Wirral Local Strategic Partnership's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy 2009-2011

Comprehensive Engagement Strategy

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1. Introduction

The members of Wirral's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) provide a wide range of services to the communities they serve. Whilst each of the partners has their own governance and communications arrangements and requirements, this Comprehensive Engagement Strategy (CES) sets out the wider aims and commitments of the LSP to involve and engage local people in the process of delivering services that are more responsive to their needs.. This strategy aims to bring together the members of the LSP to work towards a co-ordinated approach to engaging with our communities, enhancing accountability to and empowerment of all residents.

The strategy acknowledges that whilst there is a wealth of excellent work and good practice across all sectors within the borough the time is right to deliver engagement activities in a more coordinated way. The aims and objectives of this strategy have been written to ensure that we achieve this vision and in doing so compliment the Sustainable Community Strategy for Wirral;

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of CES is to provide a framework approach within which Wirral's LSP will work to create a new environment for partnership development and working. It is one of three key strategic policy documents to support the process of community engagement, namely:

- The Comprehensive Engagement Strategy (*why* we engage communities);
- The LSP's Community Engagement Toolkit (*how* we engage communities);
- The Compact (engagement *best practice*).

The benefits we seek to deliver to the communities we serve through adoption of the principles of this strategy are:

- Encouraging active citizenship, civic society and local democracy;
- Improving local public services;
- Strengthening local accountability.

Presently, we do not seek to develop new structures for engagement, rather we aim to build on and enhance the existing arrangements. The CES will seek to ensure that decision makers are able to make informed decisions based upon meaningful and mutually rewarding engagement and involvement with the relevant communities of place or interest (see definition below).

1.2 Community: What We Mean

For the purposes of CES we define "community" to mean all persons served by the partners in the LSP, either as residents, citizens, service users or tax payers. Within this context we will specifically talk about

- **Communities of Place**: resident communities within a specific and clearly defined geography;

- **Communities of Interest:** communities based around shared interests, experiences or issues.

It is also important to remember that people often belong to more than one community and communities are always diverse.

1.3 Structure

The strategy is presented in the following key sections:

Section Two: Sets out the vision, values and objectives for our CES;

Section Three: Provides an overview discussion of the policy background that informs the development and implantation of our CES;

Section Four: Describes the partners and governance arrangements involved in delivering the vision and objectives of our CES;

Section Five: Provides consideration of our aims to develop, support and sustain the communities we serve;

Section Six: Sets out our objectives achievement of which will make the aims of this strategy a reality;

Section Seven: Details the overall approach to measuring progress in realising the Vision of our strategy.

2. Our vision, values and objectives

2.1   Our Vision

The vision we aim to achieve through Wirral LSP's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy is:

> **To increase the involvement of people in the life of their communities and encourage their greater participation in the decision-making processes that affect their quality of life and the services they receive from all partners of the LSP.**

This vision as well as driving our framework for engagement will support the achievement of Wirral's Sustainable Community Strategy, 2008 – 2025:

> *"...a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential..."*

2.2   Our Values

The key values that inform the achievement of our vision are:

- Empowering communities and embracing their diverse identities;
- Communicating clearly and openly about our decisions and actions and the reasons for them;
- Using a range of tools to allow individuals and organisations to contribute and communicate in their own way;
- Building on and linking together individuals, groups and organisations that already exist, and creating new structures where gaps or needs exist;
- Supporting the voluntary & community sectors and statutory agencies in planning and delivering services to the people of the borough;
- Acting as partners in contributing to and supporting a robust third sector.

2.3   Our Objectives

To ensure the achievement of our vision we will deliver our engagement in a more strategic fashion, therefore, we have four key objectives that inform our delivery of the CES; namely:

- Building Cohesive Communities;
- Developing Procurement and Commissioning;
- Sharing Best Practice;
- Building Capacity.

3. Policy context

Although there is currently no statutory duty to prepare a CES *'community engagement '*is clearly high on the current policy agenda. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is leading the drive to "*…enable more people to play an active role in the decisions that affect their communities…"* In this the *Local Government White Paper 2006* local authorities and their partners are given the flexibility to draw up a strategy to combine activity, improve the coordination of engagement across LSP partners and reduce the risk of 'consultation overload'. In addition, enshrined within the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007* is the new duty to involve communities in health decisions and service development (effective from 1 April 2009); where they consider it '*appropriate to do so'*

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance (November 2007) states that success in meeting the duty to involve will include showing that engagement is '*embedded as standard practice throughout authorities and is central to service delivery, policy and decision making".* Partners will also be required to demonstrate that we understand the interests and requirements of the local community, and that we use information to ensure accessible engagement opportunities are provided on key issues.

Other key relevant policy areas include:

- **The Sustainable Communities Act:** Defines participation in civic and political activity as part of "improving social, economic and environmental well being of the area".

- **The Government's Community Empowerment Action Plan:** Declares, "Participatory and representative democracy are complementary".

- **The new National Performance Indicator (PI) set:** Includes PIs on civic participation and how far people "feel they can influence local decisions".

- **Comprehensive Area Assessment:** Will "assess the quality of involvement of local people" especially the vulnerable.

- **Local Government Act:** Introduces new "duty to inform, consult and involve people".

- **Place Shaping Guidance:** Says, "...services will only be improved and communities strengthened if local people are effectively engaged and empowered".

- **LAA Operational Guidance:** Says, "The development of Local Area Agreements should be based on strong local involvement" and "need for a comprehensive approach to community engagement".

The development of a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy for Wirral will place the area at the forefront of developing a partnership approach to engagement, create the environment for fulfilling the new duty to involve and provide the framework for driving this work forward.

4. Our partners and governance arrangements

4.1   Partners to the Process

The LSP consists of the range of partners who will actively contribute to the delivery of this strategy drawn from the statutory, third and private sectors. We will actively seek the involvement of others outside of our established partnership to deliver the actions that will contribute to making the vision of this strategy a reality. The local authority leads the LSP and supports some of the key mechanisms of engagement within the borough. These mechanisms are set out in more detail in 4.2.4 of this strategy.

4.2   Governance Arrangements

The responsibility for the direction, implementation and monitoring of CES lies with the LSP partners, in this respect we have established the following structure for this strategy, building upon existing structures and responsibilities within the LSP and its partners. Operational responsibility for achieving the vision and ensuring the development of a common approach to all methods of engagement sits with the Engagement Steering Group (ESG) who will provide direction to and receive reports from the working groups established to deliver the specific CES objectives.
It is not intended that additional meetings are established – existing structures are to be utilised.
The exception to this situation is the proposed establishment of a Community Cohesion Board in recognition of a gap in the LSP's ability to respond - as effectively as desired - to specific challenges in this area through its existing structures.

It is proposed to bring together a strategic funding group for Wirral to ensure funding is used in a more co-ordinated and strategic manner for best affect.

4.2.2 Engagement Steering Group

This engagement strategy will seek to provide ongoing evidence of how the process is co-ordinated and communicated. We do not seek to prescribe a single consultation method or mechanism, but rather set out clear principles, resources and timeframes, allowing communities to understand how and when they can contribute and what resources are in place to support that engagement.

To achieve this there are three documents that support and direct effective engagement:

- This strategy which details the engagement approach;
- The LSP engagement toolkit which provides a practical 'how to' guide for all partners; and
- The Wirral Compact which ensures that all partners carry out their engagement activities using best practice.

In order to monitor and review the effectiveness of our arrangements, the LSP's Engagement Steering Group has been established. The co-ordination activity of this group will be crucial to ensuring that the principles of our common approach to all methods of engagement are embedded into the working practice of partners.

4.2.2 Partner Governance and Constitution

The LSP partners in Wirral each have their own governance and communication arrangements to keep local people informed, monitor if and how needs are being met and to gauge views. Equally

they each have their own appropriate governance and accountability arrangements and operational codes of conduct.

Within the governance arrangements set out above it is recognised that partners require a process of validation and approval of agreements. Accordingly, our processes recognise the need for internal approval to proceed from individual partners through the allowance of sufficient time to achieve fully supported agreement.

4.2.3 Governance of Place and Interest

We recognise the need to provide the fullest opportunity for communities of place and interest to access and influence the decisions of partners. We therefore will incorporate existing community engagement through formal and informal means:

- **Formal and structured:** including all existing partner engagement structures, such as Area Forums; Patient Public Involvement exercises including LINk; legacy programmes (Pathways and Neighbourhood regeneration Partnerships); and the Wirral Community and Voluntary Sectors Network (VCAW);

- **Informal/ad hoc:** recognising the value and effectiveness of service users/ patient/resident/tax payer/etc, complaints and correspondence as a store of community views to bring issues to life. We will require partners to listen to what people are saying and viewing this in a positive manner.

4.2.4 What We Are Already Doing

The Chief Executive of the Local Authority has consistently demonstrated a strong personal commitment to the concept of engagement and has driven the introduction of a number of initiatives including, Area Forums, Youth Forums, Younger Peoples and Older Peoples Parliament and the Business Forum.

The Council and its partners have established 11 Area Forums across the Borough. Each Forum covers two Wards with membership being drawn from the Local Authority, other partner agencies, and the local community. The Area Forums have been an extremely useful vehicle to engage and consult with the local community and to ascertain their views on a number of key issues.

The Area Forums have already been able to distribute funds for local projects and this has allowed local residents a much greater say in how public money is used. The Community Initiatives Fund has been running for some years and has been used to fund a wide range of local initiatives. However, last year the Authority introduced "You Decide" which was an additional budgetary allocation to each Area Forum that allowed local communities to decide on which extra Council services they would like to "purchase" for their local area. This initiative is very successful and has been extended for a further year.

The Authority and its partners see the Area Forums as a key element in our comprehensive Engagement Strategy and discussions are underway to consider how the role of Area Forums might develop in the future.

We have also established Youth Forums which are specifically directed at engaging with young people on a geographical basis.

In addition, the Authority has established a Youth Parliament and an Older People's Parliament which are specifically designed to ensure that these two groups have a more effective voice within the Borough.

The Local Authority has a long track record of supporting a wide range of community based organisations and for many years has supported CVS's within the Borough.

The Authority has recently supported the coalescence of four CVS's in to one organisation "Voluntary Community Action Wirral" (VCAW).

The Council has also gone to considerable lengths to improve engagement with the business community within Wirral. We have, over the last year, established a Business Forum which consists of a number of sector based clusters who meet to consider issues of common interest and concern so that the Authority and its partners can be better informed on the views of the private sector across Wirral. We are bringing businesses together on a regular basis to discuss a range of specific and topic related views

An important aspect of the Business Forum has been the creation of a new free on-line networking facility. This is exclusive to Wirral businesses and enables every Wirral business to have an online profile page, communicate electronically with the Council and other agencies, and receive important information about business support and what partner agencies are doing.

The Council also continues to support the Wirral Investment Network which has a public, private sector partnership to promote Wirral and Wirral businesses.

The Council is also engaging with individuals on a one to one basis through the 'ReachOut' programme which supports a door knocking service to identify and refer unemployed residents to both mainstream and other relevant projects that support employment and training. Employment Support Workers continue to work with clients to develop action plans to remove barriers to employment and training. The Council is committed to supporting engagement projects such as ReachOut during this economic downturn.

The Council is currently engaged in preparing our Local Development Framework which will set out the planning framework for the Borough. As part of the Local Development Framework we have developed a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how we will consult local communities on planning issues. Our statement of Community Involvement exceeds the requirements set out by national legislation and represents the Council's commitment to facilitate early community involvement when planning policies are being drawn up.

5. Our aims

5.1 Introduction

The aims of CES are to:

- Enable and empower our communities to more effectively contribute to informed decision making and better governance;
- Support the development of a strong third sector;
- Support the effective delivery of Wirral's Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy.

5.2 Aim 1: Enabling Better Governance

Our aim is to build on the skills of people and communities so that they can fully engage in local service delivery such as neighbourhood management and regeneration projects. Overall the aim is to empower local citizens, supporting the development of their sense of place, enhancing civic participation and thereby effectively contributing to local democratic renewal.

We seek to provide equality of opportunity for all to participate, ensuring that all local people are valued, actively listened to and heard, therefore providing them with appropriate opportunity to influence decision making.

5. 3 Aim 2: Supporting the Development of a Stronger third sector

Our aim is that all key partners work in partnership to ensure that we have a robust third sector that is fit for purpose and financially secure. This will be achieved through the development of a strategy for the sector; this work will be local authority led but will require commitment from all partners.

5.4 Aim 3: Delivering the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

Our aim is to ensure the levels of community involvement crucial to the success of the LAA and the SCS.

- The LAA will tackle the key challenges facing Wirral through its three year delivery plan.

- The SCS acknowledges that the strong and effective partnerships with Wirral's voluntary and community sector have been at the forefront of much of the activity to tackle worklessness, deprivation and low skills within some of our most deprived neighbourhoods.

This strategy will seek to ensure that our engagement activities provide the necessary platforms for our communities to continue to have their voices heard regarding the LAA delivery plan and the long term vision set out for the borough in the SCS.

6. Our objectives

The objectives below are the key themes that will enable us to make the vision and aims of this strategy a reality;

- Build cohesive communities;
- Developing procurement and commissioning;
- Share best practice;
- Build capacity within the third sector.

Each of these thematic objectives will be supported by cross-cutting action (led and monitored by the ESG) that applies to all - in which we will:

- Agree a common approach to all methods of engagement.

6.1 Cross Cutting Action: Agree a Common Approach to all Methods of Engagement.

The Community Engagement Toolkit adopted in December 2006 by the LSP has been refreshed and updated. This document contains all of the practical guides to engage with communities.

The use of the community engagement toolkit and the common approach to all methods will be monitored through the LSP website by the Engagement Steering Group.

Lead:	Engagement Steering Group

6.1.1 Cross Cutting Action: Reduce Duplication

It is accepted that duplication of engagement occurs and that partners are constantly looking for ways to reduce the burden of consultation and engagement activities within our communities. The ESG will bring together the key staff from each of the partner organisations and a forward plan of joint engagement activity will be co-ordinated and reviewed as a permanent agenda item. The LSP website will contain a specified area for the ESG and CES as well as providing another platform for communication.

Lead:	Engagement Steering Group

6.1.2 Cross Cutting Action: Reduce costs

Engaging with communities incurs costs on a number of levels. This strategy will be supported by an agreement that acknowledges the funding requirements for effective engagement systems for all partner organisations. The partner organisations will work towards the development of agreed common policy for the funding for engagement activities and publish arrangements on the LSP website.

Lead:	Engagement Steering Group

6.2 Theme 1: Building Cohesive Communities

Community Cohesion is a local and national priority, since the disturbances of 2001 and the acts of a small group of extremists in London in July 2005 there has been increased focus upon addressing this area. The development of community cohesion is the attempt to build communities with four key characteristics:

- A common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The valuing of diversity;
- Similar life opportunities for all; and

- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in the school and within neighbourhoods.

Building a cohesive Wirral around these characteristics means recognising diverse needs and taking action to tackle inequality. We want the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances to be appreciated and positively valued, and for positive relationships to be developed between people from different backgrounds. Our aims are to:

- Increase the representation of diverse groups;
- Develop a single forum (the proposed Community Cohesion Board);
- Build on existing area forum structures to include the principles of neighbourhood working.

All public bodies have a legal duty relating to equality and diversity with relation to the services they provide and the employment of staff. In order to work through the legal duty, organisations have to engage fully with the following key areas of work: policy development and review, consultation, training, responding to emerging legislation, and engagement with the third sector. A common framework for engaging with the agenda is to use the six strands model:

▪ Age	▪ Faith/Religion	▪ Race
▪ Disability	▪ Gender	▪ Sexual orientation

Wirral's Local Strategic Partnership has adopted this framework for the purposes of developing an approach to ensuring that all public bodies we have a consistent approach. A Wirral Equalities Forum (WEF) has been established which will ensure that we all promote the same core values in relation to the six strands of equality across all of the services we deliver and in our roles as employers. There is a great deal of work now underway by the LSP partners and the community groups, creating a firm foundation for future partnership work. The LSP is now in a position to take advantage of the current level of activity and move the equality and diversity agenda to another level. WEF provides a delivery mechanism to ensure that we continue to work together and play a supporting role for the third sector.

For example, WEF will work with Wirral's Black Racial Minority Partnership (WBRMP) on a wide range of issues such as monitoring and reviewing Race Equality Schemes and establishing recruitment and selection best practice in partner organisations. In this case WEF and WBRMP are the mechanisms for ensuring that all engagement activities are carried out in a way that is consistent with our commitments to a shared equality and diversity agenda.

There are other frameworks for engaging with groups within the other strands, eg:

- Disability issues can be taken to the Wirral Disabled People's Forum;
- Sexuality issues can be taken to the Terrence Higgins Trust and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender group;
- The platforms for engaging with age issues are the older person's parliament and the youth parliament.
- There are faith groups within Wirral; however, this strategy recognises that a specific route for engaging within this strand is yet to be fully and effectively developed.

There is also a need to develop mechanisms for ensuring engagement activities are developed for communities of place and this will be further explored through the ongoing work of the council's area forums.

Lead:	The LSP's proposed Community Cohesion and Equalities Board

6.3 Theme 2: Procurement and Commissioning

Well targeted financial support for the third sector in Wirral is a critical element to its success. It is acknowledged that third sector economy makes a significant contribution to the achievement of the outcomes of the Wirral Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Working together, LSP partners will lead to a more cohesive approach to supporting the work of the third sector in Wirral. This will help all in the pursuit of excellence for their service users (the community). Strategic co-ordination of commissioning is vital within the current climate to ensure sustainability for the third sector offering effective, innovative service provision for our communities. Future strategies for commissioning the third sector in Wirral will need to compliment other strategies and funding streams affecting the key stakeholders and all LSP partners will be consulted on development of local guidance to include the Full Cost Recovery (FCR) model. It is intended that FCR funding should be commensurate with the level of project or service being provided and should not disproportionately fund other core services. We also intend to develop a strategic funding group.

Lead:	Compact Working Group and Funding Network

6.4 Theme 3: Sharing Best Practice

The consultation and policy appraisal code of the Wirral's Compact is the accepted tool for monitoring best practice within the field of engagement.

The ESG will have as a standing agenda item, 'Compact Working Principles' the group will include one of the joint chairs of the Compact steering group in its membership. This will therefore ensure that through the representation of the Compact Working Group and pursuing its agenda that best practice is being followed in the development of a common approach to engagement.

It is our intention to:

- Further develop the Compact's Engagement Toolkit;
- Review the existing governance and membership arrangements within existing working groups to ensure they adhere to recognised good practice;
- Provide further support and resources to the establishment of the Compact Champions Network.

Lead:	Compact Working Group

6.5 Theme 4: Building Capacity

In order to develop the strategic engagement methods within the borough it will be necessary to work with the third sector to build capacity and respond to the need for the sector to have a strong voice. A strong third sector will be able to influence at all levels whilst increasing the understanding of the role and the contribution that the sector plays in supporting the work of the public bodies within the borough.

It is our intention to:

- Develop a strategic plan for Wirral's third sector;
- Improve representation between statutory decision makers and the third sector through a recognised democratic process, strengthening links to achievement of our community cohesion objectives;

- Build capacity in the sector to deliver goods and services in their own right as well as on behalf of partners in the public sector;
- Support and develop the capacity within the sector to represent themselves within the LSP.

Lead	VCAW

7.   Performance management

7.1   Developing an Action Plan

An annual action plan for each of the key thematic objectives will be developed which sets out how they will be achieved. This will include existing work plus new initiatives to improve and enhance effective engagement with the communities we serve. Some actions which may be included are:

- Publish and maintain details of engagement opportunities across the borough on Wirral LSP's website;

- Investigate new ways for improving coordination of work "on the ground" across agencies through the ESG;

- Develop cross sector training and development activities for engagement targeted at both communities and staff at all levels;

- Undertake periodic evaluations to measure the benefits of engagement and its impact on improved services and quality of life.

7.2   Measuring Progress

In order to measure the overall performance of the CES and how well the public bodies and the third sector are engaging with the communities they serve it will be necessary to develop some local indicators of performance. These will be based around and provided demonstrable links to the achievement of the following National Indicators set by central government, (See Appendix two Wirral LSP's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy Action Plan)

Lead:	LSP Engagement Steering Group

7.2.1   Measuring Progress: Building Cohesive Communities

Progress against our objective to build cohesive communities will be measured against the following National Indicators:

- **National Indicator 1:** % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
- **National Indicator 35:** Building resilience to violent extremism.

The proposed Community Cohesion Board will develop an action plan that will incorporate local indicators that will provide demonstrable evidence of achievement of these indicators. Additionally, it is important to state that achievements against NI 1 will be measured by the proposed Community Cohesion Board through the biennial place survey.

Lead:	Proposed Community Cohesion and Equalities Board

7.2.2   Measuring Progress in Developing Procurement and Commissioning

Progress against our objective to sustain the work of the third sector in Wirral through well targeted financial support will be measured against the following National Indicator:

- **National Indicator 7:** Environment for a thriving third sector.

The Compact Procurement Code and strategic funding group will develop an action plan that will incorporate local indicators that will show demonstrable evidence of achievement of this indicator.

Lead:	Compact Working Group and Funding Network

7.2.4 Measuring Progress in Sharing Best Practice

Progress against our objective to share best practice in the field of engagement will be measured against the following National Indicators:

- **National indicator 4:** The % of people who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their locality.
- **National indicator 7:** Environment for a thriving ^{third} Sector

The Compact Working Group will develop an action plan that will incorporate local indicators that will provide demonstrable evidence of achievement of these indicators.

The Compact Working group will monitor achievement against NI 4 thorough the biennial Place Survey

Lead:	Compact Working Group

7.2.5 Measuring Progress in Building Capacity

Progress against our objective to build capacity within Wirral's third sector will be measured against the following National Indicators:

- **National Indicator 6:** Participation in regular volunteering.
- **National Indicator 7:** Environment for a thriving third sector.

VCAW will develop an action plan that will incorporate local indicators that will show demonstrable evidence of achievement of these indicators.

Additionally, VCAW will monitor achievement against NI 6 thorough the biennial Place Survey

Lead:	VCAW

Appendix one: National Indicators

Source: National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Handbook of Definitions
(Department for Communities and Local Government: London, April 2008)

Place Survey Indicator			
NI 1: % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area			
Is data provided by the LA or a local partner?	**Y**	**Is this an existing indicator?**	**Y**
Rationale	*The Local Government White Paper* sets out Government's aim of creating strong and cohesive communities – thriving places in which a fear of difference is replaced by a shared set of values and a shared sense of purpose and belonging. The aim in doing so is to ensure that the economic and cultural benefits of diversity are experienced by everyone in each community, recognising that this means promoting similar life opportunities for all. This particular measure is widely recognised as a key indicator of a cohesive society, shown to measure a number of strands of the community cohesion definition. The question that feeds this indicator was previously used in the 2006/7 BVPI satisfaction survey. Note that the methodology for the Place Survey is comparable with the BVPI satisfaction survey.		
Data Source	Collection will be through the new Place Survey. Local authorities will submit data to the Audit Commission, who will weight it and submit it to CLG directly, and provide authorities with weighted copies of their own data sets.		
Collection Interval	Biennial		
Reporting organisation	Audit Commission		
Spatial level	Single tier, district and county council		

Place Survey Indicator			
NI 4: % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality			
Is data provided by the LA or a local partner?	Y	**Is this an existing indicator?**	Y
Rationale	The Government aims to build communities where individuals are empowered to make a difference both to their own lives and to the area in which they live. A key indicator of community empowerment is the extent to which people feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area. The question that feeds this indicator was previously used in the 2006/7 BVPI satisfaction survey. Note that the methodology for the Place Survey is comparable with the BVPI satisfaction survey.		
Data Source	Collection will be through the new Place Survey. Local authorities will submit data to the Audit Commission, who will weight it and submit it to CLG directly, and provide authorities with weighted copies of their own data sets.		
Collection Interval	Biennial		
Reporting organisation	Audit Commission		
Spatial level	Single tier, district and county council		

Place Survey Indicator			
NI 6: Participation in regular volunteering			
Is data provided by the LA or a local partner?	**Y**	**Is this an existing indicator?**	**N**
Rationale	High levels of volunteering are one sign of strong, active communities. Volunteers are vital in supporting the range of activity undertaken by third sector organisations and within the public services. Local government has an important role to play in creating a culture in which individuals are able to contribute to their communities by volunteering. Regular volunteering is defined as taking part in formal volunteering at least once a month in the 12 months before the interview. Formal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations which support social, environmental, cultural or sporting objectives. The question that feeds this indicator is based on a question previously used in the Citizenship survey. Note that the methodology for the Place Survey is different to the Citizenship survey.		
Data Source	Collection will be through the new Place Survey. Local authorities will submit data to the Audit Commission, who will weight it and submit it to CLG directly, and provide authorities with weighted copies of their own data sets.		
Collection Interval	Biennial		
Reporting organisation	Audit Commission		
Spatial level	Single tier, district and county council		

NI 7: Environment for a thriving third sector			
Is data provided by the LA or a local strategic partner?	**N**	**Is this an existing indicator?**	**N**
Rationale	A vibrant, diverse, and independent third sector is a vital component of a fair and enterprising society. It can help communities to be more cohesive and inclusive, and help individuals to have more say over issues that affect them. In addition, the third sector can help local statutory agencies to address a wide range of community concerns. These issues range from strengthening community cohesion, to increasing environmental sustainability, to tackling many of the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage. Local statutory agencies can be influential in shaping the environment in which independent third sector organisations operate. This could be, for example, through their approaches to partnership working, consultation, funding relationships, or in the way that they commission and procure services. Sometimes this influence will be direct and specific, other times diffuse and broad. Taking account of these influences, this indicator is designed to capture the overall contribution made by local statutory agencies to the environment in which third sector organisations operate.		
Definition	This indicator will measure the contribution that local government and its partners make to the environment in which independent third sector organisations can operate successfully. The indicator will be scored according to the proportion of third sector organisations who answer the following question as 'positive' or 'very positive' on a five point scale: "…how do the local statutory bodies in your local area influence your organisation's success?" In answering the question, third sector organisations will be encouraged to take a wide view of the influence of local statutory bodies on the success of their organisations. The indicator will be measured in 2008 and again in 2010 by a new, bespoke, centrally-administered survey of registered and incorporated third sector organisations based in each local area.		

This is an APACS indicator			
NI 35: Building resilience to violent extremism			
Is data provided by the LA or a local partner?	Y	**Is this an existing indicator?**	N

APACS number	For APACS, this indicator will be trialled and evaluated in 2008/09 and as a consequence, it will not be published in APACS or used for assessment in APACS in 2008/09.
Rationale	The aim of the 'Prevent' work stream of the CONTEST strategy is to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists. The revised Prevent work stream has seven core objectives (see further guidance section below) which require action at local, national and international levels. Local partners have a key role to play in developing programmes in support of each of these objectives – notably objectives to enhance the resilience of communities to violent extremism and to identify and support individuals vulnerable to recruitment to the cause of violent extremism. The context for Prevent work will be subject to regional variations and an approach specific to local circumstances will be essential. The work needs to be done in close conjunction with the local community. The policing response will be guided by the emerging ACPO strategy. Given the issues concerned it is inherently difficult to directly measure outcomes. This indicator therefore assesses the standard of local areas' arrangements against a number of key factors.
Definition	Assessment framework which evaluates the effectiveness of Prevent related work programmes on a 1 – 5 scale against 4 main criteria. These four criteria are: • Understanding of, and engagement with, Muslim communities; • Knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism and the Prevent objectives; • Development of a risk-based preventing violent extremism action plan, in support of delivery of the Prevent objectives; • Effective oversight, delivery and evaluation of projects and actions. The assessment framework will be available shortly at http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/preventingextremism/ Performance is defined at each stage of the scale, e.g. when considering 'understanding of, and engagement with, Muslim communities' LSPs would rate their performance between a 1, where: 'The community are engaged on an ad hoc basis and through wider faith/minority groups. Mechanisms and engagement is/are not self sustaining or productive. Understanding of the make-up of the local Muslim community is cursory and limited'; and a 5: 'A self sustaining, dynamic and community driven engagement which takes place on a number of different levels and in a number of different ways, with innovative approaches to communication and engagement of all groups. Sophisticated understanding of local Muslim communities is used to drive policy development and engagement.'

Collection interval	Annual (Financial year)	**Data Source**	Assessment is carried out by the Local Strategic Partnership
Reporting organisation	Local authority		
Spatial level	Single tier and district councils. All authorities are expected to report, except those areas where agreed otherwise with Government.		
Further Guidance	HMIC and the Audit Commission will work with a number of priority areas during 2008/09 to identify good practice which can be shared, with a view to building up learning and effective implementation across the country. In due course, this indicator will be captured as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) process. This indicator also forms part of the APACS (Assessments of Policing and Community Safety), which is available at http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/apacs For APACS, this indicator will be trialled and evaluated in 2008/09 and as a consequence, it will not be published or used for assessment in APACS in 2008/09. Further detail on the Prevent Strategy can be found at www.security.homeoffice.gov.uk and at www.communities.gov.uk/communities/preventingextremism/ and www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=7890410 Further guidance on Prevent will also be published shortly. The revised Prevent work stream of CONTEST has seven core objectives: 1) Challenge the violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices; 2) disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions where they are active; 3) support individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism; 4) increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism; 5) address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting; 6) develop understanding, analysis and evaluation; 7) strategic communications.		
Notes	For the latest guidance for this indicator, including any corrections or clarifications, please consult the APACS technical guidance which is available at: http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/assessment-methods/assessment-technical-guidance/		