Borough of Pendle

REPORT FROM:	**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
TO:	**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**
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INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES STRATEGY GREEN PAPER: CONSULTATION

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Committee of the key policy proposals in this Green Paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1)   That the content of this report is noted.

(2)   That the Committee gives delegated authority to the Chief Executive to agree a consultation response, in consultation with the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

(1)   To raise awareness of the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper and consultation process.

(2)   To allow Pendle Council to submit a response to the consultation within the allocated timeframe.

ISSUE

Background

The Government's Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, published in March 2018, sets out proposals on building more integrated communities across the country. It states,

> *This is what true integration looks like – communities where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Communities where many religions, cultures and opinions are*

celebrated, underpinned by a shared set of British values that champion tolerance, freedom and equality of opportunity. A society in which everyone is a potential friend.

The Green Paper comes with a consultation response form, where views on the proposed strategy can be submitted, by 5th June 2018.

The Challenge

A plethora of evidence has been gathered, and the results used to identify a number of factors which affect integration. These are outlined in the strategy as follows:

- Level and pace of migration: Net migration to the UK increased from -13,000 in 1992 to +163,000 in 1999, with significant further increases in the 2000s coinciding with the 2004 EU enlargement, with the highest level of net migration being recorded in 2015. High levels of migration or sudden, very concentrated migration can put a strain on local communities particularly in deprived areas. The pressure on local services and differences between cultural and social norms can lead to tension and, in some cases, prejudice, discrimination and hate crime.

- School segregation: In some areas, there is a relatively high degree of separation of pupils of different ethnicities across schools. As of January 2017, 60% of minority ethnic pupils were in schools where minority ethnic pupils are in the majority. This reduces opportunities for young people to form lasting relationships with those from other backgrounds and can restrict pupils' outlook and education. Out-of-school settings and home education, where it is not done well, can further reduce social mixing and risk exposing children to harmful views and practices.

- Residential segregation: There are town and city neighbourhoods where ethnic minority communities are increasing in concentration with growing isolation from White British communities. In 2001, 119 wards were majority non-White. In 2011, this had risen to 429 wards. This residential segregation impacts on opportunities for social mixing and may lead to higher levels of mistrust between people of different backgrounds.

- Labour market disadvantage: The Casey Review concluded that problems of social exclusion have persisted for some ethnic minority groups and poorer White British communities. There are disproportionately high levels of un- or underemployment and economic inactivity and more limited progression in work for some. For example, around 59% of women of Bangladeshi or Pakistani ethnicity are inactive in the labour market and 50% of young people (aged 16-24) of a Black ethnic background are economically inactive compared to 35% of their White British peers. These disparities can generate disaffection, isolation and a sense of grievance.

- Lack of English language proficiency: 770,000 people in England aged 16 and over say they cannot speak English well or at all; and women are disproportionately affected. Poor English language skills limit an individual's employment opportunities, their ability to mix, their civic participation and their access to services, hindering independence, confidence and self-determination.

- Personal, religious and cultural norms, values and attitudes: People can be held back from integrating by cultural practices and attitudes or by their personal choice or fear of facing discrimination or prejudice. This often disproportionately affects women and girls.

- Lack of meaningful social mixing: Low levels of meaningful contact between people from different backgrounds can increase levels of mistrust and anxiety, damaging people's health

and well-being and limiting their ability to make the most of the opportunities Britain offers. Negative cultural norms can take hold, including prejudice, anti-social behaviour and oppression of women, and can be exploited by extremists.

Key Policy Proposals (page 14)

The Strategy states that:

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will establish a new Innovation Fund to stimulate new thinking, build new partnerships and test innovative approaches so we can build our understanding of what works.

(i) To strengthen leadership to drive integration in policy development and service delivery, we will:
- call on public authorities to include an equality objective outlining specific activity to promote integration;
- select a number of priority policies and services to review across government to determine how they might best drive integration;
- call on local government and business, and voluntary and community sector organisations to commit to doing the same;
- support the new Cohesion and Integration Network to enable it to identify best practice on leadership and to share this widely.

(ii) To support newly arrived migrants to integrate and improve communities' ability to adapt to migration, we will:
- review the impact of English language requirements on visas, introduced in 2017, and review the potential for further change in the English language requirements in future;
- review the Life in the UK test and whether it could be amended to strengthen its focus on the values and principles of the UK which we expect all people to live by;
- consider providing information to prospective migrants before they arrive in the UK, to give them a clear expectation about life in modern Britain, including our laws, norms and standards;
- provide a package of information for recent migrants in the Integration Areas to test what is most helpful to support them to integrate into their communities and to build an understanding of life in the UK;
- work with civil society and others to increase the integration support available to help refugees overcome the barriers to integration.

(iii) To make sure all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain and have the opportunity for meaningful social mixing with those from different backgrounds, we will:
- work with local admission authorities in the Integration Areas to help ensure the intake of schools are more representative of the wider area;
- strengthen expectations on integration for new free schools;
- promote mixing and twinning arrangements between schools in areas of high segregation;
- support teachers to promote British values across the curriculum;
- work with Ofsted to ensure that there is strong coverage of schools' promotion of fundamental British values and integration within its new inspection arrangements;
- ensure a high standard of safeguarding in all education settings;

- work with the National Citizen Service to increase young people's mixing in areas of high segregation, and stimulate other innovative approaches to promoting meaningful social mixing.

(iv) **To boost English language skills** – which are fundamental to being able to take advantage of the opportunities of living in modern Britain such as getting a job, mixing with people and playing a full part in community life – we will:
- propose developing a new strategy for English Language in England;
- launch a new community-based English language programme;
- work with local authorities in the Integration Areas to improve the provision of English language learning and establish a new infrastructure fund open to other local authorities;
- facilitate a new network of community-based conversation clubs.

(v) To mitigate residential segregation and support people to build strong and integrated communities, we will:
- take forward a programme of work to determine what changes to housing policy and practice would help in addressing residential segregation;
- challenge libraries and other community hubs to maximise their contribution to building integrated communities;
- issue revised guidance on how community groups can bid to take over the running of valued local assets;
- work with the Parks Action Group on how to enhance the sustainability of parks and green spaces and how they can best promote integration.

(vi) **To increase economic opportunity**, we will:
- provide additional funding to Jobcentre Plus so they can support more people from the most segregated communities into work in the Integration Areas;
- use the opportunity of Universal Credit to engage people who are economically inactive to help them realise their potential through pathways to work;
- support people from ethnic minorities into work in places where there remains a big gap between their employment rates and that of White British people;
- increase take up of apprenticeships and the early years offer by people in isolated communities.

(vii) **To challenge the practices that can hinder integration and equal rights**, we will:
- empower marginalised women, including exploring reform of the law on marriage and religious weddings;
- improve our understanding of the ways in which overseas influences can undermine attitudes to rights and freedoms in the UK;
- expand the Strengthening Faith Institutions programme to help a wider range of faith institutions to strengthen their governance structures, including the participation of women and young people;
- support faith communities and interfaith dialogue as a means of breaking down barriers between communities, building greater trust and understanding, and removing the conditions which can allow intolerance and unequal treatment to flourish;
- support delivery of the Hate Crime Action Plan in the Integration Areas, strengthening local partnerships to identify innovative practices to address hate crime and promote greater reporting of incidents.

(viii) **To learn what works in building integrated communities and to share that learning**, we will:

- undertake a programme of evaluation research in the Integration Areas to generate evidence of what works in different local area settings;
- improve the way knowledge of what works is promoted and shared so that it reaches the people who need it;
- develop a clear set of integration measures at the local and national level so that policy makers and practitioners can monitor and measure progress.

Next Steps

The Committee is requested to gives delegated authority to the Chief Executive to agree a consultation response to the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, in consultation with the Chair of the Policy and Resources.

This is in light of the short timeframe to respond, by 5th June 2018.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The Integrated Communities Strategy will be agreed following the consultation responses.

Financial: No implications relating directly to the report.

Legal: No implications relating directly to the report.

Risk Management: No implications relating directly to the report.

Health and Safety: No implications relating directly to the report.

Sustainability: The proposals outlined in this strategy will seek to promote sustainability in their implementation.

Community Safety: The proposals outlined in this strategy will seek to promote community safety in their implementation.

Equality and Diversity: The proposals outlined in this strategy will seek to promote equality and diversity in their implementation.

APPENDICES

N/A

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper and Consultation Response form can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper