

Report of: Jane Maxwell, East North East Area Leader

Report to: Inner East Community Committee – Burmantofts & Richmond Hill, Gipton & Harehills and Killingbeck & Seacroft

Date: 17th September 2015

Neighbourhood Improvement Update Report

Purpose of report

1. This report provides an update to Members on the neighbourhood improvement approach currently being developed in Inner East Leeds.

Main issues

2. In June 2015 the Community Committee agreed to develop an approach to neighbourhood improvement in the priority neighbourhoods. This builds on the previous neighbourhood management model but takes the opportunity to focus in on smaller neighbourhoods where there is an identified need to accelerate progress or where progress has started to stall.
3. The neighbourhood improvement approach will bring together a wide range of partners from the area along with council officers and other statutory services to improve the way partners integrate their services at local level to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the community. The neighbourhood improvement partnerships will focus on how to increase community engagement in each of the priority neighbourhoods.
4. It is proposed that the work of the neighbourhood improvement partnerships is overseen by the Inner East Neighbourhood Improvement Board (NIB). The principles of a Neighbourhood Improvement Board are that it:
 - has senior political and officer leadership representation;
 - has strong representation from local Elected Members;
 - is inclusive of key partners and stakeholder across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors;

- develops a measurable neighbourhood improvement programme across identified priorities;
 - seeks to increase collaborative working and integration to support sustainable local improvement;
 - has a strong emphasis on enabling community engagement and civic enterprise.
5. The neighbourhood improvement approach builds on the successful models in the Inner South and the Inner West Community Committee areas. These boards and neighbourhood partnerships have been running for several years and the approach is yielding tangible improvements.
 6. Informal discussions have taken place with Inner East Ward Members, who have started to identify neighbourhoods where they have concerns and would like to see improvement work accelerated. The area officers and newly appointed neighbourhood area officers have started work to review that statistical information available and have also commenced discussions with partners to explore key challenges.
 7. A key first step in the work programme of the neighbourhood area officers is to establish productive working relationships with council colleagues and local partners from across the sectors and to get a better understanding of the current community engagement activities and how effective they are. This will help to construct a picture of the issues, challenges and opportunities in each area. Once these discussions are complete we will work with Ward Members to agree the geographical neighbourhood focus in each ward or across ward boundaries, if appropriate.
 8. Work is also taking place with the Chief Officer (Acting) for Communities, the Assistant Chief Executive Citizens & Communities and the Executive Member for Communities to develop the Inner East Neighbourhood Improvement Board. Initial work will focus on developing the neighbourhood improvement partnerships to ensure we have all key partners working together at local level and we can understand what is currently working well, what isn't and where we need to accelerate progress. An example of this is the recent development of a neighbourhood improvement partnership board for Harehills.
 9. Each of the neighbourhood improvement partnerships will develop a neighbourhood improvement plan. This will follow the council's plan on a page format and will be focused on key themes. The emphasis will be on identifying new collaborative actions that are either additional to current service delivery or that replace existing service delivery with new ways of working. The agreed actions will form part of a sustainable improvement plan that is not just linked to additional funding but re-shapes and re-focuses existing resources to be more effective. In addition, if issues are highlighted that cannot be addressed through this co-production approach and re-shaping existing resources, these will be escalated to the Inner East Neighbourhood Improvement Board for resolution.

Community Engagement Plan

10. Each neighbourhood improvement partnership will develop a community engagement plan. Local residents and front line staff will decide the appropriate method of engagement based on previous experience and the success of existing structures. The neighbourhood improvement partnerships should use their knowledge of what has been tried before to develop innovative ways of increasing community engagement. This may include continuing with Community Leadership Team models where they are working well or refreshing existing approaches around community forums. Where local models of engagement are working well, the neighbourhood improvement partnership will build on this opportunity and share good practice across the other areas.
11. The new neighbourhood area officers started in post in July/ August and part of their induction work programme has been to review local partnership activity and speak to partners about the issues, challenges and opportunities in key neighbourhoods. A brief summary of their activities to date is highlighted below. Further information will be provided through Ward Member briefings.

Harehills

12. The neighbourhood area officer for Harehills started during June 2015 and has worked to meet a wide range of members and partners over the first two months. Previous partnership activity such as the Council's Local Management Team (LMT) has met and reviewed the previous programmes of work. Whilst this core group will continue to work as a team for Harehill's it is recognised that this partnership needs to be extended to wider partners such as the Third Sector. During July a range of partners came together to start the development of the Harehill's Neighbourhood Improvement Partnership (initially referred to as the Harehill's Neighbourhood Improvement Board). The priority focus for the group was to ensure that local Tasking discussions took place more frequently over the summer. These arrangements have worked well to draw local operational resources together and increase integrated working. They will continue over the next few months as part of the new neighbourhood improvement arrangements.
13. Further work has focused on a review of area data and other information to develop a priorities paper for partner to review. The paper will be presented to partners at the next Harehill's Neighbourhood Partnership which is organised for late September.
14. Partnership projects continue to be progressed in the area including working with CATCH to support the Hovingham Hub work, the Harehill's Festival (20th September) and work to support the Keep Harehill's Tidy campaign which is starting in September.

Seacroft

15. The work in Seacroft is well-established and continues to make progress. All of the established networks are in place including a Local Management Team and a Community Leadership Team. The area has had a neighbourhood manager for several years and relationships and partnership working continues to produce good results in relation to local projects. The focus of partnership activity has been on particular areas

of need and to drive forward improvements identified in the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan.

16. The opportunity is to shift the focus of the work to take advantage of some of the emerging opportunities relating to local infrastructure improvement such as new housing and employment and skills activity relating to the Thorpe Park developments. The challenge is to work collaboratively to ensure that local communities get the maximum benefits from these investments. Seacroft has a good partnership track record of working in the way in relation to the Tesco developments.
17. Further work will take place to work with members built on the current community engagement approach and widen community engagement activity to ensure we have the community reach to maximise the benefits of the new developments.
18. It is anticipated that the neighbourhood manager will work with ward members to identify the area of focus for the additional Neighbourhood Partnership work. Initial discussions have highlighted opportunities around the South Seacroft area.
19. Seacroft has had a successful summer with a range of planned community activities for children, young people and their families. The partnership with the police works well through local tasking arrangements and there have been real improvement in reductions in anti-social behaviour.

Gipton

20. The partnership infrastructure in Gipton is well established through the on-going work of the neighbourhood manager. Key programmes of work have taken place including work to support local employment and the development of the partnership venture around the Gipton Fire Station. The Community Leadership Team has folded over the past year due to the depleting number of resident groups in the ward. The challenge is to work with local Third Sector to ensure we have a good local programme of community engagement activity which gathers together the voice and influence of local people. New models have emerged working with the Third Sector and examples include consultation for the Gipton Fire Station and proposed changes to the Henry Barran Centre.
21. Developing better community engagement in the area is a priority and local partners will focus on this as an area of work. Work will take place with local partners to agree priorities for integrated working in the Gipton area and report back to the next ward members meeting on progress. It is likely that employment and skills will remain a priority and the work will seek to strengthen the links with the East Employment and Skills Board.

22. Gipton can also evidence a suit of local initiatives such as increased youth provisions, increased employment support for young people, a community café and a local food bank.

Burmantofts and Richmond Hill

23. Since starting in early August, the neighbourhood area officer for Burmantofts & Richmond Hill has focused on meeting members, partners and local stakeholders in the ward. As part of these opening discussions views have been gathered on existing partnership working arrangements and approaches to community engagement across the ward.
24. There is a strong partnership network in the ward and relationships between the Council and the Police are working well. The area has benefited from a number of local schemes linked to the SCIP's programme. Many of the projects are now complete.
25. Initial discussions are starting to identify new areas of focus in the ward, both geographically, and also in relation to key programmes of work. It is evident that work to support employment and skills is a priority. There has been some progress in relation to local projects and there is evidence of some impact in particular areas. However, it is evident from discussions with members and partners that this remains a priority. Discussions will take place with employment and skills to explore how we can maximise the impact of new developments for job opportunities for local people and ensure we have a targeted programme of work that includes all local partners.
26. Discussion with members and partners will identify the priority neighbourhood areas in the ward where partners need to have an additional focus using the neighbourhood improvement approach. An outlined on the emerging priority areas will be brought to ward member meetings over the next few months.

Recommendations

27. Members are asked to agree a nominee from each Ward to work with the Chair of the Community Committee to support the development of the neighbourhood improvement partnerships and the Inner East Neighbourhood Improvement Board to report back to the Community Committee in December 2015.
28. Members are asked to note that regular briefings will take place at Ward Member meetings with a view to having all arrangements fully operational by December 2015.