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SOUTH SEFTON AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Date: Monday 11th March, 2013
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Upstairs Conference Room, Conference Rooms 4 and 5,
Magdalen House, Trinity Road, Bootle

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr Hardy (Chair)	Cabinet Member
Canon Roger Driver (Vice-Chair)	Voluntary Community and Faith
Cllr Robinson	Sefton MBC
Angela Parkinson	Clinical Commissioning Group
Bob Greenhalgh	Private Sector
Cllr John Kelly	Sefton MBC
Cllr Mahon	Sefton MBC
Caroline McGee	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
Angela White	Voluntary Community and Faith
Steph Prewett	Head of Commissioning and Neighborhood Co-ordination, Sefton MBC
Sarah Jane Saunders	One Vision Housing
Yana Williams	Colleges
Inspector Tony Locke	Merseyside Police

Secretary:	Olaf Hansen
Telephone:	0151 934 2067
Fax:	0151 934 2034
Email:	olaf.hansen@sefton.gov.uk

1. Appointment of Vice-Chair

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. Apologies for Absence

4. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to give notice of any disclosable pecuniary interest, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests and the nature of that interest, relating to any item on the agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct, before leaving the meeting room during the discussion on that particular item.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November, 2012

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes

To consider matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

7. Gun and Gang Crime Update

Update from Head Commissioning and Neighbourhood Co-ordination

8. South Sefton Foodbank

Presentation by Debbie Shelley

9. Welfare Reform Update

Update from Head Commissioning and Neighbourhood Co-ordination

10. Any Other Business

11. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 3 June 2013 at the Town Hall, Bootle commencing at 14:00.

THIS SET OF MINUTES IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL IN".

SOUTH SEFTON AREA PARTNERSHIP

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, TRINITY ROAD, BOOTLE ON MONDAY 26TH NOVEMBER, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Canon Roger Driver (in the Chair)
Councillors John Kelly and Robinson

Also Present: Angela Parkinson, Keith Lloyd,
Angela White, Steph Prewett, Sarah Jane Saunders
and Lorraine Webb

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hardy and Caroline McGee.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Partnership received nominations for the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair. Councillor Kelly nominated Councillor Hardy for the post of Chair and Canon Roger Driver for the post of Vice-Chair. Canon Driver suggested that the election to the post of Vice-Chair should be deferred until the next meeting. A deferment would allow for the full membership of the Partnership to be given thorough consideration, following the identification of the Partnership's priorities, which might need to be reflected in the selection of a Vice-Chair.

Agreed:

- (1) Councillor Hardy be elected as Chair of the Partnership;
- (2) The election to the post of Vice-Chair be deferred until the next meeting of the Partnership; and
- (3) Canon Driver be elected as interim Vice-Chair for this meeting.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Christina Jones presented her report on the terms of reference and the governance structures for the Area Partnership. She explained that the aim of the Area Partnership was to promote the wellbeing of the community area with regards to its economic, social, environmental and cultural development.

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SOUTH SEFTON AREA PARTNERSHIP- MONDAY 26TH NOVEMBER, 2012

Attendees held a brief discussion regarding the Partnership's Membership. Ms. Jones explained that the meetings of the group would be held on a quarterly basis; she went on to add that the Partnership could form specific sub-groups drawn from its wider membership, whose membership could be based on the need and aim of the sub-group.

Agreed:

That the terms of reference and the governance structures for the Area Partnership be noted and approved.

5. WORKSHOP SESSION - AREA PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

Ward profiles for the Linacre, Derby, Litherland, Ford, Netheron and Orrell, and St. Oswald wards had been circulated to members. The members referred to the profiles and discussed possible areas for the Area Partnership to select as priority areas and sub-groups to progress particular issues.

Reference was made to the impact of forthcoming welfare reform legislation. It was suggested that a sub-group be established to examine this issue. It was agreed that welfare reform would be a priority.

Steph Prewett suggested that were a number of on-going work streams whose work could feed into the Partnership and could run through the 'Task and Finish Group'. However, there was a need to manage demand and be pragmatic about what both the Partnership and the Council could realistically deliver. Welfare reform would have a major impact on the community but we would not be able to mitigate all aspects of the legislation. Partnership members suggested sub-groups could be established to examine the differing aspects and impacts (such as food, clothing, benefits, housing and debt) of the forthcoming Act on the local community. It was noted that priorities and the themes therein could be overarching or short term and could be changed as particular projects were completed and other issues arose.

Ms. Prewett suggested that gang and gun crime could be another priority for the Partnership to consider. Members agreed that gang and gun crime should be added as a priority, but added that the priority should be extended to include community safety ASB. Inspector Ross, Merseyside Police, confirmed that Bootle was classified as being a gun crime area.

Agreed:

- (1) Welfare reform be confirmed as a Partnership priority; and
- (2) Gang and gun crime (including community safety ASB) be confirmed as a Partnership priority.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Angela White, Sefton CVS, informed members that the Community First Fund was now open to consider requests for grants from community groups.

7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was to be confirmed.

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Briefing to: South Sefton Area Partnership

Briefing From: Steph Prewett, Head of Corporate Commissioning & Neighbourhood Coordination

Briefing about: Gun and Gang Crime in Sefton

Date: 11th March 2013

Introduction

Sefton has experienced a recent increase in incidents relating to gun and gang activity and as such has agreed to develop a specific strategic approach to how we tackle the issue in partnership. Until recently we were considering the issue within existing mechanisms and approaches, however, given recent changes in circumstances and the escalating nature of these events we have taken a decision to develop our approach further and dedicate a targeted focus on these issues.

The following outlines a timeline of progress to date:

- 5 May 2012 - Gun Crime Summit organised by Chief Constable Merseyside Police at which it was raised that gun crime was becoming an increasing concern within Sefton. At this stage Sefton was still behind Liverpool and Knowsley in terms of incidents but it was considered an emerging issue. Meeting attended by Ch Supt Nikki Holland, Peter Morgan and Chris Jones.
- 15 May 2012 – Discussion about how we might consider approaching the issue of Youth Gang and Gun Violence was raised as an urgent item at a workshop of Sefton Operations Board (Operations Board is a partnership of senior representatives of organisations in Sefton). At this time it was agreed that as the Police already had their OCG (Organised Crime Group) in place it would be reviewed whether this was the most appropriate place to respond to this issue.
- 21 August 2012 – Respect day held in Linacre Bridge following shooting. Multi-agency reassurance day to demonstrate Police presence in the area; delivering a clean up and engaging with residents in the area. Involving a number of partners including Sefton MBC, Merseyside Police, RSLs and residents.
- 1 October 2012 – SSCP (Sefton Safer Communities Partnership) considered recent events and how we responded to them. It was suggested at this point that given changing circumstances the OCG was no longer the most appropriate place for this agenda and that something more specific was required. Issue escalated to Operations Board to agree a strategic approach to gun and gang issues be adopted.

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- 20 November 2012 – Structured session around the issue of Gun and Gang Crime at Sefton Operations Board. Received a detailed briefing on Merseyside context and strategy from Chief Superintendent Richardson, Head of Matrix, Merseyside Police as well as recent activity in Sefton relating to gang and gun crime. He indicated that in the light of this recent activity Sefton may now wish to consider strengthening its arrangements. The Sefton Borough Partnership (SBP) also received presentations on, what other areas were doing (Liverpool and Knowsley). The SBP agreed to developing a strategic approach to responding to this issue of Gun and Gang crime. Action point for SSCP to implement the approach.
- 5 December 2012 – SSCP held a dedicated planning session on detailing and implementing a partnership approach to responding to local issues of Gun and Gang Crime. It looked at what we currently do, where gaps exist and whether there are any other approaches we can learn from to develop our response

Multi Agency Response to Gun and Gang Crime (MARGG) Feedback

MARGG and COMPASS have now been merged and met for the 1st time on 13/2/13. Seven Gun Crime Nominal's were identified.

As it was the 1st meeting, the majority of actions were for agencies to trawl for information which they have been asked to feedback to police within two weeks.

The group had a good attendance and there was a good level of information sharing.

A Merseyside Organised Crime Group (OCG) meeting has just been established where each area can present their OCG's for discussion. As it is a Merseyside-wide meeting, a number of national agencies attend who may not attend 'local' meetings.

Meetings are currently held monthly but this will continue to be kept under review.

Gun & Gang Crime Strategy Group

The Partnership Vision is committed to:

- Reducing violence committed by armed groups.
- Increasing communities sense of pride, confidence and safety in areas of Liverpool most affected by armed groups.
- Helping build Sefton with a positive and forward looking reputation

The Membership of the Group consists of :

- Merseyside Police
- Mersey Fire and Rescue Service
- Probation
- Housing
- HMP

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- PCT - CCG
- Voluntary Sector
- Peter Morgan – Council – Strategic Lead
- Community Safety Lead

The Membership will be responsible for:

- To consider Strategic Intelligence Assessments and undertake consultation to inform the setting of strategic priorities and the planning and targeting of partnership resources.
- To develop and implement a Gang and Youth Violence crime reduction strategy and associated action plans.
- To pool partnership resources and commission partnership activities and action in support of strategic priorities.
- To monitor performance in relation to actions and priority outcomes.
- To up-date the Gun and Gang Crime group about the completion of actions / initiatives, successes and possible difficulties.
- To research examples of notable practice and translate into operational practice.
- To adapt to changes in government legislation.
- To provide reports on progress against strategy for each meeting.
- To involve agencies, community and voluntary sector in the completion of initiatives / actions.
- To ensure that all press / media exposure is co-ordinated through the Community Safety Partnership press channels and marketing material is branded under this banner.
- To ensure that all actions / initiatives reflect the diversity of the communities which comprise Sefton and that it reflects the diversity of the need of those communities.
- To ensure that the correct level of seniority / accountability is represented at meetings.

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Lessons Learnt from Marion Square Incident

Following the recent incident at Marion Square a Community Intervention Meeting was held on 5/2/13.

From a policing perspective, the investigation was made more difficult due to the press coverage involved. There were also issues in relation to the age of the alleged perpetrator's and the current push force-wide in relation to safeguarding and PPO's.

There was a miscommunication at officer level between Police and Children's Services in relation to safeguarding and PPO's.

The Local Authority does not have the powers to make PPO's and on this occasion there were not grounds to put the parties involved in front of the Courts in order to restrict their liberty.

From a Local Authority perspective, further understanding is needed about the time constraints placed on Police in relation to the 'custody clock'.

All parties are currently under bail conditions and some have chosen to remain out of area.

At the Community Intervention Meeting, clear information and key messages were given the public and it also allowed the public the opportunity to air their concerns.

At the Community Intervention Meeting it was agreed that council workers will share information with the police on behalf of the public who may not usually share information with police due to fear of reprisals.

It has been agreed that more Community Intervention Meetings will be held in the future and Steph Prewett has asked her Neighbourhood's Team to introduce them into other areas in the Borough.

Since the meeting Merseyside Fire and Rescue have target hardened a number of properties.

A public reassurance meeting was held in Netherton on 13/2/13 and a further one held on the 15/2/13.

Terriers Play

The play shows the consequences of becoming involved with guns and gangs and the difficult decisions that young people can face. The performance of the Terriers Play includes a performance, Q&A session with the actors and a teaching pack for the school. There are planned performances for secondary schools in Sefton and Knowsley for a four week period beginning on 25 February 2013. This will also take in Walton Prison and Hugh Baird College. There will be a VIP performance on 1 March 2013 at Royal Court and two matinee performances for year 6 pupils on 18/19 April. There is an independent evaluation running alongside the performances to evaluate the success.

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ASB Statistics

Please find below the Stats re ASB referrals to the Unit since 1st November 2012 for SOUTH SEFTON;

ASB Incidents referred to Unit - **61 – 22** of which are linked to 'Gun & Gang Crime' members.

ABC's Issued by Unit - **28 – 12** of which involved known or suspected Gun & Gang Crime members.

CrASBO's obtained from Court - **6 – 2** of which are on known or suspected Gun & Gang Crime Members.

There are a further **28** CrASBO's currently being pursued by the Unit, at least **12** of these are linked to known or suspected Gun & Gang Crime members.

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Briefing to: South Sefton Area Partnership

Briefing From: Steph Prewett, Head of Corporate Commissioning & Neighbourhood Coordination

Briefing about: Welfare Reform

Date: 11th March 2013

Introduction

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 received royal assent on the 8th March 2012. The Act – one of the Coalition Government's flagship bills - puts into law many of the proposals, as well as the broad vision, contained in the 2010 Welfare Reform White Paper Universal Credit: Welfare that Works. As with that document the Act is primarily concerned with replacing a number of benefits with Universal Credit. It also develops on a number of changes existent in a nascent form in that White Paper, relating to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Disability Benefits, and Employment and Support Allowance.

The premise of the Welfare Reform Act is to move more people into work; simplify the complexities that exist around benefits and to realise savings estimated at £28 billion. Various announcements since the initial financial assessment of savings has made this figure significantly higher.

Key Elements of the Reform

The following sets out each of the key elements:

Household Benefit Cap

From April 2013 the Government will put a limit on the total amount of benefit that working age people can receive. This means that households claiming out of work benefits will no longer receive more in benefits than the average wage paid to those who are working. Total benefit payable will be limited to a maximum of £500 each week for couples and lone parents and £350 for single people, though entitlement to certain other benefits will exempt claimants from the Household Benefit cap. Local authorities will be responsible for applying the Household Benefit cap to new and existing claims from April 2013, through Housing Benefit deductions. From October 2013 new claims will start to be taken through Universal Credit and the cap will be applied directly to those claims.

Reforming Council Tax Support

Local authorities have been given responsibility for developing a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme within the following framework:

- Future Council Tax Support to be offered in form of a discount

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- Local authorities must have a Council Tax Support Scheme by 31st January 2013 to begin on 1st April, 2013
- Support for vulnerable pensioners should be delivered through a national framework of criteria and allowances (with no changes to current levels of award)
- Support for Council Tax is provided for the most vulnerable in society
- Schemes should support work incentives and in particular avoid disincentives to move into work
- Schemes must set out the classes of person who are entitled to a reduction and the reductions that will apply
- A billing Council must consult before making a scheme and each year must consider whether to revise or replace the scheme.

At the 2010 Spending Review, the Government announced that it would localise support for council tax from 2013-14, reducing expenditure by 10 per cent. This is part of a wider policy of decentralisation and welfare reform.

Universal Credit (UC)

This will be a single benefit paid on a monthly basis and will replace Income Support, income based Job Seekers Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has worked in partnership with local authorities through the Local Government Association to examine the options for face to face service delivery and it has been agreed that a national service with targeted local flexibility is the optimum solution from the point of UC rollout. The core UC offering, for the majority of UC claimants will be provided by DWP. However local authorities to provide face-to-face support for a minority of UC claimants, with more complex needs, who will need help to access the new online system and more intensive, work focussed support.

An incremental approach is envisaged from October 2013 with applications for the new benefit arising only from new claims or major changes in a claimant's circumstances. Government are asking local authorities who may be considering reducing their benefits services to have regard to the fact that some capacity will be needed to maintain the Housing Benefit caseload prior to full migration to UC; process new claims to Housing Benefit for some working age claimants until April 2014; and to provide the face to face support described above. New Housing Benefit claims for pensioners will also continue until October 2014 and full migration of all existing claims to UC will not be complete until the end of 2017.

The DWP and the Local Government Association are working together on the development of short term pilots to help ensure that local authorities are ready for Universal Credit in 2013, and longer term pilots to help develop a more diverse model for delivering Universal Credit after 2015. More information about these can be found on the website of the Local Government Association.

During discussions with the DWP and DCLG concerns were expressed about plans to pay rent to claimants, rather than landlords, under UC. Housing Benefit Demonstration Projects

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are underway in certain local authority areas and will involve directly paying Housing Benefit to approximately 2000 tenants in each local authority to examine approaches to help claimants manage their own money on a monthly cycle, test safeguards for landlords and understand the level of exceptions. Although, Sefton is not one of the selected areas, One Vision Housing are testing this out locally with new housing development in Seaforth to see how this would impact on their tenants in Sefton.

Social Fund

This will be replaced with a non-ring fenced grant which will be paid to local authorities and they will become responsible for distribution. This covered crisis loans for people at most need, i.e. victims of domestic violence who have been forced to flee their homes and start up somewhere else.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

This will be replaced for all working age claimants by a Personal Independence Payment. There is no automatic transfer from one to the other, so people currently receiving DLA will have to make a fresh claim for the new benefit and will be reassessed in line with new assessment criteria.

Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

The amount of time that people can receive contribution based ESA will be limited to 265 days for those claimants in a work related activity group or in assessment phase. The youth element of this for disabled young people has been abolished within the Act for those who haven't paid National Insurance contributions.

The Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)

In February 2012 the Government produced a strategy called Tackling Fraud and Error in Government. This outlined plans to tackle fraud and error in the tax credit and benefit system. They will be creating a single integrated fraud investigation service with statutory powers to investigate and sanction all benefit and tax credit offences. They are also piloting a Mobile Regional Taskforce to concentrate on fraud in targeted, small, areas of the UK.

In November 2011, the Government announced that local authority staff currently employed on welfare benefit investigation will become part of SFIS from 2013. These staff will remain employed by local authorities, but operate under SFIS powers, policies, and priorities.

Social Sector Size Criteria

From April 2013, the applicable maximum rent will be reduced by a national percentage rate depending on how many bedrooms the household is considered not to require. A 14% reduction will be made for those who under-occupy their home by a single bedroom and a 25% reduction for two bedrooms or more. The assessment of requirements will be against

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the same criteria currently used for LHA: a bedroom will be allocated for a single adult or couple; every two children under the age of 10 or each child over 10 if they are different genders.

Although there are no planned exemptions to the new size criteria, the Government announced that it would add an additional £30m per year to the national discretionary housing payment budget from 2013/14.

This is aimed at supporting two specific groups of social tenants through the changes. The first group are disabled people who live in significantly adapted accommodation and who may need additional support to remain in their existing homes. The second group are foster carers, including those who need to keep an extra room when they are in between fostering.

The Government are working with social housing providers and local authorities to build an effective implementation strategy that will support tenants, their advisers and housing providers in preparing properly for this change.

Developing the Response to Welfare Reform

Welfare Reform is one of the largest policy changes to be introduced by the current Government. It was recognised immediately that the Council and its partners needed to develop a potential mitigation plan for Sefton residents. From the outset, a strong inclusive partnership approach was taken to develop a single message and a collaborative approach. It is also important that the leadership for the approach is undertaken by partners and community agencies in terms of developing community capacity and resilience.

A partnership group to oversee mitigation for Welfare Reform was established through the Sefton Borough Partnership Operations Board. This group led by the Strategic Director – People has been overseeing the development of an Action Plan for potential mitigating action. Membership is Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), One Vision Housing – representing the Strategic Housing Partnership, Sefton CVS – representing the VCF sector, Council and Job Centre Plus.

The Action Plan has been developed through a series of Partnership meetings and wider partner workshops. These have all been exceptionally well attended with a real energy and commitment to doing what we can. The following themes come out of the workshop and form the basis for the Action Plan:

- Influencing Policy and Strategy
- Information and advice provision
- Awareness raising/training and workforce development
- Working with employers
- Financial Inclusion
- Foodbanks
- Furniture Recycling
- Clothesbanks and Charity Shop Networks

- Communication

Update on Themes

The following sets out a snapshot of existing activity and is not an exhaustive list.

Influencing Policy and Strategy

- Work has been done in broad terms to develop intelligence and customer insight into where impact may be felt the most. This has been linked to the work undertaken around Council Tax Benefit
- Partnership Group is ensuring that Welfare Reform is factored where possible into policy approaches across all organisations
- Sefton Council continues to participate in and influence City Region work around child poverty, financial inclusion, employment and skills

Information and advice provision

- In process of mapping current provision and developing a signposting tool for people needing advice and agencies to signpost
- Investigating possibility of a Welfare Rights Forum for workers
- To agree consultation quality assurance standards for advice
- Developing Lottery application for advice and guidance around benefits

Awareness raising/training and workforce development

- Layered training programme being developed for Council (Members and Officers) and VCF organisations. This will include Member briefings, information packs for Councillor Surgeries, training for benefit advisers, basic awareness training for Managers in Council and VCF organisations to cascade to teams.
- Timeline for this is by end of March 2013

Working with employers

- Looking at opportunities to maintain people into work through Sefton e-work

Financial Inclusion

- Considering Credit Union Development in Sefton – this is a substantial area for development – including jamjar accounts, emergency payments and how to stop people taking out payday loans
- Addressing illegal money lending – events are planned
- General welfare reform events planned in neighbourhood areas – two already taken place in Derby ward and one in Netherton in February 2013
- Linacre and Netherton wards are looking at how VCF organisations can mitigate the impacts of Welfare Reform at a neighbourhood level

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- Tentatively looking at digital inclusion and barriers people will face in accessing benefits online – Grange Children’s Centre will be running IT courses supported by CAB

Foodbanks

- Independent charity for Sefton established with three main hubs
- Sefton CVS facilitating establishments of foodbanks in North and Central Sefton, Sefton Council facilitating establishment in South Sefton
- North Hub- agreed with Lakeside Christian Centre. Temporary storage space agreed
- Central Hub- Discussions are ongoing about coverage of area. St Lukes Church in Crosby will support a foodbank in parts of central Sefton. Sefton CVS are facilitating discussions with other faith leaders about support for Foodbanks in Maghull.
- South Hub- St Leonards/Bootle Team Ministry agreed as lead. Distribution and referral points agreed.
- Collection points in place for all main Council buildings, including Leisure Centres and Children’s Centres – (south only at this stage)
- Collection points in Fire Stations, Marks and Spencers, Bootle, Strand Shopping Centre, Health and Safety Executive, Marsh Lane Police Station, One Vision Housing, range of VCF organisations inc L3o Centre, Sefton Women’s and Children’s Aid
- Meeting with all supermarkets to get sign up in Sefton planned to agree collection weekends
- 1.8 tonnes collected so far. 1 ton is the equivalent to 25,000 cans of soup
- £500 cash donations already made
- Volunteer job descriptions on national volunteering Do-it.org.uk
- Intention to go live as soon as possible but need 4 tonnes of food per foodbank to start

Furniture Recycling

- Currently mapping out who does what around furniture recycling in Sefton and Merseyside
- Potential opportunities with Bulky Bobs, Furniture Resource Centre being explored
- Looking at a potential cost effective agreements with white goods supplier

Clothesbanks and Charity Shop Networks

- Exploring whether charity shops could be part of a voucher system linked to work on Social Fund
- Investigating Liverpool Foodbanks clothes swap approach called Tango

Communication

- Draft webpage developed for use by all partners
- Map of offers made by organisations to support Welfare Reform to be part of webpage signposting people to support

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In terms of the development of the Action Plan and other associated Welfare Reform activity, including related Social Fund initiatives, a Reference Group comprising of the comprising Cabinet Members – Children, Schools, Families and Leisure; Older People and Health and Communities and Environment has been established to oversee the direction of Welfare Reform mitigation.

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