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Report to: **Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board**

Date: **10 March 2014**

Subject: **Strategic Partnerships – Update following the Scrutiny report to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board in March 2013**

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Further to the Scrutiny review and subsequent report submitted to the Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership Board in March 2013, the following actions have since been taken as a consequence of the recommendations made by Scrutiny:

#### **Recommendation 1**

**That the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board actively pursues the development of more partner involvement in delivering the city's cleaner-greener priorities.**

Whilst the remit of the former Safer and Stronger Communities Board included street cleaning and parks and green spaces, the delivery of the city's cleaner-greener priorities had previously been delivered and monitored via a separate workstream of the Partnership led by the Chief Officer Environment Action. Following the reconfiguration of the partnership arrangements, the cleaner-greener agenda falls outside the remit of the new Communities Board and therefore separate arrangements for delivering and monitoring the city's cleaner-greener priorities continue to be required.

As such, there is now excellent scope for developing a more localised approach in line with the Council's locality working design principles which will enable more practical localised third sector and community involvement in this agenda. Efforts will therefore be focused on working with Area Leads to explore existing opportunities, be it through the emerging Community Committees, tenants' groups, friends of parks and in bloom groups etc to galvanise residents and partners to get involved in this aspect of their community.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**That the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board ensures the involvement of communities and the third sector in the cleaner-greener and the Safer Leeds agendas.**

In relation to the cleaner-greener agenda, this recommendation will be taken forward in line with the locality working principles set out in the response above.

Safer Leeds continues to work with the third sector through a range of projects such as Stop Hate UK, Victims Support, Domestic Violence Providers and organisations delivering support to people with drug and alcohol abuse problems. Engagement work is also taking place with communities, through the restructure of the Leeds Policing Divisions, which will see Leeds move to a single city wide approach which is aligned to Area Committee boundaries and more integrated with local services.

Work is also taking place with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, to consider the role of the third sector in the provision of local services to support the delivery of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan. This includes the potential development of a Victims Hub and support to access grant funding through the PCC's recently launched 'Community Safety Fund', which will see £500k of additional funding from the Police POCA programme (Proceeds of Crime Act) being distributed across the West Yorkshire sub-region.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board also undertakes work which underpins the locality working design principles and considers the needs of particular localities as well as maintaining a strategic overview citywide.**

At the May meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board it was agreed to explore reconfiguring the partnership arrangements for this Board. A workshop session took place in October 2013 to scope out the remit of a new Communities Board to drive forward the "stronger" element of the agenda and more accurately reflect its role in delivering the strategic direction required for Leeds to become the best city for communities.

The Board met for the first time on 28 January 2014, chaired by Councillor P Gruen, Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services. The Terms of Reference were agreed in principle, although issues of adequate representation of communities in its membership were raised as needing further consideration. The Terms of Reference (which includes updated membership) are attached at Annex 1 of this report. At the January meeting it was agreed that the main focus of the Board's work would be to tackle poverty and deprivation and underpin the emerging Citizens@Leeds agenda.

So as to provide a clear focus to guide the work of the Board, an outline plan on a page was considered. The plan sets out the ambitions, approach, outcomes and objectives and can be found at Annex 2 of this report. Further individual discussions are taking place with Board members during February and March to discuss the role and plan in more detail. It is likely that these discussions will result in prioritisation of the work streams within the plan. The umbrella nature of the Communities Board will then enable a range of other partners to be involved in these work streams, as appropriate, to the delivery of the plan. They will then report back into the Board.

It was acknowledged that the new Communities Board will need to work with the other strategic Boards, in particular, the Health and Wellbeing and Children's Boards to ensure close working and co-operation across all of the disciplines.

### **Recommendation 4**

**That the Stronger Communities Partnership ensures that the composition and strands of work undertaken by the supporting partnerships are also reflective of the move towards developing a 'best city for communities' framework to improve stronger communities working in Leeds.**

The decision to move towards a Communities Board has also prompted a review of the support strands of work and supporting partnerships and to review its priority actions. The supporting partnerships were:

- Migration Partnership - this continues, with a major report on the State of the Migrant Third Sector published in February 2014. The Migration Partnership work is now complemented by the development of a council wide approach to managing migration and its impacts
- Leeds Poverty Challenge remains a key strand of work and its progress will be reported to the Communities Board
- Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Strategy Group - this no longer meets as a partnership group. The issues relating to Roma communities are now picked up by the Migration Partnership, and the Environments and Housing directorate of the Council leads on engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities.

The best city for communities' framework provides a guide used by the council to underpin and provide an internal model to capture different facets of communities that need to be in place to ensure success. It provides some underpinning principles, each of which may provide a focus at different times as appropriate given the work streams that the Communities Board takes forward.

### **Recommendation 5**

**That the Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board ensures that all Elected Members are kept informed of progress relating to the Leeds Poverty Challenge.**

3 quarterly briefings were sent to elected members from Cllr Gruen prior to the formal launch on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014, to an audience of 250 people. In the last 6 months of 2013, the Challenge support team worked intensively with a group of people who are directly facing poverty to prepare them to take part in the Challenge. A final team of 15 put themselves forward and were given support to prepare their testimony in a way that was meaningful and dignified for them. These are people with experience of alcohol and drug addiction, mental health breakdown, violence, prostitution, forced marriage, criminal justice and a range of other complex issues that have directly and indirectly contributed to their experience of poverty. The launch was well received with good coverage on local and national radio, press and the blogosphere.

The first formal Challenge meeting took place on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February, and involved both those living in poverty and a wide range of partners.

Poverty Truth is now on the internet at: [www.leedspovetrytruth.org.uk](http://www.leedspovetrytruth.org.uk), twitter @PovertyTruth and Facebook at Leeds Poverty Truth.

### **Recommendation 6**

**That once confirmed, the accountability arrangements in place for the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board are set out clearly in the Partnership's terms of reference.**

The change of Accountable Director from Environment and Housing to Citizens and Communities for the Communities Board is set out clearly in the terms of reference at Annex 1

### **Conclusions**

The Safer and Stronger Communities Board welcomed the comments made by the Scrutiny Committee and these have been used to inform the changes outlined above. Work continues in taking forward all of the Scrutiny recommendations. The new Communities Board is also keen to agree a work programme, with success measures, and this will be developed following further discussions.

Any further comments or observations from the Scrutiny Board are welcomed.

## **Communities Strategic Partnership Board Terms of Reference – February 2014**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Communities Board is to provide strong and effective leadership, to support partnership work that takes action to deliver the aspirations of the Leeds 2030 plan in relation to 'all Leeds communities will be successful'. In particular, its key objectives are to join up activities to maximise outcomes, and to create a culture where partnership work in the interests of local people is built into the way all agencies, sectors and organisations act.

The Communities Board will provide a framework for relationships to be developed and work to take place across partners. It will consist of a small core group of people which will be added to as appropriate to take forward specific themed work

### **Strategic Leadership**

The board will lead the long-term strategy for the city for communities and co-ordinate the partnership actions to work towards ensuring that all communities in Leeds are successful.

### **Accountability**

The Communities Board is not a separate legal entity. Each partner on the Board retains its own functions and responsibilities, for example for Leeds City Council – its role in the Board is accountable to the Leeds City Council Executive Board.

Strategic direction for the Board will be derived from the Leeds 2030 plan. The Board provides a focus for the agreement of shared action between partners and constructive challenge to make sure that the partnership work improves outcomes, adds value and inspires innovation.

### **Roles**

The chair will be the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning & Support Services.

The vice-chair will be selected from the third sector members.

Executive accountability will be with Leeds City Council via the Assistant Chief Executive, Customer and Communities.

Servicing and support will be the responsibility of Leeds City Council

### **Responsibilities**

The Communities Board will:

- § lead the joint delivery of strategic action to make Leeds the Best City for Communities;
- § develop, deliver and report on an action plan to deliver the objectives set out in an agreed and published Board work programme and tackle underperformance against the priorities and targets;

- § provide a framework within which partners may agree to commission services together, with pooled or aligned budgets;
- § act as an advocate for the contribution which these themes make to public policy and partnership working in the city, and support the culture and practice of partnership working;
- § jointly develop, innovate or sponsor new activities, which support the aspiration to become the Best City for Communities;
- § identify opportunities for greater efficiency or effectiveness through a common approach and innovative solutions to areas of policy, planning, performance management, consultation, reporting, communication, resource allocation or delivery of services in the city and take action as appropriate;
- § evaluate the impact of interventions, capture learning and disseminate good practice across partners in city; and
- § influence local, regional and national government policy initiatives linked to the Communities agenda.

The Communities Board will have specific oversight of workstreams that meet one or more for the following outcomes:

- There is access to job opportunities at all levels, including for those who are the furthest away from the job market
- There are pathways out of financial hardship
- Individuals and communities engage with setting and achieving the priorities for their areas
- As a city we provide integrated and accessible services

### **Linkages**

The Communities Board is one of a number of Strategic Partnership Boards in Leeds which together are responsible for oversight of the Leeds 2030 plan, and will work in co-operation with each other.

The Board will work in tandem with the Citizens@Leeds Programme Board, and will respond to requests from the relevant Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board.

### **Equality and community engagement**

The Board will have due regard to equality in all its activities, and will take steps to demonstrate it has consulted with communities appropriately in all its decisions.

### **Membership**

The membership of the core group reflects a cross sector balance of expertise and knowledge in working with communities. This group will be supplemented to facilitate discussion and action on various work strands as they develop. It is envisaged that fluid arrangements will enable more productive engagement and promote greater understanding of the challenges facing people and communities and take different approaches as appropriate to the issues in hand.

The cross sector balance will reflect all relevant sectors to the agenda, specifically including:

- § Elected members – Cllr Gruen (chair), Cllr Anderson, and Cllr Golton
- § Community sector – (grass roots third sector) Tony Herrmann and Mike Love
- § Further or Higher education sector –Ann- Marie Spry, Leeds City College
- § Clinical Commissioning Group - Jason Broch
- § Credit Union – Chris Smyth
- § Housing – Lisa Pickard
- § Council – James Rogers
- § Police – Chief Superintendent Paul Money
- § Third sector – Richard Jackson
- § Equality Assembly – Tony Stanley and John Welham
- § Jobcentre Plus – Ian Hunter

### **Officers in attendance**

Officers (in addition to James Rogers) from Leeds City Council and other partners will be invited to attend the board at the discretion of the Chair. Their role will include advising the group, preparing agendas, minutes, reports and briefings for the Board, and following up actions arising from discussions and decisions made by the board.

### **Openness**

Meetings are not open to the public, but papers, agendas and minutes will be published on the Leeds City Council website promptly, and through any other relevant partner website. A forward plan of meetings will be published on the Leeds City Council website.

These Terms of Reference were agreed:

**Date:**

**Signed:**

**Chair, Communities Board**

# Communities Strategic Partnership Board

## Our Plan for 2014 – 2017

### Our Ambition

Our Vision for Leeds is to be fair, open and welcoming. We want to be a place where everyone has an equal chance to live their life successfully and realise their potential. We will embrace new ideas, involve local people and welcome visitors and those who come here to live, work and learn.

### Our Approach

Our citizens and communities are the bedrock of our city and are key to achieving our vision to be the best city. We know that there are large numbers of people experiencing challenging circumstances due to the current economic and social climate. We estimate that there are 150,000 people, a fifth of the Leeds population, that live in areas assessed as being in the 10% most deprived in the country. Whilst large concentrations of our deprived communities are located in the inner-city area, we know that there are pockets of deprivation across many parts of the city and that many other people are struggling. We want to support people across the city who are experiencing difficulty, providing them with essential support and advice, and enabling them to do more for themselves. In order to do this it is essential all partners across all sectors work together to tackle poverty and deprivation. In doing so we want, individuals and communities (both geographical and communities of interest) to be more resilient and sustainable. This way more individuals and communities will be better able to mediate their own solutions, know where to go to for help and support, and will be capable of better responding to the unexpected when it occurs. Individuals and communities will be in a better position to help shape their own locality by influencing local priorities and locality based decision-making.

### The Outcomes We Are Looking For By 2017:

#### Helping People Out of Financial Hardship

We have clear pathways to help people out of financial hardship; we experience fewer people getting into financial difficulty; the Leeds credit union is renowned and widely used for affordable finance and credit services; and we have achieved a significant reduction in the use of high cost lending.

#### Helping People into Work

More of our citizens are successful in securing local employment, particularly those currently furthest away from the labour market; we continue to see a year-on-year reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET); and key employers in the city have adopted the living wage.

#### Being Responsive to the Needs of Local Communities

Local people are actively engaged in local prioritisation and decision making; local elected members have a stronger role democratically with greater responsibility for local services and local budgets; local members and local partners work well together for the benefit of their communities; we have made positive progress in addressing important issues like migration and prostitution.

#### Providing Accessible and Integrated Services

Citizens experience truly joined-up and integrated services that are accessible to them; a greater proportion of services and enquiries are dealt with at the first point of contact; most services are available digitally and we have made significant strides in achieving city wide digital inclusion.

### The Objectives We Have Set For Year 1 (2014/15):

We have a clear plan of action and implemented a range of measures around the Citizens@Leeds initiative

The Poverty Truth challenge has influenced our thinking and approach and is impacting positively on poverty

Work with the JRF and other partners is helping to develop sustainable solutions to tackle poverty

The credit union is more accessible and having a positive impact on reducing dependency on high cost lenders

We have developed clear pathways to support people in financial hardship and prioritised key groups

We have proactively targeted employment and skills opportunities at those furthest away from the labour market

Partners have been fully engaged and are actively working together to address poverty

Community Committees are making a difference to local engagement and local decision making

We have implemented three community hubs and developed plans for a city-wide roll-out

More services are available digitally and we have a clear plan to address digital inclusion

We understand the needs of different communities and are addressing issues such as migration and prostitution

