



## Report to the Executive for Decision 7 January 2013

**Portfolio:** Leisure and Community  
**Subject:** **Fareham Park Project - A Corporate Priority**  
**Report of:** Director of Community  
**Strategy/Policy:**

**Corporate Objectives:** Maintain and extend prosperity;  
Strong and inclusive communities;  
Leisure opportunities for health and fun.

### **Purpose:**

To note the current progress against this corporate priority and agree the leadership and strategic direction for future work in this area.

### **Executive summary:**

In 2008, Fareham Park was identified by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) as one of the most deprived areas of the Borough and nationally as evidenced by national deprivation indices. The LSP identified the area as a high priority for all partners. Following the demise of the LSP in 2010, the Council adopted the project as a corporate priority with the aim of reducing deprivation and poverty in Fareham Park. Although some initiatives have been targeted towards this area, the corporate priority currently lacks clear leadership and direction.

This report reviews the needs of the Fareham Park area, the current initiatives aimed at helping to address the deprivation in the area and proposes that a Member and Officer Steering Group is established to oversee the delivery of this important corporate project. It also proposes that the Executive agrees to fund a 3 year Project Officer post to support the Steering Group, to collate information, engage with local service providers, local community groups and prepare bids to attract external funding to the area.

### **Recommendation:**

- (a) The Executive agrees to establish a Member and Officer Steering Group (as detailed in Appendix C) to oversee the delivery of the Fareham Park Project.
- (b) The Executive approves the Terms of Reference for the Member and Officer Steering Group (as set out in Appendix D).
- (c) The Executive Member for Leisure and Community be delegated authority to approve expenditure totalling up to £20,000 on projects which help to improve skills and/or reduce deprivation in the Fareham Park Area.
- (d) The Executive agrees to fund a 3 year Project Officer post to support the Member and Officer Steering Group in the delivery of this project.

**Reason:**

To provide elected members and the wider community with clarity on how this important corporate priority will be taken forward by the Council.

**Cost of proposals:**

A Project Officer (on a three fixed term contract) will cost approximately £30k per annum. It is proposed that this post be funded from a reduction in the Community Fund which has consistently under spent over the last three years.

A budget of £20,000 has already been approved by the Council to fund initiatives in the Fareham Park Area which will help to improve the skills of local people and help to reduce deprivation in the Fareham Park Area.

- Appendices A:** Map of Fareham Park  
**B:** Summary of facts and needs for the Fareham Park area  
**C:** Suggested Composition of Fareham Park Steering Group  
**D:** Terms of Reference for Working Group

**Background papers:**



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## Executive Briefing Paper

**Date:** 7 January 2013

**Subject:** Fareham Park Project - A Corporate Priority

**Briefing by:** Director of Community

**Portfolio:** Leisure and Community

### INTRODUCTION

1. In 2008, Fareham Park was identified by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) as one of the most deprived areas of the Borough and nationally as evidenced by national deprivation indices. The LSP identified the area as a high priority for all partners. Following the demise of the LSP in 2010, the Council adopted the project as a corporate priority with the aim of reducing deprivation and poverty in Fareham Park. Although some initiatives have been targeted towards this area, the corporate priority currently lacks clear leadership and direction.
2. This briefing paper reviews the needs of the Fareham Park area, the current initiatives aimed at helping to address the deprivation in the area and proposes that the Executive establish a member and officer steering group to oversee the delivery of this corporate project.
3. A map showing the boundary of the Fareham Park Area is attached at Appendix A.
4. A summary of some key facts and needs of the area is attached at Appendix B.

### RECENT PROGRESS:

5. The following paragraphs provide a summary on recent progress:
  - (a) **Community Chatters**, a local community group that came together as a result of the Learning Links research and training organised and funded by the LSP. With support from the FBC Community Development Manager and the Manager of Highlands Hub they were successful in raising in excess of £2,500 in funds for a Diamond Jubilee event (including securing funding from Awards 4 All). This enabled the event to be free to all those local residents who attended. Although they were hampered by some awful weather they carried on with the event. This included live entertainment and free food and they fed in excess of 400 people on the day.

Unfortunately members of Community Chatters have suffered from limited support and have recently been through a period of uncertainty caused by differences within the group. The remaining members have decided that they wish to focus solely on fund-raising activity in order to help the local community meet local need with a small resource. They are currently considering how they can best achieve this, whilst adhering to good practise in managing any funds they make.

- (b) **A Credit Union**, Fareham Community Savers (FCS) has been established for the Fareham Borough, two years funding has been secured for the project, with a further three years funding, providing a need can be identified and established for its service. 'Fareham Community Savers' (FCS), seeks to act as a local conduit to the services of Hampshire Credit Union through United Savings and Loans (USAL). The project also seeks to offer advice and support to local residents in connection with money management, budgeting and signposting to other sources of advice and support. A weekly session is held at the Highlands Hub every Thursday morning.
- (c) **Encouraging Play**: The Community Development Manager has secured an award of £6000 from the Local Children's Partnership to provide some additional Play Ranger support and activity in the Fareham Park and Broadlaw areas. Plans will need to be established on how best to use this to continue to provide some type of play activity, as we have now reached the formal end of the Play Ranger Programme and the staff are no longer employed by the Council. It is clear that there continues to be a strong demand in the neighbourhood for play opportunities in the area and the National Play Day event held Fareham Park in August attracted in excess of 185 local children and families. Nonetheless, children still have limited access to appropriate facilities for play and are often left to their own devices which can be associated with issues (sometimes anti-social) for the wider community.
- (d) **Outreach Services**: The Hub continues to be well-used by the general community, mornings are especially popular. However the six-month pilot to trial the operation of a number of Council services from the Hub in order to increase access to our services by local residents, has had a disappointing response. As a result and with the agreement of the Hub, the trial was ended on 30 Sept 2012. Further consideration will be given to training volunteers to sign post residents to key services and/or book appointments for vulnerable clients (either at home or at the Hub). Conversely, CAB continues to see a steady stream of clients, through its outreach service at the Hub, likewise, CAB reports that mornings are busier than afternoons. 'Hub' enquiries are across the board in terms of issues, although trends seem to be concentrated on managing benefit changes (implications of welfare reform), housing and tenant rights, debt support and advice, support on fleeing domestic violence, family advice concerning custody and access rights to separated children.

## **OTHER ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED**

6. Although some issues have been pursued, there are still many areas of work yet to be tackled, this can be mainly attributed to limited capacity and limited involvement by other partners/organisations and reductions in services accordingly.

### **Support for Community Chatters**

7. Since the beginning of the 2012, Community Chatters has been operating on an unsupported basis, following the end of the contract of the temporary Community Development worker (hosted by Community Action Fareham (CAF)). The FBC Community Development Manager has continued to meet with the Chairman of the Group to try and give a sense of continuity and offer limited assistance where relevant.
8. Several members of this group have progressed from the initial pool of residents who volunteered to undertake research training and skill development to build their abilities and confidence. This has helped them to establish themselves as a residents group and canvass the opinions of their fellow residents. They are well respected by members of the community and recognised because of their ability to take on local matters.
9. There is no doubt that this group has made a real difference locally and continues to try new ideas despite their limited membership. However, if the group is to continue, it is clear that formal support is needed and that this will need to be quite focussed until they are back on their feet again. It would appear that CAF has limited capacity to be part of this process or offer any support to this community group.
10. It is recognised that it would be disappointing for this group to disband now.

### **Links with the Highlands Hub**

11. The Hub's usage appears to be growing steadily but it is recognised that as the initiative is operated on a not-for-profit-basis, it is highly unlikely to ever breakeven; this is further compounded as the building is constrained by the capacity of the current accommodation available.
12. On an individual basis, the Hub is recognised locally as a good source of information, help and advice. However, it is felt that as they have now passed their first anniversary, the management committee should be 'encouraged' to consider developing a range of support groups or training sessions tailored to the needs of the immediate local community they are seeking to serve.
13. Until recently the Council has had limited opportunity to input to the Hub Management Committee, therefore it is inappropriate and difficult to effect any change, further than an 'ideas/suggestion' stage. This has recently been resolved with the Hub Management Committee inviting the Council to nominate a representative to join the Management Committee. Councillor Mrs Hockley (Executive Member for Community) is the Council's appointed representative.

14. The Hub is carving out an identity in the Highlands Road area and is creating a positive effect on the area by attracting a number of target groups and being actively involved in leading events for general community benefit.

### **Safer Neighbourhood Contract**

15. The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer consulted residents of the Stow Estate about their concerns and gained their support to launch a Safer Neighbourhood Contract (a compact between residents, the Council, the Police and Landlords) aimed at addressing crime and anti-social behaviour across the area. It is alleged that there is a high level of drug abuse, intolerance between generations and anti-social behaviour in the area and many residents have expressed concern about the cleanliness and quality of the local environment. The Safer Neighbourhood Contract is based on a successful model used in other parts of the country. Once fully developed, the Contract has the potential to be expanded across the whole of the Fareham Park Area subject to the full support of local councillors and all local public sector agencies.

### **Supporting Troubled Families**

16. The Government recently launched a three year programme to provide help and support to troubled families. 40% of the Fareham's Supported Families are resident within Fareham Park. The Fareham Supported Families Programme is managed by The Local Children and Young Persons Partnership with support from the FBC Community Safety Manager.

### **96 Highland Road**

17. This is a large site (formerly the site of the Hampshire Rose Public House) owned by Hampshire County Council (HCC) in a prominent location at the centre of Fareham Park. Despite a number of meetings facilitated by FBC, HCC has failed to bring forward any development proposals. A recent meeting with local traders attended by the Executive Leader of the Council gave rise to a request to HCC to release the site to be used as a temporary car park whilst the future of the site is being considered.

### **Fareham North-West Community Centre**

18. This is a small community centre owned by Fareham Borough Council and managed by the North West Fareham Community Association. The Centre has struggled in recent years, partly as a result of its location, but also due to internal conflict. There is a clear need for a community centre to support Fareham Park with the potential to improve access by local people, make better use of this facility or plan for its relocation to a more central location.

## **OTHER MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

### **Aspirations**

19. Evidence of the low aspirations among young people in the area is very clear; leaving school with no qualifications many are destined to be dependent on benefits for income and social housing.

20. In the Fareham North West area, limited skills among the adult population continue to have an impact on individuals' ability to alter their future. With the cuts in grant to Community Schools across the county, this has already started to have an impact on the availability of training and skill development opportunities for adults wishing to improve their lot.
21. Whereas previously a partnership with Henry Cort Community School would have helped move this issue forward, as HCC is no longer engaged in Community Education, another provider would need to be attracted to the area.

### **Children and Young People**

22. It is recognised that many local services continue to work in the area; issues resulting from teenage pregnancies, a lack of good parenting, family support, disengagement from troublesome children and young people (i.e.: they are now the community's responsibility, not the parents' anymore) and managing the consequences of anti-social behaviour, continue to form the core activities of several support services.
23. However it is recognised that the neighbourhood could benefit from the introduction of an initiative which seeks to raise aspiration, offer support and help people access training, skills and development, whilst also offering some alternative solutions with positive wider community benefits. As mentioned several agencies appear to be working in the patch, but it would appear that communication between them is not as good as it could be. Currently there is no 'Inter-Agency' style meeting for practitioners working in the locality.

### **Health**

24. No agency has expressed interest in operating a health information and advice service for young people across Fareham, as such, no dedicated advice exists and with limited affordable youth activities available, we could see increases in young people's health conditions (sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancy, drug and alcohol misuse, obesity etc.)
25. The issue of accessible health services for young people has been raised before and still needs addressing, accessibility in terms of friendliness and attitude are reported as being of concern for younger residents.

### **Welfare Reform**

26. It is recognised that Welfare Reform will undoubtedly affect a significant number of households and young people in the area.

## **Youth Services**

27. Following the HCC re-organisation of local youth services and the recent shift towards commissioning arrangements for youth activities, no agency submitted a bid to operate youth activity in the Fareham Park Area. The funding, although limited, could have made a difference. Consequently, the only (no/low cost) activity for children and young people in the neighbourhood is offered on a Friday evening from the Baptist Church in Gudge Heath Lane as the Council's Play Ranger Sessions (previously offered fortnightly at the Hub) have now finished.

### **SUGGESTED KEY PRIORITIES:-**

28. In order to help progress priorities and create positive opportunities for change, the following priorities are suggested to prompt discussion and shape the draft terms of reference for a Fareham Park Steering Group.

#### **Empower the local community - Building Capacity and Self Help:**

29. If the Community Chatters Group (or similar voluntary body) is to be effective in helping to tackle the issues in the area, support is clearly needed to help them develop and move forward productively.

Other actions that the Member and Officer Steering Group may wish to consider, include:-

#### **Raise Aspirations and Improve Skills:**

- The development of initiatives aimed at raising aspirations in parents and young people, including skill development, numeracy and literacy, and practical skills (i.e. budgeting and money management).
- Writing job applications and 'Job Club' style support, enabling residents to access to further learning courses.
- Encourage positive role models and local apprenticeships, one option maybe the establishment of a Young Fire-fighters Initiative as has been successfully operated in other parts of the County. Improving employability, discipline and responsibility.

#### **Improve provision for Children:**

- Exploring options to improve the take up of nursery provision.
- Provide more Play Development opportunities within the area (some of the £6k from Local Children's Partnership could be used to match this).
- Review the opportunities to learn, develop and improve parenting skills.

#### **Improve provision for Young People:**

- Development of informal open access youth work activities - (Fareham North-West Community Centre would make an ideal youth club location. This would need to be linked to the delivery of a programme of local street-based youth work).
- Work with partners to secure the available funds for youth activity in the Highlands area, via the Local Children's Partnership commissioning arrangements.



- Research into local health facilities for young people and making them more user friendly and accessible (including drugs and alcohol misuse).

**Improve the quality of the local environment:**

- Develop and implement a safer community contract (in partnership with all statutory agencies and local residents)
- Review the standard and quality of Streetscene services across the area.
- Review the results of Estate inspections (by Tenancy Services and Local Tenant Representatives).
- Offer initiatives to help local people take pride in and ownership of their own street, collectively with their neighbours.
- Review and seek to maximise use of local community facilities.

**Improve the provision of services for Older People:**

- Review the services and opportunities for older people across the area.
- Identify initiatives and opportunities to reduce isolation (including the promotion of the community alarm service (Careline) and the Mobile Library Service).
- Maximise the use of community facilities and the new Collingwood House as a focal point for older people.
- Review the take up and provision of meals on wheels, develop the need for luncheon club provision in the area.
- Review the health needs of Older people in the area and explore how services could be made more accessible, possibly an Older Peoples One-Stop facility at Collingwood House community lounge.

**Regeneration:**

- Redevelopment of Collingwood House, and maximise potential to use the scheme as a local hub for older people living in Fareham Park.
- Facilitate and enable redevelopment proposals for 96 Highlands Road.
- Explore potential for improving the quality and availability of social housing in Fareham Park (including the demolition and rebuilding of existing social housing and or garage sites).

30. **Interagency involvement in the area:** A number of organisations and agencies are involved in the area; however it is recognised that if this could be co-ordinated and more effective working links established. This could help with the development of projects aimed at tackling a number of key issues for the community.

**FAREHAM NORTH WEST COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

31. It is understood that Councillor Peter Davies (one of the ward Councillors for Fareham North West) recently invited local community groups to a meeting with the aim of seeking their support to establish a Fareham North West Community Partnership working together to serve Fareham North West. It is understood invitees included representatives of Hill Park Baptist Church, Hill Park Working Men's Club, Oak Meadow Children's Centre, Fareham North-West Community Association, Highlands Hub and Henry Cort Community School.

According to Councillor Davies the proposal to establish the Fareham Park Partnership was well supported and the group agreed the following actions:-

- Presenting a united offering of community activities to local residents.
  - Providing a joint website with links to the various organisations (with the possibility of FBC hosting the website)
  - Producing a joint community newsletter
  - Use of other outlets - Fareham Today, Community Action Fareham, Council notice boards, Library.
32. It is understood that Councillor Davies informed the meeting that FBC has provided £20,000 to spend in Fareham North West. A request was made to Councillor Davies for £3,500 to support the Saturday morning club at Henry Cort Community College for referred youngsters. Councillor Davies also suggested that funds could be directed to the area to clear litter and grounds maintenance so it is an area in which people can be proud to live.
33. Whilst the initiative to establish the Fareham North West Partnership should be welcomed as an important route for encouraging interagency dialogue and involvement, it is perhaps premature to make decisions on the award of the £20,000 grant funding in the area without understanding the wider needs of the area and agreeing priorities for action. Hence it is proposed that the award of the £20,000 grant funding should be delegated to the Executive Member for Community and Leisure, and that such awards should only be considered on the advice of the Member and Officer Steering Group. In addition, it is proposed that no grant awards should be considered until the Steering Group has completed a full appraisal of the needs of the area and determined how best to spend the limited funds to help tackle deprivation and/or attract external funding to the area.

#### **FINANCIAL and PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

34. A revenue budget of £20,000 has been set aside to help fund community based projects within the Fareham Park Area.
35. There is currently no staff resource dedicated to the delivery of this project, without which the Council is struggling to make an impact on this corporate high priority objective. Therefore, it is proposed that funds are identified to employ a Project Officer on a 3 year fixed term contract to help take this project forward. The Project Officer would be responsible for multi-agency networking, gathering information, preparing reports, identifying and applying for external funds and supporting the work of the member and officer working group. This is estimated to cost £30k per annum.
36. It is proposed that the post be funded by a reduction in the Community Fund which consistently underspent over the last 2 years as shown in the table below.

Table:- Community Fund Spend

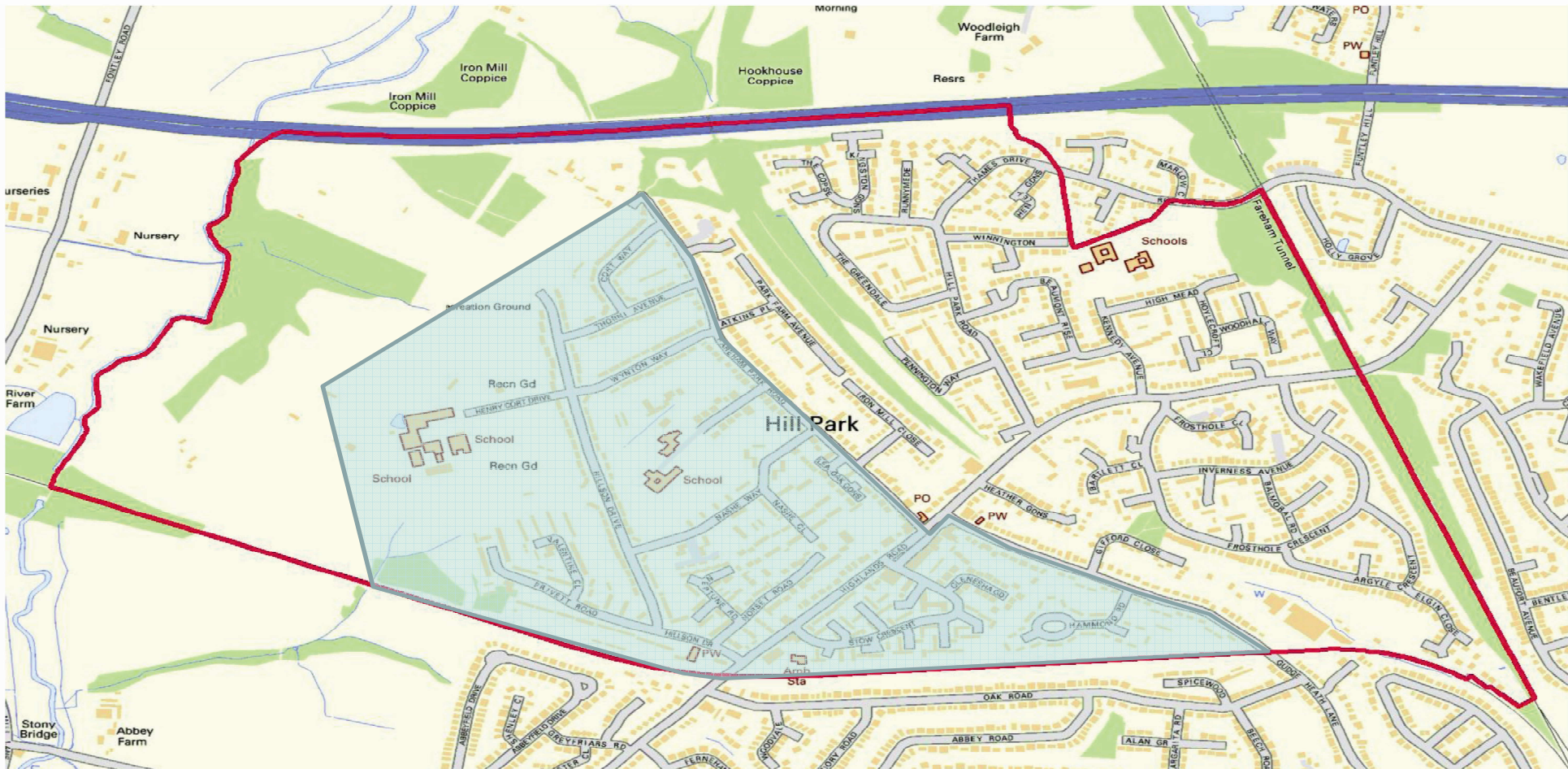
Year	Actual £	Revenue	
		Budget £	Underspend £
2012/13	33,628	101,300	67,672
2011/12	77,277	101,300	24,023
2010/11	67,558	101,300	33,742

## CONCLUSION

37. As a key corporate priority, the Council and its partners (statutory and community) need to be clear about their role and direction in the Fareham Park area so that the maximum benefit can be achieved for local residents.
38. In order to secure the support and co-operation of other agencies, and so that resources can be pooled for maximum benefit, a clear strategic direction needs to be established. This will ensure that the community can be effectively resourced and supported, enabling them to identify appropriate solutions to the raft of issues currently affecting them.
39. So that a coherent approach can be facilitated to addressing these matters, it is proposed that future activity, development and regeneration in the neighbourhood be guided by a member and officer working group, to be known as the Fareham Park Partnership.
40. It is acknowledged that in order for this initiative to succeed, appropriate resources will need to be allocated to this initiative. This will enable local activity to be guided by a Project Officer, as well as enabling projects to be initiated, as well as the option to use resources to secure external funding opportunities.

**Reference Papers:** None

### Appendix A - Map of Fareham Park Area



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## **Appendix B - Summary of the headline facts and needs for the Fareham Park area**

- The Fareham Park area was ranked in the top 3% of the most deprived areas in the country, in terms of skills
- Approximately 7340 people live in the Fareham Park area (Census 2001)
- There are 3067 dwellings in the Fareham Park area (Census 2001).
- In summer 2008, **21.6%** of pupils from the Fareham Park project area were eligible for free school meals compared to 5.13% across Fareham overall
- In August 2008, **18.83%** of the Fareham Park area working-age-population was claiming key out of work benefits compared to 5.24% across Fareham as a whole
- In 2001, **46.1%** of the working age population in Fareham Park had no qualifications compared to 29.25% across Fareham NW Ward
- In November 2008, it was identified that **85.05 per 1000 of the 16+ population** in Fareham Park were claiming incapacity benefit, in direct comparison to 33.43 (per 1000 16+ population ) across Fareham Borough

Fareham Park Project Evaluation Report, as commissioned from Learning Links, by Local Strategic Partnership (1<sup>st</sup> November 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011)

## Appendix C - Suggested composition of Fareham Park Steering Group

### Core Members of the Fareham Park Steering Group

#### Councillors:-

Executive Member for Leisure and Community - Chairman  
Chairman of Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel  
Vice Chairman of Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel  
Fareham Borough Council - Ward Councillors x 2  
HCC County Councillor x 1

#### Officers:-

Director of Community - Martyn George  
Head of Community and Leisure - Mark Bowler  
Community Development Manager - Janie Millerchip  
Community Safety Manager ( and Fareham's Lead officer for Supporting Families programme) - Narinder Bains  
Director of Streetscene - Paul Doran  
FBC Fareham Park Project Officer - (to be appointed)

#### Officer Invitees (to attend by invitation as and when appropriate):-

Kevin Wright - Head of Community Safety and Enforcement  
Sally Chapman - Anti-Social Behaviour Officer  
Jo Complin - Data Analyst  
Jane Cresdee - Senior Housing Management Officer  
Mick Gore - Operations Manager (Streetscene)  
Shaun Barnett - Planned Maintenance Manager

#### Other Agencies to be Invited (to attend by invitation as and when appropriate):-

Hampshire County Council  
Local Children's Partnership  
Hub Manager  
Baptist Church  
St Columba Church  
Henry Cort Community School  
Oak Meadow Children's Centre  
Primary Schools - Orchard Lea Infant and Junior and St Columba Primary Academy  
Fareham North-West Community Association  
Hill Park Working Men's Club  
Police  
Drugs and Alcohol Advice Team

**FAREHAM PARK PROJECT - Member and Officer Steering Group.**

**Draft Terms of Reference:**

The Steering Group will be responsible for:-

1. Conducting a review of the economic, social and health needs of Fareham Park.
2. Identifying and agreeing the priorities for action.
3. Agreeing a set of performance measures to be used to monitor the success of the project.
4. Engaging with local community organisations and statutory bodies to review, challenge and re-direct local services.
5. Providing advice to the Executive Member for Community and Leisure on award of FBC grant funding (of up to a total of £20,000) to be used to reduce deprivation in the area.
6. Exploring and securing external sources of funding to invest in Fareham Park.
7. Reviewing the quality of FBC services delivered in Fareham Park which impact on deprivation.
8. Providing a six monthly progress report to the Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel and an annual report to the Executive.

The Group will be chaired by the Executive Member for Leisure and Community.

Officers from Fareham Borough Council and/or Hampshire County Council will be invited to attend the Panel meetings to provide professional and technical advice as requested by the Executive Member in consultation with the Director of Community.