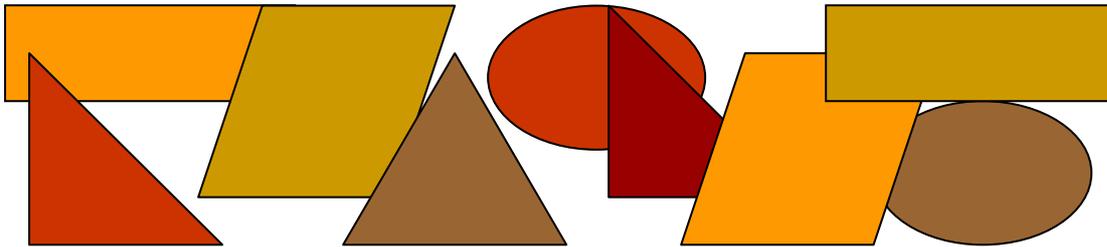


Leicester Community Cohesion Evaluation and Assessment Framework



Centre for Social Action, De Montfort University

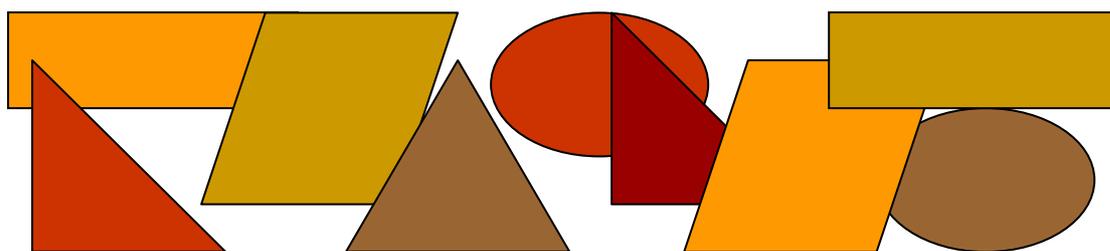
**Commissioned by:
Policy and Performance Team, Chief Executive's Office
Leicester City Council**

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The work on which this report is based was commissioned by Lee Harrison Head of Policy and Performance at Leicester City Council. Thilo Boeck from the Centre for Social Action (De Montfort University) coordinated and carried out the work with Monica Glover from the Policy and Performance Team in the Chief Executive's Office at Leicester City Council. Mark Johnson from the Mary Seacole Research Centre at De Montfort University contributed to the 'cohesion overview' of this report.



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Introduction

Priorities and arrangements for consultation

Community cohesion is a concept that has assumed increasing importance at a national and local level as politicians endeavour to ensure that different communities co-exist as harmoniously as possible and at some level increase their understanding of each other, to avoid living parallel lives without meaningful contact.

Councils are advised by national government to develop coherent community cohesion strategies in response to our changing society. One criterion in the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) is the requirement to 'know your local community', with its implications for cohesion and effective service delivery.

Leicester City Council's response included the establishment of the first Community Cohesion Fund in 2004 which supported 21 projects across the city promoting community cohesion.

Two particular publications provided a national background for the commissioning of this piece of work: 'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society' (Home Office, January 2005) and an Audit Commission document on Quality of Life Themes (May 2005) both highlighted the need for public authorities to promote cohesion and emphasised:

- Creating a sense of pride, belonging and ownership in an area
- Developing clear and shared values for a locality
- Initiatives that bring diverse communities together
- Practices which enable communities to address common concerns
- Addressing the needs of communities which traditionally experience exclusion and / or disadvantage or discrimination.

Leicester Partnership has identified seven cross cutting themes for their Local Area Agreement (LAA). A need was identified to develop appropriate tools to ensure that the commitment to these issues was reflected in every aspect of the LAA.

“Community cohesion is central to the Strategy for Leicester and to our LAA. Implementing the Community Cohesion Strategy is now the focus of many of the activities of the Leicester City Council and members of the Leicester Partnership. While not a statutory obligation, community cohesion is nevertheless critical to the future welfare and well-being of Leicester. The Local Area Agreement is one way whereby this very important work can be integrated into the mainstream activities of public bodies working in the city. We are proposing a headline outcome for community cohesion within the Safer and Stronger Communities block, but will also look to develop indicators within all blocks that will help create a positive environment for community cohesion. “

The Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University in Leicester (<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmuksa>) was approached by the Policy and Performance Team to develop a cohesion framework based on Leicester's community cohesion strategy, national and international perspectives, previous work done by the Centre in this area (see Boeck 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006) and through consultation with representatives from different organisations.

Aims

Overall the aims of this work were:

- To inform and support the implementation and development of the community cohesion strategy through the development of a cohesion framework and questionnaire, based on existing and new performance indicators, which explores the nature of community cohesion in the city
- To gather together relevant national and local datasets and indicators in order to identify those which relate to community cohesion
- To develop a framework and a pool of questions for use by the city council, its partners and other community groups locally in order to explore the nature of community cohesion in the city.

Context

The debate around cohesion is firmly embedded within national politics and informs the development and delivery of social policy.

The Cattle report has highlighted that:

2.12: We believe that there is an urgent need to promote community cohesion, based upon a greater knowledge of, contact between, and respect for, the various cultures that now make Great Britain such a rich and diverse nation.

2.13: It is also essential to establish a greater sense of citizenship, based on (a few) common principles which are shared and observed by all sections of the community. This concept of citizenship would also place a higher value on cultural differences.

The Department for Communities and Local Government and the recently created Commission for Integration and Cohesion will create even more impetus behind this work. Within the Commission for Integration and Cohesion 13 commissioners have until June 2007 to look at what causes tensions, segregation and conflict - and what practical steps can be taken to create a more cohesive society. It will tour Britain and look at the best and worst examples of getting people from different backgrounds to, at the very least, have an understanding of each other.

The new Department for Communities and Local Government has taken over the former Home Office responsibilities for promoting 'cohesive communities' and is continuing to adopt the following definition:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds

Community Cohesion: SEVEN STEPS
A Practitioner's Toolkit
Home Office

In order to warrant improved delivery of services and to enable the monitoring of targets, the Home Office highlights the importance of collecting and collating data on the origins, demography and cultural characteristics of local populations combined with an 'assessment of the local context'. This was underlined by the original generation of 'Community Cohesion' indicators by the Home Office in 2003, and the agreement of participants in the 'action learning programme' that:

all local agencies need a detailed understanding of the nature of the communities they serve to enable them to assess how equipped they are in building community cohesion. An up-to-date assessment of the local context will enable improved delivery of services and the monitoring of trends. Local authorities will benefit greatly by mapping and sharing information about issues such as ethnicity, age, culture and faith by area and by social and economic characteristics (Home Office 2004 –Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme)

Community Cohesion: an overview

The terms 'Community Cohesion' and 'Social Cohesion' have gained considerable currency in policy circles following the urban disturbances in the early years of the 21st century. Chan (2006) asserts that both the Council of Europe and the European Union (EU) have called for more attention to the issue of cohesion in setting public policy with the EU Cohesion Fund being one of the major items featured in the Union annual budget (Jeannotte, 2000). The idea of social cohesion is also coined by international organisations like the OECD and the World Bank, both of which have recently come to realize the importance of socio-cultural factors in economic development and growth (Ritzen et al., 2000 in Chan 2006).

It is generally seen as covering similar issues as 'race and community relations', but does recognise that other social tensions and cleavages, such as those based on faith, age and travelling communities, as well as migrant workers and asylum seekers (or refugees) which have begun to occupy a higher profile in public debate.

Further, other aspects of social exclusion and disadvantage are involved, and there may be a complex relationship between the demographic makeup of an area and political or social unrest or expression.

According to the Citizenship Survey, there is no relationship between the proportion of ethnic minority households in an area and views on community cohesiveness (Kitchen et al 2006 :18). However, it also has to be accepted that one of the determinants of community solidarity does appear to be the composition and turnover of the local community which is often linked to housing policies of different Local Authorities and Housing Associations (Johnston 2006).

There is some disagreement among experts and politicians about the desirable levels of diversity and mixing. Some would argue that that the formation of 'ghettoised' areas of (near)-single ethnic homogeneity is undesirable, and even where the sole group consists of mainly 'White British' population, concerns have been raised. The current housing and planning policy and practice (ODPM, 2004; ODPM, 2005b) places considerable emphasis on building sustainable and cohesive communities which is based on the premise of not creating single class or single cultural neighbourhoods.

As a result, housing is being dispersed amongst mixed tenure housing developments and in some areas traditional concentrations of social housing have been diluted through 'right to buy' schemes. Within this there is an overarching emphasis on developing sustainable communities with local community participation and active engagement of local people (ODPM, 2005a, ODPM Safer and Stronger Communities Fund). The enhancement of community cohesion is increasingly seen as a crucial factor to achieve this goal.

However, recent urban policy in the Netherlands has considered the value of engineering social mixing, but encountered problems in bringing together "the so-called native Dutch, immigrants and 'newcomers', who face problems in living together and sharing public spaces" (Smets 2006 :293). It is important to recognise how community cohesion is influenced by power imbalances, opportunities (or lack of them), the stereotypes of an area and assumptions made about its residents, reflected in their portrayal by government policy, the media, local policy, power structures and community services (Boeck et al., 2001).

For many people it is the attachment and sense of belonging to a certain place which gives them a sense of security and safety. However, the range of networks people have can vary from very restricted to very diverse which might have direct implications on the ability for people to perceive and negotiate social and place mobility. The need for diverse and wider ranging networks, a sense of belonging to a wider locale, and a focused and active outlook in life is well recognised. This is not just about the 'size and density' of the network, it is also about the resources that the network brings (Halpern, 2005).

Academic and policy research has so far failed to establish if there is an optimum level of diversity or a reliable indicator of this which could be linked to predictions of community cohesion. A recent report from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister suggests that the level of physical 'mixing' of population groups remains the easiest

way to provide an estimate of the level of social integration and community cohesion, stating that “There has been an improvement in social cohesion across the country. The vast majority of cities have become more integrated during the past decade...” (ODPM 2005). That said, the HO/DCLoG Citizenship Survey (Kitchen et al 2006 :9) shows clearly that while ‘people who lived in areas with the highest concentration of minority ethnic population were less likely to have positive views of their neighbourhood *on some measures*’, four out of five in such mixed areas said that ‘people from different backgrounds got on well together’ (italics added).

Another aspect which has to be considered is that in principle, strong ties within a community can be accompanied by the tendency to discriminate and exclude those people who do not belong to that community (Narayan, 1999 p. 8). The issue of a strong social cohesion within a community which itself is exclusive has led to the question “Can social cohesion be a threat to social cohesion?” (Jenson, 1998: p. 4) and to the conclusion “that inclusion could also mean exclusion” (Bernard, 1999: p. 18). This is why Berger-Schmitt highlights the importance of considering *both* dimensions – the inequality dimension *and* the social capital dimension – in order to get a comprehensive picture of the social cohesion within a society.

The existence and maintenance of community cohesion is clearly dependent on the state of inter-group relationships as much as it is on the social capital of specific groups making up a community or population and of social inclusion.

Community Cohesion and Leicester

Work of this kind exists in Leicester at a number of different levels. A community work audit for Leicester (Skinner 2005) suggests that, to assume that improving community cohesion is only about links between the indigenous white community and people from other backgrounds would be an overly simplistic analysis of the issue. In the community map of Leicester certain areas already have majority settled populations which can be either mainly white, or varying combinations of African Caribbean and Asian people which are already close knit through kinship, friendship and religious affiliations. In all these areas reaching out to minority populations may not be viewed as particularly necessary or practical. Nevertheless there may be internal community tensions which need to be addressed in community cohesion terms. Our consultation suggests that many organisations do not see cohesion in term of social relations. They stress the importance of acknowledging social exclusion and discrimination.

As well as resolving community cohesion issues within the settled communities of Leicester, the city’s changing population of refugees and asylum seekers and migrant workers require targeted attention in these terms, to foster understanding and defuse any potential hostility or resentment on the part of communities of longer standing in the city. It has been highlighted that groups such as travellers may also encounter prejudice from members of the settled communities. Some people highlighted that community cohesion work may also be necessary within

refugee and asylum groups to avoid clashes between coexisting groups with a history of tension in their own countries.

This understanding of community cohesion is also reflected by the IDeA Report and the Leicester Partnership strategic objective.

The IDeA Report *Taking Forward Community Cohesion in Leicester* defines community cohesion as follows:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have a similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

"Taking Forward Community Cohesion in Leicester": IDeA (The Improvement and Development Agency)

The Leicester Partnership strategic objective concerning community cohesion is as follows:

"To develop community cohesion, increase social interaction and increase social inclusion we will:

- Support equality and diversity by removing the barriers to opportunities, particularly health, education and work.
- Build inter-cultural and inter-faith contacts between geographic communities and communities of interest.
- Ensure that our education system instils common values of respect and understanding, encourages integration, and supports communities.
- Develop activities to provide opportunities for younger and older people to break down intergenerational barriers and reduce fear of crime.
- Provide opportunities to promote, celebrate and increase respect and understanding about Leicester residents' diverse racial, cultural and faith heritage
- Increase awareness of refugees and asylum seekers and provide awareness training for communities to understand needs of new communities.
- Give advice and support to new arrivals and communities in Leicester".

Leicester Partnership (2005)
"Strategy for Leicester – Aims and Objectives"

So far we have established that our consultation has highlighted that the concept of community cohesion should be related to social inclusion and social capital but also involves aspects such as: the extent and nature of segregation, equal opportunities, educational attainment, community safety, population dynamics. Some of these concepts can be measured using regularly collected variables; others require special-purpose surveys. Most commonly, they are assessed in regular local 'user' and 'best value' surveys which incorporate questions selected from the Home Office's citizenship and community cohesion indicator questions (such as 'how well people from different backgrounds get on with each other) as recommended in '*Building a Picture of Community Cohesion*' (Home Office 2003). The table below summarises the kinds of (other) variables which can be (or have been found to be) monitored regularly across these dimensions of interest.

(Table 1: Specimen Indicators, Sources and Spatial Units)

Domain	Sub-category	Indicator	Source	Lowest spatial unit available
Social inclusion	Unemployment	Claimant count benefits	ONS/DWP DWP	Ward LSOA
	Labour market exclusion	Incapacity benefit	DWP	LSOA LSOA
	Teenage motherhood	Birth statistics Abortions	ONS ONS	Ward Ward
	Illness	Mortality statistics Disability benefit	ONS DWP	Ward LSOA
	Housing deprivation	Tenancies Homelessness House prices	CORE/LA CORE/LA Land registry/banks/O DPM	District District Postcode sector
Segregation	Population	Census	ONS	OA
	School	PLASC	DfES/LEA	Unit postcode
Equal opportunities	Employment	Ethnic monitoring of all employment	ONS Annual Population Survey	Larger districts
Educational attainment	Percent achieving success	Key stage 1 & 2 GCSE A-level	DfES/LEA	School/ward/ LEA
Community Safety	Crime statistics	Type of crime by location	Police/CDRP	Varies – postcode for mapping
	Racist incidents	Type of incident	Police (RIMS)	District/Police Force Area
	Fear of crime	Perception of change	Best Value Survey	District

Population dynamics	Population turnover	Migration estimates Change in electoral register	ONS Local authority	District Ward
Social networks	Contact with neighbours/ other ethnic/social groups	How often talk to neighbours Which ethnic or social groups come into contact with	Community Cohesion Survey (sample)	District
Political participation	Electoral registration	Electoral register statistics	ONS./Local authority	Ward
	Voting patterns	Election results	Local authority	Ward
Community engagement	Volunteering	Membership of voluntary organisations	LOVAS surveys, HO citizenship survey	Some districts, otherwise national
	Density of community organisations	Database of voluntary bodies, clubs	Local authority	District
Identification with a locality	Neighbourhood identification	Which geographical scale Friends/family in area	Community Cohesion Survey (sample)	District
	Views about environment	Perception of change Environmental problems	Best Value Survey Best Value Survey	District

Note: LSOA=Lower-tier Super Output Area
PLASC=Pupil Level Annual Schools Census
RIMS=Racist Incident Monitoring System
CDRP=Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership

Important for Leicester is the recently available data of a Leicestershire Social Capital Survey.

Data was gathered through participative research of 20 super output areas of Leicestershire and indicators were built into the LAA 'stronger communities'. The survey will be repeated in two years' time.

Methodology

Introduction

DeMontfort University's Centre for Social Action has worked with a number of separate community projects in London, Leicester, Leicestershire and Nottingham (see for example, Boeck & Fleming, 2002; Boeck et al., 2001) using the concept of social capital with local people and hence feel in a position to make a contribution to taking the debate on community cohesion forward. A large number of people have taken part in the projects that have ranged from quantitative surveys with samples between 200 and over 2500 people to small group work based on qualitative approaches¹. Our work with Leicester City Council was based on a compilation and synthesis of all these experiences.

The development of the Cohesion Framework and evaluation was devised under a participative methodology. We facilitated discussion groups to establish a cohesion framework and its indicators. The sessions gave participants the opportunity to debate the concept of community cohesion and consider the meaning of it within their personal lives and in their professional practice. The workshops created the space for the different projects to share their ideas. It was hoped that this approach would ensure that different stakeholders were involved in the process.

Process

A series of meetings were held between April 2005 and March 2006 specifically about the development of the framework and the questionnaire. These included small group meetings to scope the work, examine existing performance indicators related to cohesion, and develop the framework and draft questionnaire. Specific meetings were also held about cohesion within the Local Area Agreement, the Community Cohesion Fund Programme, the police liaison work, and the work of the Leicester Partnership Information Group. Links were made with Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust, the Leicestershire County voluntary service, and the Leicestershire Police.

A draft framework was presented to the Community Cohesion Project Team in September 2005 and was warmly welcomed. Two meetings were then held with internal and external partners, in November 2005 and March 2006, to publicise and seek comments on the framework and questionnaire.

¹ **Leicester:** a TSER funded project exploring the links between social policy and social exclusion in three European cities. (see Boeck et al. 2001)

London: using social capital to develop a community development programme for a London borough, both survey and working with local community groups

Nottingham: HDA funded project to explore if social capital can be built within communities. (Boeck and Fleming 2002).

Leicestershire: Social Capital survey (2006/7)

The following organisations / groups were represented:

- Adam Archer: Policy Officer, Local Area Agreement
- Liz Blyth: Regeneration & Culture Dept. / Community Cohesion Fund Appraisal Panel
- Cathy Carter: Policy Officer, Area Committee development
- Diarmuid Cullinane: Regeneration & Culture Dept. / Community Cohesion Fund Appraisal Panel / Community Cohesion Fund Manager
- Martin Gage: Chair of the Leicestershire Voluntary Service
- Monica Glover: Policy Officer, Cohesion / Community Cohesion Fund Appraisal Panel
- Justin Hammond: Social Care & Health Dept. / Disability Information Network
- Lee Harrison: Head of Policy & Performance Team
- Phil Hindson: Creative Partnerships
- Alex Kamanga: Lifelong Learning & Community Development Dept. / Youth Service Cohesion Officer
- Irene Kszyk: Policy Officer, Equalities; MORI; Residents' Survey
- Paddy McCulloch: Inclusion Manager; Braunstone Inclusion Project
- Les Price: Lifelong Learning & Community Development Dept. / Union Representative; member of the Community Cohesion Project Team
- Trish Roberts-Thomson: Policy Officer, Cohesion; Consultation
- Maria Smedley: Leicestershire Police Cohesion Officer
- Sue Walters: Head of Organisational Development, Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust; member of the Community Cohesion Project Team.

The Framework and Indicators

Introduction

In order to establish a solid and coherent framework for the evaluation and assessment of community cohesion, we have integrated Leicester's approach, the outcomes of our work with organisations and community groups and the Community Cohesion Project Team. All of this is also embedded within the wider national and international debates.

Framework

The proposed evaluation and assessment framework for community cohesion builds on Leicester's commitment to the wellbeing of communities. It is based on the overarching theme of **Community and Personal Wellbeing**, to encompass 'Social Justice', 'Human Rights', and 'Equality and Diversity'.

Following our consultation, Leicester's approach, and national and international work (Berger-Schmitt, 2002; Rajulton et al, 2006), we integrated social cohesion into the components of quality of life and wellbeing and distinguished three essential dimensions inherent in the concept:

1. The Resource/Inclusion dimension
2. The Citizenship dimension
3. The Social Capital dimension.

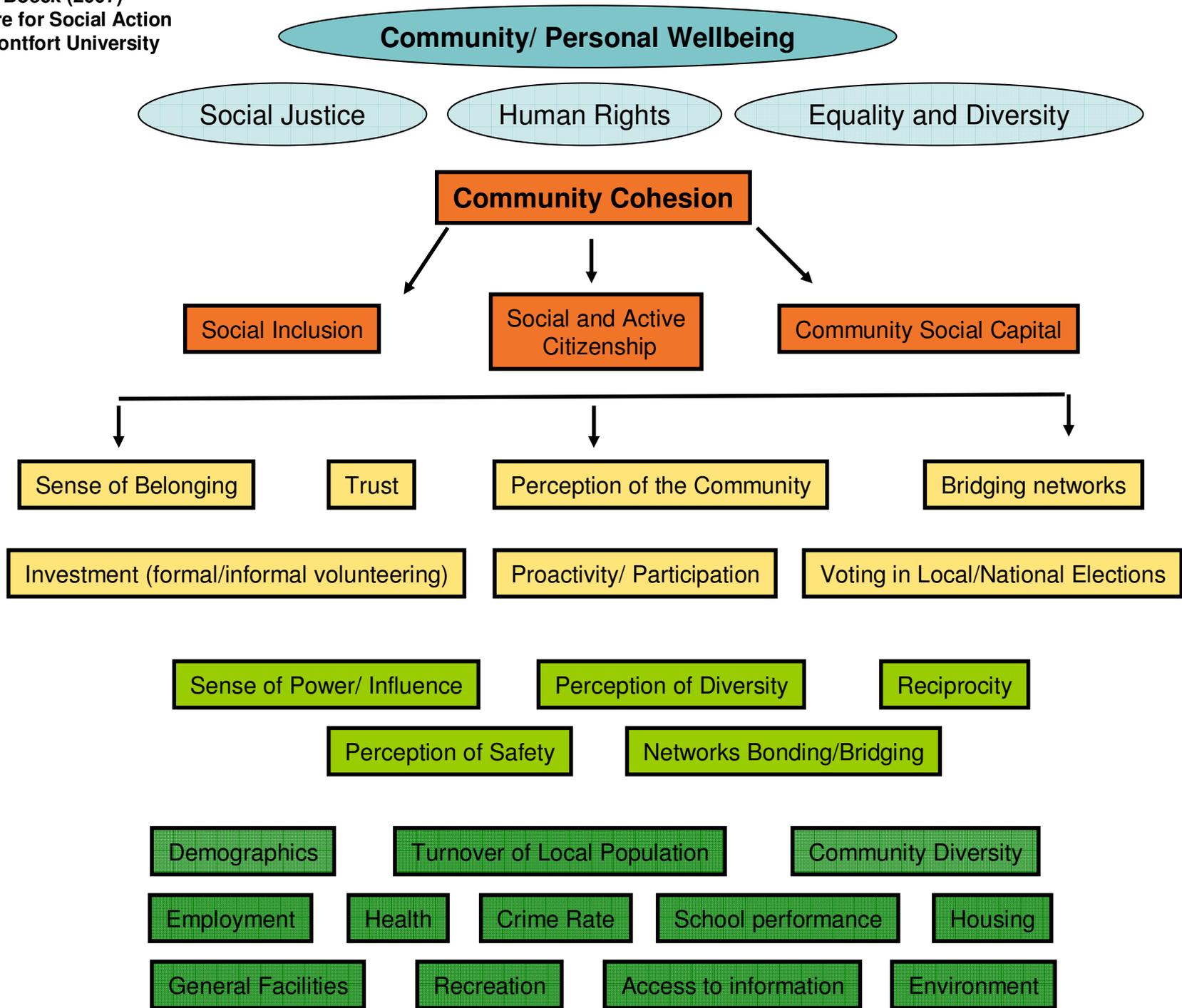
- The first dimension incorporates the goals of reducing disparities, promoting rights, equal opportunities and combating social exclusion.
- The second deals with proactivity and participation (voting and formal/informal volunteering).
- The third dimension deals with all aspects aiming at strengthening social relations, interactions and ties.

It is important to highlight that the framework is not a community cohesion development framework but an **evaluation and assessment framework**. As such, in order to have a robust framework, we split the variables into **dependent variables** which are the core questions and the **independent variables** which assess the context within which community cohesion is believed to be nourished:

- The **dependent variable** - i.e. the phenomenon that we are trying to explain: the level and dynamics of community cohesion, which we expect to vary across different areas.
- The **independent variables** - i.e. the factors which we anticipate are likely to explain (on their own or in combination) the level/dynamics of cohesion.
- The **contextual variables** - e.g. the characteristics of the area itself.

In order for the framework to be useful at different levels and for different organisations this distinction is very important. The dependent variables reflect “a minimalist definition, one that includes only the essential constituents” (Chan 2006). These will be of special relevance for Leicester City Council and the Local Area Agreement. However, only in conjunction with the independent variables and contextual variables will it be possible to form a complete picture that will allow reflection on the **context and causes of cohesion** and enable understanding of the **dynamics and relationships in the process of developing cohesion**. This holistic approach will be of special relevance when considering interventions and also in policy development and service delivery.

The following diagram shows the comprehensive Cohesion Framework which takes account of these different variables (see p. 16):



PERSPECTIVE
DIMENSIONS
DEPENDENT VARIABLE
INDEPENDENT VARIABLE
CONTEXT

Proposed Indicators (Questions)

Our discussions reflected the fact that social cohesion is a concept difficult to define and to measure. As there can be many definitions, so there can be many measurements. The main problem, either in defining or measuring the concept, is its multilevel and multidimensional nature (Chan et al 2005; Rajulton et al 2006).

Berger-Schmitt (2002) proposes how this concept of social cohesion could be measured within the framework of a European System of Social Indicators. Duhaime et al (2004) use social indicators that measure both behaviour and perceptions. They assert that measuring social cohesion is optimised by combining both culturally-specific and non-specific social indicators. We think that this is something especially relevant to the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural reality of Leicester.

We are also referring to questions which have been used by national surveys in order to have comparable data sets. However, the participants of our workshops and meetings saw some of these questions as inappropriate. This was not only because of the sometimes difficult language but also because concerns were expressed that some questions do not reflect people's realities and might contribute to the stigmatisation of communities.

After consideration we reached consensus about which questions to include and which to change or leave out.

A key objective was to produce a questionnaire which would be flexible enough for a variety of potential users at different levels through the development of a series of 'core' questions and other questions which would complement the framework.

Context and Demographics

It is not within the remit of this report to consider all the contextual indicators identified within our framework. In our discussions they were identified as important and useful aspects and the data for these are often available and regularly updated.

Dependent Variables

In order to develop indicators for the dependent variable (cohesion), we are integrating Chan's (2006) definition and indicators of cohesion:

For these indicators, community cohesion is understood as **“a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of society as characterised by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations.”**

The following three criteria should be met simultaneously:

- (1) People can trust, help and cooperate with other members of the community
- (2) They share a common identity or a sense of belonging to their community
- (3) The subjective feelings in (1) and (2) are manifested in objective behaviour.

Measuring Community Cohesion: Dependent Variables		
	Subjective component (People's state of mind)	Objective component (Behavioural manifestations)
Horizontal dimension (Cohesion within the community)	General trust with fellow citizens	Social participation and vibrancy of community
	Sense of belonging or identity	Presence or absence of major inter-group alliances or cleavages
	Willingness to cooperate and help fellow citizens, including those from "other" social groups	Investment (formal and informal volunteering)
Vertical dimension (Private/ public/ voluntary organizations - citizen cohesion)	Trust in public figures	Local participation Political participation (e.g. voting, political parties etc.)
	Confidence in political and other local social institutions	

Adapted from Chan et al (2006)

Sense of Belonging	Belonging: Your neighbourhood	} Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	Belonging: This Local Authority District	
	Belonging: Leicestershire	
	Belonging: England	
	Belonging: Great Britain	
	Belonging: Other place outside GB	

Perception of Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood is a close, tight knit community	} British Crime Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	Neighbourhood is a friendly place to live	
	Neighbourhood is a place where people look after each other	
	Most people who live in this neighbourhood trust one another	
	So overall, neighbourhood is a good place to live?	

Diversity of Networks	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same sex	} Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same area	
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same culture	
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same religion/faith	
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - similar age	
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - Are a diverse group	

Trust	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted?	} Home Office Citizenship Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	People in your neighbourhood can be trusted?	

Investment	In the last 12 months, how many times have you given unpaid help: informal volunteering
	In the last 12 months, how often have you given unpaid help: formal volunteering
	How important is it to you that you contribute to your community

Leicestershire Social Capital Survey;
ONS Social Capital Normalised Question Framework

Proactivity/ Participation	Contacted a local radio station, TV station or newspaper
	Contacted the appropriate organisation to deal with the problem, such as the council, PCT, police etc.
	Contacted a local councillor or MP
	Initiated local activities, a campaign or network
	Attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues
	Attended a tenants or local residents group
	Attended a protest meeting or joined an action group
	Helped organise a petition on a local issue
	None of these
	Thought about it but did not do anything
	No local problems

Leicestershire Social Capital Survey;
ONS Social Capital Normalised Question Framework

Voting	In the last general election (national elections - 2005)
	In the last local elections

Leicestershire Social Capital Survey;
ONS Social Capital Normalised Question Framework

Independent Variables

For these indicators, community cohesion is understood as “a process’ and they look at the factors we anticipate are likely to explain (on their own or in combination) the level/dynamics of cohesion. Together with the contextual data (see framework), these take into account issues of exclusion, rights and power. These variables should not be seen as separable from the dependent variables when exploring the underlying dynamics of cohesion.

Perception of Diversity	Your neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	}	Home Office Citizenship Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	I am happy living among people of different lifestyles"		
	In this neighbourhood everybody is very much the same (ethnic, economic, social)		
	In this neighbourhood there are people from different backgrounds (ethnic, economic, social)		
Power	You can influence decisions that affect your area on your own?	}	General Household Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	You can influence decisions that affect your area when working with others in the neighbourhood?		
Networks	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: on the telephone	}	British Household Panel Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: via email		
	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: by visiting		
	Socialise with Neighbours	}	Home Office Citizenship Survey; Leicestershire Social Capital Survey
	Socialise with Friends		
	Socialise with Family		
	I like to socialise with lots of people		
	I like to socialise mainly with family		
	I have a very close knit circle of friends		
	I keep myself to myself		

Reciprocity	How likely is it that you could get help from your neighbour?	}
	Suppose you lost your purse/wallet containing your address would it be returned?	}
	In general, in what kind of neighbourhood would you say you live in?	}

Leicestersh. SC Survey
ONS Harmonised; Leicestersh. SC Survey
British Crime Survey; Leicestersh. SC Survey

Conclusions

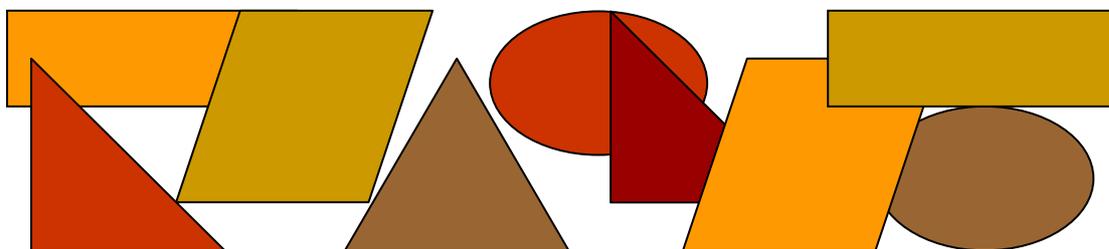
1. A national review carried out by Johnson et al. (2006) for the Home Office has established that there is a strong consensus on the potential value of a common template and guidance on data-use in order to anticipate needs and promote community cohesion.
2. Johnson et al (2006) assert that at present, data collection and monitoring is patchy, piecemeal and poorly utilised. There is an urgent requirement for guidance and support of local, regional and national agencies in collecting or collating, analysing and using such information and also for mechanisms to ensure sharing and co-ordination of data.
3. Leicester City Council is at the forefront of development in recognising the need to provide the Local Authority and its partners with a template and some technical expertise and support (or opportunities to exchange experience in learning sets) which can be used to bring together sources of information (of all types) and routine statistical data in a way which would give guidance to population change and tensions in their area, as well as pointing to ways in which this data collection might need to be improved.
4. Given the sensitivities around the issues, the data required to address them, and the lack of any coherent or consistent system of data collection, we feel that there needs to be some stable resource which could advise and guide (and possibly even compile and analyse reports and data from local sites, comparing them with larger national datasets) whilst providing a local model or template which each area could compile and use.
5. The use of the questionnaire does not provide in itself measures of 'high' or 'low' scores in community cohesion but, if administered in different areas, it does provide comparisons and an exploration of the inter-relationships between different aspects of cohesion. These can be examined further through targeted in-depth exploration of specific findings if desired.
6. The potential is there for other groups to use the questionnaire and to decide whether further exploration is appropriate for them. Creative Partnerships, for instance, was interested to see how the questionnaire related to their work with schools.
7. The interpretation and analysis of survey results will show trends and patterns by revealing participants' perceptions and feelings, illustrating bridging and bonding and also highlighting areas where these are weak or absent. This data can be matched against existing datasets such as national surveys (a selection of national indicators are being used in the questionnaire), Diversity, Environment or Unemployment, for instance, to build up the bigger picture and indicate areas of interest or concern.
8. The questionnaire requires guidelines on the analysis and use of the data collected to make an effective toolkit which can then be widely disseminated.

Recommendations

The work described in this report, initiated by Leicester City Council, already has the interest of the Audit Commission and of other local authorities for its holistic, innovative and participative approach to understanding and evaluating community cohesion and for its potential to shape interventions, policy development and service delivery.

The Community Cohesion Project Team is asked to recommend:

1. That the Cohesion Framework and guidelines are adopted and made available for use by the Council and its partners as part of a range of approaches to understand and evaluate community cohesion in Leicester.
2. That the questionnaire adopted contains sufficient information to allow comparison with data collected in the County.
3. That opportunities are taken:
 - a) for joint working on surveys and data collected between the City, County and their partners
 - b) for training appropriate Council and other staff in relevant analysis techniques
 - c) for local residents to be trained to carry out the survey.
4. That a participative approach which involves and empowers local people informs and underpins this work and its development.



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Appendices

Appendix 1

Targets in Leicestershire's 'Stronger Communities' LAA Theme where the baseline is measured by the Social Capital Survey

% of people who voted in the last Parish Council elections
% of people who feel that they can influence decisions that affect their area on their own (measured by definitely agree/agree)
% of people who feel that they can influence decisions that affect their area when working with others in the neighbourhood (measured by definitely agree/agree)
% of people who definitely agree or tend to agree that their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
% of people who respond "2 hours or more a week" to the question "In the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations?"
% of people who have given unpaid help to friends, neighbours or anyone except relatives over the last 12 months
% of people who say that many of the people in their neighbourhood can be trusted
% of residents satisfied with overall delivery of public services (measured by very satisfied/satisfied)

Appendix 2

Community Cohesion Strategy 2004 - 2009: Major Themes

The findings from the IDeA's research and Leicester's local community consultations have resulted in the identification of five community cohesion themes, and revealed four common issues which impact on all themes.

Community Cohesion Themes:

1. Supporting the social integration of communities in Leicester *

- strengthening local social networks – family, friends, neighbours
- addressing the concerns of communities on the outer estates
- supporting local activities for local people
- fostering inter-cultural contacts between communities **
- sharing issues and concerns between geographical communities
- developing strategies for welcoming newcomers.

2. Working with and supporting young people

- improving support to alienated young people
- providing appropriate 'things to do' for young people
- addressing the generation gap
- fostering inter-cultural contact between young people in schools and colleges.

3. Building confidence and a sense of belonging about living in Leicester

- building the sense of self-esteem of individuals, communities, neighbourhoods and of the city
- developing community leadership at all levels
- establishing inter-cultural activities and events valuing shared and distinct cultures
- supporting cultural festivals and celebrations which open up contacts across communities
- supporting inter-faith activities.

4. Addressing the immediate social tensions in the city

- the tensions between communities
- reducing the disaffection amongst some youth
- intra-community tensions i.e. tensions within communities.

5. Improving communication and information activities

- improving information and channels of communication to and from Leicester residents
- spreading the Community Cohesion message across the city
- addressing perceptions of unfairness
- raising understanding of different cultures.

Common Issues:

Community Plan
Partnership Working
Equalities Strategies
Economic Regeneration

- Delivering better services and tackling broad social problems
- Developing collaborative relationships with other agencies – i.e. greater partnership and cross-sectoral working
- Tackling inequalities, prejudice and discrimination.
- Addressing economic and social disadvantage through regeneration programmes.



Community Plan Issues:

Community

- reducing crime and the fear of crime
- raising poor educational standards
- alleviating poverty and deprivation
- addressing unemployment
- cleaning up the physical environment
- improving social housing
- fostering greater confidence in the police.

* Communities – refers to geographical communities, communities of interest and recognises the diversity of individuals within these communities.

** Culture – refers to the wide and rich customs and traditions that exist within all communities, which may change over time.