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Alternative Formats - the strategy can be made available in large print, Braille or on audio cassette or CD. Copies in other languages including BSL can also be arranged. You can obtain these by contacting Paul Peng, Knowsley Council, 0151 443 3073 email: paul.peng@knowsley.gov.uk
We are committed to developing and maintaining a cohesive community in Knowsley. This can only be done through partnership.

Knowsley’s Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) represents the key public, private and third sector organisations in the borough; this document sets out the LSP’s three year strategy and delivery framework for community cohesion. The process will consist of a programme of projects delivered as a partnership exercise. This will focus on the interpretation of guiding principles, which have been identified as specifically appropriate for Knowsley, and ranked by importance by local councillors and residents.

The community cohesion agenda within Knowsley carries an alternative reflection to other parts of the North West. Issues which focus on age, disability, gender, income, worklessness and sexual orientation are high on our list of priorities. We will also have a definitive focus on race and faith and every other aspect of social capital development which can contribute to community cohesion.
We have a firm commitment to community cohesion being the responsibility of all organisations and individuals associated with the borough. To demonstrate the weight of our intentions, we are committed to comprehensive engagement and consultation before and after the development of this document, and ensuring this links to other key local documents including the Sustainable Community Strategy, Economic Regeneration Strategy, and Community Safety Strategy.

This strategy supports the borough's vision of:
Knowsley - the borough of choice

Cllr. Ron Round
Leader, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Chair, The Knowsley Partnership
August 2009
Community cohesion goes beyond and incorporates concepts of race equality and social inclusion, as such it can mean different things to different people in different areas. It is much easier to see and explain what community cohesion is when it is absent, and when there is strife and disharmony between groups within communities.

Community cohesion is strongest when those who in general make up the varied potential of a resident population, have the opportunity, the resources and the motivation to participate in society as fully as they wish and on an equal basis with others. A lack of community cohesion occurs when people are prevented from participating, feel excluded or are adversely targeted because of their perceived difference.

Barriers to community cohesion can be self-imposed and are not always visible. They can relate to how much money people have, their health and the confidence they have to engage in social activities. Sometimes there are more obvious barriers such as discrimination, which does not always take place along ethnic or religious lines: for example, discrimination occurs quite frequently for lesbian, gay and disabled people.

As Figure 1 shows, all the elements of what are meant by community cohesion are connected, so that improving one aspect without the others may not produce any increased feeling of cohesion across a community. They are summarised pointers for a set of guiding principles, which essentially have to be implemented in tandem and not isolation, for good community cohesion to have a chance of being developed.
Figure 1: Community cohesion connections at a personal or individual level

Figure 1 illustrates the more personal or individual aspects of community cohesion - what each person must feel or have access to in a cohesive community. But in addition there are elements that are important community-wide, for different groups to feel their locality is a cohesive community. These are illustrated in Figure 2.
This is what you’ve told us contributes to building community cohesion in Knowsley

**Figure 2: Community cohesion connections at a community-wide level**
How we developed our strategy

The development of this document has been led by a multi agency group of partners (see page 32) and has been informed by consultations with a wide range of stakeholders including residents, agencies and elected members. The content has been drawn from a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector contributions, which has included best practice documentation from the partner organisations. These are referenced throughout the document and are listed in Sources of further information.

This is Knowsley’s commitment to the national drivers for community cohesion and Knowsley’s own expectations and aspirations for building strong, well informed, influential and cohesive communities. These are some of the activities conducted so far:

- The partnership has maintained a presence at scheduled or annual community and business events;
- Conducted consultation exercises with the broad range of residents that make up the borough population from age young to age old;
- Promoted the development of associations which could support the engagement needs of under represented groups;
- Presented outline community cohesion awareness sessions through the Partnership’s Neighbourhood Networks and Partnership Engagement Teams;
- Obtained external funding to support pilot community cohesion projects;
- Developed a business case for promoting community cohesion across the Borough;
- Implemented a Borough wide curiosity raising community cohesion poster campaign;
- Commissioned articles in a range of publications – local, regional and national;
- Contributed to the Merseyside and Greater Manchester Community Cohesion Networks;
- Set 4 objectives to drive forward the implementation of our strategy.
Our Vision and Aims

Our vision for community cohesion in the borough is:

For Knowsley to be a place where everyone has a sense of belonging, where people from different backgrounds have enduring and positive relationships with each other and where opportunity is open to all.

Our aims are clearly set out in our community cohesion guiding principles, which are:

1. **Strong leadership and engagement are essential.** An agreed local vision arrived at through engagement and advocated by strong leaders, will reduce the risk of tension. Clear leadership is also needed when it comes to making and explaining difficult decisions or getting to the truth of and answering allegations about special treatment for particular groups. Likewise it is only with a clear local vision that difficult policy decisions about, for example, housing policy or regeneration will be easier to explain and justify;
2. **Developing shared values** is a basis for creating a shared future, underpinned by a set of non-negotiables shared across all communities. Whether this means developing schemes that enhance the understanding amongst some minorities of English, clear and unequivocal leadership against extremism or simply wider work celebrating diversity, this is a key piece in the jigsaw;  

3. **Preventing the problems of tomorrow** is crucial to how we understand the profile of our communities and the challenges they present. Conflict resolution projects can build understanding and resilience across communities. This means that flashpoints which may lead to tension can be overcome. But Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) also need to plan for how they would respond in a crisis, recognising that the response might well be in the full glare of the media. Contingency planning is therefore crucial. This also recognises that there are members of our communities who do not feel safe and who may find it more difficult to live independently. Strong communities foster an understanding of “safeguarding” - a shared responsibility to recognise any neglect or abuse and to report this if necessary; and build up support that prevents people feeling at risk, unsafe or marginalised;
4. *Good information* is vital. Some areas systematically collect this and have a clear account of who the important players are in shaping relationships between different groups. They use local citizen intelligence to ensure programmes are targeted and that all communities understand the benefits. They map their communities and understand the different traditions and ethnicities. But it is not always easy to do. It relies on good contacts and networks and is not being done everywhere. The way in which issues are reported by the media can have a significant impact on cohesion. Knowsley will utilise best practice national guidance to help the local media to report issues of diversity fairly;

5. *Visible work to tackle inequalities* provides a strong foundation for cohesion. Communities who experience unequal life chances or who experience discrimination and prejudice are less likely to connect to, or feel part of a wider society. Poor schools and health services, or lack of skills training and employment opportunities, are factors which blight any community. They cause people to lose faith in public services and in authorities more generally. They corrode trust between communities. A commitment to social cohesion has to have building a fair and more equal society at its heart; ensuring that all people, especially the more vulnerable, are enabled to play a full role in the life of their community;

6. *Involving young people* is essential and they need to be engaged in a way that will attract them. Use of contemporary methods such as multimedia have been recognised as important in engaging young people. Festivals which are open to all minority groups including for example Gypsy and Traveller communities can be key catalyst activities, particularly when open involvement is not a traditional norm. Thinking creatively about engaging young people can fill a vacuum otherwise exploited by extremists;
7. **Interfaith work** can also keep channels of communication open. Faith leaders have a vital leadership role and can give a clear message by making joint statements condemning extremism. Relationships with established faith communities can also help newer faith groups develop the communal structures that they need to thrive;

8. **Partners such as local third sector organisations** can play a huge part in building cohesion. These organisations work closely with communities which help us to understand better what services are required and can detect early signs of tensions and a breakdown of cohesion within the community. They can provide communities with a common focus and create the opportunities for people of different backgrounds to work together for shared goals. They can also reach groups at grassroots level whose voice is critical to the debate - such as women and young people;

9. **Cross generational activity** is a means of ensuring that the sometimes considered “traditional” gaps which emerge between young and old are less likely to occur. There is simplicity to the benefits of cross generational activity which in essence are situations where young and old work together to the effect that a mutuality of respect is produced. Older and disabled people, or people who have experienced mental health problems are sometimes fearful of young people, and the young may have had little direct contact with them. Cross generational activity allows mutual understanding to develop.
Context for Community Cohesion

National

Globalisation and economic change have meant there has been a shift in patterns of immigration to the UK and temporary migration for work. The speed and scale of change is unprecedented. This has led to changing notions of identity, belonging and citizenship as well as the rise of faith in the public sphere. Population mobility and ease of international travel and communication means that we cannot any longer have fixed notions of what constitutes a 'community'.

The present community cohesion policy agenda was developed following the street disturbances in the Pennine towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001 and the terrorist attacks that took place on 11 September in the USA, and in London in July 2005. The most influential idea at the time was that people from different communities were leading parallel lives with little interaction at home, school or work and that this was contributing to divisions between people from different backgrounds. The challenge was identified as promoting community cohesion, which was broadly defined as a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities, an appreciation of people’s different backgrounds, similar life opportunities for all and strong and positive relationships being developed between different members of society in all areas of the community.

Consequently there has been considerable national debate about different approaches to community cohesion. It has become an increasingly important government policy issue and public service delivery has been placed at the heart of this agenda. There are a number of national legislative and policy drivers which bear on this document with some particular implications for specific partners. This has been developed as a partnership strategy which embraces these demands.

Key national drivers include:

- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2008
- Communities in Control White Paper 2008
- Duties to promote Community Cohesion (Housing, Schools, Local Authorities)
Regional

North West England is a very diverse region, and cities such as Manchester and Liverpool are amongst the most diverse in Europe. The City of Liverpool is now over 800 years old, and is one of the few places in Britain where ethnic minority populations can be traced back over dozens of generations, being one of the closest English cities to Ireland it is home to a significant Irish population, and links to the British Slave Trade resulted in the city being home to one of the first ever Afro-Caribbean communities in the UK.

Historically the North West has been the home to high levels of manufacturing. The decline of the manufacturing industries in the area has created the need for areas to rapidly regenerate themselves and the pace of change has contributed to instability and mistrust in communities.

In Knowsley, we have interpreted the regional context through three specific avenues:

1. As a participating member of the Government Office North West administrated Community Cohesion Network, the opportunity for good practice sharing and access to a wide range of expertise has been made available. Notwithstanding the fact that what works in some areas will not necessarily work in others, the development of this strategy and the associated action plan and affiliate toolkits have been made possible through utilising knowledge local to Knowsley and adapting Network colleagues practices to suit transferable activity.

2. By initiating discussions with other Merseyside Authority Community Cohesion leads, Knowsley has been able to ensure that the sub-regional context is considered. There are a myriad of links which intrinsically connect the 6 Merseyside Authorities (Knowsley, Halton, St Helens, Sefton, Wirral and Liverpool) across socio-economic themes and without due regard to the influences which each area reflects, the sub regional context would not carry the emphasis it deserves.

3. Through active involvement and attendance to seminars, conferences and master classes which focus on Community Cohesion good practice. The Knowsley Partnership has been comprehensively engaged in all aspects of regional activity which could influence this strategy, to the extent that besides being fully involved as participants at a range of events the Partnership has also taken the lead to host regionally focussed networking.
Knowsley is one of six districts of the Liverpool City Region. Located between Liverpool and Manchester, it is connected to these cities by the M57 and M62 motorways, and the A580 East Lancashire trunk road. It covers an area of 33 square miles. Knowsley is made up of four townships of Huyton, Kirkby, Prescot and Halewood. Each area of the Borough has its own characteristics and history which dictates the cohesion issues unique to that area. However, there are a number of notable characteristics of the borough’s resident population. They include:

- a comparatively small black and minority ethnic population, representing under 2% of the population;  
- a higher than average proportion of lone parent households, which are particularly concentrated in North Huyton, North and South Kirkby; and
- a lower than average proportion of single person households.

Knowsley is a borough of contrasts with areas of significant deprivation compared with areas of relative affluence. There are a large number of developed community groups and active faith organisations (the majority of which are Christian) affording real opportunities to build community cohesion.

During our recent Comprehensive Area Assessment concern has been expressed at the Partnership’s response to community cohesion and the robustness of Knowsley’s plans to address the issues in our community. This has been highlighted by a red flag being allocated to community cohesion in Knowsley. This means there were significant concerns from the inspectorate about cohesion and future prospects around this. It highlights the need for Knowsley to do something different or additional in order to address the cohesion issues in the borough.

The creation of this strategy forms the basis of the Partnership’s response to the red flag, but for the Partnership to truly recognise and understand how cohesion can be improved in Knowsley it is important to appreciate the make up of the individual neighbourhoods and the issues that can divide the Borough. The Borough’s approach to neighbourhood management and the Area Partnership Board structure will provide a means for engaging with local communities to get to the heart of the issues concerning them.
Any and all approaches will need to address the challenges presented by territorial issues represented by traditional defined community identities and boundaries and the levels of income, employment, health and educational attainment within them. Evidence also suggests that there is an increase in intergenerational mistrust and the lack of cohesion within the borough which will need to be addressed.

For the purpose of ensuring this strategy has due regard to meeting the needs of the borough, the outcomes of the associated action plan are linked directly to:

- The 7 key drivers of the Knowsley Partnership's Sustainable communities strategy
  - A diverse and prosperous economy
  - Increasing economic activity at all levels
  - Raising attainment and skills
  - Unlocking potential and raising aspirations
  - Improving the offer and quality of place
  - Safer, more cohesive communities
  - A well connected Knowsley
- The Knowsley Local Area Agreement National Indicators, as detailed in the attached action plan.
- 8 plus 1 Community Cohesion guiding principles.
Implementing the strategy

The strategy will only be successful if the vision and aims for the borough are owned at the highest level within the Partnership. The leadership from the Knowsley Partnership Board, Executive Team and Councillors will drive forward the priorities to ensure our ambitions are met.

**Delivering change**

Delivery of the strategy will be grouped around 4 objectives. These will ensure the strategy will deliver change by:

- **Raising awareness of the issues facing our residents** - this will be through real life case studies, some of which are captured on the DVD that accompanies this strategy. The intention is that we will use this strategy to ensure Councillors, senior managers and front line staff from across the borough understand the impact the lack of cohesion has on residents and the importance of tackling these issues.

- **Embedding cohesion activity in plans** - through integration of business plans and bringing together cohesion activity into one Partnership action plan.

- **Understanding each neighbourhood** - through the Area Partnership Boards, neighbourhood agreements and neighbourhood management structures we will be able to understand what matters to each area, focus these as a local priority and ensure localised activity can take place to address the lack of cohesion.

- **Bringing about behaviour change to tackle the underlying causes** - we know that public agencies cannot change behaviour alone only people change their own behaviour. The Partnership will look to educate, encourage and enforce people to make the right choices through a planned behaviour change programme.

The Knowsley Partnership embraces the challenges and opportunities which will derive from strong and cohesive communities across Knowsley. The table below outlines the key areas for action to be delivered during 2009-2012:
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<th><strong>Objectives</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Headline activity</strong></td>
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| CC1 | Improving Communication and Information - with strong social networking opportunities for individuals, families, friends and neighbours | • Build a consensus of what cohesion means for the residents of Knowsley  
• Reinforce this through ongoing training and events  
• Maintain a communications campaign through raising the public profile  
• Bring key community cohesion speakers to the borough to help reinforce the importance of consensus |
| CC2 | Partnership delivery - with opportunities to bring people together in a way that builds the self esteem of individuals, communities and neighbourhoods | • Integrate multi agency activities within all partner business plans  
• Demonstrate strong organisational leadership and engagement  
• Develop shared organisational values  
• Jointly take ownership of guiding principles and the associated action plan activities  
• Develop and maintain a Partnership Tension Monitoring tool  
• Embed Safeguarding principles for the benefit of vulnerable young people and adults |
| CC3 | Addressing area priorities for community cohesion - with a real focus on areas that need that extra support in neighbourhoods and transfer of learning to other areas | • Utilise the Area Partnership Boards as a means of implementing target and integrated area community cohesion activities  
• Utilise the learning from pilot projects including North Huyton intensive community engagement project  
• Ensure appropriate capacity exists to support vulnerable young people and adults at a neighbourhood level |
| CC4 | Changing behaviour and tackling the underlying causes of the issue - with a focus on achieving real outcomes for our communities | • Implementation of behaviour change programme  
• Staff development - Knowsley Manager  
• Citizenship programme |
There are numerous examples of work already underway in Knowsley in support of the objectives above. These include:

**Communications campaign** - to bring all Public sector buildings to reflect Knowsley as a place that promotes Welcome, Belonging, Community, Opportunity and Respect as key themes of the borough (Objective CC1).

**Good Neighbours** - events held in our communities to highlight how to be good neighbours. Good Neighbour Awards have been launched to acknowledge local residents work within their communities. (Objective CC2, CC3).

**Target Area profile activity** - Work has been undertaken in North Huyton to help measure and or understand local community cohesion perspectives (Objective CC3).

Across the borough of Knowsley we have developed a ward vitality index in order to assess and rank quality of life indicators (Objective CC3).

**Community Capacity build pilot projects** - Commissioning good practice projects such as Intensive Local Engagement activities (Objective CC3).

**Schools cluster group programmes** - which are area based and incorporate the immediate surrounding local communities (Objective CC4).

**Develop schools mainstreaming** - through the production of a Governors Community Cohesion support package (Objective CC4).

**Capturing the views of local people** - who have experienced harassment due to perceptions of difference and culture (Objective CC1, CC2).
Action plans to support the objectives outlined above are currently being developed. Monitoring delivery of the action plans will be key to ensuring the strategy is delivered. The action plans will be monitored and reviewed by the Partnership as part of our ambition to achieve the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).

**Sustainable Communities Strategy and Local Area Agreement**

Our SCS sets out the overall vision for Knowsley to become the Borough of Choice which will be achieved through activity around the 7 drivers set out in the strategy. The delivery of this 15 year vision is broken down by three year delivery plans - Local Area Agreements (LAA). Our first LAA which ends in March 2011 contains indicators used to measure cohesion, these are:

- NI 1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI 4: Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- Number of voluntary sector organisations delivering public services in Knowsley (local indicator)
- Number of services delivered by voluntary sector organisations (local indicator)
- Percentage of community groups in the borough participating in Neighbourhood Networks (local indicator)

It is recognised that while these indicators measure aspects of cohesion in the borough they do not give a comprehensive measure. There are other national indicators which contribute to measuring cohesion in Knowsley and there is a need to review and refresh how we measure cohesion as the current indicators were selected prior to the creation of this strategy.

This strategy helps to explain the challenge that faces Knowsley and will need to be reference in the development of future strategies and policies. In the development of the next LAA, which will begin to be negotiated in summer 2010, it is the intention of the Partnership to develop a more comprehensive and cross cutting suite of indicators, both national and local, drawn from across all aspects of the partnership. This will ensure cohesion is at the heart of Partnership activity.
Below are a number of strategies which the LSP believes will assist the borough to become a more cohesive community; the list is not an exhaustive one and will inevitably develop over time.

**Sustainable Community Strategy**

This provides the story of the people of Knowsley, the needs of the borough and the challenges to realise our vision of ‘Knowsley the borough of choice’. It is the overarching strategic plan for the borough. It provides seven drivers for change which the implementation of this strategy will support:

1. A diverse and prosperous economy
2. Increasing economic activity at all levels
3. Raising attainment and skills
4. Unlocking the potential and raising aspirations
5. Improving the offer and quality of place
6. Safer, more cohesive communities
7. A well connected Knowsley

**Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The LDF will set a vision for the future development of Knowsley and each of its townships up to 2025. In doing so it will make key decisions about regeneration, housing and economic development, town centres and the environment, pulling these issues together into a plan for the Borough. The LDF will involve significant choices about issues of major public interest and the council will engage all community groups effectively as the plan is being developed.
**Childrens and Young People's Strategy**

The Children and Young People’s Strategic plan highlights how Knowsley will ensure that children and young people within the borough stay safe, healthy and happy, make a positive contribution to their communities and achieve economic well-being. It sets out everything that Knowsley wants for its children and young people, the outcomes that Knowsley Council and its partners are striving towards, and the actions to be taken to achieve this.

Our children and young people are already involved in key decisions that will create long lasting positive changes throughout Knowsley in coming years. They will now have even greater participation in the services they receive through the implementation of our recently launched Participation Standards.

We also recognise that the community plays a significant role in the enrichment of children and young people’s lives, and through the work of Knowsley’s Young Advisors we will endeavour to support community cohesion through appropriate consultation and activities, addressing local issues through neighbourhood solutions.
Community Knowhow

The LSP’s community engagement and empowerment strategy sets out a commitment to working with residents, community, faith and voluntary organisations to better understand the needs of the Borough, influence the shape of service delivery, and work in partnership for the development of sustainable and cohesive communities. Involvement is supported and promoted through:

- Communication and information
- Consultation
- Empowerment
- Decision-making
- Partnership delivery
- Devolved delivery

In addition there is direct connection and relevance to community cohesion within the following:

- Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Climate Change Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Safeguarding Strategy (for both vulnerable adults and for children)
- Green Space Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Partnership Vision and Long Term Strategy
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Knowsley NHS Operational Plan and Transforming Community Services
Conclusion

This strategy sets out the Knowsley Partnership’s ambition for community cohesion in Knowsley. Progress in delivering the strategy will be regularly reported to the Local Strategic Partnership so that all organisations involved in delivering this strategy can be held to account.

This strategy provides a partnership approach, with clear links to existing and developing strategies and the thread of cohesion running through partnership working and delivery. This strategy will live through our communities and in our neighbourhoods.
Sources of Background Information

- Department for Communities and Local Government - CLG
- Community Cohesion Masterclasses - Institute of Community Cohesion
- Cohesion Guidance for Funders - CLG
- Equalities Cohesion and the Local Area Agreements - Improvement and Development Agency
- 4th Annual Community Cohesion Conference - CLG
- Play - Walk a Mile in My Shoes - Oldham Race Equality Partnership
- Strategy Survival Toolkit - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- Area Based Community Cohesion Initiatives - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- Commission on Integration and Cohesion - “Our Shared Future” 2007
- Tension Monitoring Toolkit - Adaptation of Metro Police Good Practice
Multi Agency Partnership
Strategy Development Group

DHL Kirkby
Government Office North West
Knowsley Business Watch
Knowsley Chamber of Commerce
Knowsley Community College
Knowsley CVS
Knowsley Faith Network (represented by
Huyton Church of England Deanery)
Knowsley Housing Trust

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Merseytravel
Merseyside Fire Service
Merseyside Police
NHS Knowsley
Standing Advisory Committee for
Religious Education
Villages Housing
Consultations and Engagement

Workshops and Interviews

- Elected Members seminar “the emerging issues of community cohesion in Knowsley” December 2007
- Elected Members seminar North West Employers January 2008
- Merseyside and Cheshire Authorities Desk Top Audit conducted by Audit Commission February 2008
- Community Cohesion ranking questionnaire to all 63 Elected Members February 2008
- Witness focus group consisting of Public, Private and Voluntary sector agencies May 2008

Joint Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Area Partnership Board Community Cohesion Working Group

Chair  Councillor T H Fearns

Members  Councillor T Grierson
         Councillor M A Harvey
         Councillor S Lee
         Councillor A Moorhead
         Councillor M Murphy
         Councillor M Sharp
         Councillor D Smithson
         Councillor B Swann
         Councillor D J Baum
         Councillor M Currie
         Councillor R Gaffney
         Councillor L S Moorhead-Taylor
         Councillor J Quilliam
         Councillor I Smith
**Sustainable Community Strategy Survey community cohesion centred focus groups**

List of consultees responding to Community Cohesion questions in the Sustainable Communities Strategy survey:

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