

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)**

### **AREA BASED DELEGATIONS TO COMMUNITY COMMITTEES**

#### **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In December 2013, the Executive Board endorsed the “Responsive to the needs of local communities” proposition, including the proposed development of a new approach to build on the work of Area Committees, to improve local democratic leadership of local areas, as well as providing a more meaningful way of involving local people in decisions that affect their local neighbourhoods.
- 1.2 Work has since been undertaken to develop the proposal to promote an inclusive, citizen based approach to locality decision making, in which formal Community Committees are underpinned by enhanced community engagement.
- 1.3 Integral to the success of Community Committees is also their ability to influence service delivery through direct budget/service responsibility, Service Level Agreements and/or other appropriate mechanisms. The Citizens and Communities directorate is leading on continuing to develop the approach to budget and service devolution, with this beginning to take effect in 2014/15, and aims to bring an increased focus on locality influence and decision making. Whilst not all services or budgets are within scope for consideration, the intention is to challenge and move decision-making closer to communities wherever possible.
- 1.4 Acknowledging that the work of the Citizens and Communities directorate is at an early stage of development, the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board welcomes the opportunity to assist in exploring viable options for future area based delegations.

##### **2.0 Scope of the inquiry**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
  - National and local perspectives towards budget and service devolution.
  - The different types of area based delegation possibilities and the potential implications surrounding each type.
  - Methods used in determining the appropriateness of a service area being delegated to a Community Committee(s)
  - Evaluation of existing service areas under consideration.

- Methods in determining the potential capacity needs of Area Support Teams in assisting Community Committees to deliver any new area based delegations effectively.
- The wider engagement of community representative forums in evaluating the merits of potential service area based delegations.

### **3.0 Desired Outcomes and Measures of Success**

- 3.1 It is important to consider how the Scrutiny Board will deem if their inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious and others may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.
- 3.2 Changes in the nature and focus of community engagement are supportive of the Council's values of working as a team for Leeds, being open, honest and trusted, treating people fairly, spending money wisely and primarily working with communities.
- 3.3 Making it easier for people to do business with the Council is also a key outcome set out in The Best Council Plan 2013-17. The development of Community Committees to bring an increased focus on locality influence and decision making will make a significant contribution in achieving this outcome.

### **4.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member**

- 4.1 In line with Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 12.1 where a Scrutiny Board undertakes an Inquiry the Scrutiny Board shall consult with any relevant Director and Executive Member on the terms of reference.

### **5.0 Timetable for the inquiry**

- 5.1 The Inquiry will take place over a number of sessions. These sessions will involve smaller working group meetings with stakeholders, which will provide flexibility for the Board to gather and consider evidence.
- 5.2 The length of the Inquiry is subject to change. However it is anticipated that a final report will be produced in February 2015.

### **6.0 Submission of evidence**

#### **6.1 Session one – October 2014**

To consider evidence in relation to the following:

- National and local perspectives towards budget and service devolution.
- The different types of area based delegation possibilities and the potential implications surrounding each type.

- Methods used in determining the appropriateness of a service area being delegated to a Community Committee(s)

#### 6.2 **Session two – November 2014**

To consider and evaluate existing service areas under consideration within the City Development directorate for area based delegation.

#### 6.3 **Session three – November/December 2014**

To consider and evaluate existing service areas under consideration within the Environment and Housing directorate for area based delegation.

#### 6.4 **Session four – December 2014**

To consider evidence in relation to the following:

- Methods in determining the potential capacity needs of Area Support Teams in assisting Community Committees to deliver any new area based delegations effectively.
- The wider engagement of community representative forums in evaluating the merits of potential service area based delegations.

#### 6.5 **Session five – January 2015**

To consider the findings and potential recommendations arising from this inquiry.

### 7.0 **Witnesses**

7.1 The following have been identified as possible contributors to the inquiry, however others may be identified during the course of the inquiry:

- Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities)
- Chief Officer Communities
- Environment and Housing Directorate representation
- City Development Directorate representation
- Relevant Executive Board Members
- Community Committee Chairs
- Area Leaders
- Local Parish and Town Council representation
- Citizens Panel representation

## **8.0 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 8.1 The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 to 2015 have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve it's ambition to be the best City in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity.
- 8.2 Equality and diversity will be a consideration throughout the Scrutiny Inquiry and due regard will be given to equality through the use of evidence, written and verbal, outcomes from consultation and engagement activities.
- 8.3 The Scrutiny Board may engage and involve interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the council) to inform recommendations.
- 8.4 Where an impact has been identified this will be reflected in the final inquiry report, post inquiry. Where a Scrutiny Board recommendation is agreed the individual, organisation or group responsible for implementation or delivery should give due regard to equality and diversity, conducting impact assessments where it is deemed appropriate.

## **9.0 Post inquiry report monitoring arrangements**

- 9.1 Following the completion of the Scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.
- 9.2 The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored.