C I T Y   V I S I O N

E D I N B U R G H

Background

The Edinburgh City Vision began in June 2003 and is ongoing. It is an overarching strategy document that brings together a number of policy areas including social inclusion. Tied into this vision are a number of thematic strategies focused around key priority groups and/or functional areas. These include:

The 'Joined up for Jobs' Employability Strategy focuses on improving access to job opportunities, particularly for those furthest from the labour market. For further information click here;

Joint Health Improvement Plans (JHIPs) are part of a national drive to engage all agencies and sectors in joined up action to improve health. For further information click here.

Objectives

The strategy benefits the citizens of Edinburgh, particularly those facing significant disadvantages in their life. For example, the Jobs Strategy targets people who are often excluded from the local labour market such as disabled persons, lone parents, young people and those from minority ethnic groups.

Responsible institution

The strategy is delivered through a partnership
of agencies led by the City of Edinburgh Council ("The Edinburgh Partnership"). Partners include national and local government agencies (Jobcentre Plus, Skills Development Scotland), the city's universities, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, Lothian and Borders Police, the voluntary sector and the National Health Service.

Services are delivered either directly by individual partners (or their contractors) or jointly with other relevant agencies where their involvement would produce a better result.

Activities

The strategy is delivered through six thematic partnerships:

- children and young people;
- community safety;
- economic development;
- health;
- social and community;
- sustainable development.

These thematic partnerships enable the overarching strategy to be broken down into

manageable blocks of activity, bringing together relevant agencies to jointly deliver on the commonly agreed objectives and outcomes. For further information click here.

Since 2007, the City of Edinburgh Council has been developing, in conjunction with its partners and the Scottish Government, a new approach to prioritisation and target setting. The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is a rolling multi-agency agreement that sets out the local context and priorities along with performance indicators, baselines, targets and key actions. It seeks to demonstrate how policy objectives as set out in the city vision are translated into tangible actions and outcomes by the relevant partners. Policy priorities identified include:

- Development of the city and regional economy
- Environmental sustainability
- Health Wellbeing and Inclusion
- Services for Children
- Working in partnership to improve community safety and quality of life in our communities

For further information on the SOA click here.

Results

Each of the thematic partnerships report (quantitatively and qualitatively) on progress made against the strategic priorities, as articulated in the Single Outcome Agreement. This is collated into a six-monthly report that is reviewed by the Edinburgh Partnership Board (http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/Partnerships/CEC_community_planning_homepage).

The various strands of activity have developed a number of innovative approaches that contribute to overall objectives. Examples of this work can be viewed in the City of Edinburgh Council's Employability and Skills team Annual Report http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/jobskills.

Evaluation and follow-up

The structures of the Community Planning Partnership are designed to build in user-opinion into the development of services. Evaluation is undertaken on a regular basis at project, thematic and strategy level to ensure each element is "fit for purpose". For example, the employability thematic partnership has developed a monitoring and evaluation framework.

Lessons learned

The project is progressing well. Reflecting on the development and implementation of the objectives of the partnership highlights a number of key lessons:

Mutual understanding of the issues to be tackled

The strategy has to be based on a robust needs analysis within the city to inform the development of strategic and operational focus.

These needs then have to be translated into strategy and tangible operational outcomes and targets.

Partners need to have a shared understanding of the performance and monitoring framework that will be used to track progress.

All partners need to develop a system of regular data collection, collation and validation that will provide them with good management information on achievements or where performance is not what was anticipated.

The operating context and partnership

There needs to be a good appreciation of the operating context. Knowing what partners cannot do because of for example policy, capacity restraints, legal reasons is as important as knowing what they can do.

Nurturing and developing Partnerships requires a resource and true commitment from the partners to make them work. Keep your promises.

People round the table must be empowered to make decisions and negotiate with partners in arriving at an agreed course of action.

Decision lines must be clear and transparent.

Two-way communications are important in building a cross-agency network that delivers the need of individuals in a joined up way.

Budget and resources

Significant resources are allocated to these activities as part of organisational allocations and special regeneration funding (such as Fairer Scotland Fund, Cities Strategy Pathfinder monies and European Structural Funds). The exact budget is difficult to quantify.

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If you have an example of a good practice that you would like to include in the database, please send an email to caroline.greene@eurocities.eu.