



The purpose of this report is to summarise the recent informal discussions among Members about a new approach to community engagement in the context of recently published evidence of the challenges confronting the Town.

No. DETAIL

1) CHALLENGES

- a) The challenges have been identified through the recent publication of the national Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (IMD 2010) and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011 (JSNA) produced by the Isle of Wight Council and the Isle of Wight NHS.
 - b) As Members are aware, the IMD 2010 provides detailed information on a range of indicators of deprivation about each of the small areas of roughly 1,500 population, known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), into which it divides the country.
 - c) As the JSNA 2011 points out, this information puts parts of Ventnor along with Newport, Ryde and East Cowes among the most deprived in the country; it states, *Five of the Island's 89 LSOAs are among the most deprived 20% in England: they are in Newport, Ryde and Ventnor.*
 - d) The more detailed information from these reports reveals that half of Ventnor's population is in the five most deprived areas on the Island as ranked on across the range of indicators including income, employment, health, housing, education and skills and children in poverty.
 - e) Members were clear that a major initiative is required in response; they are equally clear that reversing this decline can only be achieved by fully engaged communities
-

2) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- a) A community engagement strategy needs to develop from among and with the support of the communities themselves; it must be genuinely inclusive, fully representative and solidly grounded.
 - b) The basis for achieving this is already present in the Ventnor, given its surprisingly large number and range of voluntary and community based organisations, as the Town Clerks discovered through their work on compiling a database of them: 66 to date.
 - c) Also very significant for an effective strategy are those who work within the Town as providers of the so essential professional services: again a surprisingly large number with very considerable knowledge of the challenges to be faced and bringing significant resources to bear on them.
-

3) GETTING STARTED

- a) The Town Council wants to meet with representatives of all these groups and services to share a closer look behind the headline figures of the recently published reports and begin to identify how Town Council, residents and service providers can work co-operatively around a commitment to produce a positive change in those headlines over the next five years.
 - b) Arrangements are in progress for a series of four meetings between 16 January to 6 February with invitations from the Mayor and Town Council being sent to all the groups and services it has been possible to identify. The invitations will be posted by the end of this week.
-

4) RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to formally confirm its commitment to the development and delivery of an effective community engagement strategy and ask the Town Clerks to complete arrangements for the initial meetings.
