

# South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Board meeting 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005

## Agenda Item 9

### Consultation With Hard To Reach Groups - SDCVS

#### Introduction

Following the agreement of the Board South Derbyshire CVS supported by People Express were tasked with consulting hard to reach groups on the draft community strategy. The definition of hard to reach was very broad, being those people who have traditionally not had the opportunity to comment either on how or what services are delivered or to contribute to the planning process.

The results of this process were reported to the Board at its last meeting and presented to the Forum at the Annual General Meeting last month. The Board was informed that because of the very short timescale available, the pre Christmas timing and the fact that this consultation closely followed the crime audit meant that some of the identified groups were not accessed. In particular it was not possible to make sufficient contact with the BME and GLBT groups which probably represent a substantial 10% of the District's population.

The development of the draft strategy and its consultation process has thrown up the need for consistent and meaningful consultation. One of the recommendations to the Board as part of the proposed Community Strategy's Action Plan will be to determine and agree a consultation and communication protocol, including the Hard to Reach Groups.

In addition the Board is aware that although the Community Strategy will soon be completed, it will need to be regularly monitored and updated. The Action Plan will need to be reviewed annually and new targets/proposals suggested. The timetable for this process will need to be linked with the Forum and Annual General Meeting and will therefore require a consultation process to be carried out prior to these events. There may well be other instances where additional consultation may be involved.

The CVS remain happy to be the consultation vehicle for the Hard to Reach Groups. The original consultation exercise was to have cost some £15,000 but there was an underspend of £4,000 (as there was insufficient time to include BME and GLBT groups). Nevertheless, the CVS have indicated that a more inclusive consultation exercise could be undertaken for approximately £13,000 (although unplanned events would be additional and more expensive). To be able to provide such a service and in order to plan work and adjust staffing levels, the CVS have requested that the Board give consideration to providing an annual amount for such services.

#### Recommendation

That the Board consider offering the South Derbyshire CVS an annual financial amount to carry out consultation with the Hard to Reach Groups.