

**WEST JOINT COMMITTEE****26 JUNE 2008**

**Subject:** State of the District

**Lead Officer:** Richard Hood  
*Contact on 01789 260218*

**Lead Member/  
Portfolio Holder:** Councillor L Topham

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**Summary**

As part of the consultation process, consideration of the state of the district needs to be assessed at meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny committees and also at each of the Joint Committees during this cycle. This report summarises the events of the past year along with an outline of proposals for the coming year.

**Recommendation**

**That the West Joint Committee identify its views on the 'State of the District' related to its area for 2008/09.**

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**1. Background/Information**

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution adopted in April 2002 and updated in 2007, stipulates that the Council will debate the state of the district at its first meeting after the Annual meeting.
  - 1.2 This is the seventh year since the Council adopted the provision to debate annually the state of the district. This report summarises the principal elements of the consultation and key issues identified for maintaining and improving the quality of life in the District.
  - 1.3 Members are invited to debate this analysis of the past events and comment on the future proposals.
  - 1.4 **Health Inequality in the Stratford-on-Avon District**
    - 1.4.1 Overall the quality of life index produced by Local Futures places the district as 16<sup>th</sup> in the country in relation to the rest of the districts and unitary areas in the country. A presentation will be given at the Area Committee to give a detailed assessment of issues within the area covered by this Committee.
    - 1.4.2 The perception is that Stratford District is generally prosperous, enjoying high rates of employment, above average incomes and relatively low rates of crime. There are however pockets of inequality in our district which
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cannot be ignored and we have to work together to address them.

1.4.3 National statistics show Stratford-on-Avon District as one of the healthiest areas in the country, ranking 86 out of 408 areas (source: Local Futures Study, 2006).

1.4.4 The Health Profile for Stratford-on-Avon 2006 produced by the West Midlands Health Observatory on behalf of the Department of Health and the NHS (further details available at [www.communityhealthprofiles.info](http://www.communityhealthprofiles.info)) identify that Stratford-on-Avon District:

Is significantly better than the national average for:

- Life expectancy (for males, females, and overall)
- Deaths from smoking
- Early deaths from heart disease, strokes and cancer
- Road injuries and deaths
- Proportion of children achieving 5 or more GCSEs grade A-C
- Proportion of low quality housing
- Level of violent crime
- Levels of teenage pregnancy
- Proportion of people who smoke
- Proportion of binge drinkers
- Healthy eaters
- Alcohol related hospital stays
- Drug misuse treatments
- Diabetes
- Children's tooth decay.

Is significantly worse than the national average for:

- % older people helped to live at home
- Mental health treatment.

1.4.5 As a consequence residents of the District live an average 1.2 years longer than the national average (source: [www.nchod.nhs.uk](http://www.nchod.nhs.uk), figures are for 2003-2005.)

1.4.6 However these overall figures mask health inequalities within the District itself. Analysis carried out by NHS Warwickshire shows there are inequalities in the distribution of good health throughout the district. For instance, the level of people with chronic heart disease in the Ward with the highest level in the District is 60% higher than that in the Ward with the lowest level.

1.4.7 Analysis of distribution of key health issues, shows that problems tend to be concentrated in a few Wards within the District rather than spread randomly between all of them. "The weight of scientific evidence supports a socioeconomic explanation of health inequalities. This traces the roots of ill health to such determinants as income, education and employment as well as to the material environment and lifestyle." (Acheson Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report, 1998.) Acheson demonstrates strong causal links between certain demographic and social factors and poor

health.

## 1.5 **Summary of 2007/08 key events**

- The Council's overall performance as judged by the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment improved from weak to good.
- There were several strategic initiatives designed to improve the area, if implemented. These are long term initiatives, not short term plans. These include:-
- The adoption of the Vision Action Plans for Alcester, Shipston and Southam
- Council Improvement Plan 2008- 2010 adopted
- Adoption of Corporate Strategy 2008-2012, which identifies the following priorities;
- A district where everyone shares in an improved quality of life
- A Clean and Green District
- A district where business and enterprise can flourish
- An excellent Council that is well managed and respected by the community
- The adoption of a Strategy for Shared Services in Warwickshire
- The agreement to form with Warwickshire County Council of Joint Committees
- The Adoption of a Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011.

## 1.6 **Key Events 2008/09**

- 1.6.1 The key targets and actions for the Council are as set out in the Corporate Strategy 2008-2012.
- 1.6.2 The Executive forward programme is based on these service plans, and sets out a challenging agenda for the next four months. This programme is updated monthly with information on achievements to date.
- 1.6.3 One planned action to improve working arrangements between the County and District Council is the production of a strategic Locality Business Plan. This will allow local members to target areas of activity towards what is important to them, within the County and District Council's Strategic and Financial framework.
- 1.6.4 Taking into account all the information presented, the Joint Area Committee is invited to give its views on the state of the district in relation to this Area, and its prospects for improvement.
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1.7 **Local Issues**

1.7.1 Grants – details of the grants awarded by Council during 2007/08 are contained within Appendix 1 to the report.

1.7.2 Parish Plans – during 2007/08 the Area Community Committees adopted seven parish plans. These were for Avon Dassett, Combroke, Exhall and Temple Grafton, Long Marston, Shipston, Studley and Welford on Avon.

**2. Options available to the Committee**

2.1 To debate the analysis of the past events and comment on the future proposals.

**3. Members' Comments**

3.1 The comments of the Leader of the Council are contained in this report.

**4. Implications of the proposal**

4.1 ***General***

4.1.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. However, individual projects referred to in the report do have implications that will be addressed when considering each individual project or task.

4.2 ***Legal***

4.2.2 See 4.1.1 above.

4.3 ***Financial***

4.3.1 See 4.1.1 above.

4.4 ***Environmental***

4.4.1 See 4.1.1 above.

4.5 ***Corporate Strategy***

4.5.1 See 4.1.1 above.

**3. Risk assessment**

3.1 Not applicable.

**4. Conclusion**

4.1 The report outlines the past year's actions and future proposals for 2008/09.

Councillor L Topham

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

## Community Grants Awarded by ACCs in 2007/08

West ACC:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Beaundesert & Henley Christmas Lights Working Party	Upgrade light display	£4,000.00
Great Alne Parish Council	Improve Play Equipment for 6-14 yrs	£5,000.00
Greig Centre	Summer Holiday Scheme 2007	£1,525.00
Insight Creative Summer Scheme	Studley Summer Playscheme 07	£400.00
Inclusive Leisure Education Activities Project	3 year partnership agreement for Saturday club	£884.00*
Tanworth/French Friendship	Exchange visit	£500.00
Henley in Arden Cricket Club	Improvements to cricket square	£1,000.00
1st Wilmcote Scout Group	Scout Hut Equipment and Quad Bikes	£650.00
Wootton Wawen Village Hall Management Committee	Lavatory Refurbishment	£600.00
Alcester Town Criers Guild 2008	Staging of Town Criers Guild Championships	£854.00
St Nicholas Primary School, Alcester	Build All Weather Turf Pitch	£20,000.00
Studley Allotment Association	Regeneration of Allotment site	£3,000.00
Stratford Upon Avon Credit Union	Credit Union Centre for Studley	£5,933.00

\* Grant was awarded by Executive as the project covers whole of district. For 2008/09 district wide grants will be split between the 3 area committees. The figure shown above represents 34% of the grant awarded by executive.

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