

**RAMSEY AREA PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN
(Report by Planning Policy Manager)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Cabinet is aware of the activities proposed to be undertaken by the locality-based Ramsey Area Partnership (R.A.P.) under the Market Town Initiative to address the priorities within the Community Strategy relating to the Ramsey area [Minute 82 refers].
- 1.2 This report highlights the developments in this area since the Ramsey Area Partnership was formed in the Autumn 2003 and submits the agreed Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan for endorsement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The need for the regeneration of Ramsey has been recognised by many partners, including the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and associated Thematic Groups.
- 2.2 The Community Strategy, within the key principle “Supporting Continued Economic Success”, incorporates the priority:
 - ◆ to develop a joint vision and action plan for Ramsey, including interim planning guidance for the development of the area north of Ramsey town centre.
- 2.3 Following a series of events, the community-based Ramsey Area Partnership was formed, covering the parishes of Ramsey, Bury, Conington, Holme, Upwood & the Raveleys, Warboys, Wistow and Woodwalton. It's aim is to develop and transform opportunities in Ramsey and the surrounding countryside into positive, sustainable actions by creating an environment of partnership working which will improve the quality of life for all who live, work and visit the area now and in the future. Over 50 groups and organisations are involved with the partnership plus a significant number from the business community through their linked membership of the Ramsey Town Centre Partnership.
- 2.4 To take this work forward, the partnership has been undertaking the Market Town Initiative (MTI) ‘Healthcheck’ process – an activity brought forward as part of the Rural White Paper 2000 – and been awarded up to £17,000 to do so. A comprehensive consultation exercise, including a Forum Event, a community questionnaire, a 3 week “Make a Difference” campaign, and a telephone business survey, has now been undertaken along with the completion of a statistical “Snapshot” of the area in order to identify community concerns, needs and ideas to help develop the Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan.
- 2.5 A Ramsey Area Partnership Officer Group has also been established, with officers from across all directorates of Huntingdonshire District

Council, which has helped to guide preparation and development of this plan. The Economic Development and Learning Group has also carried out a study tour of the area and outlined a number of development areas, which were highlighted to the HSP Board in April 2004.

3. THE R.A.P. HEALTHCHECK STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

3.1 The Healthcheck Strategy covers:

- ◆ Current performance and potential of the Ramsey area
- ◆ Local perceptions of performance
- ◆ The future picture of the Ramsey area, including the vision and objectives
- ◆ The way forward
- ◆ The Action Plan 2004 –2007

3.2 Ten Key Objectives are shown within the strategy document, set within the three key challenges of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Community Strategy. However, it is recognised that no individual objective or action should be looked at in isolation but rather collectively in order to meet the vision to improve the quality of life for all in the Ramsey area. The Action Plan is, therefore, not centred around the key objectives but the following five agreed themes:

- ◆ Our Community
- ◆ Enhancing our heritage, open spaces and waterways
- ◆ Creating sustainable development
- ◆ Vibrant town centre
- ◆ Effective transport choices

A summary of the key priorities of the Ramsey Area Partnership and linkages with Council work priorities is shown in Annex 1.

3.3 The MTI Healthcheck process has resulted in a wide group of partners understanding the current and future needs of local communities across the Ramsey area and this has meant that a large number of projects and activities have been agreed for inclusion in this first 3 year Action Plan. As such, it was not felt suitable to detail all in this report but rather highlight the overarching aims of the work. The detail of individual projects, activities, deliverables, funding and timescales will be recorded on an electronic Task Manager system currently being compiled.

3.4 A summary leaflet is also being prepared which will use pictures and sketches to highlight the work the partnership will work to achieve. This will be made available to all members of the local community.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The Ramsey Area Partnership will now move into 'Phase 2' – the implementation phase. It is hoped that in the coming months, a delivery plan and individual project timetables will be agreed, where possible, along with identifying potential funding streams. To assist with this, steps have now been taken to request the release of years 1 & 2 MTP funding out of the set 5 year programme fund.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan has been approved by the Ramsey Area Partnership Board following consultation with partners and key groups, such as the Ramsey Action Group, Ramsey Area Community Safety Task Group, Ramsey Town Centre Partnership and Ramsey Town Council.
- 5.2 Key partners involved in the implementation of the programme of work are now being asked to consider the document for endorsement.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet consider the Ramsey Area Partnership Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan and agree to endorse it and the role the Council will play as a key delivery partner.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ramsey Area Partnership File
Huntingdonshire Community Strategy 2004

Contact Officer: Claire Keck
 **01480 388274**

Annex 1

Theme	Ramsey Area Partnership Priority Actions	HDC Short-term Priority	HDC Long-term Priority	Community Strategy Priority
Our Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together with local communities and appropriate agencies to develop a plan for the establishment of multi-purpose community resources, including those for young people, in the town as part of the Ramsey Gateway proposal ▪ Work together to support the development and management of a local community chest fund ▪ Work together to promote the Ramsey Area Partnership vision and encourage increased community participation and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Information Shop ▪ Community learning ▪ HeLP sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-agency Community Resource Centre ▪ Meeting place for young people ▪ Joint Health Facility with greater expertise for provision of range of clinics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare plans for the provision of community facilities and service-hub centres ▪ Promote services and activities which contribute to healthy lifestyles ▪ Promote active involvement of young people in planning ▪ To work with communities to reduce anti-social behaviour
Enhancing our heritage, open spaces & waterways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to promote Ramsey and the Great Fen Project in partnership investigating ▪ Work together to develop the waterway for leisure, linking with other initiatives such as the Fens Waterways ▪ Work together to develop a 'visitor package' for residents and tourists promoting the heritage, cultural and recreational activities the area has to offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barge Dock ▪ Tourist Information Kiosk ▪ Tourism Signage ▪ Heritage interpretation ▪ Heritage Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Great Fen – interpretation and linkages to Ramsey ▪ Development of waterway based leisure activity ▪ Customer Care (Welcome Host) ▪ Tourism Development ▪ Improving local recreational open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-ordination of and access to cultural and leisure activities
Creating sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to develop the northern entrance to the town, known as Ramsey Gateway, potentially incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ business and enterprise centre ➢ housing ➢ community facilities ➢ links to and from town centre and the open countryside ➢ renewable energy schemes ➢ design methods that provide a high quality, safe environment which is in keeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment Initiative ▪ Retail Skills ▪ Vocational Training ▪ RAF Upwood Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Northern Gateway ▪ Business & Enterprise Centre ▪ Renewable Energy ▪ Housing to meet local needs ▪ Designing out Crime ▪ Learndirect Facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interim Planning Guidance for Northern Gateway ▪ Housing to meet local needs ▪ Produce good practice to promote sustainable communities ▪ Support the development of and access to the countryside for informal recreation

	<p>with the character of the town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to successfully apply for external grant funding to help realise the Ramsey Area Partnership vision 			
Vibrant town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to conserve and enhance the town centre supporting the development of a Conservation Area Character Statement and appropriate enhancement schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation Area Review ▪ Community Safety – CCTV, diversionary activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation Area Enhancements ▪ Environmental Improvements ▪ Historic Building Restoration ▪ Streetscape Continuity ▪ Increased investment ▪ Increased footfall in town ▪ Community safety – ASBOs ▪ Public space / Market Square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage local employers to participate in workforce development ▪ Improve the facilities, competitiveness and appeal of Ramsey town centre
Effective transport choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to establish a Transport Strategy for the Ramsey area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of community transport ▪ Cycle use – cycle racks ▪ Free car parking & signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased use of community transport ▪ Market Town Area Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote new and existing public transport schemes ▪ Prepare promotion of community transport