



NORTH EAST (OUTER) AREA COMMITTEE

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Hall, Leeds on
Monday, 5th December, 2011 at 5.30 pm**

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

G Wilkinson (Chair) - Wetherby;
A Lamb - Wetherby;
J Procter - Wetherby;

R D Feldman - Alwoodley;
P Harrand - Alwoodley;
D Cohen - Alwoodley;

A Castle - Harewood;
R Procter - Harewood;
M Robinson - Harewood;

**Agenda compiled by:
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**East North East Area Leader:
Rory Barke
Tel: 33 67627**

A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF COUNCIL FUNCTIONS AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

There are certain functions that are defined by regulations which can only be carried out at a meeting of the Full Council or under a Scheme of Delegation approved by the Full Council. Everything else is an Executive Function and, therefore, is carried out by the Council's Executive Board or under a Scheme of Delegation agreed by the Executive Board.

The Area Committee has some functions which are delegated from full Council and some Functions which are delegated from the Executive Board. Both functions are kept separately in order to make it clear where the authority has come from so that if there are decisions that the Area Committee decides not to make they know which body the decision should be referred back to.

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting.)</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items or information have been identified on the agenda</p>	

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	
5			<p>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</p> <p>To declare any personal / prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 12 of the Members Code of Conduct.</p>	
6			<p>OPEN FORUM</p> <p>In accordance with Paragraphs 6.24 and 6.25 of the Area Committee Procedure Rules, at the discretion of the Chair a period of up to 10 minutes may be allocated at each ordinary meeting for members of the public to make representations or to ask questions on matters within the terms of reference of the Area Committee. This period of time may be extended at the discretion of the Chair. No member of the public shall speak for more than three minutes in the Open Forum, except by permission of the Chair.</p>	
7			<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2011.</p>	1 - 8
8			<p>WELL BEING FUND CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS (EXECUTIVE FUNCTION)(10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the East North East Area Leader providing Members with an update on the current position of the capital and revenue budget for the Outer North East, together with applications made for funding.</p>	9 - 20

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
9			<p>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES - PERFORMANCE UPDATE ON THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (EXECUTIVE FUNCTION)(10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Locality Manager (East North East) providing an update on performance against the Service Level Agreement between Outer North East Area Committee and the East North East Locality Team.</p>	21 - 38
10			<p>DEVELOPING A LOCALITY APPROACH BETWEEN LEEDS CITY COUNCIL SERVICES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE TEAMS/POLICE COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICERS (PCSOS)(COUNCIL FUNCTION) (10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods providing Members with an overview of progress to develop more joined-up working within locality based City Council services and Neighbourhood Police Teams/PCSOs.</p>	39 - 50
11			<p>LEEDS CITIZENS PANEL IN SUPPORT OF LOCALITY WORKING (COUNCIL FUNCTION) (10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Customer Access and Performance outlining the progress being made to create and manage a new and enlarged Leeds Citizens' Panel that will form an important tool for the Council and partners' consultation activity.</p>	51 - 62
12			<p>SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE REPORT (COUNCIL FUNCTION) (10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services on the School demographic process with Outer North East.</p>	63 - 68
13			<p>WELFARE REFORM (COUNCIL FUNCTION) (10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the East North East Area Leader on Welfare Reform.</p>	69 - 110

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
14			<p>CAPITAL RECEIPTS INCENTIVE SCHEME REPORT TO EXECUTIVE BOARD (COUNCIL FUNCTION)(10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Customer Access and Performance highlighting the Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme that received approval at the Executive Board meeting on 12th October 2011.</p>	111 - 126
15			<p>LOCALISM ACT 2011 (COUNCIL FUNCTION) (10 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Customer Access and Performance providing a high level summary of the main elements of the Localism Act that will be of direct relevance to Area Committees and to provide an opportunity to debate and influence the way the Council implements the legislation.</p>	127 - 138
16			<p>AREA CHAIRS FORUM MINUTES (COUNCIL FUNCTION)(5 MINS)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) notifying Members of the minutes of Area Chairs Forum meeting held on 5th September 2011 and to give a brief overview of the issues raised at the Area Chairs Forum.</p>	139 - 148
17			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Monday 6th February 2012 at 5.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.</p>	

Agenda Item 7

NORTH EAST (OUTER) AREA COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor G Wilkinson in the Chair

Councillors A Castle, D Cohen,
R D Feldman, P Harrand, A Castle,
D Cohen and M Robinson

39 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the October meeting of the North East (Outer) Area Committee.

In particular, he also welcomed Inspector Marcus Griffiths, West Yorkshire Police to the meeting. The Chair informed Members that Inspector Griffiths would be retiring from the police force at the beginning of December 2011.

The Chair, on behalf of the Area Committee, thanked Inspector Griffiths for his tremendous support to the North East (Outer) Area Committee over the years and wished him a long and happy retirement.

40 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A Lamb, J Procter and R Procter.

41 Declaration of Interests

The following personal declaration of interest was made:-

- Councillor G Wilkinson in his capacity as a Member of Wetherby Town Council, the organisers of the Wetherby Community Bonfire event (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 46 refers)

42 Open Forum

In accordance with paragraphs 6.24 and 6.25 of the Area Committee Procedure Rules, the Chair allowed a period of up to 10 minutes for members of the public to make representations or to ask questions on matters within the terms of reference of the Area Committee.

On this occasion, there were no matters raised under this item by members of the public.

43 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

RESOLVED -That the minutes of the meetings held on 19th September 2011 and 3rd October 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

44 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a) Consultation on Expansion of Primary School Provision for September 2011 (Minute 27 refers)

At the request of the Chair, Lesley Savage, Senior Planning and Bids Manager, Children's Services attended the meeting to provide the Area Committee with a verbal update on the work being undertaken across the city to ensure the authority meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of school places in the context of an increasing birth rate.

A brief discussion ensued and Members raised their concerns about the shortages of Primary School places within their respective wards, in particular where planned housing developments were planned.

Specific reference was made to the future provision in Boston Spa; Moortown, Scholes and east Leeds.

Following discussions, the Senior Planning and Bids Manager agreed to prepare a report for consideration at the next meeting on 5th December 2011 identifying the demographic needs of primary school provision within the three Outer North East wards.

b) Well Being Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets (Minute 30 refers)

Councillor M Robinson referred to the Security of Bardsey Recreation Ground project and sought further clarification on the amount awarded and the Area Committee's decision. He was of the opinion that the Area Committee had agreed to defer consideration of this application while awaiting planning information.

The East North East Area Leader responded and it was noted that to date a letter had not been sent to the applicant confirming the amount of funding. In the interim period the Area Leader agreed to look into this matter with a report back on progress at the next meeting under the Well Being item.

45 Outer North East Business Plan 2011/12

The East North East Area Leader submitted a report explaining the context for introducing a new business plan, including changes to the city and council planning and partnership framework and reviewing the Area Delivery Plan format.

Appended to the report was a copy of the Outer North East Area Committee Business Plan 2011/12 for the information/comment of the meeting.

Nicola Denson, East North East Area Management presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

The Chair invited Members to comment on the detail contained within the document.

During discussions it became apparent that there were a number of inaccuracies referred to in the ward profiles and it was agreed to delegate this issue to Ward Members for consideration prior to implementation/publication of the Business Plan.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given, in principle, to the Outer North East Business Plan 2011/12 in accordance with the report now submitted.
- c) That in relation to finalising the factual information contained within the three ward profiles, this issue be delegated at Ward Member level prior to implementation/publication of the Business Plan.
- d) That this Committee notes the progress made in relation to the plan and the Moor Allerton Partnership Neighbourhood Improvement Plan.

46 Well Being Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets

The East North East Area Leader submitted a report on an update on the current position of the capital and revenue budget for the Outer North East and setting out applications made for consideration by the Area Committee.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Outer North East Area Committee Well-Being Budget 2011-12 (Appendix 1 refers)
- Outer North East Area Management Capital Budget Information (Appendix 2 refers)

Rory Barke, East North East Area Leader and Nicola Denson, East North East Area Management presented the report and responded to Members' comments and queries.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That this Committee notes the spend to date and current balances for the 2011/12 financial year as outlined in the report now submitted.
- c) That the following project proposal be dealt with as follows:-

Project

Decision

Wetherby Community Bonfire

Approved £1,000

47 Notification of Appointments to Outside Bodies - Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Referring to Minute 25 of the meeting held on 19th September 2011, the Chief Officer (Democratic and Central Services) submitted a report on progress in relation to Local Authority Appointments to Outside Bodies with specific reference to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Briefing for Outer North East Councillors around role of Health Champion on the Health and Wellbeing Partnership (Appendix 1 refers)
- Terms of Reference for Local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships (Appendix 2 refers)
- Membership of East North East Leeds Health and Wellbeing Partnership (Appendix 3 refers)

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That Councillor G Wilkinson be appointed to the outstanding vacancy in relation to the Area Health and Wellbeing Partnership for 2011/12.

48 West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) - Fire Cover Proposals

A report of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service on fire cover proposals within the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service was submitted.

Appended to the report were copies of the following document for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Gipton and Stanks Fire Station Business Case (Appendix 1 refers)

Graham Ambler, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service presented the report and responded to Members' comments and queries.

In summary, specific reference was to the following issues:-

- clarification of the direct impact of the fire cover proposals within the North East Outer ward
- the need for Members of the Area Committee to be supplied with a copy of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service 'Moortown Fire Station Business Case'
(Graham Ambler, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service responded and agreed to e mail a copy of the document to the East North East Area Leader for dissemination to Members)
- the need for the Fire Service to include the views and comments of Parish Councils within the consultation process
- the need for a collective response to be undertaken by this Area Committee prior to the deadline for the receipt of comments i.e. 9th December 2011

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

- b) That on behalf of the Chair, Councillor P Harrand be requested to convene a Ward Members meeting prior to Council on 16th November 2011 in order for Members to formulate a collective response to the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

49 Annual Report for Parks and Countryside Service in North East Outer Area Committee

The Head of Parks and Countryside submitted a report updating the Area Committee on the yearly review of the Parks and Countryside Service in the North East Outer area.

Appended to the report was a copy of a document detailing residents survey information for the comment of the meeting.

Mike Kinnaird, Development Manager, Parks and Countryside, City Development presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the date when fencing works around the play area at Deepdale Recreation Ground would be undertaken
(The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside responded and informed the meeting that the works would be completed by January/February 2012)
- the need for Scholes in Bloom and Slaid Hill In Bloom to be included within future annual reports
(The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside responded and agreed to address this omission)
- the concern that Harewood Ward Members had not been consulted on the content of a report being presented to Executive Board on 2nd November 2011 in relation to consultation on Lotherton Hall and the current charging arrangements
(The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside responded and agreed to raise this issue with the project team)
- clarification of the support in place for future schemes (including MUGA schemes)
(The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside responded and confirmed that Parks and Countryside would provide as much support as possible to new schemes subject to available funding and were happy to work with Ward Members)

Arising from detailed discussions, Members raised their general concerns on how the visitor figures and resident survey information were calculated e.g. Cranmer Bank park/Lotherton Park and also on the accuracy of such figures.

The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside responded and agreed to e mail the protocol used for calculating the visitor figures/resident surveys to the East North East Area Leader for dissemination to Members. If requested a briefing session with interested Members on this issue would be arranged.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 5th December, 2011

In concluding, Rory Barke, East North East Area Leader provided the meeting with statistics and costings in relation to volunteer labour across the city and Members acknowledged the incredible support and value of the volunteer workforce in this area.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) The Development Manager, Parks and Countryside be requested to e mail the protocol used for calculating the visitor figures and resident surveys to the East North East Area Leader for dissemination to Members and if then requested, to arrange a briefing session with interested Members on this issue.

50 East North East Homes Capital Programme

The Director of Technical Services, East North East Homes Leeds submitted a report on progress on how the capital programme was formulated; progress made on each scheme and spending to date.

Appended to the report was a copy of document highlighting the Capital Programme areas for the information/comment of the meeting.

In addition to the above documents, a revised copy of the Capital Programme Areas (Appendix 1 refers) was circulated.

Tony Butler, Director of Technical Services, East North East Homes Leeds presented the report and responded to Members' comments and queries.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the protocol in relation to the shortfall in funding and details of those schemes which would not be completed within the year
- clarification why the Moortown ward appeared to be the 'poor relation' and the need for comparative data within other wards
(The Director of Technical Services responded and agreed to e mail comparative figures in relation to the Alwoodley ward via the East North East Area Leader for dissemination to Members)
- clarification of the background behind the 2011 'unallocated' Capital Programme Areas in relation to heating and whether they were transferable to other areas
(The Director of Technical Services responded and commented on the aims of the Heat Leeds Scheme which was in place to deliver this initiative)
- the need for Members to be supplied with a list of void properties
(The Director of Technical Services responded and agreed to e mail this information via the East North East Area Leader for dissemination to Members)
- to welcome the fact that 15 apprentices had been recently employed within Construction Services

RESOLVED- That the contents of the report be noted and welcomed.

51 East North East Homes Leeds Estate Investment Bids

The Director of Housing Services, East North East Homes Leeds submitted a report informing the Area Committee of the work carried out by East North East Homes Leeds and the residents Area Panel.

Jill Wildman, Director of Housing Services, East North East Homes Leeds presented the report and responded to Members' comments and queries.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the match funding criteria in relation to the Kirkfield Green scheme
(The Director of Housing Services responded and agreed to investigate this issue further with a report back to Members via the East North East Area Leader)
- clarification of the source of match funding
(The Director of Housing Services responded and informed the meeting that match funding was received from lottery funding, together with external funding)
- the need the Area Committee to address similar schemes approved by Aire Valley Homes
(The East North East Area Leader responded and agreed to follow up this issue with the aim of ensuring that this item was discussed at Ward Members meetings)

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

52 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 5th December 2011 at 5.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.

(The meeting concluded at 6.50 pm)

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Report of East North East Area Leader

Report to Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Well Being Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley, Harewood, Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides members with an update on the current position of the capital and revenue budget for the Outer North East.
2. Applications made for funding are included in the report for member's consideration.

Recommendations

3. Members are asked to:

- Note the spend to date and current balances for the 2011/12 financial year;

Consider the following project proposals and approve where appropriate the amount of grant to be awarded:

- Slaid Hill in Bloom
- Parivhar Luncheon Club
- Grit bin refills
- Bardsey Recreation Ground CCTV
- Farmwatch/Christmas Police Patrols

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The report provides members with an update on the current position of the revenue Wellbeing Funding for the Area Committee and sets out applications made for consideration by the Area Committee.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 Each of the ten Area Committees receive an annual allocation of revenue funding to commission projects and offer grants to organisations in the local area. The amount of funding for each Area Committee is determined by a formula based on 50% population and 50% deprivation in each area, as agreed by the Council's Executive Board. The Area Committees also have the balance of any revenue wellbeing budget which was allocated to them in previous years.
- 2.2 Alongside the wellbeing budget, ward councillors have access to other sources of local funding, such as Section 106, Ward Based Initiatives (WBI), Members Improvement in the Community and Environment (MICE). The use of this funding is discussed at ward member meetings as appropriate.

3. REVENUE PROJECTS

3.1 Wellbeing Revenue – available funding for 2011/12

The Council has agreed an allocation of wellbeing (revenue) budget across the ten Area Committees which includes a reduction on last year's allocation of £250k. The allocation to individual Area Committees is calculated using a formula based on 50% deprivation and 50% population. In February 2011 a new allocation of the Wellbeing funding to Area Committees was approved. The Outer North East allocation for 2011/12 is £112,000.

The Outer North East Area Committee manages its allocation by proportioning the amount between the three wards based on population. For the 2011/12 allocation, the split between wards is:

- Alwoodley: £41,664 (based on pop. = 37.2%)
- Harewood: £33,712 (based on pop. = 30.1%)
- Wetherby: £36,624 (based on pop. = 32.7%).

The current revenue financial position of the Area Committee is shown in Appendix 1. The format, in which this information is presented, has been approved by the Area Committee to list clearly the schemes approved (i.e. committed) in 2010/11 and which are still to be paid for in 2011/12.

The funding will be used to support the priorities in the Community Charter as agreed by the Area Committee in March 2011. Updates on spending and projects funded will be reported to the Area Committee on a regular basis.

3.2 New schemes for consideration

3.2.1 Project: Troughs, Tools and Trugs
Organisation: Slaid Hill in Bloom
Amount: £925.09
Ward: Alwoodley ward

- Slaid Hill in Bloom is an active group which would like to continue its work at the Slaid Hill shopping parade and surrounding area.
- The funding will be used to pay for four flower troughs for the shopping parade at Wike Ridge Lane to make the area more attractive, to purchase tools and trugs so that more members can get involved, and maintenance of current tools. Some of the funding will also be used to design and print the 1,000 newsletters the group use to keep residents informed of activities and hopefully increase volunteers.
- This scheme will benefit the immediate community, businesses and many drivers and shoppers that pass through the busy area and are given a boost by the colourful displays.
- Community Charter priorities: Communities.

3.2.2 Project: Sambhav
Organisation: Parivar Luncheon club
Amount: £6547.75
Ward: Alwoodley ward

The Parivar luncheon club brings together elderly men, women and carers of the BME community, providing them with a chance to come out of social exclusion and encouraging them to take part in various health related activities. This project aims to improve the health and social life of its members by organising exercise sessions, health awareness speeches, and walks to the park and trips to various places of interest. The group members also attend city events for older people to make their voices heard. Our group workers provide language support throughout these activities.

The money will be used to promote independence, awareness, happiness as well as social and health well being by providing them not just social get together but regular information sessions too on healthy diet, keeping themselves mobile as well as safe in and out of the house. The total cost of the project is £8,000.00.

A snapshot analysis of postcodes of luncheon club users shows that the majority live in either Chapel Allerton (10), Roundhay (7) and Alwoodley (16), giving a 50 – 50 split between Inner North East and Outer North East.

Community Charter priority: Health and Wellbeing

3.2.3 Project: Refilling Grit bins
Organisation: Leeds City Council
Amount: £1368
Ward: Alwoodley ward

At the September 2009 Area Committee, wellbeing funding was approved for the provision of 15 additional grit bins in the Alwoodley Ward for locations identified by ward members that did not meet the strict highways criteria for supplying a grit bin. The bins were installed on the condition that future refills would be funded by the Area Committee. Therefore this funding is to cover one refill at a cost of £91.22 per bin, total cost £1368.

Community Charter priority: Communities

3.2.4 Project: Security of Bardsey Recreation Ground
Organisation: Bardsey-cum-Rigton Parish Council
Amount: £3,000
Ward: Harewood

- This project was originally considered at the September meeting of the area committee, and was deferred pending further information.
- The Parish Council have had funding previously towards their playground renovations and have also carried out improvements to their sports club and surrounding area.
- They would now like to install a security system to protect these facilities, comprising of security lighting, CCTV and recording equipment. The Area Committee is being asked to fund £3,000 towards the total cost of £5,150 +VAT.
- Community Charter priorities: Communities and Children

3.2.5 Project: Farmwatch and Pre Christmas Patrols
Organisation: Wetherby Neighbourhood Policing Team
Amount: £6000 Farmwatch, £3,500 pre Christmas patrols
Wards: Wetherby and Harewood

Farmwatch is a programme run by the Wetherby NPT. It provides public reassurance, crime prevention patrols and arrest details in rural areas of the two wards. Two vehicles patrol the rural communities which are funded entirely by external organisations as an additional resource.

The pre-Christmas patrols are designed to address anti-social behaviour brought on by alcohol abuse and public order, leading to acquisitive crime in the town centre. The police will be on high visibility patrols thus engaging with the local community whilst maintaining the peace and addressing problems which may occur.

The total cost of the Farmwatch project is £21,000, and the NPT are seeking a contribution of £6000 from the area committee, split between Wetherby and Harewood Wards.

The cost of the pre Christmas patrols is £3500 for two weeks prior to Christmas.

Community Charter priority: Communities

3.3 Small grants and skips

Each of the wards has a pot set aside for community groups to apply into for small grants and skips. Below are the amounts remaining in each pot for the three wards.

	small grant budget £	skip budget £
Alwoodley	1,398	1073
Harewood	981	1275
Wetherby	2632.50	1746

3.4 Wellbeing Capital Funding 2011/12

There is no new capital wellbeing allocation in 2011/12. The Outer North East capital programme is now at an end. The balance shows a small amount left in the Wetherby ward allocation. A complete list of projects is in the appendix 2.

3 Corporate Considerations

3.1 Consultation and Engagement

3.1.1 The local community and VCFS groups are consulted and the well being fund grant process is shared with them via the community engagement strategy and events that are attended. In addition feedback is provided via the Community Charter. Consultation on the priorities within the Community Charter is undertaken on an annual basis and shapes the priorities which the Well Being Fund is used to deliver.

3.1.2 The ward member groups consider the applications for funding and make a recommendation for the Area Committee to consider.

3.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

Well Being Funding is used to ensure that inequalities within the local area are addressed through local projects and schemes. All projects funded by wellbeing monies must demonstrate:

- Equality and diversity issues have been considered in the planning of the project,
- How equality and diversity issues have shaped the project delivery;
- The impact of the project will be on different groups;
- how the project will promote good community relations between different groups and how barriers that might prevent their involvement will be overcome.

3.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

3.3.1 Wellbeing funding is used to support the priorities set out in the Outer North East Community Charter which supports the Vision for Leeds.

3.4 Resources and Value for Money

3.4.1 Spending and monitoring of the Wellbeing budget is administered by the Area Management Team in accordance with the decisions made by this Area Committee.

3.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

3.5.1 The Area Committee has delegated responsibility for taking of decisions and monitoring of activity relating to utilisation of capital and revenue well being budgets within the framework of the Council's Constitution (Part 3, Section 3D) and in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

3.5.2 There is no exempt or confidential information in this report.

3.5.3 Decisions on wellbeing funding are delegated to the Area Committee from the Council's Executive Board, therefore they are subject to call in.

3.6 Risk Management

3.6.1 All wellbeing funded projects must demonstrate that they have identified any potential risks for the project and what action would/will take to avoid or minimise them. Details of the risk assessments individual projects are available from the author of this report.

4 Conclusions

4.1 The Wellbeing fund provides financial support for projects in the Outer North East area which help to deliver the priorities of the Community Charter.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the spend to date and current balances for the 2011/12 financial year;

Consider the following project proposals and approve where appropriate the amount of grant to be awarded:

- Slaid Hill in Bloom
- Parivhar Luncheon Club
- Grit bin refills
- Bardsey Recreation Ground CCTV
- Farmwatch/Christmas Police Patrols

6 Background documents

6.1 Area Committee Roles and Functions 2011/12

6.2 Report to Executive Board, 11 February 2011, Revenue Budget 2011/12 and Capital Programme.

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OUTER NORTH EAST AREA COMMITTEE WELL-BEING BUDGET 2011-12

Funding / Spend Items	Alwoodley	Harewood	Wetherby	Total
Balance b/f 2010-11	24,615.53	16,984.00	50,054.92	91,654.45
Schemes Approved from 2009-10 budget to be spent in 2011-11	16,667.00	-	-	16,667.00
Schemes Approved from 2010-11 budget to be spent in 2011-12	7,948.53	16,984.00	50,054.92	74,987.45
New Allocation for 2011-12	41,664.00	33,712.00	36,624.00	112,000.00
Total available for new schemes in 2011-12	41,664.00	33,712.00	36,624.00	112,000.00
2009-10 Schemes to be paid for in 2011-12				
Sandringham Drive Parking Improvements (LCC Highways)	16,667.00	-	-	
Total of schemes approved in 2009-10	16,667.00	-	-	16,667.00
2010-11 Schemes to be paid for in 2011-12				
Balance of Skips Budget	1,073.00	1,003.00	1,003.00	
Balance of Small Grants Budget	1,500.00	981.00	2,632.50	
New Grit Bins for Alwoodley	612.84			
Open House Moving Again Q4 (March 2011)	3,750.00			
Keeping Slaid Hill Clean & Green Q2 (Sept 11)	1,012.69			
Scholes Conservation Area (Oct 11)		6,000.00		
Shadwell Conservation Area Review (Oct 11)		6,000.00		
Scholes Parking Restrictions (LCC Highways)		3,000.00		
Wetherby Site Based Gardener (Mar 11)			19,900.00	
Wetherby Road Plantation (Apr 11)			1,000.00	
WISE Activities for People over 60yrs			3,150.00	
Barleyfields Youth Club Refurbishment			4,842.42	
Deepdale Fencing (P&C)			11,700.00	
Deepdale Fencing (P&C) - 2nd phase			5,000.00	
Rental Support at Deepdale Community Centre (remaining balance)			827.00	
Total of schemes approved in 2010-11	7,948.53	16,984.00	50,054.92	74,987.45
Approved 2011-12 Schemes				
Small Grants	-	2,500.00	3,000.00	
Skips	-	712.00	853.00	
Localism Officer Post (split with Wetherby)		19,500.00		
Localism Officer Consultation (Split with Wetherby)		500.00		
MAECare Promoting Partnerships		2,000.00		
Localism Officer Post (split with Harewood)			19,500.00	
Localism Officer Consultation (Split with Harewood)			500.00	
MAECare - Promoting Partnerships	6,694.00			
Northcall	10,000.00			
Northcall (Report 1)	2,500.00			
St Barnabas Central Heating	4,000.00			
Burglary Action Plan - Trembler Alarms	499.20			
Wetherby Festival			750.00	
Barleyfields Radio			1,000.00	
Social Activities Sunshine Café			3,150.00	
Wigton Moor United Reformed Church	1,677.00			
Tree Tops and Open House Community Centre Budget	5,000.00			
Wetherby Bonfire			1,000.00	
Total of schemes approved in 2011-12	30,370.20	25,212.00	29,753.00	85,335.20
Grand Total Projected Spend 2011-12	54,985.73	42,196.00	79,807.92	176,989.65
Ward Budget (inc balance b/f)	66,279.53	50,696.00	86,678.92	203,654.45
Remaining Ward Budget	11,293.80	8,500.00	6,871.00	26,664.80

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CAPITAL	Allocated at Area Committee			
	Alwoodley	Harewood	Wetherby	Total
Allocations				
2004-07	85,754	85,753	85,754	257,261
2007-08	24,500	24,500	24,500	73,500
2008-09	24,500	24,500	24,500	73,500
transfer from Alwoodley to Wetherby	-20,000		20,000	0
2009-10 incl 10% reduction in Feb10	22,030	22,030	22,030	66,090
Total allocation 2004-10	136,784	156,783	176,784	470,351
Bramham Playground			2,000	2,000
Wetherby in Bloom watering system			9,000	9,000
Thorner over 55s extension		20,500		20,500
Moortown RUFC	10,000			10,000
The Zone sports surface	4,800			4,800
The Zone kitchen	3,750			3,750
Shadwell Lane Community facility	24,000			24,000
Wetherby number plate recog			4,150	4,150
Aberford playground		10,000		10,000
Boston Spa Milleneum Gardens			10,000	10,000
Slaid Hill in Bloom	1,777			1,777
Walton PC bus shelter			3,250	3,250
Environment fund 2006-2008		8,850	8,850	17,700
Collingham roundabout		2,490		2,490
Boston Spa Village Hall kitchen			5,000	5,000
Barwick Village Hall toilet		3,850		3,850
Bramham Village Hall disabled access			5,000	5,000
Wendell Hill conservation project		3,649		3,649
Wigton Moor school path	2,985			2,985
Carr Lane footpath		5,000		5,000
Cranmer bank CCTV	3,500			3,500
Barwick Miners Institute		3,643		3,643
Barwick Festive Lights		3,900		3,900
Northcall Computers	1,500			1,500
Environment Fund 2008-2009	8,123	14,527	4,250	26,900
Thorner Victory Hall		10,000		10,000
Shadwell Lane Library		1,000		1,000
Cranmer Bank security fencing	4,000			4,000
Thorner Parish Centre		10,000		10,000
Holywell Lane Footpath		5,000		5,000
Fir Tree Vale	5,000			5,000
Bardsey Tennis Club		9,746		9,746
Alwoodley Park kitchen	15,000			15,000
Scholes swimming pool		1,000		1,000
Scholes playground		10,000		10,000
Bardsey heritage lights (cancelled)		0		0
Bardsey sports club		18,000		18,000
Shadwell village hall carpark		7,415		7,415
Wigton Moor Church	3,896			3,896
Radio Jcom	8,000			8,000
Bardsey Playground Renovation		10,000		10,000
Boston Spa Children's Centre			105,000	105,000
Leodensians Junior Rugby Club	4,900			4,900
Alwoodley Community Hall	10,000			10,000
Moortown RUFC	2,200			2,200
Aberford & District PC lighting		3,250		3,250
Alwoodley methodist church - toilets	5,606			
Parking improvements in Sandringham Drive	9,747			
Alwoodley welcome sign	3,000			
Path to scout hut	5,000			
Roundabouts			20,000	
Total actual spend	136,784	161,820	176,500	475,104
Balance remaining	0	-5,037	284	
Budget adjustment		5,000		
Balance Remaining	0	0	284	

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Report of Locality Manager (East North East)

Report to Area Committee (Outer North East)

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Environmental Services - Performance Update on the Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley Harewood Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of the main issues:

This report provides the first half-year update on performance against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Outer North East Area Committee and the East North-East (ENE) Environmental Locality Team. However, as this is the first such report since the SLA was approved it covers the period from September to November 2011.

Recommendations:

That the Outer NE Committee note the report, comment where progress in delivering the SLA is good/not so good and how useful the format of this first update is in helping Members make that judgement.

Purpose of this report

- 1 This report provides an update on performance against the Service Level Agreement between Outer NE Area Committee and the ENE Environmental Locality Team.
- 2 This is the first such report and covers the period from September to November 2011. Normally the performance update reports to Area Committee will cover 6 month periods (ie May-Oct, Nov-April).
- 3 As the SLA was only agreed at the beginning of October and the formal relationship with the Area Committee is still comparatively new, this first update report focuses on providing information on the progress made against the commitments made in the SLA. It sets out to give the Area Committee a better idea of the range of functions the service actually delivers across the area and how that makes a difference on the ground/at the front line.
- 4 It is planned for future updates to Area Committee and reports through the Environmental Sub Group to provide more information on performance against the agreed outcome of an acceptable level of cleanliness, how efficiencies are being achieved and the use of the available resource across the locality.

Background information

- 5 At its meeting of 30th March 2011, the Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services.
- 6 The delegation made clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the service that achieves as a minimum, the service standards set by Executive Board.
- 7 The SLA should determine the principles of deployment of the available resources through:
 - the identification of priorities for service delivery annually (both geographical and in terms of types of services delivered);
 - the agreement of the most appropriate approaches to be taken to achieve local environmental cleanliness and quality.
- 8 Services included in the delegation are:
 - Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
 - Leaf clearing;
 - Litter bin emptying;
 - Dog warden services (agreed to exclude dangerous dogs in Outer NE SLA);
 - Littering & flytipping regulation;
 - Domestic & commercial waste (storage & transportation issues);
 - Highways enforcement (abandoned & nuisance vehicles, A-boards on pavements, mud on roads and placards on street furniture);
 - Graffiti enforcement; and
 - Overgrown vegetation controls.

- 9 Resources are organised into three wedge/locality/area based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, each managed by a Locality Manager.
- 10 The SLA sets out the principles, priorities and outcomes that would be applied and measured in the delivery of the delegated services in the Outer NE area. It also set out how the Locality Team would deliver it's activities and how ward members and the Area Committee would be able to influence changes to local activity and receive performance updates.
- 11 The SLA for Outer NE Area Committee was agreed on 3rd October 2011. The new ENE Locality Team went live from 5th September.
- 12 This is the first performance report to the Area Committee and covers the period since the new service went live at the beginning of September.

Main issues

- 13 The SLA sets out how the service will be developed, organised and delivered in four key sections:
 - a) **Service Principles and Priorities**
 - 12 Part 1 of Appendix A provides an update on progress implementing new service principles (inc values and culture change) and priorities. This includes detail on what we have been doing to change the way the service delivers, to increase efficiency and become more responsive to local needs; together with some specific examples to evidence progress is being made.
 - b) **Service Activities**
 - 13 Part 2 of Appendix A provides an update on progress actually delivering the different strands of service activity and provides analysis and examples for each ward to evidence delivery. Appendix B provides an analysis of the service requests, legal notices and fixed penalty notices dealt with by the enforcement and regulatory staff in the three Outer NE wards during this reporting period.
 - c) **Outcomes**
 - 14 The SLA proposes that outcomes be measured in terms of formal assessment of neighbourhood cleanliness using the previously named "NI195" methodology, together with resident satisfaction gathered through the Leeds citizens panel and/or local neighbourhood surveys. There is no data available for this reporting period from either of these sources. The next survey is taking place across the city late November/early December 2011.
 - 15 Discussions are taking place corporately about whether the citizens panel can be used to gather resident satisfaction at a meaningful level for Area Committees.
 - 16 In the meantime, the Locality Manager continues to use the judgement of the ward members/Area Committee and feedback from the Town and Parish Council Forum to assess whether satisfaction levels are acceptable and where outcomes need improvement.

d) Accountability and Member Influence

- 17 Since the SLA was approved in October the Locality Team has ensured senior manager representation at each of the 3 ward member meetings. The meetings have provided opportunity for members to be updated in progress establishing the team, be briefed on how the new mechanical blocks/frequencies effect their ward, have discussions on how routes could be altered and where new litter bins could be best placed. In this particular period there has also been discussion on de-leafing and what streets/paths need doing.
- 18 The new Environmental Sub-Group has been established and will have met for the first time on 5th December, just prior to this meeting.
- 19 Individual ward members are referring issues direct to the Locality Team where they are deemed a significant issue that needs a quick response. Feedback from Members is positive and that most issues are being responded to and resolved quickly. There are some issues though that Members still feel are not always being responded to quick enough, for example requests for new litter bins. This particular issue will be dealt with quicker now as a contractor has been found that can provide a three/four week turn round, delivers the bins on site and without need to drill/screw the bin in place.
- 20 The Locality Manager has attended and made presentations/took questions at the last two Wetherby and Harewood Parish and Town Council Forum meetings. Parish Councils have feedback that they feel they have a more responsive service/relationship with the Locality Team. Discussions are ongoing about how the Locality Team can best work with Parishes in reintroducing a lengthsman style arrangement across a number of villages, possibly with match funding from all parties.

Recommendations

- 21 That Outer NE Area Committee note and comment on:
 - a. what aspects of the service they feel are working well and delivering against the commitments made in the SLA;
 - b. what aspects of the service do the feel are not working as well as they should against the commitments made in the SLA and would like to see improvements made;
 - c. the format of the update and its usefulness for the Area Committee in judging progress made against SLA commitments.



Half Year Performance Update (September – November 2011)

Part One: Progress against the agreed service principles and priorities

	Progress since September 2011
<p>Under the terms of the agreement the Locality Manager will ensure the following principles will be applied and priorities addressed in how the Locality Team plans and delivers its services across the Outer North East area:</p> <p>a) Outcome focused: The ENE Locality Team will focus on delivering the best outcome for residents across the Inner East area - so that the streets and neighbourhoods in which they live are of an acceptably clean standard. It is this equality of standard that every resident will be entitled to, not necessarily the same quantity of service. For example, not everyone will get their street swept every x weeks, but everyone will be entitled to get their street swept as and when needed if it is the best solution to making sure it doesn't fall to an unacceptable standard of cleanliness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Locality and Service Managers have spent the last 2/3 months meeting individually with all 60 members of staff in the locality team. The purpose of this has been to make clear from the beginning that the relationship between managers and front line staff is key to the improvement and successful delivery of the service. In terms of refocusing the service on outcomes, the meetings with staff have been to listen to their ideas, worries and issues, and to discuss how they can be better supported in delivering a first class service to residents - which has the outcome of clean streets and neighbourhoods at the heart of what they do. • As a result of greater staff involvement, improvements have already been made in equipping staff with better tools to do the job. For example the flytipping crews asked that they be provided with digital cameras to help gather evidence and also potentially save enforcement officers time in unnecessary trips and get the flytip removed quicker. • Frontline staff are now consulted on where new bins should be placed before they are ordered. • Although this reporting period has seen a prioritisation of deleafing for capacity days, where possible the service has responded to requests for ad-hoc cleans of streets

	<p>where a regular sweep is not necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Locality Manager or senior representative attends every ward member meeting to ensure that actions are being taken where Members feel the greatest difference can be made.
<p>b) Responsive to local needs: The service will be more responsive to local needs. There will be greater capacity built in to react to current hotspots, plan for known local events that may effect the cleanliness of neighbourhoods and go where the problem is at that time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new blocks/schedules for the mechanical sweeping came into force from September. By moving to an “8 day week”, a spare “capacity day” was created. Across the locality that equated to 32 capacity days for the Sept-Nov period. Details of how capacity days have been used in Outer NE are provided elsewhere in this update – for de-leafing, catch up cleans and ad-hoc requests.
<p>c) Common sense approach: The service will have a common sense approach which supports getting the job done. No cleaning of clean streets, more flexible routes/coverage, no driving/walking past problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work has been done with enforcement staff to shift the emphasis of what they do away from “as many jobs as possible” to the most effective use of their time to make a difference to the environment in which people live. Support and encouragement is being given for them to take more risks (e.g. do more work in default), to be zero-tolerant where that is the best approach and use common sense when judging what actions to prioritise when faced with several issues in neighbourhoods/workloads.
<p>d) Working as a team in our priority neighbourhoods: The service will work as part of the “team neighbourhood” approach and contribute towards tackling problems identified in the agreed priority neighbourhood of Moor Allerton (inc Lingfields and Fir Trees). We will provide a lead at tasking meetings on environmental crime/asb issues and make sure coordinated action is being taken against the local priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have briefed NPT Inspectors on the new locality team service. Agreed to use tasking mechanism to identify top local priority for joint working on environmental crime/offence issue – to involve PCSOs more closely in helping tackle such offences as the main patrol resource available in our neighbourhoods. The agreed environmental priority for the Roundhay, Alwoodly and Moortown NPT was agreed as regular Stop and Search operations targeting illegal waste carrying and scrap metal theft. The agreed environmental priority for Wetherby and Villages NPT is tackling of fly-tipping/littering by parked up vehicles (mainly HGVs) on Sandringham Road, Sandbeck Way and Prevas Road.
<p>e) Supporting community action: We will work better with Parish and Town Councils and other community based organisations that: add value to what we do, provide eyes and ears in villages/ communities, contribute towards making our streets and neighbourhood cleaner and have a role to play in making our service more accountable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Locality Manager attended the Town And Parish Council Forum meeting of 20th October to update the representatives on progress, including the news that the SLA has been approved, and to take questions etc. Some examples of actions arising from intelligence/referrals passed to us by Parish Councils and/or village residents include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Thorp Arch – gully clearing at Thorp Arch bridge to coincide with bridge closure

<p>and leaf clearance programmed in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clifford - responded to request that a litter bin purchased and installed by the PC be added to the collection route ✓ Harewood - flytipping removed from Wike Lane and Forge Lane laybys (Cllr R Proctor request). ✓ Bardsey – clearance of leaves on Church Lane and dealt with overgrown hedges onto pathways ✓ Boston Spa – Provided two new litter bin liners at request of Parish Clerk. Service Manager and local street attendant met with reps from the PC, agreed to update map of litter bins in village and make sure collection crew have it (done), suggestions for new litter bins to be considered and problem of ex-recycling litter bins to be addressed to reduce being filled with glass bottles. ✓ Thorner – response to complaint that litter bins seemed to be being missed with clarity re the collection days and direct number of team manager provided to Parish Councillor. Removal of flytipped tyres on Milner Lane following report from Parish Clerk. ✓ Shadwell – removal of leaves from ginnel (note moss problem still to be resolved through help from P&C). Progress is also being made to get corporate approval to allow the In-bloom group free access to council waste sites to dispose of green waste (ie cuttings, vegetation). ✓ Collingham - urgent gully cleaning at Wattle Syke following flooding ✓ Scarcroft – responded to long standing compliant of blocked gullies at Slaid Hill/Wike Ridge Lane and problem cleared ✓ Wetherby Town Council – reported missing litter bin near Wetherby swimming baths, new replacement bin installed ✓ Scholes – quick response to reports of full litter bins at Rakehill Road and urgent one off path/road sweep of Arthursdale Grange due to mess left by utilities services work. ✓ East Keswick – response to request from Parish Clerk to book a village leaf clearance visit, with particular focus on Moor Lane (scheduled for 2/12/11) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting clarification on what resource is to be provided by Area Management to support the development of this and similar service development issues. The original commitment was for staff secondment to bring in this expertise. In the meantime looking to reshape enforcement section of the team to build in more prevention work. Opportunities for joint work with the localism officer on this are also to be looked at.
	<p>f) Education and Enforcement: We will develop and implement local strategies which effectively combine education and enforcement approaches to tackling long standing problems. For example; we will develop a better relationship with schools to work together to prevent litter on school routes, and, have a clearer policy around the cleaning of shop frontages that works in</p>


<p>partnership with local businesses to make local shopping centres/main streets clean and pleasant places to visit; for example Wetherby and Collingham main streets.</p>	<p>g) Working with ALMOs to deliver more effectively: We will work in partnership with ENE and Aire Valley Homes to make more effective and efficient use of our combined resource; focusing initially on joint approaches to cleaning open land/spaces and developing a maintenance programme for ginnels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with ENE Homes to have mapped all the ginnels across ENE by end of 2011 and have a proposal to bring to Area Committee in early 2012 for a joint annual maintenance programme to be included in next year's SLA. • In the meantime, agreed with ENE Homes to take pragmatic approach to clearing/cleaning existing ginnel problems as they are referred through. P&C agreed to help during winter months, particularly in rights of way ginnel/paths and where overgrowth needs cutting back etc.
<p>h) Planning for seasonal and annual events: We will ensure that there is sufficient capacity and flexibility in the service to programme in work to deal with leaf fall in autumn and help clean up after significant community events planned during the year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity days created by new mechanical sweeping blocks have been prioritised toward de-leafing operations/programme across ENE. • Using a dedicated budget, a temporary de-leafing team has been created to cover the ENE locality, bringing in agency staff and adapting an old refuse vehicle. This team works 9am-5pm, Monday to Saturday during the deleafing season. • The following is a summary of the de-leafing so far in each ward (over and above the already planned normal sweeping schedule): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alwoodley Ward - 69 streets have been additionally cleaned as part of the de-leafing programme to date. This includes a visit from either a footpath, road sweeper or manual team. Areas cleansed include: Shadwell Lane, Harrogate Road between the Ring Road and the Grammar School at Leeds, Alwoodley Lane, The Darkwoods and a slippy footpath in Shadwell Village ✓ Harewood Ward - 8 streets have been additionally cleaned as part of the de-leafing programme to date. This includes a visit from either a footpath, road sweeper or manual team. Areas cleansed include: Bardsey village, Highcroft and Langwith Mews at Collingham, Aberford, Barwick, Scholes and East Keswick are programmed in to be visited toward the end of November as part of the ongoing de-leafing programme. ✓ Wetherby - 2 streets have been additionally cleaned as part of the de-leafing programme to date. a visit from either a footpath, road sweeper or manual team. Areas cleansed include: Spofforth Hill area. Thorp Arch, Deighton Road and Boston Spa are programmed in to be visited in the next month as part of the ongoing de-leafing programme. 	

Part Two: Progress delivering the agreed service activities

The following are examples of activity delivered during the reporting period which illustrate the work being undertaken and impact they are having. The Enforcement section should be read in conjunction with Appendix B which provides the total number of casework/referrals for the period broken down by type.

<p>The Environmental Locality Team, via this SLA, undertakes to provide the following service provision to the Outer North East wards determined by the Committee and statutory obligations placed upon the Council. Activity type is split between programmed and reactive service provision, with activity detailed separately below for each service.</p> <p>a) Mechanical Path & Road Sweeping Sweeping is largely undertaken by pre-determined routes (blocks) which are scheduled on a cycle set on a 8-day, 3 weekly, 6 weekly or 12 weekly basis. As part of the capacity review for mechanical sweeping, the new work cycles are based on an 8-day "week". This has enabled an extra day of "spare" capacity to be programmed in, which will allow the service to recover days lost for planned and unplanned leave. Any remaining capacity will be used to respond to local problems, support community clean ups, tackle seasonal issues (e.g. leaf clearance) and take part in joint-operations agreed through tasking meetings.</p>	<p>Alwoodley Ward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of the 13 sweeping blocks programmed to be swept during the period between w/c 5th September and w/c 7th November: • 10 work blocks (77%) have been completed • 3 work blocks were not completed during the period due to holidays/sickness. • We have carried out 4 additional mechanical sweeps in the ward (requests from members, public etc outside of the schedule) by using capacity days/capacity time when operatives have finished 	<p>Harewood Ward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of the 17 sweeping blocks programmed to be swept during the period between w/c 5th September and w/c 7th November: • All 17 work blocks (100%) have been completed • 0 work blocks were not completed during the period due to holidays/sickness • We have carried out 8 additional mechanical sweeps in the ward (requests from members, public etc outside of the schedule) by using capacity days/capacity time when operatives have finished their scheduled days work 	<p>Wetherby Ward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of the 16 sweeping blocks programmed to be swept during the period between w/c 5th September and w/c 7th November: • 15 work blocks (94%) have been completed • 1 work block was not completed during the period due to holidays/sickness. • We have carried out 2 additional mechanical sweeps in the ward (requests from members, public etc outside of the schedule) by using capacity days/capacity time when operatives have finished their scheduled days work
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	<p>their scheduled days work including around the Harrogate Road and Alwoodley Lane areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NB The majority of capacity days have been used for leaf clearance/complaint referrals during this period including some intensive work in the Alwoodley ward (eg Darkwoods). Once the seasonal work has been completed the capacity days will be used for recovering any missed blocks and for complaints/referrals. 	<p>including an extensive clean up in the Bardsey area, the A58 Wetherby Road at Scarcroft. We also have capacity days planned in to visit Aberford, Barwick, Thorne, Scholes and East Keswick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During summer, we committed resources outside of the schedule to cleansing Shadwell village as part of the Shadwell in Bloom preparations. • NB The majority of capacity days have been used for leaf clearance/complaint referrals during this period including some extensive work as above in the Harewood ward. Once the seasonal work has been completed the capacity days will be used for recovering any missed blocks and for complaints/referrals. 	<p>including around the Wetherby Town Centre area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NB The majority of capacity days have been used for leaf clearance/complaint referrals during this period. We have additional visits to the Wetherby, Boston Spa and Thorp Arch areas over late Nov/early Dec on capacity days. Once the seasonal work has been completed the capacity days will be used for recovering any missed blocks and for complaints/referrals.
<p>b) Manual Litter Picking Manual litter picking is undertaken on pre-set routes which are scheduled to be completed over a 7 day period, with each route completed by a team of two streetscene attendants who alternate duty through</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data available at this time to record the streets completed or streets missed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data available at this time to record the streets completed or streets missed. • We have carried out 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data available at this time to record the streets completed or streets missed. • We have carried out 2

<p>the 4 by 3 shift pattern. Daily coverage per attendant is expected to be approximately 11km. Where possible, variations to the routes will be negotiated at ward member meetings. This will be limited to instances where the total daily distance covered is not increased.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have carried out 2 additional litter picks in the area along Harrogate Road at the request of residents/enforcement. Deep manual litter pick/cleanse of guided bus lane on King Lane (see photo) – to be carried out 3 times a year as an additional commitment to the SLA. 	<p>additional litter picks in the area in Scholes, Aberford and around the A64 York Road at the request of residents/enforcement this is in addition to the pre-programmed litter picking carried out in the ward by the existing parish beatsweeper at Collingham.</p>	<p>additional litter picks in the area at the lay-by on Boston Road at the request of residents/enforcement this is in addition to the pre-programmed litter picking carried out in the ward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have also held a meeting between the Parish Council at Boston Spa, our management team and the local area litter picker in an attempt to jointly identify grot/litter hot spots and act quickly to clear them by using local information /intelligence in a more pro-active way.
<p>c) Litter Bins During the first period of the new SLA work will be done through ward member meetings and progress reported to the Environmental sub group to verify the locations of the bins, agree where locations can be changed to better meet local needs, replace bins unfit for purpose and where possible new bins provided where they will be most effective. Litter bins will be emptied and the immediate vicinity checked for cleanliness by one of the two crews on duty in the ENE Locality Team. The SLA is for all bins to be emptied without any overflowing and the frequencies of visits to bins will be adjusted to ensure this commitment is met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data available at this time to record numbers of litter bins collected or missed. We have installed 1 x new litter bin outside the shops on Harrogate Road in the ward at the request of members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data available at this time to record numbers of litter bins collected or missed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data available at this time to record numbers of litter bins collected or missed. We have installed 1 x new (replacement) bin near to the Swimming Pool in Wetherby

<p>d) Flytipping Flytipping removal is largely undertaken as a reactive service, responsive to customer complaints and 'in-house' requests (e.g. from Members, enforcement staff and partners), although the crews do have regular 'hot spots' to check on a pro-active basis. We aim to remove all reported fly tips within 36 hours of receiving the request, unless it requires specialist equipment or treatment (e.g. asbestos/chemicals). The service will work with the Regulatory team to investigate, deter and prevent future instances of fly tipping, and to resolve long standing fly tipping 'hot spots'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific data available at this time to record numbers of fly tipping reports received/closed out via the contact centre during this period. We have carried out 1 additional fly tip removal of approx 50 tyres from the Shadwell Lane/Ring Road area after a report from local residents and also approximately 200 tyres were removed from Eccup Lane. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific data available at this time to record numbers of fly tipping reports received/closed out via the contact centre during this period. We have carried out 8 additional fly tip removals from the ward including moving over approximately 1,000 tyres from various locations across the ward in direct response to the recent spate of fly tipped tyres. We are working very closely with the enforcement side of our team in sharing intelligence and trying to identify the culprits using things such as smart water. We have also removed fly tips from Rakehill Road, Scholes, Milner Lane, Thorne and Cattle Lane at Aberford and further large fly tips of tyres from the 'red bus café' layby on the A64 York Road and also a fly tip of assorted items on Wike Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific data available at this time to record numbers of fly tipping reports received/closed out via the contact centre during this period. We have carried out 3 additional fly tip removals of tyres from across the ward of approximately 200 tyres from various locations including Spen Common Lane at Bramham in direct response to the recent spate of fly tipped tyres. We are working very closely with the enforcement side of our team in sharing intelligence and trying to identify the culprits using things such as smart water.
<p>e) Enforcement and regulatory The work of this element of the service forms part of the next phase of the review of Environmental Services. The Area Committee's will need to consider the following, in order to help inform the review and how the existing capacity to respond to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Littering FPN issued to a male for allowing his waste to be fly tipped (no proof to prosecute offenders) however he 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Keswick – Harewood Lane – overgrown vegetation – site line issues for exiting Crabtree Lane – Traced farmer landowner who has 	

<p>local priorities can be best used; the Area Committee's top enforcement issues, the preferred balance of approaches locally, i.e. between enforcement, clean-up and educational/promotional activity; and geographical hotspots. At a ward level, local tasking arrangements will be used by the service to lead discussion and ensure the securing of partner resources in problem solving and addressing the priority "grime" issues through joint enforcement.</p>	<p>did accept a FPN and has paid</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trader on the highway Issued with a section 47 notice requiring that he obtains a contract for disposal of his business waste. Obstruction notice also served on this trader for parking his trailer outside a residential address locally • Cars for sale – Moortown/Alwoodley – enforcement officer does a weekly patrol around the area and has taken enforcement action on a couple of vehicles, this seems to have done the trick, however still continuing to patrol. 	<p>fully complied with requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegal advertising: Banners were reported to have been erected on highways grass verges in the East Keswick and Shadwell area - advertising an event at Harrogate showground – Cancelled stickers were attached to the banners and Notice served. We rang the event organisers who were based in Surrey and explained the offence and that cancelled stickers had been attached to their banners giving the impression their event had been cancelled. They fully complied within the two day notice period. This was imperative as the banners were causing a sight line issue on a verge which was designed specifically to allow a good view of oncoming traffic to motorists exiting the junctions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overgrown Vegetation – A serious problem of farm boundary hedges obstructing the highway on Sicklinghall Road – traced the farmer landowner who has fully  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complied and cut back all his boundary hedges • Wetherby - FPN issued to a man littering in Market Square from his vehicle • Open to access – A property in Boston Spa was open to access and in a very poor state of repair – the garden was badly overgrown – bins were overflowing – The property belonged to the Diocese and after liaising with them the matter was satisfactorily resolved. • Illegal advertising of a housing development owned by Consort Homes – Notice served and all signs removed which covered the Walton – Wetherby area
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mud on the road in Aberford and Barwick – we have dealt with two severe cases of mud on the road by farmers  <p>harvesting potatoes – in both cases the mud was so dangerous that we refused to leave site until they had arranged for private road sweepers to come and clear the mud within a couple of hours – we then served Sec 151 H/Act on both farmers requiring future actions to prevent further mud on the road from their farming activities. On both of these cases local residents kept approaching the officer to thank them for my intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberford – Dog Fouling FPN issued to a resident of Garforth walking his dog in Aberford • Littering FPN was issued to a Harewood Estate employee for littering in Harewood • Overgrown vegetation: we 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with landowner to clear up land and public right of way following a travellers encampment.  • Two enforcement officers worked with festival organisers and WP Police to patrol and enforce issues (food traders, ticket touts, littering outside the grounds) at the Leeds Festival at Bramham. We did 29 stops over the 3 days and issued two notices trading on the highway.
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		<p>were contacted by "First Bus" who were having problems with overgrown vegetation from private properties damaging their buses en route through Shadwell, Bardsey and Keswick. We arranged to travel on a bus laid on by them and follow the route in question. We stopped at problem area's where we took photo's etc. There was one particular area of overgrown vegetation which was difficult to establish the owners of the land. We spoke to various residents who were able to point in the direction of four landowners responsible for the land. We wrote to the owners, also met on site and explained the requirements to cut the veg back to standard. All complied fully within the timescale. In all dealt with approx 30 cases which were all a direct result of the First Bus complaint. All are now resolved.</p>	
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Flytipping of tyres (all 3 wards):

In September we began receiving complaints re tyres being fly tipped in the area (to present approx 1,000). Initially this was mainly in the Thorne and Bardsey (see photo below) area but later spread to affect all wards in Outer NE (see bottom photo in Alwoodley) and possibly beyond.

Throughout our investigations we have worked closely with WY Police, local residents, local businesses, Environment Agency, ENE Homes and other street cleansing and enforcement colleagues (including those in neighbouring authorities).

Action has been taken by various agencies and it anticipated that a positive outcome will be reported to the Area Committee in due course. In the meantime ward members will continue to be kept in formed of progress.

As well as investing time on the case through our Enforcement staff, a considerable amount of time has been spent by the flytipping crew clearing over 1,000 tyres from a number of locations across Outer NE.



SERVICE REQUESTS	Alwoodley	Harewood	Wetherby	ONE
Commercial waste	1		1	2
Illegal vehicle crossing	11			11
Damage to the Highway	2			2
Fly Tipping	1	10	5	16
Domestic Waste				0
Vehicle stop and search			6	6
Illegal A Board		1		1
Abandoned caravan / trailer				0
Graffiti				0
House (other)				0
House (vacant)		1		1
Bins not returned			4	4
Nuisance accumulation			1	1
Overgrown Vegetation	6	19	22	47
Rodent	1	1		2
Waste in garden	10		1	11
Litter	1	4	4	9
Illegal advertising	5	5	2	12
House (dirty)	1			1
Pollution (bonfire)	2	1	1	4
Trading on the highway	4		1	5
Vehicles for sale	2			2
Drainage	1	2		3
Odour			1	1
Nuisance (light)		1		1
House (defect)		1	1	2
Mud on the road				0
TOTAL	48	46	50	144
LEGAL NOTICES	Alwoodley	Harewood	Wetherby	ONE
BA59 repair defective drain	1			1
EP34_5 produce waste transfer notes			3	3
EP46 proper use of domestic receptacles				0
EP47 proper use of commercial receptacles	1			1
EP59 remove waste from land		1		1
EPA 92A Litter clearing notice	2			2
EA108 power of entry to investigate pollution				0
HW 132 remove marks / signs from Highway		4		4
HW 143 remove structures from a Highway				0
HW151 remove soil from a street		1		1
HW154 cut back overhanging vegetation	1	4	1	6
LG35 remove obstruction from a private sewer				0
LG29 secure domestic property				0
PH17 repair defective drain			1	1
PH79 removal of noxious waste				0
TCP 215 properties/land detrimental to the amenity	1	1		2
TOTAL	6	11	5	22
FIXED PENALTY NOTICES	Alwoodley	Harewood	Wetherby	ONE
Failure to produce waste carriers license / transfer notes	1		2	3
litter / dog fouling		2	1	3
Failure to comply with a litter clearing notice				0
TOTAL	1	2	3	6

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Report of : Director of Environments and Neighbourhoods

Report to : Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Developing a Locality Approach Between Leeds City Council Services and Neighbourhood Police Teams/Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs)

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Arrangements will apply in all wards, initial examples are in the appendix of the report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Leeds has benefited from the work of Police Community Service Officers (PCSOs) for a number of years. The city currently has 324 PCSO working across the city. The PCSO service is funded from a number of sources including the West Yorkshire Police Authority (WYPA), Leeds City Council (LCC), the Hospital Trust, City Centre Markets, White Rose Shopping Centre, some Parish Councils and ALMOs.
2. Despite the huge budget pressures that the Council currently faces, it has maintained significant investment in the PSCOs service, and in April 2011 the Council agreed to extend the existing agreement with the WYPA to retain 170 PCSOs across Leeds. The funding provided by the Council amounts to just over £1.5m per annum, and provides a 30% contribution towards these posts.
3. The investment provided by the Council was awarded on the basis that work be undertaken this year to strengthen arrangements between PCSO's and Leeds City Council Services. In particular the aim is to support the delivery of locally identified

environmental priorities and assist in the delivery of service efficiencies and improved effectiveness.

4. The Council's Executive Board received a report on this in September. A protocol between the Council and the Police was then presented to the November meeting of the Safer Leeds Executive. Members of the Area Committee are asked to note the progress with arrangements for closer working and discuss local environmental priorities which need tackling through joint working.

Recommendations

5. The Area Committee is asked to:
 - 5.1. note the progress being made to develop more joined up working within localities between LCC services and Neighbourhood Police Teams/PCSOs.
 - 5.2. discuss proposed areas of closer working on local environmental priorities.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of progress to develop more joined-up working arrangements between locality based City Council services and Neighbourhood Police Teams/PCSOs.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Working within local Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the main role of PCSOs is to contribute to the policing of neighbourhoods, primarily through highly visible patrols with the purpose of reassuring the public; tackling anti-social behaviour in public places; responding to concerns raised by residents and Elected Members; and being accessible to communities and partner agencies working at local level. This involves working with a range of local services including Youth Services, Schools, Environmental Services and ALMOs.
- 2.2 In 2008 Leeds City Council entered in to a three year contract with the West Yorkshire Police Authority for the provision of 170 PCSOs across the city. In April 2011, the Council agreed to extend this arrangement for a further year. The 2011/12 contract amounts to over £1.5m of additional policing within localities funded from Council budgets. The decision to continue funding was made despite a backdrop of significant cuts to Council budgets, coupled with the withdrawal of major grant programmes such as Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF). This demonstrates the commitment and investment that the Council has made in local policing for a number of years.
- 2.3 The deployment of PCSOs part funded by LCC are allocated on an equal 5 per ward basis across Leeds. West Yorkshire Police allocate their PCSO cohort across their Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), of which there are 17 in total across Leeds.

- 2.4 The designation of PCSOs is based on intelligence gathered from a range of sources including; hotspot locations for example burglary and ASB; information provided by the community and Elected Members; and data from the Council and other agencies.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 For a number of years, work has taken place within localities to develop closer working arrangements between local service providers and NPTs. The introduction of the new locality working arrangements have brought a sharper focus to how local services work and co-operate with one another on a daily basis in order to deliver better outcomes for local people.
- 3.2 There are already significant levels of co-operation. Children's Services, for example, work closely with the Police through the Safer Schools Initiative, within which the PCSO's play an important part. PCSO's often act as the "eyes and ears" within local areas, reporting on a range of issues, from anti social behaviour and truancy, through to matters of safeguarding.
- 3.3 Work this year seeks to build on the relationship across the Council, in a more systematic way, with particular emphasis on how the PCSO's can assist with improving the environment. The full Executive Board report contains more information about this and the protocol provided as an appendix provides more information about arrangements and current examples by Neighbourhood Police Team area. The Area Committees are asked to feed in their views on local environmental priorities at this early stage of development and to receive periodic monitoring reports about progress.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 West Yorkshire Police and Leeds City Council Services undertake regular consultation with residents through a wide range of means to assess local needs and priorities. The methods include community forums, PACT meetings, resident surveys, face to face meetings, local patrols and events, Area Committee meetings, newsletters and other media publications.
- 4.1.2 The tasking arrangements between LCC and WYP will be determined via consultation with local communities, elected members and through intelligence products produced by WYP, LCC and the Community Safety Partnership.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Both LCC and WYP follow Equality procedures which ensure that their services are accessible to all the residents of Leeds. Services are developed and delivered in response to need and intelligence information, which aims to address inequality and improve lives.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The development of more integrated and closer working between locality based services, will deliver improved outcomes for local people and is aligned with the

new Safer and Stronger Partnership's priority to 'Make Leeds an attractive place to live, where people are safe and feel safe, and the City is clean and welcoming.'

4.3.2 The delivery of the new tasking arrangements will also support the delivery of the Safer Leeds Plan, which aims to reduce crime and its impact across Leeds and effectively tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in our communities.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The Council has committed over £1.5m in 2011/12 to support the continuation of the PCSO service across the city. Through the development and delivery of closer working between service providers, communities will benefit from the delivery of more joined up services, working together better to address identified local needs and deliver improved outcomes.

4.4.2 The integration of services should also deliver service efficiencies and improved effectiveness through a more focused approach to address problems, provide a better distribution of responsibility to deal with issues of concern, and improve ownership by individual services and organisations.

4.4.3 It is hoped that the protocols established between WYP and LCC, will deliver service efficiencies and provide better value for money, and that the delivery model can be replicated across the city in other partnership working arrangements.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications connected with the contents of this report.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Risks will be managed by the regular tasking meetings in each area.

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Area Committee is asked to:

5.2 Note the progress made to develop more joined up working within localities between LCC services and Neighbourhood Police Teams/PCSOs

5.3 Discuss proposed areas of closer working on local environmental priorities which will be fed back to local tasking arrangements to progress

6 Background documents

6.1 Report to Executive Board September 2011

6.2 PCSO joint working case studies exercise – WYP June 2011

6.3 2011/12 PCSO contract between Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Police

West North West Leeds

Key Contacts - Police - Chief Inspector Jim McNeill

Environmental Services - Jason Singh

Area Community Safety Coordinator - Zahid Butt (North West) Gill Hunter (West)

Woodhouse

A number of bin yards in the Little Woodhouse area were in such a state with refuse and fly tipping that they were unable to be used. PSCOs are now monitoring the yards as part of their duties and reporting incidents through to the Locality Team for potential further action.

Headingley

Environmental Services will be working with the PSCOs throughout the year to support the Council's Waste Strategy for inner North West Leeds including a number of communication campaigns over the whole year focussed on improving crime and grime outcomes. As part of this approach the PCSOs will be supporting a targeted door to door exercise in the area this autumn aimed at sharing and emphasising key messages on: environmental cleanliness, presenting and pulling bins back into properties on bin collection days, personal safety and burglary prevention.

Adel & Wharfedale

Littering from Ralph Thoresby High School has been identified as a problem by local residents. The Locality Team has been working with PSCOs to arrange for the school children to do litter picking in the area. The Locality Team will be developing this approach to school based educational activity in the new year and will seek to work with PCSOs to support community engagement activity and local monitoring.

Bramley

Broadbale estate environmental audits with Bramley Housing Office.

Armley

Armley Burglary Reduction - Fortnightly environmental audits of the Little Scotland's, Barden's, Cedar's and Aviary's specifically working with partners (Police and Arson Task Force + ALMO).

Stop Search operation x2. One at the Armley Gyrotyory and One at BHS in Kirkstall dates and planning is continuing, will be raised at next crime & grime.

Pudsey Town Centre

Tackling school children ASB, rowdy behaviour and littering.

Environmental audit of the town centre addressing commercial waste issues and 'A' board project.

Thornbury

Leeds/Bradford border at Thornbury working with Bradford Police and Bradford Council to tackle metal theft, trade waste and travelling criminality. These are arranged quarterly.

North East Leeds

Key Contacts – Police – Chief Inspector Melanie Jones

Environmental Services (North East and Inner East) – John Woolmer

Environmental Services (Outer East) – Tom Smith

Area Community Safety Coordinator – Bev Yearwood

North East and Inner East

Gipton

To assist with littering problem around Colcotes Shop/Circus, Witness proformas to be completed if offences are observed

Harehills

To assist in a problem solving approach in dealing with dangerous or problematic dogs/owners in Harehills Park (including tackling dogs that are been allowed in the play areas and causing a nuisance).

Burntcliffe

To be established

Richmond Hill

To assist in the enforcement of selective licensing (meeting scheduled for Monday 10th October 2011 to progress)

Killingbeck & Seacroft

To assist in the enforcement of littering offences around the Blacks shops on South Parkway. Witness proformas to be completed if offences are observed

Wetherby and villages

Prevas Way, and Sandbeck Trading Estate in Wetherby – Note company names and any possible details of lorries parked at these locations and pass intelligence on so that letters can be sent to the companies as part of a coordinated effort to reduce littering by lorries in these roads.

Roundhay, Alwoodley and Moortown

To tackle illegal waste carriers and scrap metal theft

Chapel Allerton

To assist in a problem solving approach in dealing with dangerous or problematic dogs/owners in Potterneton Park, Playground plus, Reginald Park (To be reviewed).

Outer East

Temple Newsam

To assist in reporting incidents of fly tipping and routinely monitoring of 'hot spot' areas (to be determined) whilst on patrol. PCSOs to have an awareness of the evidence gathering procedure with regard to fly tipping to include witness statements in order to assess if needs referring for collection or if

an enforcement officer is required to attend. Training will be provided by the Locality Team .

Crossgates and Whimoor

To support enforcement action regarding littering offences and potential breaches of Dog Control Orders. PCSOs to provide witness statements and assist in joint patrols with enforcement officers.

Garforth and villages

To assist in reporting incidents of fly tipping and routinely monitoring of 'hot spot' areas (to be determined) whilst on patrol. PCSOs to have an awareness of the evidence gathering procedure with regard to fly tipping to include witness statements in order to assess if needs referring for collection or if an enforcement officer is required to attend. Training will be provided by the Locality Team .

Kippax and Methley

To assist in reporting incidents of fly tipping and routinely monitoring of 'hot spot' areas (to be determined) whilst on patrol. PCSOs to have an awareness of the evidence gathering procedure with regard to fly tipping to include witness statements in order to assess if needs referring for collection or if an enforcement officer is required to attend. Training will be provided by the Locality Team .

In addition we will deliver 12 x 4h Joint operations between the Police and East North East Environmental Enforcement Team using stop/search. These will occur on the last Thursday of each Month commencing November 2011 . The purpose of the operation is to target metal theft, illegal scrapbers, reduce instances of fly tipping and increase legal/licensed carriers. The operations will be high visibility and will contribute towards increased public confidence and satisfaction levels in terms of the joint indicator around police/council working together. These operations will cover 6 of the neighbourhood policing teams - Discussions are to take place shortly with South East Environmental Enforcement to cover Temple Newsam and Garforth Neighbourhood Policing teams .

South Leeds

Key Contacts - Police - Vernon Francis
Environmental Services - Tom Smith
Area Community Safety Coordinator - Gerry Shevlin

Beeston and Holbeck

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems, such as bins on streets and bin yards, in Beeston Hill, the Recreations and Cardinals.

To support enforcement action regarding littering offences and potential breaches of Dog Control Orders within Cross Flatts Park. PCSOs to provide witness statements and assist in joint patrols with enforcement officers.

City and Hunslet

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems, such as bins/bags on streets and open spaces, in Cottingley and the Garnets.

To assist in joint patrols and estate walkabouts in the above areas.

To undertake proactive patrols of the Bismarcks area of empty properties to prevent fly tipping and ASB in the area.

Middleton Park

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems, such as bins on streets, in Manor Farms and Westwoods.

Morley North

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems in Oakwells and Fairfax areas of Drighlington.

Morley South

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems in Harrops area.

To support joint litter enforcement patrols focused on the commercial centres of Morley.

Rothwell

To support the reporting and assessment of fly tipping, waste in gardens and waste management problems in John O Gaunts estate.

To support enforcement action regarding littering offences and potential breaches of Dog Control Orders within areas to be determined. PCSOs to provide witness statements and assist in joint patrols with enforcement officers.

Ardley & Robin Hood

To assist in reporting incidents of fly tipping and routinely monitoring of known 'hotspot' areas whilst on patrol. PCSOs to have an awareness of the evidence gathering procedure with regard to fly tipping to include witness statements in order to assess if needs referring for collection or if an enforcement officer is required to attend. Training will be provided by the Locality Team.

To support joint litter enforcement patrols focused on Eastleighs and Fairleighs areas of Tingley.

Across the South area

We will also be looking to work jointly with PCSOs on school based education programmes with regard to littering and environmental issues.

We are undertaking joint clean-ups focused on the priority areas identified above, coordinating environmental work on particular days to take action.

City-wide

Generic priorities include reporting racist graffiti and needles immediately when discovered to avoid personal injury and undue stress to the community. These need to be reported direct to 0113 222 4406. The Council's service standards stipulate that racist graffiti should be removed within 24 hours.

Any observations made on environmental offences such as fly tipping (e.g bulky items /bags /waste), general graffiti and excessive littering can be reported via email to :

eneaction@beds.gov.uk North East and Inner East

sseaction@beds.gov.uk South and Outer East

wnwaction@beds.gov.uk West and North West

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Safer Leeds

tackling drugs and crime

Safer Leeds Executive

Protocol to Support Local Working Between Leeds City Council Environmental Services and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

1. BACKGROUND

Leeds currently has over 320 PCSOs working across the city and Leeds City Council provides a 30% contribution towards 170 of these posts. Despite huge budget pressures for the Council, it has maintained significant investment in the PCSO service. In April 2011, the Council agreed to extend the existing arrangement with West Yorkshire Police Authority to retain the level of PCSOs in Leeds. The investment by the Council was awarded on the basis of strengthening arrangements between PCSOs, NPTs and Leeds City Council Services. One particular aim is to support the improved delivery of locally identified environmental priorities and this was supported at the Council's Executive Board in September 2011.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THIS PROTOCOL

This protocol provides guidance for NPTs, PCSOs and Council Officers to jointly deliver better outcomes in respect of environmental issues and enforcement in localities across the city.

An essential element of integrated locality working is the ability to involve the community and partners in finding solutions to the problems they have identified. By doing this it is more likely that the identified and implemented solutions will be sustainable.

PCSOs contribute to the policing of neighbourhoods, primarily through highly visible patrols with the purpose of reassuring the public, and being accessible to both communities and partner agencies working at local level.

There are strong links between crime and disorder and environmental issues and this protocol is aimed at ensuring the quality of the local environment is incorporated into the work of crime reduction partnerships. It is important that the fear of crime, heightened by issues such as graffiti, litter and abandoned vehicles, is addressed.

This protocol provides a coordination and tasking mechanism for NPTs, PCSOs and Council Officers to jointly deliver better outcomes in respect of environmental issues and enforcement in localities across the city.

3.0 WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT ISSUES WILL PCSOs BE INVOLVED IN?

PCSOs will play a pro-active and re-active role in addressing environmental concerns that have been raised. These will be agreed jointly at a local level between Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Police (NPT) officers.

Appendix 1 details the initial priority actions for each of the 3 areas of the city, which will be subject to change as outlined at paragraph 4.

4.0 PROCESS FOR AGREEING ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

Priorities will be communicated at local tasking meetings. These are chaired or co-chaired by a senior officer from the Police, Council or ALMO. Meetings are held on a six weekly cycle which is programmed into core business throughout the year.

A regulatory team officer / supervisor from Environmental Services will attend these meetings and will provide information from the analysis of local data which will highlight areas of poor environmental conditions. This will enable the prioritisation of specific issues where environmental crimes require a focused partnership approach.

It is proposed that priorities should be reviewed at each cycle, be amended as appropriate on the tasking matrix, updated with progress and monitored through the existing performance framework.

5.0 CONTACTS

Contact details are included for Police, Environmental Services and Area Community Safety Coordinators to support the implementation and monitoring of these arrangements and can be found in Appendix 1 by area.

6.0 GOVERNANCE

The protocol will be agreed and periodically updated by the Safer Leeds Executive.

Tabled reports will be presented to Area Committees with inputs from each tasking meeting to brief them about initial arrangements and provide periodic updates. Periodic reports will also be provided for Divisional Community Safety Partnerships / Locality Partnership meetings which will also be able to consider PCSO support for other local priorities, such as tackling burglary and antisocial behaviour, alongside contributions from other partners.

Divisional Community Safety Partnerships / Locality Partnerships will monitor the implementation of the protocol.

Key issues of significance and occasional updates will be provided to the Safer Leeds Executive.

Draft Version 1.0	October 2011
Draft to Police, Environmental Services & Community Safety	October 2011
Draft to Safer Leeds Executive	3 rd November 2011
Approved by Safer Leeds Executive	
Date of Next Review	
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Report of Assistant Chief Executive, Community Access and Performance

Report to the Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Leeds Citizens Panel in Support of Locality Working

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
All wards are affected		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

Financial pressures, localism and the council values all highlight the importance of consulting residents about what we do and where they live, in high quality, cost-effective and representative ways.

There is a need to improve the coordination and consistency of consultation in Leeds, and to do so as efficiently as possible. The current approach to managing consultation includes the ad hoc use of an existing Citizens' Panel which is no longer fit for purpose.

This paper outlines the progress being made to create a new Panel of 6000 residents who would be representative of population profiles at Area Committee level. It sets out how the new Leeds Citizens' Panel will be developed and managed and seeks the Area Committees views on the opportunities it presents for supporting local decision making.

Recommendations

The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to:

- Note and comment on the development of a new Citizen's Panel in Leeds as described in this paper
- Support the use of the new Leeds Citizens' Panel and to take up its use as part of the committee's community engagement activities in support of Wellbeing fund priority setting and in the development of the Area Business Plans.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To outline the progress being made to create and manage a new and enlarged Leeds Citizens' Panel that will form an important tool for the council and partners' consultation activity.
- 1.2 To present the advantages of the new Panel in terms of efficiency, partnership working and supporting localised consultation of communities of place and interest.
- 1.3 To update the committee on the progress towards launching the new Leeds Citizens' Panel.
- 1.4 To consider the opportunities that the Leeds Citizens Panel offers for undertaking consultation at the Area Committee level to identify Wellbeing fund priorities and the support the development of the Area Business Plans.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 The development of the Leeds Citizens' Panel is part of a wider plan to improve the way we undertake community engagement in the council. This plan looks at improvements in a context of limited resources and the council values 'working with communities' and 'spending money wisely'.
- 2.2 Financial pressures, localism and new council values all highlight the importance of consulting residents about what we do and where they live, in high quality, cost-effective and representative ways.
- 2.3 A citizens' panel is a representative database of residents willing to take part in regular consultation activity over a period of time. Panels are recruited to be representative of wider populations by characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and disability.
- 2.4 A panel of approximately 1000 active members is currently available to Leeds City Council, although the membership has not been refreshed for several years and key communities are now poorly represented. At present, use is ad-hoc and response rates have declined significantly over time through lack of contact or refreshment of the membership.
- 2.5 A pilot to use the current Leeds Citizens' Panel on a locality basis took place in 2010. Panel members living in one specific area of the city were consulted on

community safety and environmental issues. Surveying was primarily undertaken online using Talking Point to reduce costs.

- 2.6 While the pilot demonstrated that consulting the Panel on local issues can achieve a high response rate (74% in the case of the pilot) and very low costs compared to past paper-based consultation, it highlighted that the current Panel membership is far too small to enable truly robust results from local consultations.
- 2.7 Approval has now been granted by Corporate Leadership Team to proceed with the development of an enlarged Citizens Panel. **Appendix 1** sets out the recent progress in the development and management of the Citizens' Panel. With its planned expansion of membership to 6000, an opportunity now exists to undertake a range of thematic consultations at the Area Committee level which will aid in the delivery of a range of locality working initiatives.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 The council carries out a great deal of community engagement work aimed at increasing the involvement of local people in decision making. The Annual Statement on community engagement was submitted to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee on June 15 2011 and they concluded that much good consultation work took place. However they also said that it was inconsistent and that there is a lack of coordination across the council.
- 3.2 Historically council services have run separate large-scale single issue surveys that are mailed to significant numbers of residents. The financial problems we face make it vitally important that we consult far more efficiently in the future.
- 3.3 Local partners are placing increased emphasis on the need to understand and work with residents and service users. Many face reduced engagement budgets which mean they need new, more cost effective ways to consult.
- 3.4 To show the scale of savings possible through better management of consultation, in 2010 the corporate consultation manager worked with the Strategic Landlord and the ALMOs to reduce the number of Tenant Surveys in the city from five to one. This saved £60K overall.

A new enhanced Citizens' Panel

- 3.5 A Panel of at least 6000 adult residents, recruited to be representative of the ten Area Committee population profiles and therefore the city, will allow robust consultation at Area Committee and city levels, as well as for particular demographic groups or service-users.
- 3.6 A well-managed Citizens' Panel offers benefits including
- The ability to continue to understand the needs and views of communities at reduced cost
 - A catalyst for joined-up consultation planning and activity in Leeds
 - A significant contribution to the council values of 'working with communities' and 'spending money wisely'

- The ability to engage with a robust and representative cross-section of the city at smaller geographies
- The achievement of Locality Work objectives by enabling residents to engage in local decision making.

3.7 Consulting the Panel through surveys, focus groups and other methods will be significantly cheaper than equivalent methods we currently use. A high proportion of panel members will take part in online consultation to keep costs low.

Use and Management of the new Citizens' Panel

3.8 The Panel will be used by partners, services and corporately as well as by area teams in support of Area Committee's community engagement objectives. There will be a vetting/clearance process before users consult the panel and a calendar of activity will be created. This will be managed by the corporate consultation manager working through the corporate consultation group.

3.9 The Panel will be consulted online as far as possible, using the Talking Point survey platform. Postal surveys will also be used where necessary to avoid limiting participation of different communities.

3.10 In order that deeper insight can be gained from consultation, where appropriate, users will be encouraged to go beyond just capturing perception responses through surveys by using methods such as focus groups, workshops and interviewing panel members.

Resources for panel recruitment and management

3.11 Recruiting and managing the Panel ready for consultations in Year One is covered by existing PPI budgets.

3.12 NHS Leeds has confirmed it will provide £12.5k towards set up costs. Other partners have committed to providing resources in kind to support recruitment.

3.13 It is currently planned that the long term costs for maintaining membership and managing the use of the Citizens Panel will be covered by existing PPI budgets.

Costs for undertaking consultation through the Panel

3.14 Services will not be charged for the costs of building and maintaining the Panel. Online aspects of survey research would also be free as the existing Talking Point system would be used. However, services will need to pay for the following elements of survey work:

- Postal survey production, mailing and Freepost return
- Data capture of postal survey returns
- Analysis and reporting

There will also be costs when delivering focus groups, workshops or other face to face consultations with the panel, such as venue hire, covering travel costs of those attending and refreshments. If impartial moderation is important, we may

decide to use one of our preferred market research suppliers, or a partner's staff. In these cases additional costs would apply.

- 3.15 The proposal for Area Committees use of the Citizens' Panel involves the use of data from a citywide survey at the Area Committee level. This means that there will be no additional cost to Area Committees for the production of the survey and analysis. Although an Input of staff time from Area teams will be required to draw local conclusions from this data. Should Area Committee's wish to undertake additional consultation through the Citizens' Panel the costs outlined in section 3.14 would apply.

Savings achieved through use of Citizen's Panel

- 3.16 Discussion with services shows that significant savings can be made by consulting the Panel rather than many current approaches to consultation. For example;
- Residents Survey 2009 cost £64K, delivered face to face by interviewers. The equivalent done through the Panel, assuming 66% of responses are online, will cost an estimated £8.7K to provide delivery, analysis and reporting.
 - The Parks and Countryside Survey has been delivered in-house as a major postal exercise. Excluding officer time costs, c£25K was spent on delivery. The service is confident that a similar enough outcome would be gained from a Panel survey in future at lower cost.

A total of £80,000 can be saved for just these two exercises if managed through the Panel. The more consultation work that is suitable to be undertaken through the proposed Panel the greater the efficiency benefit.

- 3.17 The Panel would also make it feasible to introduce new consultation work that is otherwise unaffordable. For example, plans for a dedicated Health and Wellbeing survey to support the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) hinge on finding an affordable method for consultation and a new Panel is seen as critical to its success.

Creating a calendar of Panel consultation

- 3.18 Panels give the greatest benefit when consultation is managed from a single agreed calendar of activity. There is a risk that if too little or too much consultation is put to the panel, or outside of an agreed cycle, response rates will fall and panel members will leave.
- 3.19 A number of consultations have already been identified for a calendar of Panel consultation. These include a number of council Business Plan perception-based performance indicators.
- 3.20 The corporate consultation group, and the Strategic Involvement Group, are continuing to draft a calendar of potential consultation for the Panel, aiming to thematically group individual requirements into larger consultations e.g. 'crime and grime', health and well being. If practical, these themes could align to the strategic partnership boards.

- 3.21 A registration of interest has already been received by Area Management for the use of the Leeds Citizens Panel to support Area Committee business planning and priority setting activity. Should Area Committees' agree to take up the opportunity of consulting the panel, a place will be set on the calendar and Area teams will work with corporate consultation to draft a detailed proposal for Area Committees to consider.

The Citizens Panel use at the Area Committee Level

- 3.22 Area Committees have a responsibility for community engagement delegated by Executive Board as follows:

Each Committee will agree a local community engagement plan based on an agreed template to ensure consistency across the city. Information on how Area Committees have delivered on their community engagement plans, will be included in an annual report to the Executive Board, which outlines achievements from the previous year to deliver the Area Delivery Plan, and future priorities.

2011/12 Function Schedule,

Council's Constitution (Part 3, section 3c)

- 3.23 A range consultation methods have been developed by individual Area Committees to support the development of Area Delivery plans and the business of the Area Committee. Much of this activity represents good practice and work should be undertaken to capture this learning and seek to apply it to other Area Committees where appropriate.
- 3.24 While there is a recognition that a variety of approaches to engagement at the Area Committee level will continue to be necessary to respond to local issues, a degree of consistency across the city as a whole is needed to help maximise the impact of integrated locality working and achieve the level of co-ordination as set out in the Council's constitution.
- 3.25 To help achieve this balance of improved consistency while maintaining a flexible and responsive approach to engagement, it is suggested that Area Committees develop community engagement plans that works at two distinct levels:
- Primary Engagement: A core programme of primary engagement for all 10 Area Committees should be implemented which provides a consistent approach for consulting the public on the broad priorities for each area and meets the requirements for the area committees' delegated function. It is proposed that this is undertaken through annual surveys of Citizens Panel and is implemented as part of the annual Business Plan development and review process. The results of this consultation activity would be presented in an annual report specific to each Area Committee, setting out the findings of the consultation against the business plan themes.
 - Secondary Engagement: The findings from the Citizens' Panel consultation will provide a clear view of resident priorities and can be used to inform the development of a wider programme of engagement specific to each Area

Committee. For example, if the citizens panel consultation identified that a large proportion of residents living in a particular area were dissatisfied with the cleanliness of their neighbourhood and the quality of public greenspaces, then the Area Committee may choose to explore these issues in more detail through additional surveys and public meetings to help identify what changes in service delivery were required to address resident priorities. In this way the Citizens Panel would add value to existing programmes of consultation.

- 3.26 With a total membership of 6000, the Leeds Citizens' Panel will enable each of the ten Area Committees to consult approximately 600 residents who will represent the broad demographic make up of the area. In statistical terms this provides a robust sample size to undertake a broad range of engagement activities and enables the results of surveys to be analysed at the Area Committee level.
- 3.27 A number of thematic surveys are currently being considered which will produce data that can be used to measure the delivery of actions which might be contained in the Area Business Plans. Further consultation will be undertaken with elected members to determine how best to apply this approach to business plan performance monitoring. However, by undertaking Citizens Panel surveys each year we will be able to measure a wide range of Area Committee level trends such as:
- The percentage of people who feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
 - Levels of satisfaction relating cleanliness and environmental quality
 - The issues which limits residents from accessing local health services
 - Priorities for improvement to police and council services
- 3.28 In addition to community engagement, Area Committees have a delegated responsibility for Wellbeing funding. Area Committees are provided with a budget of capital and revenue funds each year which can be used to enhance local services or commission new initiatives from the council and external partners including the voluntary sector.
- 3.29 Consultation through the Citizens Panel will help identify the funding priorities for each of the 10 Area Committees thereby insuring that this limited resources is targeted at the areas where it is needed most. Further consultation will be undertaken with elected members to determine how best to apply this approach to Wellbeing fund prioritisation.

4.0 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

The Leeds Citizens' Panel will form a central part of the council's community engagement strategy and represents a significant opportunity to better understand the needs and views of communities.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

There are no specific equality considerations arising from this report. As such it has not been necessary to prepare an Equality Impact Assessment.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

A number of perception-based Business Plan and City Priority Plan performance indicators are likely to be measured through the Panel

The Panel will require the application of a greater degree of advance planning and quality control to the council's consultation work than currently exists.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

The expansion of the citizens' panel offers exceptional value for money. It will be delivered from existing budgets, and will cost less overall than surveys it aims to replace, such as the Residents Survey.

The Panel database will need to be managed by a dedicated officer.

Suitably skilled officers are required for data capture, analysis and report creation for the Panel consultations.

Services will need to fund any consultation they put to the panel, although usually at a significantly lower cost than for non-panel consultation.

If applied consistently, the Citizens' Panel offers significant efficiencies for consultation in support of Area Committee business planning and priority setting for Wellbeing.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

Data Protection law will apply to the management of the panel membership database, including data sharing between partner organisations

The enhanced Citizens' Panel will enable the council to 'consult a balanced selection' of residents as required by Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

4.5 Risk Management

Panels give the greatest benefit when managed as a single project, from a single agreed calendar of activity. There is a risk that if too little or too much consultation is put to the panel, or outside of an agreed cycle, panel members leave.

There is a risk that services may not plan a calendar of engagement far enough ahead to identify activity for the Panel.

Panels must be refreshed, i.e. members retired and replaced, to stay representative. This level of management requires an ongoing contribution of resource.

In house delivery of a programme of consultation requires sound data processing and analytical resources. Failure to arrange this in support of the panel is a key risk to efficiency and data quality.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.2 There is a need to improve the coordination and consistency of consultation in Leeds, and to do so as efficiently as possible. The Leeds Citizens' Panel is a key part of how we aim to address this challenge.
- 5.3 A well-managed Citizens' Panel offers benefits including
- The ability to continue to understand the needs and views of communities at reduced cost
 - A catalyst for joined-up consultation planning and activity in Leeds
 - A significant contribution to the council values of 'working with communities' and 'spending money wisely'
 - The ability to engage robust and representative cross-section of the city at smaller geographies
 - Significant contribution to evidence for the involvement aspects of the Equality Act 2010
- 5.4 Consulting the Panel through surveys, focus groups and other methods will be significantly cheaper than equivalent methods we currently use.
- 5.5 With the expansion of Citizens' Panel an opportunity now exists to undertake a range of thematic consultations at the Area Committee level which will support the development of Area Business Plans, the identification of Wellbeing fund priorities and delivery of a range of locality working initiatives.
- 5.6 The inclusion of Citizens' Panel consultation as a core part of the Area Committees' community engagement activity will provide significant efficiencies and offer a consistent approach to consultation in support the delivery of functions delegated by Executive Board.
- 5.7 Due to the demographic representation of the Citizens' Panel an opportunity exists to gain the views of a much broader section of the community than would be achievable through the more conventional methods of engagement.
- 5.8 The use of the Citizens Panel at the Area Committee level would add value to existing engagement activity and strengthen our approach to involving local people in decision making.

6.0 Recommendations

The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to:

- Note and comment on the development of a new Citizen's Panel in Leeds as described in this paper

- Support the use of the new Leeds Citizens' Panel and to take up its use as part of the committee's community engagement activities in support of Wellbeing fund priority setting and in the development of the Area Business Plans.

Background documents

- December 2010, Report to Executive Board, Toward Integrated Locality Working
- July 2011 Report to Corporate Leadership Team, A New Citizens Panel for Leeds
- 24 October 2011 Business Plan Report to **Outer North East** Area Committee
- Appendix 1: Leeds Citizens' Panel progress update, October 27 2011

Leeds Citizens' Panel progress update, October 27th 2011.

This note sets out the progress made on recruiting the new Leeds Citizens' Panel.

The main recruitment effort started at the beginning of October 2011, following a period of project design, process and resource management and liaison with partners. The initial focus has been on no/low-cost, pre-existing contact lists and communications channels.

We now have in place:

- Demographic profile of the 'ideal' panel for Leeds via Business Transformation
- Electronic systems to help us track the demography of respondents (via BT again)
- Webpage / information on council, PCT and other local websites via Comms Team
- Online and paper recruitment forms
- FAQ sheet, flyers and posters via Graphics Team
- Scanning systems to electronically capture paper responses via Adult Social Care

We are promoting the recruitment through:

- Social media incl. Twitter, Facebook
- Traditional media and PR incl. YEP, local radio
- About Leeds, Leeds card magazine and other public sector publications
- Private sector employer corporate social responsibility schemes via Leeds Ahead
- Attendance at community groups/events e.g. Carnival, Xmas lights switch-on.
- In public buildings e.g. libraries, One Stop Centres, GPs, attractions
- Emails to existing databases of residents / service users

The table below shows a selection of the organisations disseminating the recruitment message, for free:

Organisation	Method	Potential audience
Leeds Rhinos	Email	16,000
Leeds City College	Variety of methods	55,000 students
Leeds Metropolitan	Websites	30,500 students and staff
University of Leeds	Websites	40,000 students and staff
Leeds College of Art	Email	2000 students
All 268 schools	Newsletter to parents	Families of 110,000 pupils

Leedscard	Newsletter and email	60,000
Concord interfaith	Email and event	200 people
Current panel members	Email and post	800
ALMOs	Websites and newsletters	56,500
LINK	Email	500
Benefits service	Email	3600
NHS Foundation Trust	Email	14,000

Although there will be duplications in these lists, we estimate the invitation to join will initially reach c200,000 people. About Leeds will then reach [potentially] all households, reinforcing the message.

Costs

To date we have spent c£1000, excluding officer time, largely on print. Although we expect these costs to increase, it should still be well within the available budget for the recruitment of the panel.

Next steps

Tracking responses (c450 to date)

Establishing calendar of consultations for new Panel (request form circulated to all partners and services)

Further publicity preparation e.g. About Leeds story from November 14th

Arranging volunteers for face to face recruitment in bus station and other high-use areas e.g. Merrion Centre

Report of the Director of Children’s Services

Report to the Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5 December 2011

Subject: School Demographic update report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley, Harewood and Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report presents the Area Committee with an update of the demographics and current situation for school places within the Outer North East area.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Area Committee are asked to consider the information contained in the report and comment on this

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report is intended to provide members with an update by ward of the latest demographics including the numbers of children attending schools within these areas. The report also identifies known housing developments and the impact this may have on the schools within this area.

2 Background information

- 2.1 At the September 2011 Area Committee meeting a report was submitted titled Consultation on Expansion of Primary School Provision for September 2013, which gave details of public consultations that were underway to expand primary school provision across the city from 2013. The schools or areas proposed for expansion for 2013 were not located within the Outer North East.
- 2.2 Members have since requested that an update be given around demographics and school place planning within the Outer North East area.
- 2.3 The information put together in the report is based on the latest under 5s health authority data for Leeds, along with school numbers on roll taken from the latest school census data collection and pupil preference patterns.
- 2.4 We have established better processes for working with all schools and other stakeholders on an area by area basis to respond to trends and to plan and deliver a place at a local school for every child in the city. Ongoing engagement with Area Committees and ward members is essential to this process.

3 Main issues

Table A
Under 5s breakdown by ward

Ward	Schools	Places available	Places allocated Sept 2011	Under 5s and year children will start school				
				2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Alwoodley	Allerton C of E, Alwoodley, Brodetsky, Highfield, St Pauls Catholic, Wigton Moor	315	301	256	263	278	300	284
Harewood	Aberford C of E, Bardsey, Barwick-in-elmets C of E, Collingham LEH C of E, Harewood C of E, Scholes, Shadwell, Thorner C of E	217	211	173	158	161	140	144
Wetherby	Bramham, Crossley Street, Deighton Gates, Primrose Lane, St Edward's, St James C of E, St Josephs Catholic, St Mary's C of E, Thorp Arch LEH C of E	220	210	234	211	201	212	179

Alwoodley Ward

- 3.1 This ward has seen a steady increase in the number of births in recent years, although the latest figures show a slight drop by 5% on the previous year (table A). Having increased the admission numbers at both Allerton C of E and Highfield primary schools, there are now 315 reception places available within the Alwoodley ward.
- 3.2 In addition to this, the creation of two through schools in Roundhay and Meanwood which open in September 2012, will also ease pressure for primary school places within the North East.

- 3.3 There are no planned housing developments within this ward that would impact on the demand for school places.
- 3.4 There were 256 first preferences for schools within this ward on offer day and of these schools, only Alwoodley primary were unable to fit all its nearest children in. The current situation shows 4 children on the waiting list who have the school as their nearest. These children are currently attending Allerton C of E primary school.

Harewood Ward

- 3.5 Latest area health data for 0-5s living within this ward show a decline in numbers for the next 4 years (table A). Applications for school places appear to have been at a peak for September 2011, but this has still been below the number of places available in reception.
- 3.6 Preference patterns show that parents often preference schools outside their own village. Collingham LEH, Harewood and Shadwell were the only schools that were oversubscribed this year. However, there were no refusals for nearest children at any of the schools. With numbers dropping across the ward as table A indicates, and no major changes up or down at any of the villages in terms of under 5s, there should no need for expansion of primary provision at present.
- 3.7 There are no planned housing developments within this ward, although there is a development in the Kippax & Methley ward close to Micklefield, which may have some impact on Aberford and Barwick. However, at the moment there is little movement between Micklefield and these villages in terms of school places so we would expect this to be minimal. We have submitted an application for section 106 contributions against this development.

Wetherby Ward

- 3.8 The Wetherby ward is also showing a decline in births, however this is one area where cohorts typically increase after birth and we would therefore expect the 179 born this last year to have increased by the time these children enter reception.
- 3.9 All schools within the Wetherby area were oversubscribed with the exception of St James C of E. Crossley Street was the most popular choice for parents with a third of it's preferences coming from parents that have St James C of E as their nearest school. No nearest children were refused a place at any of the schools in Wetherby on offer day.
- 3.10 All schools within the Boston Spa area filled to their admission numbers, with the exception of Bramham primary. However, this school saw an increase in first preferences compared to recent years. There were no nearest children refused a place at any of the schools in the Boston Spa area on offer day.
- 3.11 We are aware of developers interest in sites at Church Field and Thorp Arch which could potentially create 165 and 400 houses respectively. If these developments are to progress, we would estimate a yield of 6 children per. Thorp Arch would be considerably more and we would estimate that this development could generate 14 children per year group, equivalent to half a form of entry. This is based on the completion of the developments, although these would be built in phases. We are currently in the process of seeking section 106 contributions should these progress, to support the need for school places generated from these developments.

Secondary school place planning

- 3.12 The birth rate across Leeds hit its lowest point in the academic year 2000/2001. The children born in that year have now just started secondary school and we are seeing the lowest numbers entering year 7. From 2012 onwards we will start to see the rise in year 7 applications year on year, similar to what we have been experiencing in primary schools. We have already started planning for this and are currently looking at individual high schools to determine whether there is extra capacity to expand. Changes to the 14-19 provision will impact on the utilisation of existing high school capacity, and should release some additional places without the need for physical building schemes.
- 3.13 Of the secondary schools in the Outer North East, only Allerton High School has been filling to its admission number over the past few years as the table below shows. However, we would expect this to change as more applications for secondary schools are expected from 2012.

Current numbers on roll

School	Admission number	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Allerton High	185	185	184	186	184	185
Boston Spa	300	187	230	224	263	270
Wetherby	170	137	159	159	167	170

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Any proposal to create additional school places requires engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders, and is managed in accordance with the relevant legislation. This occurs before a proposal has been developed as well as during the consultation period

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 This report does not have a particular impact on any of the following groups: Race, Disability, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Religion or belief.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 Any proposal brought forward would meet the Council's statutory duty to secure sufficient school places.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 There are no resource implications relating to this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications relating to this report.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no risk issues relating to this report.

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report updates Members of the demographics in their relevant wards as well as the current situation for school places. Currently there are no plans to expand any schools in the Outer North East, however demographics, housing and preference patterns will be monitored to ensure sufficient school places are available.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Area Committee is requested to:

- Note and consider this report and make comment on any of the content.

7 Background documents

7.1 None

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Report of Assistant Chief Executive, Community Access and Performance

Report to Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Welfare Reform

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
	All wards in Leeds	
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Government has embarked on a major programme of Welfare Reform which sees major changes happening in each year of the next three years.
2. These changes affect all currently administered benefits including Council Tax benefit and Housing benefit which will see a disproportionate number of poorer sections of our community, on average, £11pw worse off.
3. It is also foreseen that additional resources will be needed to meet the needs of affected residents and to deal with the effect on our income streams.

Recommendations

4. The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the appended reports and letter.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share with Area Committee changes that will be coming into effect.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The reports attached at Appendix 2 and 3 went to the Area Chair's Forum on the 3rd November 2011.
- 2.2 The letter attached at Appendix 5 was sent to the Government Department for Communities and Local Government on 13th October 2011 by the Leader, Cllr Keith Wakefield.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The Government has embarked on a major programme of Welfare Reform which sees major changes happening in each year of the next three years a timetable for which is attached at appendix 1.
- 3.2 Within the programme of reform there are significant changes to the Housing Benefit scheme. The changes introduced in April 2011 only affect private rented sector tenants and will make claimants, on average, £11pw worse off. Appendix 2 gives greater detail on how this will be calculated and sets out what reforms will be coming into effect in 2013, including the roll out of Universal Credit.
- 3.3 Changes affecting ALMO/BITMO¹ tenants will come into effect in October 2013 and include payments being made directly to customers instead of direct to the ALMO/BITMO. Appendix 3 outlines some of the concerns and additional strains on resources that it is anticipated these changes will bring and appendix 4 details some of the measures the ALMO/BITMO propose to try to combat some of these.
- 3.4 Appendix 5 sets out Leeds City Council's response to the proposed localisation of the support scheme to replace Council Tax Benefit which is to be brought into effect in April 2013. The Council believes that it will have a disproportionate impact on poorer sections of the city, present a significant financial risk to local authorities and is not deliverable by April 2013.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The changes are being rolled out nationally but residents will need support and advice on how they are affected nearer the time.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 This report has no equality and diversity/ cohesion and integration considerations.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

¹ Arms Length Management Organisation/Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation

4.3.1 There are no implications for Council policies and city priorities associated with this report.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications or access to information issues. This report is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 See appendix 4.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The documents attached are presented to the Area Committee for information only.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the reports attached at appendixes 2 and 3 and the letter at appendix 5.

7 Background documents

7.1 Report of the Director of Housing Services to Area Chairs, 3rd November 2011, appendix 3

7.2 Report of Chief Officer, Revenue and Benefits to Area Chairs, 3rd November 2011, appendix 2

7.3 Response to localisation of Council Tax Support (appendix 5)

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Welfare Reform timetable

Date	Change	Description	Timing of change	National financial impact over the spending review period	Leeds impact
Apr-11					
Housing Benefit	National caps on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates	The LHA rates for each property type are capped at a national maximum for each property type	Change applies to all new cases from April 2011. Existing cases are transitionally protected until Jan 2012 and then change is applied from next anniversary of Housing Benefit claim.	£235m savings	No impact in Leeds as all LHA rates are below the national caps
Housing Benefit	5-bed LHA rate capped to 4-bed LHA rate	Maximum LHA rate is capped at 4 bed rate for families that require 5 bedrooms or more.	Change applies to all new cases from April 2011. Existing cases are transitionally protected until Jan 2012 and then change is applied from next anniversary of Housing Benefit claim.	Included in figure above	Around 60 cases face a reduction.
Housing Benefit	- Excess payments removed	Claimants who find rents less than the LHA rate they are entitled to were able to keep the difference to a maximum of £15 a week. This was known as the 'excess'. Benefit now restricted to the actual rent charged or the LHA rate whichever is the lower.	New cases: April 2011. Existing cases: at next anniversary of claim.		9,588 cases in Leeds will lose an average of £11.82 pw although all will still get sufficient LHA to meet their rent. Reductions take place from April 11 - March 12 depending on date of anniversary of benefit claim

Housing Benefit	- LHA rate calculation change	LHA rates are set by the Valuation Office Agency who each month collect evidence of rents being charged in the private rented sector for each property type. Until April 2011, the LHA rate was set at the midpoint, or 50th percentile point, of the range of rents being charged in the private rented sector. From Apr 11 LHA rates are set at the 30th percentile point of the rents being charged in the private rented sector.	New cases: April 2011. Existing cases: transitionally protected until Jan 2012 and then wef next anniversary of claim.	£1.2bn savings	10,226 cases are affected with reductions averaging £8.92 pw
Child Benefit	Child Benefit	Child Benefit frozen for 3 years from 2011	April 2011	£2.6bn savings	All families in Leeds
Jan-12					
Housing Benefit	Extension of Shared Accommodation Rate	Single people up to the age of 35 renting in the private rented sector will have their LHA limited to the Shared Accommodation Rate (or Bedsit rate). Until April 2011 the rule applied only to single people under 25 but the change now extends the rule to cover single people aged between 25 and 35 renting in the private sector	Change applies to all new cases from Jan 2012. For existing cases the change will be applied in line with the end of their Transitional Protection period in relation to other LHA changes	£570m savings	1300 people currently entitled to the 1-bed rate will become entitled only to the Shared Accommodation Rate
Income Support	Lone parent conditionality requirements	Most lone parents where youngest child is 5 or 6 will be migrated from IS to JSA and expected to engage in work-related activity. Also, sanction regime is strengthened for failure to meet conditionality requirements	With effect from January 2012	£250m savings	As at Nov 10 there were 6,700 Lone Parents in Leeds with children under 5 and 3,000 lone parents with youngest child aged between 5-11
Apr-12					

All benefits	Fraud Penalties and Sanctions	Administrative Penalties for fraud set at £350 or 50% of OP whichever is the greater; loss of benefit for 13 weeks, 26 weeks or 3 years following successful prosecution; introduction of £50 civil penalty in non-fraud cases for failure to report a change in circumstance	April 2012	£107m savings	Impact will be dependent on the policy developed for applying civil penalties
Jan-13					
Child Benefit	Child Benefit	Removal of Child Benefit from all higher rate tax payers	January 2013	£8.05bn	N/k
Apr-13					
All benefits	Single Fraud Investigation Service	LA, Jobcentre Plus and HMRC fraud teams will be merged into a single fraud service. LAs will lose their power to prosecute for benefit fraud	April 2013	N/A	Impact relates to staffing. 15 LCC staff potentially affected by the change
Housing Benefit	Benefit cap	Total weekly amount of benefits to be capped at around £500 pw for couples and £350 pw for single people. Cap to be applied by LAs by reducing HB entitlement until benefit below caps	April 2013	£400m savings	Expected to be small numbers of families affected in Leeds. More work will be undertaken in 2012 to confirm position.
Housing Benefit	Social-sector housing under-occupation	HB to cut by a % where claimant occupies property that is larger than family size requires, Change only applies to working-age tenants and not to pension-age tenants	April 2013	£770m savings	Work is underway to identify the extent of this issue in Leeds

Housing Benefit	HB - uprating LHA rates by CPI	LHA rates will be uprated annually using Consumer Price Index. Change means LHA rates will no longer be uprated in line with actual rents in the private rented sector	April 2013	£225m savings	All cases will be affected but impact will depend on a number of factors including reaction by landlords and CPI rates
Social Fund	Social Fund localisation	Crisis Loans and Community Care Grant funds will be transferred to LAs to help ensure funds are appropriately targeted	April 2013	No figures produced yet	Much depends on the level of funding provided. Opportunity to review provision and link with other funds including Discretionary Housing Payments and s17 payments
Council Tax Benefit	Localisation of Council Tax support	Council Tax Benefit is abolished wef March 2013. It is to be replaced by locally developed schemes of support for Council Tax with 10% less funding from Central Government. DCLG is leading on this initiative and is expected to start a more formal consultation process in July 2011.	April 2013	£975m	Over 75k families in Leeds get Council Tax Benefit. Indications are that some groups will be protected from potential cuts (pensioners) but many others likely to face cuts
DLA	Disability Living Allowance reform	DLA to be replaced by Personal Independence Payments and to be more focused on those disabled people facing the greatest barriers to leading full and independent lives	April 2013: for new cases with an ongoing review of those aged 16 - 64 during 13/14	£2bn	21k working age people in Leeds receive DLA and likely to be subject to a review
Oct-13					

All means tested benefits	Universal Credit	Universal Credit replaces the main income based benefits (IS, JSA, ESA, HB and Tax Credits) with a single payment delivered by a single agency	Oct 2013 for all new claims for a 'replaced' benefit'. Existing claims will migrate to Universal Credit between April 2014 and March 2017 - migration strategy still to be agreed	N/a	There are currently 40,000 working age families getting HB who will migrate to Universal Credit by 2017. No one will lose out at the point of transfer. The role of local councils has not yet been determined but it is expected that DWP will administer Universal Credit - this has workforce implications for Leeds and other councils
Oct-14					
Housing Benefit	Pension Credit	Housing Benefit for pensioners will be paid as Pension Credit	Oct 2013 for all new claims. Existing claims will migrate to Pension Credit between April 2015 and March 2017 - migration strategy still to be developed	N/a	There are currently 35,000 pension age families getting HB who will migrate to Pension Credit by 2017. The role of local councils has not yet been determined but it is expected that DWP will administer Pension Credit inclusive of housing costs - this has workforce implications for Leeds and other councils

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REPORT OF: STEVE CAREY, CHIEF OFFICER, REVENUES AND BENEFITS

REPORT TO AREA COMMITTEE CHAIRS' FORUM

DATE: THURSDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2011

SUBJECT: WELFARE REFORM

The report provides an update on the Government's Welfare Reform proposals and the impact on Leeds' citizens.

Background information

The Government has embarked on a major programme of Welfare Reform which sees major changes happening in each year of the next three years. Appendix 1 provides information on the most significant changes over the next 3 years.

Within the programme of reform there are significant changes to the Housing Benefit scheme. The changes introduced in April 2011 only affect private rented sector tenant and it is useful to understand how Housing Benefit works in the private rented sector.

Housing Benefit in the private rented sector is based on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates set by the Valuation Officer Agency (VOA). Each month the VOA provides LHA rates for:

- shared accommodation
- 1-bed accommodation
- 2-bed accommodation
- 3-bed accommodation
- 4-bed accommodation
- 5-bed accommodation

The amount of Housing Benefit a private-sector tenant gets is based on the property size required for the size of a tenant's household. For example, a tenant requiring 3-bed accommodation will have their HB based on the 3-bed LHA rate whether or not the tenant actually rents 3-bed accommodation. Where a tenant rents a property that is more expensive than the LHA rate, the tenant will have to pay the shortfall themselves. Where a tenant rents accommodation that is cheaper than the LHA rate, the tenant can keep the excess benefit up to a maximum of £15 pw.

Changes were introduced in April 2011 that:

- removed excess benefit payments of up to £15 pw
- capped the maximum LHA that can be paid at the 4-bed rate; and

- changed the way that LHA rates are calculated resulting in reductions in all LHA rates with the exception of shared accommodation.

Main issues

Housing Benefit changes

- *loss of excess benefit:* Private sector tenants can no longer keep excess benefit where they rent property that is cheaper than the LHA rate. Around 9,500 tenants are affected by this change and will see their Housing Benefit reduce by an average of £11 pw. The reduction is applied to existing tenants on a rolling basis from April 11 with tenants losing their excess on the anniversary of their HB claim. All excess payments will be removed by March 2012.
- *Capping LHA at 4-bed rate for families previously entitled to 5-bed rate of LHA:* Existing cases are protected until January 2012 but following the end of the transitional protection period, 60 families in Leeds requiring 5-bed accommodation will see their Housing Benefit reduce by between £9.87 a week and £161.92 a week with the average reduction for these families being £86.55 a week. A programme of home visits was undertaken in April and May to explain the changes and options to householders. Further visits are planned as benefit falls to be reduced.
- *Reductions in local housing allowance rates following changes to the way LHA rates are calculated.* Existing cases are protected until January 2012. Table 1, below, shows the reductions in LHA rates for the different property types and the number of households that will be affected when transitional protection starts to run out in January 2012.

Table 1

Type of accommodation required	Pre-April 2011 Local Housing Allowance rates £pw	Latest LHA rates following change in calculation (Sep 11) £pw	Number of households facing a reduction
Shared accom	61.50	61.50	} 4984
1-bed	109.62	99.92	
2-bed	126.22	115.38	3058
3-bed	144.23	132.69	1035
4-bed	206.54	183.46	295
5-bed	335.00	183.46*	60

* 5-bed rate is capped at the 4-bed rate

- *Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR)*: Single private rented sector tenants up to the age of 25 have their HB limited to the Shared Accommodation Rate of LHA – around £61 pw. New rules come into effect from January 2012 which extends the Shared Accommodation Rate rules to cover single people up to the age of 35. From January 2012, over 1500 tenants aged between 25 and 35 will see their Housing Benefit reduce from the maximum 1-bed rate of £99.92 to the SAR of £61.50 pw.
- All tenants affected by these changes have been sent personalised information about the changes, the impact of the changes and, in each case, the date the changes are due to be applied. Landlords and landlord groups have also been provided with information about the changes. The Government has also increased the amount of funding for Discretionary Housing Payments from £20m annually to £30m annually for 11/12 and this will increase further to £60m for 12/13. Leeds allocation based on the £30m figure is £397k and it is expected that this figure will increase at least proportionately. The increased allocation will be used to help those facing the most difficulties.
- Leeds is also a partner in a successful West Yorkshire bid to the Department for Work and Pensions for funds to establish a West Yorkshire online service that will help to match Housing Benefit tenants to affordable private sector accommodation. Work is currently underway to deliver this solution.

Welfare Reform proposals planned for 2013

There are a number of reforms planned to come into effect starting from April 2013. This includes the proposed implementation of a localised scheme of support for Council Tax which is intended to replace Council Tax Benefit from April 2013 and the start of the rollout of Universal Credit from October 2013.

Replacement scheme for Council Tax Benefit

- The Welfare Reform Bill proposes the abolition of Council Tax Benefit with effect from April 2013. In its place will be localised schemes of support designed and operated by councils with funding for the scheme reduced by 10%. The Department for Communities and Local Government is leading on the localised schemes of support for Council Tax.
- The key features of the consultation proposals are:
 - a) Pensioners are likely to be protected from any reduction in support and councils are likely to have the ability to protect other vulnerable groups; and
 - b) Councils will be given fixed funding for the schemes which will be reduced by 10% in comparison to current spend on Council Tax Benefit. Any spend above this level, whether driven by more generous schemes of increased demand, will need to be funded by councils.

- A copy of Leeds' response to DCLG's consultation paper is attached at appendix 2

Universal Credit

- Universal Credit is the cornerstone of the Government's reforms aimed at making work pay. It is also the most ambitious of the changes bringing together IS, JSA, ESA, HB and Tax Credits into a single payment. Nationally, this will see 19m different benefit claims (including 5m HB claims) being migrated into 8.5m claims for Universal Credit. Universal Credit is intended to simplify the benefits system and ensure that people are always better off in work than on benefits. This is achieved by firstly having a single working age benefit accessed through a single claim form and administered by a single agency and secondly by allowing people to keep more of their benefits when they move into work than is currently the case. It is expected that the rate at which Universal Credit will be withdrawn when people move into work will be 65%. The current range of benefits can see people who move into work having their benefits withdrawn by rates in excess of 90% in some instances.
- Although the design work and underpinning policies are still being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions, a number of aspects of Universal Credit are now known and these have implications for the council and for people receiving benefits in Leeds.
 - Universal Credit will be delivered in the first instance by teams formed from Jobcentre Plus and HMRC Tax Credits teams with local authority responsibility for Housing Benefit being removed by 2017. A decision on the longer term operating models will be taken in 2015. This may result in opportunities for local councils to become involved in Universal Credit delivery once the transition programme is completed in 2017;
 - Access to Universal Credit is expected to be through an electronic claims process with support provided for people who may struggle with this process. Jobcentre Plus will provide face-to-face support in the first instance although discussions are underway with the Department for Work and Pensions on the role of local councils in providing face-to-face support;
 - From October 2013 new claims for Income Support, Employment Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance will be treated as claims for Universal Credit as will any associated HB claims and will be administered by the new Jobcentre Plus/HMRC teams;
 - From 2014 there will be a transition programme to transfer existing HB, IS, ESA, JSA and Tax Credit claims to Universal Credit with the transition period expected to be completed by 2017.
 - It is intended that Universal Credit will be paid monthly in arrears and will be paid, in most instances, directly to claimants.

- Pensioner claims will transfer to the Pension Service starting in October 2014 and housing costs will be paid as a housing credit with Pension Credit. The Pension Service has recently stated that it expects to continue to pay housing costs elements directly to landlords where this is currently the case.

Other changes

- 1.1 The programme of welfare reform also sees further changes coming into effect from April 2013. These changes include:

a) *Cap on Housing Benefit for social sector tenants who live in accommodation that is too large for their needs:* Tenants who live in social sector housing that is larger than they need will see their Housing Benefit reduced by a percentage. The change applies only to working age tenants and not to pension-age tenants.

b) *Use of Consumer Price Index to up-rate Local Housing Allowance rates*
Currently local housing allowance rates are up-rated on a monthly basis by the Valuation Office Agency using evidence collected from landlords in the private rented sector. From April 2013 local housing allowance rates will be up-rated by reference to the consumer price index and will be up-rated by the lower of the consumer price index or the evidence collected by the Valuation Office Agency. The Departments for Work and Pension's analysis suggests that this change will save the Government £225m.

c) *Benefit caps*

The Welfare Reform Bill contains proposals to cap the total amount of benefit a household can receive to around £500 a week for a family and £350 a week for a single person. The cap will only apply to out of work working age claimants.

The cap will be applied by local councils and will be achieved by reducing Housing Benefit until the overall amount of benefit is no more than the £500/£350 cap. The key factors that will determine the number of cases affected by the cap are a) the amount of housing benefit that is paid and b) the size of the family. Initial work suggests that 184 families in Leeds would be affected by the change – all are families with 4 or more children.

d) *Social Fund*

From April 2013 Jobcentre Plus will no longer run a scheme of Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans for General Living Expenses and emergency situations. Instead, an amount of funding will be transferred to local councils for councils to consider running schemes to support citizens.

It is expected that Councils will be free to decide whether they wish to run a scheme and, if so, what type of scheme they wish to provide. If a council chooses not to run a scheme, it is expected that it will need to state what the funding has been used for. The reasoning for transferring the scheme to local councils is that Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans applications are more suitably dealt with in a face-to-face setting and that is

not the direction of travel for Jobcentre Plus; it also enables councils to design schemes that better reflect local situations.

The funding that will be transferred to councils is expected to be less than that currently spent on the schemes by Jobcentre Plus. In 2009/10, £70M nationally was spent on Crisis Loans and it is intended that £36m will be distributed to councils from April 2013 along with £136m Community Care Grant funding.

e) *Disability Living Allowance changes*

From April 2013 Disability Living Allowances (DLA) will be replaced by Personal Independence Payments for claimants aged between 16 and 64. A programme of reviews will be undertaken for people already getting DLA and they will be assessed against the criteria for Personal Independence Payments. The Department for Work and Pensions impact assessment states there will be “net costs to individuals of £2.1bn from reduced benefit expenditure from focussing support on disabled people with greatest needs”.

A Welfare Reform Strategy Board has been established to prepare for and oversee the implementation of the changes in Leeds and an overall strategy is in development for approval by Executive Board in the New Year.

REPORT OF: JILL WILDMAN, DIRECTOR OF HOUSING SERVICES

REPORT TO AREA COMMITTEE CHAIRS' FORUM

DATE: THURSDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2011

SUBJECT: WELFARE REFORM

This briefing note outlines to Members as to the potential implications/risks for the Leeds ALMO's / BITMO as a consequence of the Welfare Reform – particularly relating to the introduction of Universal Credit and Under Occupation.

Universal Credit

- ALMO / BITMO Customers - Go live date October 2013 for all new claims. April 2014 thereon to 2017 migration of all other claims.
- ALMO / BITMO Customers Affected: £60 million HB is rebated and currently paid direct to ALMO / BITMO rent accounts for 22,300 working age ALMO / BITMO tenants:
 - 17,800 get full HB
 - 4,500 get partial HB

Potential Issues and Risks

- Once implemented the HB will be paid direct to the tenant, therefore a substantial additional amount of income will need to be collected by the ALMOs/BITMO.
- Customers will have the responsibility to manage their own benefits i.e. paid directly to individuals and they are responsible for making their own rent payments to Landlords.
- Customers managing own finances – some do not have a bank account for the payments to be paid into.
- Customers may not view paying their rent as a priority.
- Many customers are financially excluded and do not have sound financial literacy skills which will enable them to budget effectively.
- Reduction in income collection.
- Impact on performance. (Benefits to be made per calendar month in arrears to claimants).
- Increased collection costs / recovery activity / transaction costs.
- Increased arrears / increased evictions / increased legal costs.
- Potential increase in legal high cost lenders/illegal money lending / loan sharks
- Increased number of terminations / void costs / rent loss.
- Increased number of homelessness cases.
- Impact of overpayments in direct payment cases.

- Increase amount of bad debt provision may be required – potential increase in number of FTA write offs.
- DWP considering that 5-10% of vulnerable customers rent may be paid direct to ALMO / BITMO rent account (no definition of vulnerable).
- Concerns re vulnerable customers i.e. drugs / alcohol dependencies (additional disposable income).
- Managing the migration for ALMO / BITMO customers to Universal Credit.
- Central administration – Universal Credit is to be managed by one single agency to reduce prospect of loss of fraud and error.
- Increased no of enquiries via Face to Face and Contact Centre to clarify issues. Additional support needed for customers hence increased staff resources may be required.
- The need to re-skill staff to deal with the new legislation / process.
- DWP will accept, process and decide all claims for UC but are aiming for all claims to be conducted on-line (no paper claims). Initial target is 50% to then reach 80%. Each claimant will have own unique login ID and password to access their own benefit account. Claimants have responsibility of notifying DWP via their own on line account re got a job or off work / sick etc.
 - High percentage of our customers do not have access to computers and have no skills to use a computer.
 - From April 2013 all employers will be required to notify HMRC of the earning of all their employees i.e. if claimant is in low paid employment and has a change in their earnings – this automatically notifies real time systems and account is amended.
 - Process required for Human Resources and an increase in workload.
- Disability Living Allowance – to be abolished in April 2013, replaced by PIP (Personal Independence Payment). (21k claimants in Leeds between 16 and 60 receive DLA). Point scoring system – DWP predict 20% reduction in claims. Claim assessment targeted at daily living (not care). Mobility (not walking) and what aids / adaptations considered when claims are made.
 - Customers may refuse, delay or even remove aids and adaptations whilst under assessment to qualify for a higher rate of PIP.
 - ALMOs/BITMO will have to notify DWP of every aid and adaptation delivered / installed.

Welfare Reform – Housing Benefit Under Occupation in Social Rented Sector

Potential Implication for ALMOs / BITMO

- April 2013 change to HB rules mean that “working age” social tenants will receive a reduction in their HB where they live in accommodation that is larger for their needs i.e. number of bedrooms.
- Percentage reduction depends on the degree to which the tenant is under-occupying i.e. less reduction for a one bed, more reduction for a 2 bed plus.
- May be some exemptions i.e. homes adapted for disability purposes.
- Estimate of 7,500 ALMO / BITMO tenants that may be affected.

Potential Issues and Risks:

- Increased number of staff resources, realignment of duties to collect income / provide advice / support / collection teams.
- Reduction in income collection.
- Increased rent arrears (those tenants affected are in receipt of benefits and therefore will have less disposable income).
- Communication to both customers and staff as to the future changes.
- Impact on performance.
- Increase in legal costs / evictions.
- Possible impact on number of homeless cases.
- Support required for vulnerable customers – hence additional resources may be required.
- Increased transaction costs.
- Potential increased demand for smaller property types i.e. one bed flats and possible reduced demand for larger properties i.e. flats.
- Increased number of voids / rent loss / void budgets and expenditure.
- Implication on current Incentive Scheme (LCC).
- Lettings Policy (LCC) – will need to be reviewed to incorporate any changes.
- Tenancy conditions / agreement to be reviewed (LCC).
- LLP's currently age restriction in blocks - consideration of future LLPs.
- Consideration where Landlords allowed an additional bedroom i.e. disabled children / medical, access to children, foster carers – impact.
- Potential changes in IT systems may be required.

Please note Appendix A the cross ALMO / BITMO Action Plan.

The ALMO's / BITMO and LCC are currently gathering detailed data to be able to have a more detailed understanding as to how many customers are to be affected.

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WELFARE REFORMS: CROSS ALMO / BITMO ACTION PLAN 2011 / 2012

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
Issue: General							
1	Review Income Management Staff Structures within each ALMO in anticipation of increased demand.	31/03/2013	SS, SK, DR	Review current structure and potential increased workload.	30/06/2012		All organisations.
			SS, SK, DR	Draft new structure and seek approval	30/09/2012		All organisations.
			SS, SK, DR	Implement new structure if appropriate	31/03/2013		All organisations.
2	Review rent arrears procedures across Leeds to ensure prompt action to be taken on Customers falling into arrears.	30/04/12	SS, SK, DR	Review current process	31/10/2011		Pre NISP completed Oct 2011
			SS, SK, DR	Draft new process and letters	31/01/2012		Pre NISP completed Oct 2011. Meeting 10.11.11 to review Post NISP.
			SS, SK, DR	Implement new procedures	30/04/2012		
3	Review working practices within each ALMO to ensure most effective way of delivering new procedures are implemented.		SS, SK, DR		30/06/2012		AVH & WNVH

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
4	Develop communications strategy to ensure customers and staff are fully informed on changes in a timely manner.	31/05/12	SS, SK, DR & ABCL Comms Team	Review Migration schedule & Welfare Reform Timetable and develop comms strategy to publicise changes.	28/02/2012		All organisations and ABCL Communications Team to be involved.
Issue: Financial Inclusion							
5	Ensure Financial Inclusion Support is available for customers.	30/04/12	SS, SK, DR	Change role and job description for existing Benefit Advisors to become Financial Inclusion Officers.			Ongoing discussions with Benefit Advisors regarding training requirements. (AVHL specific)
6	Ensure each ALMO remains updated with Financial Inclusion implications of reforms.	Ongoing	SS, SK, DR	Ensure representation on local Financial Inclusion and financial literacy forums.			Each ALMO to continue attending the strategic meetings.
7	Fuel poverty - increasing numbers of customers are experiencing fuel poverty. Undertake a series of co-ordinated campaigns to highlight the issue and other advice to customers to minimise the impact.	Ongoing	SS, SK, DR	Pre payment meter campaign	31/10/2012		To organise city wide campaign highlighting issues associated with PPM's.
			SS, SK, DR	Fuel saver campaign	31/03/2012		To organise city wide publicity on fuel saving options/changing benefits to reduce fuel costs.
Issue: Universal Credit							
8	Engage with DWP to start to build a working relationship to introduce processes for communication, data protection. Are there any opportunities for the ALMO's, e.g. offering to deal with enquiries for DWP?	30/09/12		Arrange meeting with DWP Manager for Leeds.	31/01/2012		ENEHL to organise.
				Agree working protocols/data sharing etc.	31/07/2012		
				Establish how enquiries are to be dealt with.	30/09/2012		

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
9	Use the migration schedule and Welfare Reform Timetable to target priority groups in order, to ensure customers who are affected first are contacted first. These groups could have no online access, communication or support needs	31/03/12	SS, SK, DR	Review Welfare Reform Timetable. Review migration schedule due to be released by DWP December 2011.	31/01/2012		Awaiting Schedule to be issued
				Plan target groups and commence target awareness campaigns.	Linked to above		
				Work with Customer Sounding Boards/ Focus Groups to agree a communication plan for leaflets, articles, website, letters, posters etc	Linked to above		
				Review and promote Lone Parent conditionality requirements. Most lone parents, where youngest child is 5 or 6, will be migrated from IS to JSA and expected to engage in work related activity. Sanction Regime is strengthened for failure to meet requirements.	Linked to above		

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
9	Use the migration schedule and Welfare Reform Timetable to target priority groups in order, to ensure customers who are affected first are contacted first. These groups could have no online access, communication or support needs (Cont'd)		SS, SK, DR	Publicise and prepare for localisation of Council Tax support - Council Tax Benefit is to be abolished March 2013 and replaced by locally developed schemes of support for Council Tax with 10% less funding from central government.	30/04/2013		
				Review Housing Benefit cap. Total weekly amount of benefits to be capped at around £500 pw for couples and £350 pw for single people. Cap to be applied by LA's by reducing HB entitlement until benefit below caps.	30/04/2013		More work will be undertaken in 2012 to confirm position.
				Refer to Welfare Reform Timetable - October 2013 for all new claims for a 'replaced benefit'.			
10	Ensure that staff receive training so that the appropriate help is given to customers regarding their rent payments, financial advice and support.	31/03/12	SS, SK, DR & ABCL Training	Review migration schedule due to be released by DWP December 2011.	31/01/2012		Training Manager's to develop training programme for staff.
				Plan staff training	Dates to be linked to migration schedule		
				Deliver staff training			

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
11	Explore the possibility of increasing the method of payment options such as introducing self service payment kiosks within housing offices.	31/03/12		Research and obtain quotes	31/12/2011		Visits undertaken.
				Present report for decision.	31/01/2012		
12	Estimate impact of Universal Credit though loss of Housing Benefit direct.	31/12/12		Obtain data on housing benefits and analyse	30/06/2012		Currently investigating data available.
13	Develop partnership with Jobs & Skills to encourage customers on benefits to undertake training to lead into work/education opportunities.	31/12/12	SS, SK, DR & ABCL Training	Arrange ALMO meeting with ABCL training/Jobs & Skills to discuss options.	30/04/2012		
				Develop and implement strategy and new opportunities for customers on benefits.	31/12/2012		
14	Ensure Customers are able to claim Universal Credit easily.	31/10/13		Claims will be administered online.	31/10/2013		Review data on customers who do not have online access.
				ALMO's to take part in customer trials when approached by DWP			Awaiting details from DWP.
15	Ensure Customers effected by Universal Credit are aware of rental liability and legal action.	30/04/12		Plan and deliver Rent First campaigns on website and in newsletters.	Autumn and Winter 2012; Spring and Summer 2013		Will need home visits to customers affected to discuss methods of payment, implications, put on direct payment if possible.
				Involve focus groups.		Winter 2012 & Summer 2013	Review communications strategy/public city material within group.

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
16	Ensure Leeds Bad Debt provision reflects impact of welfare reforms.	Ongoing		Engage with Strategic Landlord on work around write offs.	30/06/2012		The Council may need to increase its bad debt provision significantly to take account for a likely increase in Former Tenancy arrears due to increased legal action, evictions and abandoned properties due to increased rent and arrears. Until the detail of the Universal Credit and the Under Occupation penalty are known it is difficult to predict by what amount the bad debt provision
17	Produce publicity on bank accounts and financial services such as budgeting, direct debit as a rent method and Credit Union.	31/03/13	SS, SK, DR & ABCL Training	Review current publicity material	31/08/2012		Winter, Spring & Summer campaigns.
				Produce new material, highlighting changes on UC, importance of rent first.	31/01/2013		Winter, Spring & Summer campaigns.
				Regular campaign in newsletters, website and mail shot.			Winter, Spring & Summer campaigns.
Issue: Under occupancy Caps to Housing Benefit							
18	Ensure that staff receive training so that the appropriate help is given to customers regarding their rent payments, financial advice and support.	31/12/12	SS, SK, DR & ABCL Training	Changes due to come in April 2013			
				Once impact known, training to be planned and delivered.	January/ February 2013		City wide training to be delivered via ABCL training.

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
19	Review direct let lettings, successions, assignments and advise customers of the potential impact under occupancy will have on increasing rent payments from April 2013	31/12/11	ALMO Lettings Lead Officers	Changes due to come in April 2013			
				Lettings and Leeds Homes Team to begin work on this.			Awaiting confirmation from DWP on what is to be implemented.
20	Gather and analyse data on under occupied accommodation within each ALMO, using the customer profile and data from LCC to match against accommodation size	31/12/11	SS, SK, DR, Lettings Lead Officers & Leeds Homes	Changes due to come in April 2013			Awaiting confirmation from DWP on what is to be implemented.
				Need to check data we hold, and model what the impact will be.			
21	Review best practice on under occupation.		Lettings Lead Officers & Leeds Homes	Changes due to come in April 2013			Awaiting confirmation from DWP on what is to be implemented.
				Can commence working to best practice on under occupation now to minimise impact in April 2013			Awaiting confirmation from DWP on what is to be implemented.
22	Use data to plan timely consultation and advice sessions with all customers affected. Work across ALMO's and LCC to review the lettings policy to take the changes into account.	31/03/13	Lettings Lead Officers & Leeds Homes	Analyse data and customer	31/03/2012		Awaiting confirmation from DWP on what is to be implemented.
				Review and amend Lettings policy.	30/06/2012		
				Undertake consultation with affected customers.	31/12/2012		

NR	ACTION CODE & TITLE	DUE DATE	TASK OWNER	MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE DUE DATE	MILESTONE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
23	Engage in discussions with LCC regarding the Localism Bill which could change Tenancy Agreement conditions.	31/03/12	Lettings Lead Officers	Changes due to come in April 2013			
24	LCC currently have a downsizing incentive of £1000 per room, ALMO's need to work together to see how this can be utilised, prior to the changes. Also need to assess any impact on void and repair performance and costs.	31/03/12		Changes due to come in April 2013			
25	Minimise impact of Under Occupancy, particularly to new/potential customers.	31/12/12		Engage in city wide projects to review direct let lettings, successions, assignments and advise customers of the potential impact under occupancy will have on increasing rent payments			
				Refer to Welfare Reform Timetable.	30/04/2013		
25	Ensure customer effected by Under Occupancy is aware of rental liability.	30/04/12		Plan and deliver Rent First campaign on website and in newsletter.			

Key: SS Simon Swift
SK Sarah Kemp
DR David Rickus



Councillor Keith Wakefield
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Our ref: KW\SH\CTAX

13 October 2011

Dear Sir or Madam

Leeds City Council believes that the proposals for localisation of the support scheme to replace Council Tax Benefit will have a disproportionate impact on poorer sections of the City, present a significant financial risk to local authorities and are not deliverable by April 2013.

The proposals will see many workless claimants faced with significant levels of debt and create additional financial pressures for councils that could impact on the delivery of frontline support to workless customers. The rationale for keeping support for Council Tax separate from and not part of Universal Credit is not supported by the Council. We believe that support for Council Tax should form part of Universal Credit and that Universal Credit, which will also include Housing Benefit, should be delivered locally by local councils.

Rationale for reform

The consultation paper sets out the rationale for reform as follows:

- *to give local authorities a greater stake in the economic future of their local area;*
- *provide opportunities for local authorities to reform the system of support for working age claimants;*
- *reinforce local control over Council Tax;*
- *give local authorities a significant degree of control on how a 10% reduction in expenditure is achieved;*
- *give local authorities a financial stake in the provision of support for council tax.*

The Government's intention to cut expenditure in this area by 10%, prescribe a national scheme that protects pensioners from losses and make arrangements that ensure that local schemes support the intention behind Universal Credit for people in work and moving into work, means that there will be little scope for councils to carry out effective reform of the support provided. The impact of this is that costs can only be reduced to match the funding by reducing support to unemployed working age customers by as much as 15-20%. This reduces local control over Council Tax support and this is further reduced by the omission of discounts and exemptions from consideration within a localised scheme of support for Council Tax. Leeds had a gross spend of £64m in Council Tax Benefit in 2010/11 and a

further £52m in discounts and exemptions over the same period. While the £64m in Council Tax Benefit was targeted to people in need, a significant proportion of the £52m awarded in discounts and exemptions would have been paid to people who could afford to pay without the need for support. Leeds City Council proposes that local control over Council Tax support should extend to the scheme of discounts and exemptions.

We also propose that support for Council Tax should form part of Universal Credit and that Universal Credit should be delivered locally by Councils. This would deliver simplification brought about by a single claim for all the main means-tested working age benefits and also deliver local accountability for provision, performance and impact if administered by local councils.

The Government's proposal to move away from the current model of funding for Council Tax support and to move to a fixed grant to fund the local scheme of support, presents significant financial risk to local councils and represents a whole transfer of this risk from Central Government.

The Government's rationale for the scheme suggests that the proposed changes will give councils a greater stake in the economic future of their local area.

- Councils like Leeds already have a strong commitment to tackling worklessness backed up by significant investment, innovative schemes, close partnership working with Jobcentre Plus, LEPs, Enterprise Zones and other development and regeneration activity;
- People moving into work, especially low paid work, may remain entitled to Council Tax support, with the level of support remaining similar to that provided when unemployed in order to support the Government's intention to maintain marginal deduction rates of 65% when taken in conjunction with Universal Credit. Because of this any potential savings to local schemes are likely to be muted; and
- Demography and the ageing population means that there will continue to be growth in the number of pensioners requiring support. Each additional pensioner claim thereby increases spend on local support at a greater rate than any reductions gained from people moving into work.

Principles of the scheme

- *Local Authorities to have a duty to run a scheme of support*
- *For pensioners there should be no change in current levels of awards*
- *Local Authorities should also consider ensuring support for other vulnerable groups;*
- *Local schemes should support work incentives, and in particular avoid disincentives to move into work.*

Leeds City Council believes authorities should have a scheme of support for Council Tax that reflects ability to pay and provides a safety net for people undergoing difficult circumstances. The proposals do not achieve this and the principles underpinning the scheme mean that some of the poorest people will face some of the biggest reductions. An analysis of Leeds caseload shows that:

- 94k claims for Council Tax Benefit were paid in 10/11 at a value of £64m
 - o 35k claims were from pensioners at a value of £25.8m
 - o 15k claims were from people with a disability benefit at a value of £10.5m
 - o 13.5k claims from people in-work at a value of £8m

Protecting these claims and supporting the marginal deduction rates to be applied to Universal Credit for people in work, would leave fewer than 31k cases (33% of claims) and less than £20m of spend to deliver the overall 10% reduction in expenditure. This means that unemployed families in Leeds would be faced with reductions of 15%-20% or more in their Council Tax support. At Band D rates this would mean some of the poorest people paying an extra £240 a year in Council Tax

The proposals to protect pensioners and provide some protection for other people, including people in work and moving into work, would require, in effect, each council to operate multiple schemes. There would be:

- a national scheme for pensioners prescribed by Government and administered by councils;
- an in-work scheme that would work in tandem with Universal Credit to achieve acceptable marginal deduction rates for people in work;
- a local scheme offering protected levels of council tax support for vulnerable groups, most notably disabled claimants but also other groups not subject to the requirement to look for work; and
- a local scheme designed by councils that delivers an overall 10% cut in total expenditure from less than half the overall expenditure.

The administrative and software requirements arising from multiple schemes within councils are likely to be expensive, complex and difficult to deliver and would work against the overall aims of simplification and transparency that underpin Universal Credit.

Establishing local schemes

The consultation paper states that councils will need to design schemes which take account of the funding the LA 'intends to dedicate to the scheme' and also take account of the following:

- *Framework set by central govt (e.g. pensioners)*
- *Local priorities*
- *Forecasts of demand*
- *Assumptions around take-up*
- *Impact on council tax yield, for example, as a result of non-payment*

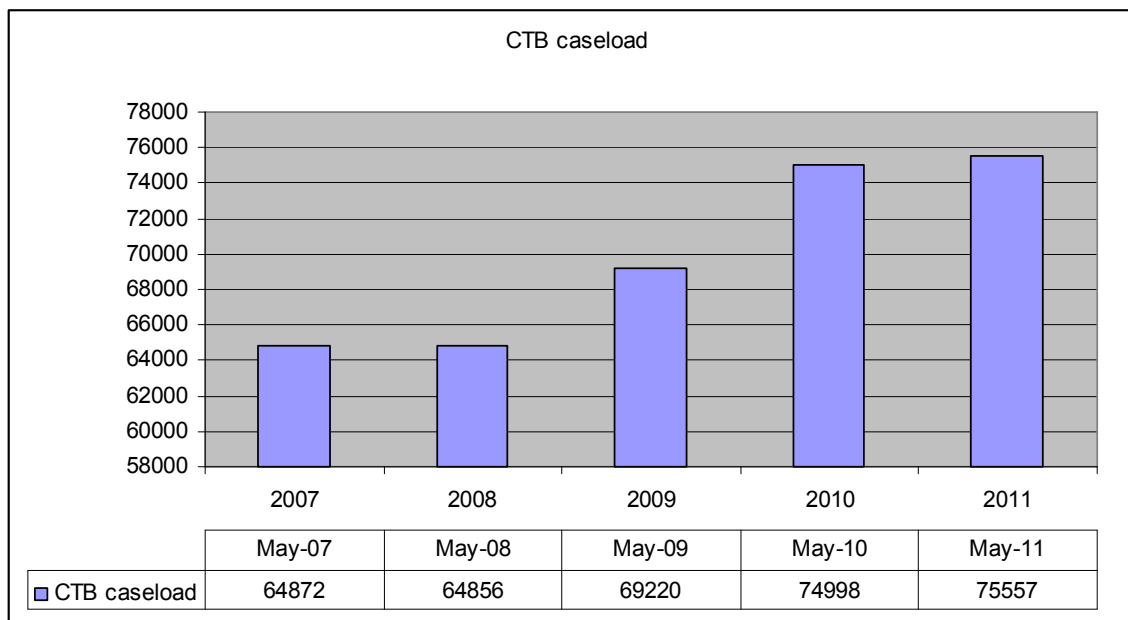
As stated above the ability to reflect local priorities is severely limited by the prescription of a national scheme for pensioners and the expectations around protecting other vulnerable groups and people moving into work. The scope for local priorities can be increased by including discounts and exemptions and allowing local councils to design these to both reflect local priorities and provide an overall scheme of support for council tax that reflects ability to pay.

It will be very difficult to accurately forecast demand for council tax support and councils will have little incentive to increase take-up where this will also increase financial pressures. Forecasts can be made using current and historic data on council tax benefit but there are many factors outside councils' control that significantly increase demand. The last 2 years, for instance, has seen significant increases in benefit claims as a result of the recent recession, including a doubling of Jobseekers Allowance claims in Leeds. There are other factors that make forecasting demand very difficult including the impact of Universal Credit itself. The majority of claims for Universal Credit will be from people in-work, a group that has relatively low levels of Council Tax Benefit take-up. It is likely that links between

Universal Credit and local schemes of support will see increases in the numbers of in-work claimants getting local Council Tax support;

Other factors include the impact of an ageing population and scheme design. Simple schemes that are easy to access and understand will increase demand. A snapshot of the Leeds' Council Tax Benefit caseload over the last 5 years shows the change in position and the difficulty in accurately forecasting demand. The table shows significant increases in caseload between 2008 and 2009 and again between 2009 and 2010. Over-forecasting demand could lead to customers having unnecessarily higher levels of contribution to pay towards their Council Tax; under-forecasting demand would lead to increased financial pressure on the council. The gross spend on Council Tax Benefit increased by £5.2m in 08/09 after allowing for Council Tax increase and by £5m in 09/10 after allowing for Council Tax increases – these increases represent the financial risk the Council would have been exposed to if the proposed scheme had been in operation in 08/9 and 09/10.

The caseload continues to rise in Leeds and at August 2011 had risen by another 1269 cases to 76,844.



Leeds agrees with the proposal that no adjustments to schemes within year should be allowed but does believe that schemes should be able to be adjusted from year to year. We also agree that local schemes should be subject to local consultation but have concerns about the intention to require further consultation on scheme changes. The timescales and processes required to consult would seem to prevent councils reacting to unexpected demand by taking steps to prevent further financial pressures occurring in the next financial year. Consultation in scheme adjustments should be limited to more fundamental redesigns and allow councils to adjust parameters without the need for a formal public consultation exercise.

Joint working

Leeds City Council agrees that there could be merit in operating similar local schemes across regions in order to provide some degree of consistency between neighbouring councils and residents. This includes the ability to collaborate and pool resources in design, consultation and implementation of schemes. However, the ability to do this will depend significantly on the make up of each council's caseload, the scope for achieving 10% reductions in expenditure after the application of the Government framework and

forecast demand within each council. Individual councils are unlikely to adopt a scheme that leads to significant financial pressures. Equally individual councils are unlikely to adopt less generous schemes to support other councils and the principle of consistency – not least because this would increase the amount of Council Tax to be collected from the poorest people in the area.

There may be scope for some councils to collaborate and jointly administer local schemes, particularly where there are shared schemes. However, this scope exists at the moment with the national Council Tax Benefit scheme. For Unitaries and Mets joint administration of local schemes is likely to prove problematic and it is difficult to see how this could be achieved in isolation of the administration of housing benefit and the overall billing, collection and recovery activity in Revenues services. With the pending transition of housing benefit cases to Universal Credit and the proposals to localise Business Rates, it is not deemed appropriate to impose shared and joint working requirements on councils without the development of full business cases that reflect the economies of scale already delivered by large Mets like Leeds.

Funding and managing risk

“Schemes will need to be designed based on a fixed grant allocation. Local authorities will need to consider what additional contingency arrangements should be put in place within their local schemes to take account of unplanned increases in demand or take-up.”

A key consideration is the methodology for establishing the initial grant and we are awaiting the promised technical paper on this. We would support annual refreshes of the funding to councils rather than the option for initial funding levels to remain unchanged for a number of years. An annual refresh of the grant will provide a degree of protection against the financial risk faced by councils through increased and unexpected demand. The notional prospect that councils may gain from a fixed grant by reducing the number of people requiring local support for council tax is unrealistic when set against an ageing population, increased take-up by in-work claimants through links to Universal Credit and uncertain economic performance at a national level.

The annual refresh should also include an uplift in funding to reflect changes to Council Tax levels. This would provide some protection against increased financial pressures and help provide stable schemes for those already faced with reductions in local support.

The proposal to create a safety valve so financial pressures can be shared with major precepting authorities such as the police and fire and rescue services is another area of concern. Although *in extremis*, billing authorities might welcome the opportunity to share the burden with their local police or fire and rescue authorities, we can see no compelling argument for allowing them to do so, any more than, say, allowing them sharing the burden with the NHS. Police and fire authorities have no stake in the Council Tax Benefit regime, and any safety valve would have an element of uncertainty in their funding which is in direct contradiction to the proposals for “guaranteed levels of funding” in the Local Government Resource Review (see Section 2.7, Technical Paper 1 of the Resource Review).

The consultation suggests that billing authorities should put in place local contingency arrangements to cope with fluctuations in demand. We would agree that this would be desirable but are concerned that creating such contingencies will necessarily take resources away from other services. A further consequence is that reductions in Council Tax Benefits to low income groups will make Council Tax itself more difficult to collect. To compensate for this, billing authorities will need to adjust their provisions for bad debts in

their annual calculations of council tax, which will create an additional pressure on council tax levels, and the risk of a spiral effect.

With regard to the proposal to create a national contingency, we have two concerns:

- where the contingency would be drawn from; and
- given that the proposals will transfer most if not all the risk associated with Council Tax Benefit from central to local government, why there would still be a need to maintain a national contingency and what would it be used for.

Timescale for implementation

The timescale for implementation is wholly unrealistic. The paper suggests that the required primary legislation for localised Council Tax support schemes will not be passed until Spring or Summer 2012 and that the necessary regulations will follow on from this. It is possible that the required detail and legal framework will not be on the statute books until autumn or winter 2012 and it is not possible to design, consult, build and implement new schemes of support by April 2013. If the Government intends to pursue the localisation of Council Tax support then at the very least the implementation date for the schemes must be deferred until April 2014.

Summary

Leeds City Council does not support the proposals for local schemes of support for Council Tax which it believes are inherently unfair. The proposals would lead to some of the poorest citizens bearing the brunt of the reductions and believes that more equitable systems of local support could be achieved with the inclusion of council tax discounts and exemptions within a local scheme of support.

The proposals present a significant financial risk to councils at a time when councils are already faced with significant cuts to funding. A key driver for the reform is the need to achieve £500m savings in Council Tax Benefit expenditure and we would urge the Government to look elsewhere for these savings. We would suggest that a national scheme should remain in place and be included within Universal Credit with Universal Credit delivered locally by Councils - this would provide simplification, accessibility, accountability and a focus on outcomes at a locality level. A national scheme would continue to be funded centrally.

If the Government intends to push ahead with localised schemes of support, then the deadline for implementation must be deferred to April 2014 at the least.

Responses to the specific questions asked within the consultation document are attached.

Yours faithfully



Councillor Keith Wakefield
Leader of the Council

5a: Given the Government's firm commitment to protect pensioners, is maintaining the current system of criteria and allowances the best way to deliver this guarantee of support?

The current system is the best way to protect pensioners from reductions. This will, however, require DWP to maintain and update figures for Applicable Amounts and Premiums. It will also require the current relationship between Council Tax Benefit and Pensions Credit to be retained and will, in effect, see The Pension Service continuing to decide the income levels to be taken into account by councils when awarding financial support towards Council Tax.

5b: What is the best way of balancing the protection of vulnerable groups with the need for local authority flexibility?

There Government's proposals around protection for pensioners and other vulnerable groups, alongside the proposal for councils to meet the costs of the scheme from a fixed grant, limit the scope for local authority flexibility. If Councils limit their spending to the funding available they will have little choice but to apply disproportionate reductions to the group of people who are working age and out-of-work and required to comply with work-related conditionality requirements. Councils would have greater scope for flexibility in designing a scheme of support if the scheme also covered discounts and exemptions.

6a: What, if any, additional data and expertise will local authorities require to forecast demand and take-up?

Trend data relating to Council Tax Benefit take-up over recent years is available to councils. Councils would also need to factor in data, including trend data, from Jobcentre Plus on jobs and worklessness and Pension Service on take-up of national benefits. This aspect will be a challenge for councils:

- overestimating demand may result in less generous schemes being designed leaving councils with larger amounts of council tax to collect from claimants;
- underestimating demand will mean councils needing to fund schemes that are more expensive than anticipated.

6b: What forms of external scrutiny, other than public consultation, might be desirable?

The consultation paper recognises the risks to councils. The use of external agencies to scrutinise schemes is likely to be costly and is unlikely to provide significant assurance around demand forecasts and scheme costs.

6c: Should there be any minimum requirements for consultation, for example, minimum time periods?

The extent and nature of public consultation may vary depending on the level of funding a council wishes to apply to a local scheme. A scheme designed to spend within Government funding levels may require greater consultation with vulnerable groups; a scheme supplemented by Council funding may require much wider consultation on the option of using Council Tax funding to provide greater financial support to help unemployed people meet their council tax liabilities. In either case a minimum timescale should be specified. The requirement to consult on local schemes is a new burden for councils and the costs of consultation would need to be met by Central Government.

6d: Do you agree that councils should be able to change schemes from year to year? What, if any restrictions, should be placed on their freedom to do this?

Yes. Councils need to be able to amend schemes from year to year to respond to demand issues and reflect changing local priorities.

6e: How can the Government ensure that work incentives are supported, and in particular, that low earning households do not face high participation tax rates?

The best way to achieve this is to consider the way that Universal Credit treats people in work and make an allowance that recognises people in receipt of local council tax support. This approach would better support the intention to protect pensioners and allow councils to put in place a common scheme covering customers both in work and out of work.

7a: Should billing authorities have default responsibility for defining and administering the schemes?

Yes.

7b: What safeguards are needed to protect the interests of major precepting authorities in the design of the scheme, on the basis that they will be a key partner in managing financial risk?

We do not agree that precepting authorities should share the risk (see 8a below).

7c: Should local precepting authorities (such as parish councils) be consulted as part of the preparation of the scheme? Should this extend to neighbouring authorities?

There should be no requirement to consult precepting authorities unless it is expected that precepting authorities are to share the financial risks arising from the scheme. There should be no requirement to consult with neighbouring authorities.

7d: Should it be possible for an authority (for example, a single billing authority, county council in a two-tier area) to be responsible for the scheme in an area for which it is not a billing authority?

The regulations should allow this but it should be left to the individual authorities to decide

7e: Are there circumstances where Government should require an authority other than the billing authority to lead on either developing or administering a scheme?

It is difficult to see how this would support the concept of local schemes.

8a: Should billing authorities normally share risks with major precepting authorities?

The proposal that precepting authorities such as the police and fire and rescue should share the financial risks arising from local schemes is contrary to the intention behind the Resource Review which is intended to provide stability of funding for precepting authorities. .

8b: Should other forms of risk sharing (for example, between district councils) be possible?

This is for district councils to address

8c: What administrative changes are required to enable risk sharing to happen?

See 8b

8d: What safeguards do you think are necessary to ensure that risk sharing is used appropriately?

See 8b

9a: In what aspects of administration would it be desirable for a consistent approach to be taken across all schemes?

Consistency will be achieved through Government prescription of schemes of support for pensioners. Councils will have to consider a number of factors when designing local schemes. These include: whether local scheme is a rebate scheme or a discount scheme, how much funding is put into local schemes and what balance needs to be struck between scheme costs and administration costs. These factors will make it difficult to impose consistency across councils.

9b: How should this consistency be achieved? Is it desirable to set this out in Regulations?

Imposing consistency through regulation will further limit scope for local design and may make it more difficult to achieve overall reductions of 10%.

9c: Should local authorities be encouraged to use these approaches (run-ons, advance claims, retaining information stubs) to provide certainty for claimants?

There are clear distinctions between the rules around the *making* of a claim and rules around level of entitlement. Local councils should be able to set rules for level of entitlement that reflects local priorities – awarding run ons when people move into work may help people with the transition into work but will, because of the fixed funding approach, reduce funds available to support others in need. If the Government intends to prescribe a scheme for pensioners that also covers rules about start date of claim, including backdating rules, then it makes sense for these rules to be common across rebate/benefit schemes. If councils choose to operate discount schemes then rules around start dates need to be aligned with current schemes of discounts and exemptions.

9d: Are there any other aspects of administration which could provide greater certainty for claimants?

Greater certainty would be provided if there is consistency around lengths of awards, review periods and the impact of changes in circumstances. With the majority of claimants on local schemes also getting national benefits, it may become very confusing for claimants if there are different requirements around reporting changes and timing of claims and renewal of claims. However, the greater the requirement for consistency and standardisation between local schemes and national schemes, the less scope there is for genuine localisation.

9e: How should local authorities be encouraged to incorporate these features into the design of their schemes?

Given the financial risks faced by local councils, councils need as much scope as possible to be able to fit schemes into available funding. Recognising scheme costs arising from greater consistency across schemes in the funding and distribution models would help to encourage greater consistency and certainty across schemes.

9f: Do you agree that local authorities should continue to be free to offer discretionary support for council tax, beyond the terms of the formal scheme?

The provision to deal with cases of financial hardship already exists but is used rarely if at all within councils. The cost of applying discretion would continue to fall on the council and, given that there

is likely to be a disproportionate reduction in support for people not in protected groups, it is unlikely that councils would extend the use of this discretion to cover groups of people in need of, but not entitled to, full support. Such a use may be seen to be circumventing the design and consultation requirements of local schemes and would bring further financial pressure.

9g: What, if any, circumstances merit transitional protection following changes to local schemes?

Amendments to local schemes will be needed in order to respond to financial pressures or better reflect local priorities. Awarding transitional protection as a result of a scheme change, the costs of which would need to be met from the fixed grant for local schemes, would add another limiting factor and could see other groups getting less in order to meet the costs of transitional protection.

9h: Should arrangements for appeals be integrated with the new arrangements for council tax appeals?

Council tax appeals deal with national legislation. It is difficult to see how this would work for local schemes which will differ from one council to another. It may be necessary to re-establish local appeals arrangements to deal with appeals around local scheme decisions.

9i: What administrative changes could be made to the current system of council tax support for pensioners to improve the way support is delivered (noting that factors determining the calculation of the award will be prescribed by central Government)?

Currently pensioners can claim Council Tax Benefit when claiming Pension Credit from the Pension and Disability Carer's Service and also when claiming Housing Benefit. With pensioner Housing Benefit moving into Pension Credit, with first claims expected to move in October 2014, it is important that automatic links between Pension Credit/Housing Benefit claims and claims for local scheme support are developed and maintained in order to help take-up rates and avoid the need for multiple claims and duplicate information.

Changes to Council Tax rules to allow LAs to identify pensioner liabilities would also assist with increasing take-up rates.

10a: What would be the minimum (core) information necessary to administer a local council tax benefit scheme?

Income details, including details of benefits in payment, will be needed whether councils operate discount schemes or rebate schemes. Councils also need information to identify vulnerable groups, age data to identify pensioners and non-pensioners and data to identify 'in-work' Universal Credit and 'out-of-work' Universal Credit claims if different local scheme rules are applied to in-work claims to avoid issues around marginal deduction rates. Basic information around address, council tax liability and applicable discounts will also be required but this data will be available within councils.

10b: Why would a local authority need any information beyond this "core", and what would that be?

The current rules around Council Tax Benefit are complex and councils may choose to build schemes that are simpler in design. The basic information listed above would be needed even for simple systems. More complex systems and systems that replicate the current rules will need information about households and non-dependents and their income and circumstances. Also, the current pass-porting arrangements to CTB will change and councils may need information about children and family size for claimants of Income Support and Jobseekers Allowance cases and, eventually 'out-of-work' Universal Credit cases in order to assess entitlement to local scheme council tax support – currently receipt of IS, JSA passports a family to 100% CTB entitlement and there is no need to gather data about children and family members other than the claimant.

10c: Other than the Department for Work and Pensions, what possible sources of information are there that local authorities could use to establish claimants' circumstances? Would you prefer to use raw data or data that has been interpreted in some way?

Council Tax liability data is available within councils with benefits and associated data available through DWP systems. HMRC will have data for all earners with the exception of newly self-employed earners. All other data and information would need to come directly from claimants.

Raw data is likely to be needed for rebate schemes; interpreted data may be more appropriate for councils operating discount schemes. The information needed for pensioner claims will depend upon the links developed between local schemes and Pension Credit. Currently the Pension and Disability Carer's Service carry out the means-test for CTB purposes where there is a Pension Credit claim in payment – if this requirement continues under local scheme arrangements then all the necessary data will come from Pension and Disability Carer's Service. For cases where there is no claim for Pension Credit some information will be available from DWP systems but other information may need to be obtained directly from the claimant.

10d: If the information were to be used to place the applicants into categories, how many categories should there be and what would be the defining characteristics of each?

It is not possible to answer this question other than in broad terms. A lot will depend on the type of categorisation: categorisation by income levels, for instance, will only be useful in discount schemes based around income bands. It may be useful to identify employed from unemployed and, within the unemployed category, those subject to work-related conditionality and those who are not. But it is unlikely that this degree of classification on its own would support local scheme assessments.

10e: How would potentially fraudulent claims be investigated if local authorities did not have access to the raw data?

If there is no access to the raw data then potentially fraudulent claims would need to be investigated by the organisation holding the raw data; alternatively, arrangements would need to be established where councils could request and receive the raw data where there was a suspicion of fraud.

A key element of the current approach to identifying fraud and error within Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit is the use of data-matching and, in particular, the Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) monthly data match provided by DWP. The onset of Universal Credit will eventually remove the need for DWP to provide the HBMS extract for councils and for councils to provide the Single Housing Benefit Extract that enables DWP to carry out the datamatching. Unless new arrangements are made to support the use of data matching between benefits systems, then less fraud and error will be identified.

10f: What powers would local authorities need in order to be able to investigate suspected fraud in council tax support?

The ability to investigate Council Tax Benefit arises from the Social Security Fraud Act 2001 which makes benefit fraud a criminal offence. It is unclear whether local schemes of support would be benefit schemes and, if so, whether they would be covered by the Fraud Act. If local schemes fall outside the Fraud Act, local councils would need either new powers to prosecute fraud against local schemes or to prosecute under the Theft Act which is more difficult.

10g: In what ways could the Single Fraud Investigation Service support the work of local authorities in investigating fraud?

Local Authority Benefit Fraud Investigators currently investigate Council Tax Benefit fraud along with Housing Benefit fraud. If Local Authority fraud investigators are included within a Single Fraud Investigation Service, as is the intention, then the Single Fraud Investigation Service would need to

take responsibility for investigating local scheme fraud. This would also mean ensuring that local schemes of support are included within an investigation when investigating fraud against national benefits.

10h: If local authorities investigate possible fraudulent claims for council tax support, to what information, in what form would they need access?

Councils would need to access the documents that contained the false information. Where this information is contained within a claim for a national benefit, councils will need access to this information. This could be recordings of telephone calls where claims to national benefits have been made by telephone; or paper or electronic documents where claims or changes have been made this way. There may also be the need to gather witness statements from front-line staff and decision-makers.

10i: What penalties should be imposed for fraudulent claims, should they apply nationally, and should they relate to the penalties imposed for benefit fraud?

The same range of penalties should be available to local councils to deal with fraud against local schemes as there is to deal with fraud against national benefit schemes. The application of these penalties should be a matter for local councils to decide.

10j: Should all attempts by an individual to commit fraud be taken into account in the imposition of penalties?

All *known* attempts to commit fraud would most probably be taken into account by councils when considering the imposition of penalties. However, local councils should have the power to decide if a penalty should apply and the duration of that penalty.

11a: Apart from the allocation of central government funding, should additional constraints be placed on the funding councils can devote to their schemes?

Local councils should have the ability to decide the level of funding they wish to commit to a local scheme.

11b: Should the schemes be run unchanged over several years or be adjusted annually to reflect changes in need?

It must be possible to amend schemes annually if required. Equally, the funding provided by Central Government should be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in need.

12a: What can be done to help local authorities minimise administration costs?

Local schemes that reflect and respond to income levels and household changes are more difficult and costly to administer than other types of schemes. Separating the administration of housing benefit from council tax benefit is unlikely to achieve significant reductions in administration costs as it leaves most of the elements of a means-tested benefit in place. It is essential that there are effective links to national benefits, timely and accurate exchange of data and information between national and local schemes and common ICT standards that support e-delivery options for exchanging data.

Limiting the number of schemes within councils and keeping changes in rules and regulations to a minimum will also help to keep administration costs down.

12b: How could joint working be encouraged or incentivised?

Large councils already deliver efficiencies of scale and develop wrap around services that incorporate housing benefit, council tax benefit, education benefits and domiciliary care financial assessments. The option for local schemes is unlikely to see large councils looking to enter into

new joint working arrangements. Councils will also need to maintain a housing benefit service for the first few years of a local scheme until the migration of housing benefit cases into Universal credit has been completed and this will bring its own set of challenges that may complicate prospects of joint administration of local schemes.

13a: Do you agree that a one-off introduction is preferable? If not, how would you move to a new localised system while managing the funding reduction?

A one off introduction is preferable as this is easier to manage from a communications aspect.

13b: What information would local authorities need to retain about current recipients/applicants of council tax benefit in order to determine their entitlement to council tax support?

We would expect to keep most of the information we hold. Whether the local scheme is an income-based rebate scheme or a banded discount scheme, retaining the current data sets is essential in supporting its implementation. It will allow us to accurately assess entitlement in many instances without the need to re-contact customers and, in cases where we can't accurately assess entitlement, it will enable us to better target those from whom we need additional or new information.

13c: What can Government do to help local authorities in the transition?

The intention to implement local schemes by April 2013 means that there will be 2 transitional phases. The first is the transition from the current CTB scheme to the local scheme from April 2013 which will need to have links with Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance and the main working age and pension age benefits; the second is the need to set up arrangements to link a scheme to Universal Credit which is due to go live in October 2013 and which replaces the main working age benefits. It is important that the arrangements developed for the pre-Universal Credit running of local schemes are transferred to the running of the scheme after Universal Credit goes live.

The development of model schemes and toolkits for forecasting demand will also be required as will adequate funding to cover communication strategies, customer services implications, IT development and the development of policy, procedures and forms.

It is also important that there is clarity and consistency between DWP, DCLG and local councils around administration funding. DWP currently provide administration grant funding for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit. DWP funding levels are expected to reduce from April 2013 to reflect the fact that they no longer need to fund Council Tax benefit and also that each council will have a reducing Housing Benefit caseload following the October 2013 implementation of Universal Credit. These funding changes need to be adequately addressed within the funding provided by DCLG and decisions on funding need to be made early to support councils' planning arrangements.

13d: If new or amended IT systems are needed what steps could Government take to shorten the period for design and procurement?

Councils will in the first instance look to develop existing IT solutions and the key issues will be the timing of the laying of the necessary legislation and the level of funding made available for systems development.

13e: Should applications, if submitted prior 1 April 2013, be treated as if submitted under the new system?

Existing claims should be treated as claims for the new scheme of support automatically. It should be up to individual authorities to decide how far in advance of the new scheme they would accept new claims

13f: How should rights accrued under the previous system be treated?

The Government intends to prescribe a scheme for pensioners and it will be up to local councils to decide how local schemes should operate taking into account local priorities. Local councils should be free to decide whether any rights accrued – most of which relate to transitional arrangements for national benefits – are a local priority.

Report of The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance)

Report to Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme Report to Executive Board

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. On 12th October 2011 Executive Board approved the principle of establishing a Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme with effect from April 2012 following a period of consultation with elected Members.
2. In order to provide an incentive to localities to release and dispose of surplus land and property, the Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme will allow Wards to retain a proportion of capital receipts, up to a maximum threshold, generated within the Ward.
3. Consultation with elected Members will take place over the next few months with a view to reporting back to Executive Board in February 2012 on an agreed scheme.

Recommendations

4. The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the Executive Board Report on the Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make Area Committees aware of the report on the Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme that received approval at the Executive Board Meeting on 12th October 2011.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The report attached at appendix 1 received approval at the Executive Board meeting on 12th October 2011. It sets out the proposal for a Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme which will allow Wards to retain a proportion of capital receipts, up to a maximum threshold, generated within the Ward.
- 2.2 It is intended to introduce the Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme from April 2012 following a period of consultation with elected Members.
- 2.3 Consultation is due to take place over the next few months

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The report attached at appendix 1 is presented to Area Committees for information only at this stage. Consultation with elected Members will take place over the next few months with a view to reporting back to Executive Board in February 2012 on an agreed scheme.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Consultation with elected Members will take place over the next few months.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 There are no equality and diversity / cohesion and integration considerations for this report.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 There are no implications for Council policies and city priorities associated with this report.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications or access to information issues. This report is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There are no risk management issues relating to this report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The report attached at appendix 1 is presented to Area Committees for information only at this stage. Consultation with elected Members will take place over the next few months with a view to reporting back to Executive Board in February 2012 on an agreed scheme.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the Executive Board Report on the Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme attached at appendix 1.

7 Background documents

- 7.1 Executive Board Report on the Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme attached at appendix 1.

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Report of Director of Resources
Report to Executive Board
Date: 12th October 2011
Subject: Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): All Wards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Currently the Capital Receipts policy only allows capital receipts to be earmarked for specific purposes where there is a need to re-locate or otherwise provide for a service following property being vacated.
2. In order to provide an incentive to localities to release and dispose of surplus land and property, it is proposed that a Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme is introduced which will allow Wards to retain a proportion of capital receipts, up to a maximum threshold, generated within the Ward.
3. Some categories of receipts will be excluded from this arrangement and these are set out in the report.
4. It is proposed that this new incentive scheme will be administered under the existing Ward Based Initiative scheme, the guidelines for which are included at Appendix A.

Recommendations

5. Members are asked to approve the principle of establishing a Capital Receipts Incentive scheme with effect from April 2012 following a period of consultation with elected Members.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out for Executive Board a proposal for the introduction of a capital receipts incentive scheme for local areas.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The capital receipts policy forms part of the Capital Strategy which was approved by Executive Board in February 2011. The capital receipts policy only allows ringfencing of receipts in cases where decanting from a property results in additional costs of re-provision
- 2.2 There are costs associated with holding land and buildings which are surplus to service requirements but often localities view disposal as a reduction in service or facilities even though buildings may not be required by services and may not be fit for purpose. Retaining a proportion of capital receipts for re-investment locally will ensure that localities see some benefit from releasing land and property which would otherwise remain vacant and unused.
- 2.3 The introduction of a capital receipts incentive scheme will allow Wards to bring forward surplus land and buildings for disposal with the Ward then retain a proportion of the capital receipts generated for re-investment within the Ward to meet local needs.
- 2.4 It is recognised however that some Wards will have fewer opportunities to bring forward sites for disposal and that land and property values in some Wards will be lower. The proposed scheme includes a pooling element of receipts generated which will ensure that all Wards will benefit from the scheme.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 In establishing a capital receipts incentive scheme for localities, it is important to protect the Council's current budget assumptions regarding the use of receipts. Also, there are also some corporate initiatives which require the use of Council sites (for example, for primary schools) and these must also be protected. It is proposed therefore that the following capital receipts are excluded from the scheme:
 - § all existing scheduled capital receipts to support the existing revenue budget and capital programme;
 - § sites required for delivery of other Council initiatives or services, for example, primary school places, affordable housing etc
 - § receipts from disposal of council offices
- 3.2 The key features of the proposed scheme are set out below:
 - § 20% of receipts generated will be retained locally up to a maximum of £100k per capital receipt with 15% retained by the Ward and 5% pooled across the Council and distributed to Wards on the basis of need.

- § The resources available to each Ward through this scheme will be added to the existing Ward Based Initiative scheme under which elected Members can put forward proposals for investment individually or collectively. The existing guidelines are included at Appendix A.
- § Wards would only retain a share of a receipt after other legitimate calls on the receipt have been met. So for example, if there is a need to re-provide a service following release of a site, the cost of this will be first call on the receipt and the Ward would only retain a share of what is left after the re-provision has been funded.

3.4 There is potential for other resources to be available for investment within localities when development takes place within an area, in the form of S106 contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). It is intended that the capital receipts incentive scheme proposed would sit alongside these other processes. It is proposed therefore that the capital receipts incentive scheme will be reviewed when the new arrangements for S106 and CIL are in place to ensure the schemes are complimentary.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 This report is seeking approval in principle to the setting up of a capital receipts incentive scheme. It is proposed that consultation will take place with elected Members with a view to reporting back on an agreed scheme in February 2012 as part of the Capital Programme Review report.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 Under this proposal a proportion of capital receipts could be retained locally to support local capital investment including equality, diversity, cohesion and integration where these are local priorities.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 This scheme, if approved, will be incorporated into the Council's Capital Receipts policy which is set out in the Capital Strategy. There are no other implications for Council policies and city priorities.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 Allowing a proportion of capital receipts to be retained for local investment will mean that fewer capital receipts will accrue corporately and be available to fund the revenue budget and capital programme. However, it is anticipated that this will be compensated for through more sites for disposal coming forward than would otherwise be the case.

4.4.2 Using the existing Ward Based Initiatives scheme as the means of controlling and monitoring the use of these receipts will mean that no additional administration costs are incurred.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal or Access to information issues arising from this report. The report is subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no additional risks associated from this proposal.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The capital receipts incentive scheme will give Wards across the city an incentive to release surplus land and property thereby reducing the cost of holding property. By retaining a proportion of receipts locally, localities can see some direct investment in their areas as a result of the disposal.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Executive Board are asked to approve:

(a) the setting up of a Capital Receipts Incentive scheme set out in section 3 of this report, with effect from April 2012

(b) a period of consultation with elected Members on the proposed scheme.

7 Background documents

Capital Strategy – Capital Programme report Executive Board February 2011

Ward Based Initiative Scheme Guidance – attached

WARD BASED INITIATIVES

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF COUNCILLORS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Capital Programme Report to the Executive Board in February 2008 introduced the provision of £30,000 per ward (£10,000 per ward member), over a two year period commencing in 2008/09, for a Ward Based Initiative scheme, to provide Members with funding to progress minor schemes within their wards.

The report to Executive Board in April 2009 sought approval to extend the scheme by allowing Members to sponsor capital projects within their respective wards in the form of grants to voluntary organisations, with a further provision of £10,000 per ward (£ 3,333.33 per ward member).

This gave a total approval per Councillor of £ 13,333.33 for the lifetime of the scheme.

2. ELIGIBLE SCHEMES

2.1 The expenditure must be for the acquisition or improvement of any Council asset and must fall within the definition of capital expenditure as set out in the Capital Finance Regulations, this includes:

- § the purchase or laying out of land
- § the purchase or refurbishment of buildings to enhance the building rather than maintain it
- § the purchase of equipment for Council use (Schools, Libraries, Community Centres etc. – for schools, see Section 5.6 below)
- § CCTV

2.2 In the case of a grant to a voluntary organisation, who operate out of non-Leeds City Council (LCC) premises, it must be for capital works (as defined above) to their premises that will result in reduced running costs.

Ward members should ensure that the project / organisation for which the application is being made is not one in which a personal or prejudicial interest is held. You have a personal interest if an issue affects the well-being or finances of you, your family or your close associates more than other people who live in the area affected by the issue. Personal interests are also things that relate to an interest on your register of interests.

Prejudicial interests are personal interests that affect you, your family, or your close associates in the following ways:
their finances, or regulatory functions such as licensing or planning which affect them;

and which a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of the facts would believe likely to harm or impair your ability to judge the public interest.

If you have a prejudicial interest you must not seek to improperly influence the decision on the issue. This rule is similar to your general obligation not to use your position as a member improperly to your or someone else's advantage or disadvantage.

Where members have a prejudicial interest in a WBI application, they can ask their ward colleagues to apply for the grant on behalf of the organisation.

Where a grant payment is made through the WBI scheme, Councillors should note the following :-

- Each cheque will have a covering letter with it addressed to the organisation outlining details of the conditions of acceptance of the grant. This will be attached to the cheque and in accepting the grant, the organisations must agree to the conditions of the grant.
- Organisations are required to provide receipts showing what the money has been spent on. These should be sent to the Department of Resources as soon as possible after the grant has been spent.
- Should the organisation wish to spend the grant money for a purpose other than that originally indicated then the organisation is advised to contact the Councillor to see if this is possible, in which case the application process described above will have to be repeated.
- Should an organisation send the receipts to a Councillor showing what the money has been spent on, these should be forwarded to the Department of Resources to update the records.
- If an organisation fails to submit receipts then reminder letters are sent asking for receipts to be supplied.

2.3 Schemes must be consistent with the Council's approved Corporate Plan / Vision priorities and with Departmental Asset Management plans (see Section 4 below re approvals process)

2.4 Schemes must provide benefit to whole wards or communities and not confer private benefit to individuals.

3. FINANCIAL CRITERIA

- 3.1 The total scheme cost will be inclusive of fees for design and supervision and any other associated costs (Planning Permissions, Building Regulations etc).
- 3.2 Schemes must result in no additional revenue costs for the Council, unless these can be met from within existing departmental budgets.
- 3.3 Joint sponsorship of projects can be made with other ward members.

4. JOINT FUNDED SCHEMES

Departments can joint fund WBI schemes, only if such a programme of works is included in the Capital Programme. Any such matched funding by the sponsoring department would require that additional authority to spend be obtained independently of the WBI scheme.

5. INITIATING SCHEMES

- 5.1 **Applications must be made through the relevant sponsoring Department.** Only applications for a grant payment to a non-LCC voluntary organisation as defined in 2.2 above should be sent directly to the Director of Resources.

It is essential that proposals complement existing departmental service plans and strategies. Therefore, Councillors should discuss the scheme proposals with the Head of Service or a nominated officer. Section 10 shows a list of contacts in the areas of responsibility.

That Officer will be able to advise on:

- the Council's legal powers for such expenditure
- the estimated capital costs
- the potential revenue costs (and the likely ability of the service to meet those costs)
- whether the proposals are likely to secure approval.

- 5.2 The formal submission document, signed by the sponsoring Councillor(s) is to be forwarded by the responsible department, when the scheme is almost fully formed. The Head of Service with responsibility for the property must approve it as being within current Council policies, in the interests of the Council and as involving no more expenditure than is proportionate to the benefit to be achieved and is satisfied that there are no other reasons (including alternative proposals) which make it inappropriate to approve the proposal. Where the form is signed by 1 or 2 Councillors, the form should indicate whether the other Ward Councillor(s) have been made aware of the proposals.

- 5.3 Full details of the scheme should be provided to determine:

- whether and how the proposal meets the WBI eligibility criteria
- whether and how the proposal meets the WBI financial criteria
- whether and how proposals are consistent with approved Council priorities and the relevant Departmental Asset Management Plan
- whether any CCTV project meets the Community Safety criteria, details of which are available from the Community Safety Officer.
- that schemes relating to schools meet the criteria (see further below, para 5.6)

Insufficient detail can unfortunately delay the progress of a scheme while further information is sought.

All documentation (Guidance Notes, Contact Lists and Submission Forms) will be sent to Councillors and is also available on the Council Intranet). Any updates or alterations to such forms will be communicated to all councillors and Departmental nominated officers.

5.4 CCTV Schemes

All WBI proposals for CCTV schemes must comply with the Council's criteria for CCTV schemes as advised by the Community Safety Officer.

5.5 Energy Efficiency Schemes

As with all WBI projects, proposals must be capital in nature and be for Council assets or, in the case of a grant to a voluntary organisation, must be for works to their premises that will result in reduced running costs . Depending on the nature of the scheme and in order to support the sustainability agenda, the scheme will allow members to supplement the WBI funding with match funding from the Council's Energy Efficiency reserve.

The reserve was established as part of the 2006/07 revenue budget to provide pump priming funding to energy efficiency initiatives. Further revenue contributions have been made to the reserve each year since 2006/07 and it has also been supplemented by external funding of £90k p.a. over a four year period from Salix Finance which is a scheme operated by the Carbon Trust aimed at encouraging Local Authorities to create invest to save funds for reducing energy consumption.

All proposals in respect of environmental efficiency should be discussed in the first instance with the relevant contact officer who will advise on the merits of the proposal and on whether match funding would be available. In the majority of cases, funding will be made available as a loan, with a maximum payback period of 5 years. After the payback period, the service area will benefit from the ongoing efficiencies and the energy efficiency reserve will become ultimately self sustaining.

The funding has already been used to install new heating systems in Leisure Centres, install Automatic Meter reading equipment and to pilot the use of Biomass fuel technology (woodchip and wood pellets to replace coal). The

following are further examples of energy efficiency initiatives which members may wish to support with match funding from the reserve:

- Insulation including cavity wall, double glazing, roof
- Boilers
- Heating systems
- Combined Heat and Power
- Swimming Pool cover
- Voltage reduction equipment
- Heating and Lighting controls

In addition, one of the agreed priorities for the WBI scheme is capital investment in renewable technologies within schools, council owned community buildings or premises owned by voluntary organisations working within the local community; for advice on such investment, please contact George Munson, the Climate Change Officer.

5.6 SCHOOLS

All WBI proposals relating to schools must be assessed by the Property Services Division within Education Leeds using the six criteria set out as follows (the criteria will rank equally in determining whether the proposal will be supported):

1. Condition

The proposal should relate to building condition issues categorised as “poor” and identified as priority 1 or 2 as identified by the condition surveys carried out as part of developing the Education Department’s Asset Management Plan.

2. OFSTED identified premises deficiencies

The proposal should address premises deficiencies identified in the school OFSTED report that would directly contribute to the raising of standards.

3. Curriculum Computers

A priority for support would be for schools which fall below a minimum ratio of computers to pupils of
1:12 in Primary Schools and
1:8 in High Schools.

Proposals should be justified in terms of the overall deficiency of equipment at a school and/or support the essential renewal or replacement of equipment in line with the school ICT Development Plan.

4. Capital for Revenue Savings

Proposals should be cost effective in reducing future revenue expenditure e.g. energy efficient schemes, and may also contribute to improving the learning environment.

5. **School Security**

Proposals should improve the security and safety of pupils, staff, premises or equipment. Evidence of priority should be supported by a high level of reported incidents from the Property Services Division Incident Base.

6. **Developments/Improvements to Facilities**

Proposals to contribute to improved educational standards or to promote social inclusion will require the endorsement of the School Improvement Strategy Group.

7. **Grants for facilities co-located with schools**

Proposals which are for a facility based on a school site, for example a sports facility or a community centre, will not automatically be subject to the same prioritisation criteria as school schemes. The position will depend on the particular arrangements in force on each site. Where a grant is proposed for such facilities, then officer advice should be sought at the outset to clarify the position.

6. **Approvals Process**

When received by the sponsoring Department, the application will be checked to make sure :-

- there are sufficient funds available for the proposal to qualify within the financial limits.
- that the proposal meets the eligibility and financial criteria outlined above.
- that it is within the legal powers of the Council to make the grant.
- external organisations in receipt of grant awards will be required to enter into a legal agreement with the Council to protect the Council's investment in future. Legal requirements will be scaled dependant on the level of Council investment,
- that, in the case of grant payments to voluntary organisations, Councillors have no personal or prejudicial interests in that organisation.

The proposal will then be submitted by the sponsoring Department to the Director of Resources for approval.

Until all necessary approvals have been obtained, no firm commitments of funding can be given.

7. **Final Approval Stage**

Following the above approvals, a scheme will be set up in the Council's Capital Programme under the sponsoring Service area and the scheme will proceed like any other Council Capital scheme. This means that the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules must be followed with regard to tendering and appointment of contractors. The final stage is for a Chief Officer Approval form to be completed by the Department, which when approved, allows a contract for the work to be awarded.

8. Joint Funded Schemes

If, during the WBI process, it becomes apparent that the WBI element of the scheme exceeds or will exceed the approved amount, the Head of the sponsoring Service will seek agreement from the Councillor(s) to the revised cost before proceeding further (subject to the additional funds being available).

9. Position Statements

The Chief Officer Financial Development will maintain a record of the value of schemes relating to each ward, will undertake scheme monitoring and will provide other financial monitoring information as required.

10. Contact Points

Initial contact with Departmental Service Areas should be made to the officer named on the contact list attached. Ward Based Initiative matters will be co-ordinated within Financial Development by Keith Burton telephone number 2474294. Keith is based on the 3rd floor West of the Civic Hall.

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Report of Assistant Chief Executive, Customer Access and Performance

Report to North East Outer Area Committee

Date: 5th December 2011

Subject: Localism Act 2011

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The [Localism Act 2011](#) having completed its passage through Parliament has been the subject of considerable debate at a national and local level.
2. New rights will be given to communities to bid for local assets and challenge to run council services. Changes to the planning system will increase local people's ability to get involved in shaping their local area.
3. The council has limited resources and has to prioritise meeting the aspirations of local areas alongside meeting the strategic needs of the city. It is important that expectations of what is possible through the Localism Act are explained. There will be some issues that the council may be able to help resolve with or on behalf of the community and some where local people will have to work together in an innovative way in order to achieve their aims.
4. It is important that the implications of the Localism Act are debated at a local level in order to inform the council's policy and approach to implementing this legislation.

Recommendations

5. That area chairs lead a debate at their area committees about localism and the contents of Act. It is important for areas to begin to think about what localism means for them and what they see as the main opportunities, challenges and risks taking into consideration the role they wish to play in future in engaging with their communities on this issue.
6. That any views, ideas, suggestions and concerns are fed back to officers in order to inform a further report to go to Executive Board on the implications of the Act and more detailed reports/sessions on Planning, Assets of Community Value and Right to Challenge agreed by area chairs.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide a high-level summary of the main elements of the Localism Act that will be of direct relevance to area committees and to provide an opportunity to debate and influence the way the council implements the legislation.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament on 13 December 2010 and received Royal Assent on the 15 November 2011. The aim of the Act as with other changes in health, education and welfare reform is to devolve power to the lowest possible level, including individuals, neighbourhoods, professionals and communities as well as local councils and other local institutions.
- 2.2 The Act has been subject to consultation and debate over the last year and there have been a large number of changes at the committee stages in Parliament. Further regulations and guidance will be published over the next 6 months.
- 2.3 In March 2011, the Outer North East Area Committee, specifically Harewood and Wetherby Ward Members, considered its priorities for the 2011 – 2012 financial year and the best possible use of the Wellbeing funding available to the Ward Councillors. After analysis of the forthcoming government legislation relating to the localism agenda, the appointment of a Localism Officer was considered to be the most efficient way of supporting the town and parish councils and Area Committee in the development of the locality and for attracting additional finances into the Outer North East Leeds.
- 2.4 In June 2011, a report was produced for the council's Executive Board that gave an update as to the robustness of the council's interim housing targets in light of a raft of unsuccessful housing appeals. The report also identified what the next steps should be in relation to developing a strategy for housing growth in the city. The headline message of the June report was that housing growth needs to increase and as a result, all Phase 2 and 3 sites identified in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) will need to be developed as well as other greenfield sites (unallocated) and potentially some of the Protected Areas of Search (PAS) sites (although it is considered that this should only arise through the LDF process).
- 2.5 It is anticipated that this strategy could have significant ramifications for communities in both Harewood and Wetherby Wards. Due to their rural (as defined by METRO) setting and the subsequent appeal of these communities to property developers, there are concerns amongst the areas town and parish councils that there will be a clamour to develop not only the already identified Phase 2 and 3 sites (there are four in Harewood Ward and two in Wetherby Ward) but also the PAS sites (there are four in both Harewood and Wetherby Ward) and as yet unidentified green field sites.
- 2.6 In a bid to ensure that the town and parish councils in the Harewood and Wetherby Wards do not feel powerless against this perceived threat to their communities, Ward Members have strongly advocated that they each to draw-up a Neighbourhood Plan for their individual area(s). In order to help facilitate these Neighbourhood Plans and other opportunities arising from the government's localism agenda, the post of Localism Officer was established.
- 2.7 The Localism Officer started in post on 25th July 2011 and produced a comprehensive Project Brief that outlined his work programme for the 12 month period of his contract. The Project Brief was endorsed by both Harewood and Wetherby Ward Members at the Outer North East Area Committee on 19th September 2011 and was made available for public consumption on the council's website (see link 7.24 for more details).

3 Main issues

3.1 Local Government

3.2 Councils will be given a new General Power of Competence (GPC) in order to better respond to local need. The GPC is an extension to already available “well-being” powers and will allow councils to take any action on behalf of local people not proscribed by other laws. The council will have to tread carefully however if it wishes to do anything new and government has the power to intervene and overturn council decisions.

3.3 Leeds, as a ‘core city’ has been working with other councils to ensure that further powers are devolved to gain flexibility in relation to skills and innovation, transport and the economy, this resulted in an amendment to the bill. This is being moved forward in Leeds by the Leeds City Region and the Leeds Local Economic Partnership (LEP) who are producing “policy asks” in order to negotiate the specific powers with ministers.

3.4 Amendments to the bill have removed the Secretary of State’s powers to make regulations relating to area committees. Councils will be able to establish what area committees they want and delegate the necessary functions without asking for regulations or permission from the secretary of state. There will no longer be restrictions on the maximum size of area committees.

3.5 A referendum on whether Leeds should have an Elected Mayor will take place in May 2012 and a [consultation](#) document has been published by the government on the proposed approach for giving powers to any mayors, asking for responses by 3rd January.

3.6 The standards board regime will be abolished with councils given the power to decide their own arrangements. It will be compulsory for all councils and parish and town councils to have a [code of conduct](#) based on the [Nolan principles of public life](#) selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. This means that as a council a local code of conduct can be adopted rather than one set nationally.

3.7 The fact that parish and town councils will have to develop their own code of conduct has caused some concern in the Outer North East area. It would be well received if the City Council could offer some guidance and/or examples of best practice in this regard.

3.8 There is a requirement for councils to prepare a ‘pay and policy statement’ by March 2012 that details the pay arrangements for the councils highest paid and lowest paid staff.

3.9 Business rates

3.10 The localisation of business rates is being developed as part of the local government resource review which will also look at the implementation of community budgets. Business rates will be collected and spent locally rather than given directly to and re-distributed by the government on the basis of need. The council submitted a consultation to the government’s proposals and this was subject to a report to [Executive Board](#) on the 2nd November.

3.11 Community right to challenge

3.12 Under the Community Right to Challenge voluntary and community groups, parish councils and local authority staff will be able to challenge and formally submit ideas through an expression of interest to run all or part of a council service. A challenge could come from any voluntary group including a social enterprise, co-operative or community interest company (i.e. an organisation where not all profits are reinvested in their activities or the community

but their activities are for the benefit of the community). These groups do not necessarily have to be local or have a local connection.

- 3.13 The council will have to consider an expression of interest and either reject, accept or accept with modification what is submitted. Accepting an expression will automatically trigger a procurement exercise where any other organisation including the private sector can participate in this.
- 3.14 An expression of interest can be received at any time unless the council chooses to specify periods during which expressions of interest may be submitted. There will be a requirement for councils to set and publish these timescales, having regard to factors which will be set out in further guidance. In order to prevent delays to the process, councils will need to notify relevant bodies of how long the timescale will be for a decision within 30 days.
- 3.15 If a service has already been contracted out submitting an expression of interest would not affect the existing contract and any procurement exercise would be carried out when the contract for that service is due to end.
- 3.16 The [Duty of Best Value](#) is important because it makes clear that councils should consider overall value – including social value – when considering service provision. A list of information to be included in an expression of interest is to be published in regulations. The government consulted on the right to challenge process earlier on in the year and based on responses produced a [position paper](#) highlighting how the process would work. Information to be included in an expression of interest will now include *“details of the outcomes to be achieved, including how it meets service user needs and the social value offered by the proposal”*.
- 3.17 There has been much debate about which services should be excluded from the Right to Challenge and the Secretary of State has the power to make certain services exempt. Currently the right applies to any service provided by or **on behalf** of the council. All **functions** (a function is defined as a duty or power that requires decision-making by the responsible person or body of the council) are currently out of its scope. The government is clearly committed through its [‘Open Public Service White Paper’](#) to further widen the scope of the community right to challenge, both in terms of the bodies that may be open to challenge and the range of services and functions to be open to challenge.
- 3.18 There is a risk that the right to challenge may lead to the fragmentation of services as groups could cherry-pick the parts of a service they want making it more difficult for the council to deliver what’s left. This could result in increased costs or having an impact on what services can be offered. There will also be risks in terms of governance and accountability. The council’s corporate commissioning group is currently looking to develop a process to respond to expressions of interest submitted under the right to challenge. This links with work already underway to make the councils procurement and commissioning processes more accessible to the third sector and small businesses. A briefing and information was given to Third Sector Leeds who are subsequently going to produce a statement on localism and explore how they can best support communities namely in inner city areas to take up the right to challenge and manage local assets.
- 3.19 A key remit of the Localism Officer has been to raise awareness of the emerging localism agenda with the 15 town and parish councils that sit within the boundaries of both Harewood and Wetherby Wards. In order to successfully achieve this aim, the Localism Officer has visited all 15 town and parish councils to give a presentation on the Localism Bill, including explaining the powers relating to Community Right to Challenge. The overwhelming feedback received from the town and parish councils is that whilst in some cases their may be an aspiration to take on the running of a service currently being provided by the council,

particularly grass cutting, the reality of doing so would pose a significant challenge; both in terms of raising the necessary finance and having the suitable capacity and expertise to add value.

3.20 A good recent example is that of Shadwell Parish Council and their involvement in the take over of their local library that was earmarked for closure. Both Shadwell Parish Council and local residents, many of whom have volunteered their time to help staff the library, are working hard to find a way to viably run the library in the absence of any financial and technical support from the previous service provider, Leeds City Council. Whilst the aspiration and will is there to run the library as a community service, both the Parish Council and local residents have come across a number of bureaucratic and financial barriers that have hindered this process.

3.21 **Assets of community value**

3.22 Local authorities will be required to maintain a list of [Assets of Community Value](#) as well as a list of unsuccessful community nominations, including both public and private assets. These assets can be nominated by parish councils and voluntary and community organisations with a local connection (further guidance to be issued on this). The lists must be published and be freely available for public inspection.

3.23 When listed assets come up for disposal, the group who nominated the asset will be notified and they will be given six months to develop a bid and raise the capital to buy the asset when it comes on the open market. This will help local communities to save sites which are important to the community, which will contribute to tackling social need and building up resources in their neighbourhood. Local people will need to find funding to take over the asset. There is no obligation on the landowner to dispose to an eligible community group, only a right to bid.

3.24 Assets of community value could be council owned (libraries, day centres, leisure centres etc) or private properties (pubs, post offices, shops, playing fields, woodland etc). If accepted by the authority as having community value, property on the list would be restricted from normal disposal for a period of 5 years.

3.25 If private assets are nominated to the list the owner has the opportunity to appeal and if the owner incurs loss or additional costs for complying with the regulations then the council will be required to pay compensation to the asset owner. Increased requests for assets transfer are likely to occur and the council will be under pressure to give communities more than 6 months to raise funds to take-over assets. This may have an impact on the council's capital receipts programme and the ability to raise revenue from the sale of buildings and land. [Capital receipts incentive scheme](#) has been proposed that will give a proportion of the money from applicable asset sales directly to the community. This scheme is subject to member consultation and officers are to produce further practice guidance about how the scheme will work. If approved this would begin in April 2012.

3.26 The council already has a strong track record of supporting community assets transfer. A draft approach to Assets of Community Value is to be agreed and will include nomination forms for community groups and details of how the scheme will be advertised and published. This duty will be built into procedures for disposal of council owned property where it is 'listed', as part of the proposed community asset transfer framework due to be agreed by Executive Board early next year.

3.27 Again, via making a series of presentations to the areas Town and Parish Councils, the Localism Officer has raised the awareness of the issue of Assets of Community Value. There has been strong interest in this element of the Localism Bill, due largely to the fact that the

majority of villages in Harewood and Wetherby Ward have very few remaining community facilities left. However, there is some understandable confusion over how a community asset is defined and who from the council would not only list the asset but decide if it is of sufficient community value. There also remains the issue of how a parish council, voluntary or community organisation would finance any bid to take over the running of an asset.

3.28 To date, a number of Parish Councils in both Harewood and Wetherby Wards have indicated that they would be interested in taking ownership of the village shop and/or local pub should it be threatened by closure. The prospect of taking community ownership of sports facilities such as the local cricket pitch and communal spaces such as the village green has also aroused strong interest.

3.29 Neighbourhood planning

3.30 The government's aim is to reform the planning system by making it simpler and giving more control to local councils and local people. The government believes that more local ownership through neighbourhood planning will lower the level of opposition to new development and enable communities to secure well-designed buildings in keeping with their local area. There is a general concern that stripping away planning regulations and guidance will leave local authorities subject to challenge. Currently the onus is on councils to draft their own policies and to speedily produce up to date local plans at a time when they are dealing with a reduction in staff numbers and expertise in planning departments.

3.31 The reforms have so far been criticised by many as there is a conflict between the government's growth agenda and localism. Neighbourhood plans are part of a wider reform agenda to pass more control over planning matters to councils and communities. The government has published a draft [National Planning and Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) that has been subject to public consultation. Leeds submitted a [response](#), heavily critical of the new policy, lack of reference to brown-field site and the "presumption in favour of sustainable development". The government has recently announced they intend to modify the document and put in place transitional arrangements for local authorities who do not have an up to date local plan.

3.32 There are planned major changes to the planning system with the planned removal of regional spatial strategies (RSS) following the completion of an [environmental impact assessment](#) currently out for consultation with the deadline Friday, 20 January 2012.

3.33 The core strategy is anticipated to be considered by Executive Board in the New Year and submitted in spring 2012 at which time there will be a formal opportunity (6 weeks) to comment. Any comments made will be fed into the public examination and inquiry process to consider whether the core strategy is "sound", in other words, ensuring that evidence requirements are met and it complies with statutory requirements.

3.34 The abolition of RSS has raised uncertainties surrounding the scale of housing growth and the need to plan for further population growth and how to best achieve this. As part of the core strategy the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (SHMA) was updated in 2010 and this forms part of the evidence base which will help to inform future housing and planning policies and strategies. In addition the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (SHLAA) exercise, published by the council in 2009, establishes the potential scale of land coming forward in the future to meet housing needs across the city. This will be used to conduct the site allocation process that will be undertaken following the core strategy.

3.35 A recent scrutiny enquiry and consultation has been undertaken in Leeds surrounding housing growth. The outcomes of the [enquiry](#) and the [consultation](#) complemented each other

in terms of their recommendations. The recommendations will inform part of the council's core strategy.

- 3.36 A new form of neighbourhood planning is being introduced to give communities more powers to shape the future of where they live. This could include where new homes, shops and offices should be built, what those buildings should look like (type of materials, scale and character) and which green space should be protected or created. The plans can grant planning permission for the new buildings communities want to see go ahead (neighbourhood development orders) or lead themselves (community right to build).
- 3.37 The new plans will be led by parish and town councils or neighbourhood forums where there is no parish council. They have more weight than existing community-led plans and design statements but must be in "general conformity with the council's strategic policies for the city and will be subject to an independent examination. A referendum may not be required when all parties are in agreement with the plan and it is in "general" conformity with an authority's local plan. Where there is conflict between the council and the community it is suggested that a referendum should take place.
- 3.38 A report, to be agreed at Executive Board "[Developing a response to neighbourhood planning in Leeds](#)" sets out the council's plans to pilot neighbourhood planning in four areas of the city (Otley, Boston Spa, Kippax and Holbeck). The [regulations for neighbourhood planning](#) are currently out for consultation, the deadline for responses is 5th January 2012. A seminar for parish and town councils on neighbourhood planning was held on 17th October, parishes were invited to comment on the draft neighbourhood planning regulations.
- 3.39 There are a number of other changes designed to provide incentives to development such as the [New Homes Bonus](#). This commenced in April 2011, and will match fund the additional council tax raised for new homes and empty properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes, for the following six years.
- 3.40 In addition the regulations on [Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (CIL) are now out for consultation. The deadline for responses is 30th December; Leeds City Council will be submitting a response to this that will go to Executive Board on the 14th December. Local people are keen to keep the majority of funds from development for spending in their local area (Leeds housing scrutiny enquiry recommended 80%). However, the government has suggested a "meaningful" amount is spent locally and that a cap is placed on this amount so it is likely that the percentage will be significantly less.
- 3.41 Pre-application consultation is proposed to be made a statutory requirement for large scale developments. It will be crucial for developers to begin consultation at an early stage, ensuring objections can be minimised. It is currently best practice for developers to consult prior to submitting planning applications. Guidance is set out in the council's [Statement of Community Involvement](#) however this is something that the council cannot currently enforce. Developing new ways to engage with local people in planning and working more effectively with developers will be a challenge and an area the council is looking to develop its approach to. Indeed developers are keen to engage with local people in order to speed up the whole planning process.
- 3.42 In terms of neighbourhood plans in both Harewood and Wetherby Wards, the Localism Officer has established a Project Board to help oversee the formation of two 'pilot' plans; one in Harewood Ward involving Barwick-in-Elmet & Scholes Parish Council and one in Wetherby Ward involving Boston Spa/Bramham/Clifford/Thorp Arch/Walton Parish Councils – the latter being a joint planning venture. A confirmed interest in neighbourhood planning has also been shown from the majority of the areas remaining town and parish councils.

- 3.43 After the inaugural Project Board meeting in October, the Localism Officer issued a four-point action plan to all Project Board Members to help them (and in turn their fellow Parish Councillors) to start work on their neighbourhood plan. This action plan has subsequently been shared with all the areas town and parish councils at the behest of both Harewood and Wetherby Ward Members.
- 3.44 In line with agreed timetables and guidelines, the Localism Officer also submitted a bid on behalf of all the identified pilot parishes, via the council, for the government's Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners Scheme grant. This bid, if successful, would see a number of grants (as much as £20,000 each) issued to the City Council to help them and their identified pilot areas (including Boston Spa) with the construction of a Neighbourhood Plan. The outcome of the bid should be known in a matter of weeks.
- 3.45 Housing Reforms**
- 3.46 From 2012, as part of the Localism Act councils will need to produce a Tenancy Strategy, setting out the council's approach to ensuring that registered housing providers offer and issue tenancies which are compatible with the purpose of the housing, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community and the efficient use of their housing stock.
- 3.47 A consultation with the range of housing partners in the city on agreed roles for each tenure and the tenancy arrangements that should be put in place across rented housing in Leeds. This will include where flexible tenancies could and should be offered. From this a Tenancy Strategy will be drawn up.
- 3.48 A new national '[HomeSwap Direct](#)' scheme will make it easier for tenants living in a council or housing association home to find a new property in another part of the country. The scheme will link into local homeswap schemes that some councils already have in place.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

Responding to national consultation

- 4.1.1 Each part of the Act has been subject to extensive national consultation and debate. Officers have written responses that have been agreed with members before being submitted to government. This report forms part of the consultation process in anticipation for when the bill becomes law and the various elements of the Act are enacted. Area committees are asked to provide their feedback highlighting any concerns and/or opportunities which may be used to form an Executive Board report on the Act and the implications in early 2012.
- 4.1.2 The Localism Officer is to ensure that each of the areas town and parish councils has ample opportunity and information to submit a response to both the Neighbourhood Planning and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) consultations in line with the agreed timetables.

Local community engagement

- 4.1.3 Strong evidence of consultation and engagement of local people is required in order to take forward many of the powers outlined in this report. The council is currently in the first stage of reviewing the way we deliver all types of engagement, under the 'Way Forward' review that was described at area chairs forum in November 2011. Area Committees will be invited to give their views on the 'Way Forward' during January/February meetings, as part of the consultation on developing a shared operating framework for community engagement.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The government have produced equality impact assessments for each part of the Act. There are concerns that the powers in the Act are more likely to be taken up in certain areas of the city. Non-parished areas of the city are more likely to be at a disadvantage because of the need to form neighbourhood forums, that meet set (but as yet uncertain) criteria in order to undertake neighbourhood planning.

4.2.2 A communities ability to run services and manage assets will depend on the amount of community activity and groups already operating in an area; the level of organisation and ability to bring in investment and support from elsewhere; and/or to be innovative and find new ways of generating income locally. The council's role in enabling all communities who want to take-up these powers to do so will be a challenge and there will be a need to draw support from all sectors including the private and third sector.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 Successful implementation of the Localism Act will enable the council to deliver a number of its strategic objectives through the locality working agenda most notably the Housing and Regeneration and Sustainable Economy and Culture City Priority Plans.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 The government have produced impact assessment for each section of the Act. It is expected that these will be revisited in light of the changes that have been made and republished. The costs are largely uncertain as it is based on the level of take up across the city and aspirations of communities. There are likely to be considerable costs involved but there is an opportunity to save money that the council may incur later on through legal challenge to the councils planning policies and individual planning applications as well as challenge relating to our decisions surrounding service delivery.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 A legal assessment of the Act is to be carried out. Links to further information sources have been provided where possible. This report is not subject to call-in as a decision is not needed.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are a number of risks linked to this agenda including a potential delay to the decision making process. Fragmentation of services and variation and inequality in the level/quality of services that people receive depending on where they live in the city.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Communities will benefit from considering neighbourhood planning, community right to challenge and asset management issues together. Identifying any opportunities within their area and how they could work with other communities. The ability to share best practice across the city and across the country will help to ensure more opportunities are realised and spread widely.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That area chairs lead a debate at their area committees about localism and the contents of Act. It is important for areas to begin to think about what localism means for them and what

they see as the main opportunities, challenges and risks taking into consideration the role they wish to play in future in engaging with their communities on this issue.

- 6.2 That any views, ideas, suggestions and concerns are fed back to officers in order to inform a further report to go to Executive Board on the implications of the Act and more detailed reports/sessions on Planning, Assets of Community Value and Right to Challenge agreed by area chairs.

7 Background documents

- 7.1 Localism Act 2011: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>
- 7.2 What can a mayor do for your city? A consultation <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/mayorsconsultation>
- 7.3 Leeds city council member code of conduct http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Council_and_democracy/Councillors_democracy_and_elections/Councillors_information_and_advice/Members_code_of_conduct.aspx
- 7.4 Nolan principles of public life <http://www.public-standards.gov.uk/>
- 7.5 Local Government Resource Review Consultation, Executive Board Report, 2nd November 2011 <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=60916>
- 7.6 Best Value Duty Statutory Guidance, DCLG <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1976926.pdf>
- 7.7 Community Right to Challenge, DCLG, September 2011, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1986977.pdf>
- 7.8 Open public service White Paper, Cabinet Office <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/open-public-services-white-paper>
- 7.9 Assets of community value - policy statement, DCLG, September 2011 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1987150.pdf>
- 7.10 Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme, Executive Board Report, <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=60292>
- 7.11 Easier to read summary – draft National Planning Policy Framework, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1972109.pdf>
- 7.12 Draft National Planning Policy Framework – Consultation Response, Executive Board Report, <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=60239>
- 7.13 Environmental report on the revocation of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan, DCLG, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2012158.pdf>
- 7.14 Leeds City Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment [http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_planning/Planning/Planning_policy/Strategic_Housing_Market_Assessment_\(SHMA\).aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_planning/Planning/Planning_policy/Strategic_Housing_Market_Assessment_(SHMA).aspx)
- 7.15 Leeds City Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_planning/Planning/Planning_policy/Strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_\(SHLAA\).aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_planning/Planning/Planning_policy/Strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_(SHLAA).aspx)

- 7.16 Leeds Housing Growth Scrutiny Enquiry Report
<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=61197>
- 7.17 Informal consultation on housing growth, Executive Board Report, 2nd November,
<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=61220>
- 7.18 Developing a response to neighbourhood planning in Leeds Executive Board Report, 2nd November, <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=61222>
- 7.19 Neighbourhood planning regulations consultation, DCLG,
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1985878.pdf>
- 7.20 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingsupply/newhomesbonus/>
- 7.21 Community Infrastructure Levy: Detailed proposals and draft regulations for reform – Consultation, DCLG,
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/cilreformconsultation>
- 7.22 Leeds Statement of Community Involvement
<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/page.aspx?pageidentifier=2806af09-9c0f-4b12-8464-ec10f1e938d9>
- 7.23 DCLG news article *Grant Shapps: nationwide home swaps become 'just a click away'*
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/localgovernment/2016097>
- 7.24 Localism Project Plan <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=59503>

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Report of The Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement)

Report to Outer North East Area Committee

Date: 5 December 2011

Subject: Area Chairs Forum Minutes

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report formally notifies members of the decision made by full council that Area Chairs Forum minutes should be considered by Area Committees as a regular agenda item at future Area Committee meetings.
2. The report also includes background information regarding the Area Chairs Forum meetings.

Recommendations

3. The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and to consider the minutes from the Area Chairs Forum meetings at this and future Area Committee Meetings.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to formally notify Members that the minutes of Area Chairs Forum meetings will be brought to Area Committee meetings as a regular agenda item, and to give a brief overview of the Area Chairs Forum meetings.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Area Chairs Forum meetings take place on a bi-monthly basis and are chaired by the Deputy Leader of Council and Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Regeneration.
- 2.2 Meetings are attended by the ten Chairs of the Area Committees, the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy & Improvement), the three Area Leaders and the Neighbourhood Services Co-ordinator in Leeds Initiative.
- 2.3 Agenda items focus on issues relating to services delegated to Area Committees, future delegations of services, locality working and any other issues that can be influenced by, or have an impact on, Area Committees.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Following recommendations by the General Purposes Committee, full council approved on 26th May 2011 that minutes of the Area Chairs Forum meetings should be considered by Area Committees, and that this should be a regular agenda item for Area Committee meetings.
- 3.2 Area Chairs Forum minutes will only be available to be considered by Area Committees once they have been agreed as an accurate record by the subsequent Area Chairs Forum meeting.
- 3.3 The scheduled Area Chairs Forum meeting dates for 2011 / 12 are:
 - Friday 17th June 2011, 10:00am – 12:00pm
 - Monday 5th September 2011, 10:00am – 12:00pm
 - Friday 11th November 2011, 9:00am – 11:00am
 - Friday 13th January 2012, 10:00am – 12:00pm
 - Friday 2nd March 2012, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 3.4 Attempts will be made to include Area Chairs Forum minutes in papers issued prior to Area Committee meetings, however due to some tight deadlines between meetings, it may be necessary to table the minutes at certain Area Committee meetings.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 There has been no need to publicly consult on the inclusion of Area Chairs Forum Minutes on Area Committee Agendas, however the matter has been discussed by the General Purposes Committee.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 There are no equality and diversity issues in relation to this report.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The inclusion of Area Chairs Forum minutes on Area Committee Agendas is a revision to the Area Committee Procedure Rules within the Constitution agreed by full council on 26th May 2011.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications or access to information issues. This report is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no risk management issues relating to this report.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Full Council has approved the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee to include the Area Chairs Forum minutes as a regular item at future Area Committee meetings.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Outer North East Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and to consider the minutes from the Area Chairs Forum meetings at this and future Area Committee Meetings.

7 Background documents

7.1 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 26th May 2011

7.2 Council Constitution

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**Area Chairs Forum
Monday 5th September 2011
Committee Room 1, Civic Hall**

Attendance:

Councillors: P. Gruen (Chair), G. Hyde, G. Wilkinson, K. Parker, A. Gabriel, G. Latty, D. Blackburn

Officers: J. Rogers, R. Barke, S. Mahmood, J. Maxwell, H. Freeman, B. Logan

Minutes: S. Warbis

Officers attending for specific items: Jane Harwood, Debra Scott, Geoff Turnbull

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Apologies	
1.1	Cllr. G. Hussain	
2.0	Minutes and Matters Arising	
2.1	The minutes of the previous Area Chairs Forum meeting on 17 th June 2011 were agreed as an accurate record.	
2.2	<u>2.3 of previous minutes – Environmental Service Level Agreement pilot</u> Due to timescales it had been agreed to take the SLAs to Area Committees, with no need for a pilot exercise.	
2.3	<u>3.1 of previous minutes - Environmental Delegation Member Workshops</u> Reminders had been sent to members by Cllr Gruen and attendance averaged around 60 members at each workshop. It was noted that some elected members had failed to attend any of the workshops.	
2.4	<u>3.3 of previous minutes – Cycles of Mechanical Cleansing Services</u> Dealt with in agenda item 5.	
2.5	<u>3.5 of previous minutes – Land Ownership Issues and Responsibilities</u> Although progress has been made, particularly regarding co-operation with ALMOs, it was felt that this was still an issue locally and that remedies discussed between partners had not always been embedded with the front line workforce. Multi-agency work has progressed regarding priority ginnels, including tackling red tape around budget issues, and it was felt that this work would be built on, although it was still a work in progress. Further meetings are to take place with Parks and Countryside in September to explore further co-operative approaches between responsible agencies. It was agreed that this would be an item on the next Area Chairs Forum agenda in November, and that Area Leaders would provide a snapshot of issues in their areas, and detail progress being made between partners.	Area Leaders
2.6	<u>3.6 from previous minutes – Environmental Services Restructure</u> Dealt with in agenda item 5.	
2.7	<u>3.8 from previous minutes – Environmental Delegation</u> Dealt with in agenda item 5.	
2.8	<u>5.5 from previous minutes – Luncheon Clubs</u> The following written update was provided by Jason Lane:	

	<p><i>In addition to a short questionnaire sent to LC grant recipients ASC have organised three discussions / meetings with sample of luncheon club committee members on 22nd August and 2nd September to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>get feedback on the previous years application process,</i> • <i>gather more information about how the LC's function,</i> • <i>identify and explore concerns raised by clubs,</i> • <i>identify networking possibilities and</i> • <i>enable PCT Health improvement workers to distribute nutrition and hydration information and discuss these topics directly with LC coordinators.</i> <p><i>ASC are also arranging dates September onwards to conduct informal interviews with service users of a sample of the luncheon clubs across Leeds to get an indication of the types of benefit individuals perceive they gain from the clubs. LC coordinator feedback will be used by ASC to improve the next annual process and application documents after which time a schedule for the 2012-13 application process can be confirmed and invitations to Area Management staff to observe 2012-13 grant application process can be made. Interviews with service users will not be complete for September Area Chairs Forum meeting. Budget information is being collated for inclusion with mapping information and issues raised by LC users and co-ordinators into a report to be brought back to Area Chairs Forum meeting for November.</i></p> <p>It was requested that Jason Lane be contacted to ensure that arrangements are made for the shadowing of the grant application process by the former Area Management staff.</p>	Sarn Warbis / Area Leaders
3.0	Update on the Localism Bill	
3.1	Jane Harwood, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer, attended to present a paper outlining ongoing work across the council in preparation for the Localism Bill.	
3.2	Work is ongoing across directorates to establish the implications of the bill and to prepare for the potential changes. Particular reference was made to the following areas:	
3.3	<p><u>Community Right to Challenge</u></p> <p>The potential right for various groups to express an interest in running services which the authority is responsible for. A paper is going to the Strategic Planning and Policy Board on 16th September and this area will be discussed at Corporate Commissioning Group on 19th September. Various pieces of work are underway to look at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ our relationship with the third sector ○ key account management ○ category management ○ commissioning processes ○ the Open Public Service white paper ○ innovation and new models of service delivery ○ community engagement ○ equality impact assessments ○ procurement. 	
3.4	<p><u>Community Right to Buy</u></p> <p>The potential for communities to register land or property as assets of community value and to have a chance to bid to take over assets and facilities. A detailed report has been produced by Neil Charlesworth, Community Asset Officer, which has been agreed by Asset Management Board and will go to the executive board in December or January. This includes the proposed approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assessing nominations ○ listing assets 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ publishing a list of assets of community value ○ publishing a list of unsuccessful community nominations <p>The Asset Transfer Framework is to be discussed at Asset Management Board on 15th September and will go to Executive Board in November.</p>	
3.5	<p><u>Local Referendums</u></p> <p>The Localism Bill will give people the power to initiate local referendums on local issues if support can be gained from 5% of the local electorate. Work is being undertaken to examine potential resource and cost implications, with assistance from Bradford MBC who are providing information regarding a recent parish poll carried out.</p>	
3.6	<p><u>Neighbourhood Planning</u></p> <p>This is a complex area with detail emerging as the bill progresses. A Neighbourhood plan would be subject to an independent examination and would need approval by 50% or more of voters who turn out for a referendum. A report is going to Corporate Leadership Team on 13th September and then to Leader Management Team to establish the LCC approach. Member briefings are taking place on 23rd September and 22nd November with a Parish and Town Council Seminar taking place on 19th October. Leeds is also hosting a Localism Roadshow for Councillors at the Town Hall on 1st November and there will also be a Localism Forum in Leeds run by the Local Government Group aimed at Heads of Service and Senior Officers from Local Authorities.</p>	
3.7	<p>Concerns were raised regarding the difficulties for areas that did not have Parish Councils in getting organised to take part in the various aspects of the Localism Bill. It was suggested that Area Committees and Locality Teams would need to be involved in supporting local areas to get organised. There were concerns that Neighbourhood Forums would need a lot of effort to achieve the appropriate mandate and representation from their communities, and that guidance was needed on what would represent an appropriate constitution for a forum. It was suggested that there needs to be communication between the Area Teams and Area Committees regarding where Neighbourhood Forums and other representative groups are functioning well and that learning should be shared.</p>	
3.8	<p>It was raised that the National Planning Framework was also changing dramatically and there needed to be clarity on the relationship between national and local planning policies.</p>	
3.9	<p>The Locality Bill is a work in progress and there are many amendments to guidance as the bill is progressing which can lead to confusion. Neighbourhood Planning may be seen by some as a means to stifle development although this is not the stated intention, and work will continue by officers across services to keep abreast of developments.</p>	
4.0	Community Centres Review Update	
4.1	<p>Debra Scott attended to present a report outlining the proposed review of community facilities.</p>	
4.2	<p>Although referred to as the Review of Community Centres it had already been agreed to rename this as the Review of Community Facilities to include other assets in the review options. It was stressed that the review was not tasked with reducing provision but was intended to maximise resources.</p>	
4.3	<p>The Project Initiation Document was included in the papers and this will be considered by the Asset Management Board on 15th September and will also be shared with Directors of other Directorates to explore opportunities for collaboration. It was stressed that consultation was key to the development of proposals and a workshop was suggested for Area Committee members to discuss and develop the consultation strategy.</p>	

4.4	A project board is being established and there was an invitation for an Area Chair to join the programme board. It was also suggested that the programme board should include a representative for users of community facilities.	
4.5	It was suggested that clarity needed to be reached on what facilities were to be included in the scope of the review. Reference was made to community centres owned by external bodies but located on council land. Debra Scott stated that a mapping exercise was taking place and that issues such as these should be addressed through this exercise and through workshops with officers and members.	
4.6	Reference was made to a recent review of community facilities carried out in Chapelton which identified a vast array of facilities owned or run by local groups. This highlighted a duplication in provision, with competition threatening the viability of certain facilities and groups. It was suggested that the review needed to take account of the context in which facilities were located.	
4.7	Area Chairs were asked to note the content of the report and provide comments on the proposals.	
4.8	The Area Chairs Forum were asked to nominate an Area Chair to serve on the project board and Cllr Angela Gabriel volunteered and was nominated.	
4.9	It was agreed that a number of workshops would be arranged to enable Area Committee members to engage with and influence the review and consider wider consultation arrangements.	Debra Scott
4.10	It was agreed that Debra Scott would return to a future meeting to provide an update on the progress of the review.	Debra Scott
5.0	Delegation of Environmental Services to Area Committees	
5.1	Helen Freeman attended to provide an update on the progress of the Environmental Services delegation.	
5.2	The service level agreement is going to the first Area Committee meeting this afternoon for approval and will be going to all other Area Committees during September.	
5.3	Workshops for members carried out in January, March and July were successful and, along with sessions with environmental sub-groups, enabled the development of the service level agreement to proceed smoothly.	
5.4	The service restructure has progressed and appointments have been made to service manager and supervisor posts. The 8 day programme of sweeping and mechanical cleaning is going live today .	
5.5	Work is still ongoing in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reviewing the fleet of vehicles ○ establishing a balance between mechanical and manual cleaning ○ coordination with Parks and Countryside ○ reviewing the use of depots and addressing downtime ○ developing and maintaining the committed and flexible culture within the service 	
5.6	It was acknowledged that whereas some areas of the city were up to the benchmark other areas were below and these needed to be brought up. There will be ongoing reflection and reviewing of the delegation and this will involve Area Committee members. Also, Area Leadership teams will have input where they feel resources or performance is not appropriate.	

5.7	There will be a full 6 month review of the environmental delegation, however intervention will take place as and when difficulties arise or problems are identified.	
5.8	Cllr Gruen stated that the service level agreements represented a minimum offer from day one, with a baseline grounded in reality, and that there was an expectation to perform. Cllr Gruen is looking for a real challenge from environmental sub-groups to ensure the service is effective and that the right balance is established locally for the environmental services that can be provided.	
6.0	Update on Restructuring and Locality Working	
6.1	Briefing seminars for elected members had taken place to explain the details of the restructure, with 40-50 councillors attending.	
6.2	The restructure proposals had been issued to the trade unions before the August bank holiday with a deadline set for comments of 16 th September. As part of the process meetings will take place between James Rogers and the trade unions.	
6.3	Introductory events have been set up towards the end of September for the Area Leadership Teams set up to oversee locality working in the three areas.	
7.0	Any Other Business	
7.1	<u>Equality and Decision Making Training</u> Geoff Turnbull, Senior Project Officer within the Equality Team, attended to give background information on the legal equality duties that apply to Area Committees due to their decision making responsibilities.	
7.2	There is a risk that decisions can be challenged if due consideration is not made to equality issues in the decision making process.	
7.3	It was proposed that training sessions should be set up for all elected members on this area, and it was agreed that an initial training session be set up for Area Chairs with a proposal that this takes place after the Area Chairs Forum meeting in November.	Geoff Turnbull
7.4	<u>West Yorkshire Fire Authority</u> Cllr Gruen referred to the proposed review of fire stations by the Fire Service and informed Area Chairs that he was ensuring that Area Committees would be consulted by the Fire Service on this matter.	
8.0	Date of Next Meeting	
8.1	11 th November 2011, 9am, Committee Room 4, Civic Hall.	

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