

## Social & Community Development Sub-Group – Community Empowerment Network

### Background

Clearly our Community Strategy needs to reflect the aspirations of Bassetlaw residents and stakeholders. Equally the involvement of local people is central to the effective development and implementation of the Community Strategy. Currently there are a wide range of groups/organisations working hard for the District as well as a range of neighbourhood initiatives e.g. the Policing Priority Area for Harworth. However, there is no one group that provides a collective Bassetlaw voice and no co-ordination of this activity.

Whilst we have a statutory obligation to involve local communities there are a number of other reasons why we should seek to involve our local communities:

- ▶ Appropriate and good quality services can only be delivered when you know what services local people actually need, want and prefer
- ▶ Effective involvement can also help agencies to target their resources more appropriately
- ▶ To ensure social inclusion and social justice
- ▶ Promote civic responsibility and strengthen local communities
- ▶ Increase local accountability

Involvement represents a spectrum of activity – with simple information giving or consultation being at one end of the spectrum and actual involvement in decision making at the other end of the spectrum.

In Neighbourhood Renewal areas the Community Empowerment Fund provides funding assistance to set up Community Empowerment Networks. These networks are intended to bridge the gap between the statutory partners of an LSP and the communities it serves.

The Social and Community Development Sub-Group has looked at different models of community engagement but recognises that due to limited resources and the sprawling rural nature of the District of Bassetlaw models like Area Structures for example may not be deliverable in the short-term.

This issue has also been considered by the Board.

### What is happening locally?

**The Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership Board considered the recommendations of the Social and Community Development Sub-Group and agreed that the BCVS would be tasked to set up a Community Empowerment Network on behalf of the Partnership.**

**This task is almost complete. It is an IT network that links all the communities of interest and geography across the District.**

**This network can be utilised for consultation, to feedback important developments in the District, to share good practice going on within communities, and to help build the capacity and skills of community groups.**

**It is intended to launch this new initiative and members of the Partnership are asked to feed in their ideas on how best to do this.**

### **Contact Details**

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