



Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

To: South (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 24th June 2008

Subject: Area Delivery Plan 2008-2011

Electoral Wards Affected:

All Inner South Wards

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report presents the South Area Delivery Plan (ADP) for 2008-11 for approval. The report proposes that the ADP is structured to mirror themes set out in the Leeds Strategic Plan. This will enable local interpretations of the priority outcomes for the area to be developed and delivered against.

The report presents a detailed action planning and performance framework against which it proposed progress will be reported at Area Committee. However, it is suggested that there is a development of a more public friendly summary document, possibly in the form of a "neighbourhoods charter", to make transparent the service delivery commitments and specific improvements being aimed for across Inner South wards.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1. This purpose of this report is to:
 - (a) present the Inner South Area Delivery Plan (ADP) for 2008-11 for approval

- (b) agree the development of a more public friendly summary document, in the form of a “neighbourhoods charter”, to make transparent the service delivery commitments and improvements being aimed for across Inner South wards.

BACKGROUND AND MAIN ISSUES

2. In previous years the Area Delivery Plans have focused on agreeing, delivering and supporting actions to tackle local priorities, largely within the spheres of influence and responsibilities given by Area Function Schedules delegated to Area Committees from the Executive Board.
3. However, following a review of Area Management and District Partnership arrangements and the introduction of a new Strategic Plan for Leeds, there is the opportunity to widen the sphere of influence to capture local outcomes/ improvements delivered through partnership working as well as other council services (the delegation of further council functions to Area Committees is to be considered by Executive Board).
4. The aim is to turn the Area Delivery Plan in to a local interpretation of the Strategic Plan – with a focus on those strategic themes and outcomes most relevant to the area as agreed by the Area Committee. The strategic themes are:
 - Culture
 - Enterprise and Economy
 - Learning
 - Transport
 - Environment
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Thriving Communities
 - Stronger Communities
5. As Council Directorates and partners will be committed to developing and delivering services to meet the agreed strategic outcomes, the Area Committee has a valuable role to play in ensuring that those outcomes that are a priority in its area feature in local service planning and are fed into corporate planning and budget setting processes.
6. To assist with this, the ADP also now reflects the 3-year cycle of the Leeds Strategic Plan. Clearly the focus and reporting will be on actions for the current year but in order to influence medium-longer term planning of services and prioritise how resources may be best used, the ADP needs to be a tool for the Area Committee in setting this out.
7. The local accountability of partnership working will no longer be at “District” level – it will be increasingly at Area Committee. It is important therefore that the framework of the ADP also enables the Area Committee to understand what outcomes partnerships are charged with delivering and how the Area Committee can measure their performance and contribute towards their effectiveness.

8. This offers opportunity for a much greater involvement of Members in the work of area partnerships and it is proposed to formalise this through lead roles linked to the strategic themes as previously discussed and agreed by this area committee.
9. The Area Delivery Plan presented in appendix A is not an easy read – and certainly does not enable Elected Members or the public to quickly see which priorities are being address at a local level, what is being done and the progress that is being made. There are additional sections of the ADP still in development including the Chair’s introduction, explanation of area management and Area Committee, area profile and a section giving commitment to equalities, cohesion and engagement. The Area Committee is requested to delegate authority for approval of these sections to the Chair.
10. To that end it is proposed that a public facing summary of the Area Delivery Plan be designed and produced. There are examples of good practice from other authorities based on a “neighbourhoods charter” style. This may be a mixture of a statement of the minimum local service delivery that should be expected in the area and a commitment to agreed improvements and specific local actions. Agreement is sought from the Area Committee to produce a similar document for Inner South for distribution at public places (e.g. libraries, doctor surgeries, schools etc.).
11. The final point to be made is that this should be seen as work in progress. The development of area partnership arrangements away from a District Partnership set up is still in its early stages. Potential accountabilities of partnerships to Area Committees through the Area Delivery Plan process are being worked through and agreed. Similarly, any development of “neighbourhoods charters” that is to include local service delivery commitments of partner agencies needs negotiating with those agencies and the benefits to them in working with the Area Committee need to be clear.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

13. There are no implications for the Council policy and governance.

LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no legal implications.

CONCLUSIONS

15. The Area Delivery Plan 2008-2011 reflects a significant increase in the role and responsibilities of the Area Committee and its ability to influence how area priorities are being addressed to both make a difference locally and to contribute towards the city’s strategic plan.
16. A challenge though will be to translate the language and format of strategically agreed outcomes to something that is easy to understand and relevant to a local level – so that the levels of service delivery and improvements in performance that are being aimed for are transparent at a local level. The development of complementary Neighbourhood Charters is suggested as an answer to this.

17. There is an opportunity for the Area Committee to develop its relationship with partner agencies so that skills, knowledge and experience of local Members can assist in improving local delivery of services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. The Area Committee is asked to:
 - a) approve the ADP as set out in appendix A
 - b) approve the development and publishing of public facing summaries of the ADP in the form of "Neighbourhood Charters"
 - c) delegate authority to the Chair to approve the remaining sections of the plan