

**Report of: Jane Maxwell, East North East Area Leader**

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

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**Date: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**For decision**

## **Area Update Report**

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### **Purpose of report**

1. This report provides an update on the work programme of Inner East Community Committee.

### **Main issues**

2. Over the summer members have given their views on the community committee champion role and how their work in this capacity can be further embedded. The community committee chair has committed to bi-monthly community champion meetings to ensure that champions in post are able to share their key areas of work and identify any areas of overlap. The meetings are also an opportunity to share good practice and address any challenging issues collectively. At the time of writing this report, the date and time of the first meeting are yet to be finalised.
3. Aside from the these meetings, the Communities Team (East North East) will be instigating conversations with the community champions to ensure they are receiving the expected level of service support and that relevant meetings are in place.
4. As identified at the previous Inner East Community Committee, a new performance management framework for community committees is being developed to help drive forward the priorities and achieve defined and measurable outputs from the workshop discussions that arise from the community committee meetings.
5. The objective is to review all workshop actions and update reports and to bring this into one document with each action being allocated a rating of red, amber or green. Each of

the community champions will then be able to review and monitor progress against key actions within their local portfolio.

6. Not only will this process serve as a useful mechanism for community champions to readily identify areas of good practice and any cases where we are struggling to make progress, it also allocates actions to a named individual and organisation and therefore provides clear accountability around any actions arising from the community committees.
7. It is recommended that members form an informal working group with one member from each ward and the chair to review the draft document and ensure it is fit for purpose. It is also proposed that community champions are able to use the document to feedback to future community committee meetings using the area update report.
8. During the summer holiday period, several successful Wellbeing funded community fun day events have taken place in inner east. Burmantofts Gala took place on 27<sup>th</sup> June on Oxton Fields. Seacroft Gala took place on 4<sup>th</sup> July, followed by the Seacroft Children and Young People's Day on 13<sup>th</sup> August, both on Seacroft Village Green. Harehills festival is due to take place at Banstead Park on 20<sup>th</sup> September.
9. The Communities Team (East North East) play a key role in planning and organising these important community events and ensuring that they run smoothly on the day. In total, events funded by the Inner East Community Committee were attended by approximately 4,500 children, young people and families and played a key role in bringing local communities together.
10. Ward members meetings have taken place for each inner east ward since the previous Inner East Community Committee covering a range of standing items as well as bespoke matters. At the Burmantofts & Richmond Hill ward members meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, officers from regeneration and asset management were invited to update members on the council's derelict and nuisance properties programme as well as to discuss the future of vacant buildings in the ward. As a result of the meeting, officers agreed to investigate several properties identified by ward members and report back any action that could be taken against the owners to ensure the properties are meeting the required standards.
11. Other matters discussed at ward members meetings during this period include planning matters, environmental issues, policing and community safety and highways improvements.
12. With a wider scope on derelict and nuisance properties, it was agreed at the last meeting of the inner east community committee that the inner east environmental sub group will perform a monitoring role with regards to identified properties in the area as well as to identify new properties which meet the criteria. It is intended that this item will go on the agenda for the next meeting of the inner east environmental sub group scheduled for mid-October to establish a reporting process going forward.

13. Good progress has been made on the Harehills Lane Town and District Centre scheme which benefits both Gipton and Harehills and Burmantofts and Richmond Hill wards. The refurbishment of the Bellbrookes car park has been completed and a number of positive comments have been received by local residents and businesses. The majority of the Highways works have also been completed incorporating traffic calming measures and resurfacing and the barrier between the car park and Harehills Lane has been replaced with an attractive dwarf wall and railing feature. Discussions are now taking place with local schools through East Street Arts to involve local young people in the design of a public art installation within the grounds of the Compton Centre and the design of 'welcome' banners on lampposts. These will be complimented by hanging baskets in the spring.
14. Social Media update – Communities Team ENE have continued to use the inner east Community Committee Facebook pages to provide details of work of the committee as well advertising community events, such as the Burmantofts and Seacroft Gala's, and employment and training opportunities in the area. At the time of writing, the inner east Facebook pages had been "liked" by 205 people, an increase from 139 at the time of the last Community Committee in June. The Facebook pages continue to be an important communications tool between the council and local residents and services.
15. At the January 2015 meeting of the inner east community committee, a workshop took place to discuss mental health and social isolation. By way of feedback and actions that have arisen from this session, please see **Appendix A** of this report.
16. A council-wide review of community centre lettings and charging policy is currently taking place. Once in place, this new approach will be reviewed in due course by the Inner East Community Committee. At the previous community committee, members resolved that the decision to waive lettings charges for certain community groups would be made on a case by case basis by ward members. This process appears to be working sufficiently, however elected members have requested clear guidance for informing these decisions going forward. The Communities Team (Central) are in the process of providing this as part of the review of community centre lettings and charges.
17. At the previous meeting of the Inner East Community Committee in June, a workshop was held where participants were asked to contribute towards the formulation of a service level agreement for environmental services on ward basis. The community committee resolved that the draft plans that were developed as a result of this session would be presented at a future meeting of the inner east environmental sub group. This is anticipated to take place in October.
18. A dedicated Employment and Skills Board has been established for the East North East to address issues of unemployment and skill deficits across the area. This board oversees the development and implementation of the Employment & Skills plan for the East North East area.

19. The Inner East area is represented on that board by the Community Champion for Employment, Skills and Welfare, Councillor Ron Grahame.
20. So far the board has met three times and discussed the priorities for each community committee and over-arching priorities for the whole of the East North East area. For the Inner East in particular this has included focusing on increasing the number of employers taking on an apprentice or providing valuable work experience for unemployed young people as part of the Head Start work programme. Where possible, activities to up-skill local people have also been prioritized so that they can take full advantage of job opportunities emerging through major developments. There has also been a focus on improving engagement between schools and businesses, with proactive work undertaken with Co-op Academy and John Smeaton Academy. The Education Business Partnership is hoping to work with David Young Academy, Mount St Mary's and Leeds East Academy who currently buy in support from Ahead Partnerships.
21. In addition, intensive support has been provided through Job Centre Plus's Social Justice Team with numbers of people engaging continuing to increase across Inner East. Fully updated figures will be presented to the Employment and Skills Board and to the December Community Committee.
22. Two major developments – Thorpe Park and Victoria Gate – may present some new employment and training opportunities for Inner East residents.

#### Thorpe Park

23. At Thorpe Park, site preparation is on-going. An application for the extraction of the surface coal is due to be submitted in September 2015. This is unlikely to generate high volumes of new jobs as the work will be carried out by a specialist contractor. Approval for the construction of 300 new homes was approved in January 2015 and work is likely to start on site in 2017. The houses will be built in three phases over a five year period. The preferred housing developer will be announced in Autumn 2015. Scarborough Group will provide an introduction to the contractor. The Scarborough Group is hoping to announce a large retail anchor tenant shortly. Smaller units including food offer will be part of the new retail space from summer 2017 onwards.
24. The Scarborough Group have delivered a school project with Leeds East Academy with a further programme of school engagement being developed with the Ahead Partnership. All east Leeds high schools have been invited to take part.
25. An announcement was made on 10<sup>th</sup> August detailing a partnership between Scarborough Group and Legal & General Capital who are committing £162m to the on-going development of the site for a 50% stake in the Thorpe Park development.
26. LCC Employment and Skills service colleagues are meeting the main contractor in mid-September ahead of any construction opportunities which may come on stream in 2016 onwards. This includes the construction of the Manston Lane Relief Road. Once a timeline for construction opportunities is known along with details of the roles and

numbers of jobs, the service can then plan for information to be available in communities with support to help local people access the construction and end user opportunities.

### Victoria Gate

27. As well as existing contract site staff who have moved with the supply chain on to the site, an additional 255 people have accessed jobs – 80 from local target wards, 46 from other Leeds postcodes and 129 from outside of Leeds. There have been nine new apprenticeships and three existing apprentices employed on site.
28. A Victoria Gate schools engagement programme has been developed which will be delivered by Ahead Partnership. The first activities took place in July 2015 with further activity planned for the 2015/16 academic year.
29. A 'Head Start' work experience programme has been developed in partnership with Re'new / Construction and Housing Yorkshire. Sir Robert McAlpine as the main contractor are now offering a rolling programme offering placements with sub-contractors on site.
30. Whilst LCC Employment and Skills Service continues to work with the main contractor and sub-contractors to maximise any new and future construction jobs, they are also meeting with the HR team at John Lewis about end user opportunities. These will include customer service roles, warehousing and catering opportunities. Employment and Skills are also in regular dialogue with the owners of the casino to be able to support them in delivering their employment and skills obligations.
31. The next meeting of the East North East Employment and Skills Board will take place in late September. It is suggested that a full Employment and Skills update report will be presented to the Community Committee at its December 2015 meeting. In the meantime, it is suggested that a time-limited working group is formed including a Member from each ward within Inner East (including the Employment, Skills and Welfare Champion) to inform the development of this report and ensure it addresses local issues.

## **Conclusion**

32. There are a number of actions on-going to achieve the Community Committees' priorities and fulfil its work programme and tangible progress has been made in improving the way that the Community Committee, supported by the Communities Team (ENE), serves as local decision-making body. However, the Community Committee recognises that there is still a significant amount of work to be done going forward.

## **Recommendations**

33. That members note the contents of the report and make comment where appropriate.
34. That members agree to form an informal working group to review the performance management framework with the involvement of one member from each ward and the community committee chair to ensure it is fit for purpose.
35. That members agree to a further report to be brought to the December Inner East Community Committee.

## **Background information**

- Link to the Facebook Page for the Inner East Community Committee:  
<https://www.facebook.com/LCCInnerEast>
- Link to the Priority Setting report that was approved by the Inner East Community Committee in March 2015:  
<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s128842/2%20-%20Priority%20setting%20report.pdf>