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**Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**Outer West Area Committee**

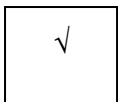
**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

**Subject: Community Engagement: Calendar of Events**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Calverley & Farsley  
Farnley & Wortley  
Pudsey



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

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**Executive Summary**

In November 2008, the Area Committee approved a framework for community engagement activities for Outer West Leeds in 2009. This report sets out a proposed calendar of neighbourhood and community based events for the approval of the Area Committee. The calendar aims to build on the successful events over the last year and introduce new ideas for reaching a wider sector of the community, particularly in priority neighbourhoods.

**Purpose of this report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of Members for a timetable of events which will enable the Area Committee, with the support of the Area Management Team, to implement a calendar of wide-ranging communication and engagement activities throughout 2009.

**Background**

2. The Council's Executive Board has delegated responsibility for community engagement to the Area Committees through the Area Function Schedule. Part of this responsibility requires the production of a local plan which includes a **calendar of planned communication and engagement activities**.

3. At its November 2008 meeting, the Area Committee agreed the forms of community engagement activity that it would like to organise for Outer West Leeds in 2009. On one specific aspect of community engagement, **Participatory Budgeting (PB)**, Members have requested further information to help them make an informed decision about its inclusion in the programme of events. Information about pilot PB projects in Inner West Leeds and Outer South Leeds is included in this report to assist Members in their decision-making. A short film of the South Leeds PB pilot will be shown to the Area Committee in support of this report.

### **Participatory Budgeting**

4. In order to reach a wider range of participants through community engagement and to use innovative involvement techniques, it has been proposed to introduce Participatory Budgeting (PB) on a pilot basis in Outer West Leeds. If approved by the Area Committee, implementation of a PB project would be informed by the evaluation of the two projects run in Drighlington, (Outer South Leeds) and the Broadleas estate, Bramley (Inner West Leeds) earlier in 2008. Appendix A describes how these pilots were implemented and the types of projects that were funded.
5. At the end of the pilot projects process it was clear that PB is a potentially very successful method for engaging and supporting residents to become active in their community. Residents welcomed the vote of confidence from the local authority in allowing them to make decisions on their community. They also learned about the Council's budgeting processes and structures.
6. However it is important that at each stage there are sufficient checks and balances in place. Area Committees would normally only fund formally constituted groups with a bank account. Inevitably some applicants had not yet reached this level of organisation. Part of the budget should also be set aside for promotion costs and a realistic assessment be made of the staff time needed to successfully promote and develop the scheme.
7. Members are asked to consider an initial PB project in 2009, possibly in the Swinnow neighbourhood. This would enhance the work of the Area Management Team to build capacity on the Swinnow estate to ensure a sustainable future for the Community Centre. If this proves successful, the Gambles and Heights could be a priority area for 2010. The Area Management Team would explore various sources of funding, but in the first instance, the Area Committee is requested to earmark up to £20,000 from its 2009/10 Well Being Fund to carry out a Participatory Budgeting project in 2009.

### **Calendar of Planned Engagement Events in Outer West Leeds**

8. The Area Committee has approved a set of engagement activities which will provide a balanced range of events across the year, including: Area Committee Partnership Events, Community Forums in Pudsey & Swinnow, Tyersal, Farnley & Wortley, 'What's the Big Idea?' consultation events, community festivals and the 'I Love West Leeds' arts festival.
9. A programme of **Partnership Events** held immediately prior to each of the Area Committee meetings began in September 2008. Each event takes the form of a discussion between members, Area Delivery Plan partners, local residents and

businesses. The current programme of discussions is themed by the following ADP priorities: Extended Services; Community Safety; Business, Enterprise & Economy; Health & Well-being; Environment. The success of these events will be evaluated following the December 2008 meeting. If it is decided to continue with the events, a new programme of theme topics will be proposed for the 2009-10 municipal year.

10. The existing **Community Forums** held in Farnley & Wortley, Pudsey & Swinnow and Tyersal will be held on a quarterly basis in their respective localities. It is proposed to make the agendas more relevant to community interests by looking at specific issues and discreet projects, such as mobile youth provision, community greenspace, community centres or public transport provision, which past experience suggests will attract greater numbers of attendees and involvement by residents.
11. In 2008, the ward-based '**What's The Big Idea?**' events were a new approach to engagement which led to increased public involvement. A wide range of issues were raised through discussions between residents, Ward members and service delivery partners. These helped to shape the first year of the 2008-11 Area Delivery Plan. It is proposed to hold three more events in Spring 2009, one for each of the Wards, repeating the successful format employed in 2008. However the purpose of the events needs to be developed to reflect the progress made in the last year and be relevant to the future years of the ADP.
12. The events will be held from 3.30-7.30pm in accessible venues on dates when there would normally have been a community forum. The marketplace style layout will include stands reflecting the ADP themes, including Jobs and Skills, Environment, Community Safety, Older People & Health, Children and Young People. Key partners will be invited to display information about what they did in response to last year's community feedback, in 'You Said...We Did...' displays. Each service will be able to consult visitors on their key priorities to implement the Leeds Strategic Plan and Outer West Area Delivery Plan in 2009/10.
13. The Area Management Team will prepare a stand which displays information about projects that have been funded by the Area Committee and with which the Area Management Team have been closely involved, for example the Town and District Centre regeneration Schemes in Farsley and Pudsey, other community engagement opportunities or community centre developments in each of the Wards. Attendees will be able to leave comments using a Post-it board or face-to-face discussions at the themed stands. It is also proposed to trial a system of theme prioritisation which has worked successfully elsewhere. It works by providing attendees with tokens which they distribute between the themes to indicate their views on where the Area Committee's funding priorities should lay. This will not take resources from other ADP actions but inform the Area Committee about community views on the balance of expenditure across the year.
14. It is important to attract as many people as possible to the 'What's the Big Idea?' events to ensure a representative range of views are heard from all parts of the community especially, for instance, young people. The events will be promoted well in advance and enhanced with extra attractions, including refreshments, a raffle, children's play activities and locally provided entertainment, such as short performances by schools or community arts groups from the 'I Love West Leeds' festival or Leeds Light Night events.

15. The Interplay community arts group is planning a Summer 2009 '**I Love West Leeds' arts festival** and has already started working in partnership with community and statutory organisations, including schools, older people's groups, Parks and Countryside, Museums and Galleries and local businesses. Members have been asked to consider a Well Being Fund application to support the festival.
16. It is also suggested that an Outer West **Area Citizen's Panel** could be established to gauge public opinion on a wide range of issues. It would involve a representative sample of the local population (at least 500 people), who have agreed to take part in consultation activity. Potential participants are normally recruited by random sampling, or door to door recruitment. Panel membership should be broadly representative of the population, taking account of issues such as age, gender, ethnic origin and disability. Panel members would then be asked to complete surveys on a regular basis. The Panel in its entirety can be asked to respond or particular groups can be targeted.
17. Generally, citizens' panels can achieve high response rates and are fairly cost effective. They can also measure whether people's views are changing over time. This can help to assess the impact of service developments. The Panel could be managed on behalf of the Area Committee by a research company, although there would obviously be a cost and funding implication.
18. The following table summarises the planned calendar of events for 2009 and is followed by explanatory notes. Specific dates will be confirmed as the year progresses.

January - March	April - June	July - September	October - December
<b>Area Committee Themed Partnership Event</b>			
<b>6 Feb:</b> Health & Well Being	<b>3 Apr:</b> Environment	<b>July:</b> Housing & Regeneration <b>Sept:</b> tbc	<b>Nov:</b> tbc <b>Dec:</b> tbc
<b>Community Forums</b>			
<b>Jan:</b> Farnley & Wortley <b>Jan:</b> Pudsey & Swinnow <b>Jan:</b> Tyersal	<b>Jun:</b> Farnley & Wortley <b>Jun:</b> Pudsey & Swinnow <b>Jun:</b> Tyersal	<b>Sept:</b> Farnley & Wortley <b>Sept:</b> Pudsey & Swinnow <b>Sept:</b> Tyersal	<b>Nov:</b> Farnley & Wortley <b>Dec:</b> Pudsey & Swinnow <b>Dec:</b> Tyersal
<b>What's the Big Idea? Engagement Events</b>			
<b>Mar:</b> Pudsey	<b>Apr:</b> Farnley & Wortley <b>Apr:</b> Calverley & Farsley		
<b>I Love West Leeds Arts Festival</b>			
		First 2 weeks in July	
<b>Swinnow Participatory Budgeting (subject to Area Committee approval)</b>			
	<b>Apr, May, June:</b> community involvement and applications	<b>Jul, Aug, Sept:</b> actions implemented	
<b>Community Festivals and Other Engagement Events</b>			
<b>Jan:</b> Pudsey Business Forum Feb/Mar: Swinnow Community Centre Open Day and consultation on play area	<b>May:</b> Pudsey Carnival	<b>Jul:</b> Farsley Community festival <b>Aug:</b> Tyersal Fair <b>Sep:</b> Bawns Fun day	

## Implications for Council policy and governance

### Member consultation

19. Members considered the framework for the 2009 community engagement plan in November 2008 and have provided comments on the way forward. Further information on proposals for Participatory Budgeting is provided in this report.
20. Member Champions are leading the themed discussions which take place prior to each Area Committee and which are based on the Strategic Plan and ADP themes.

## **Equality and diversity considerations**

21. A key element of the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008 – 2011 states that Leeds is a city that values the contributions of all the people of Leeds and actively engages with all our diverse communities.
22. Equality monitoring, designed to ensure that we are reaching all sectors of the community and that barriers to participation in engagement activities are addressed, will include:
  - ensuring that effective promotion of community engagement activities targets all equality groups, plus other socially excluded communities, e.g. people reliant on state benefits or excluded because of education or skills levels;
  - assessing what barriers people may face in, for example, accessing services or getting their opinions heard;
  - annual monitoring of regular forums and networks through a standard monitoring form for completion by attendees;
  - annual postal surveys of all households in the Outer West area;
  - use of a standard voluntary feedback and equality monitoring form at public events.

## **Legal and resource implications**

23. There are no legal implications arising from this report.
24. The Area Management Team will be responsible for organizing and co-ordinating community engagement activities and equality monitoring under the direction of the Area Committee. Costs associated with holding forums, individual community events, the 'What's the Big Idea?' events and supporting the participatory budget will be met from the Well-being Fund. A Well-being Fund application from the 'I love West Leeds' festival organisers is to be considered elsewhere on this meeting's agenda.

## **Conclusion**

25. The Area Committee has indicated its support for a number of community engagement events in 2009. Further information was requested on the methodology of Participatory Budgeting which the report provides. A calendar of activities is now proposed for the consideration of the Area Committee.

## **Recommendations**

The Area Committee is:

26. requested to comment on and approve the calendar of communications and engagement activities for Outer West Leeds in 2009
27. agree to earmark up to £20,000 for PB, initially on the Swinnow estate during 2009/10 and potentially the Gamble Hill and Heights area during 2010/11

## **Background Papers**

none

## APPENDIX A

### Pilot Participatory Budget Projects in South and Inner West Leeds

1. The pilot projects in Drighlington, (Outer South Leeds) and the Broadleas estate, Bramley (Inner West Leeds) were initiated by the Narrowing The Gap Executive and supported by the local Area Committees. Budgets of £20,000 for Inner West Leeds and £30,000 for South Leeds were made up of contributions from the Narrowing the Gap Executive, the Area Committees, Aire Valley Homes and the Highways Service.
2. Initially residents were invited to '**support sessions**' where the concept of PB was explained. The co-ordinated work of local partners was crucial to maximise the reach of the publicity and promotion and, therefore, the attendance at the sessions. Partners included Broadleas Improvement group, a parish council, Groundwork Leeds, the ALMOs, neighbourhood wardens and the area management teams. The support sessions initially engaged the community in consultation events to identify local priorities. Information on potential support from City Council departments, support networks and funding streams was distributed.
3. Residents were helped to think how they could develop project ideas, submit applications and prepare for 'Decision Day'. The **application process** offered training on how to complete an application form and on presentation skills that would help at the Decision Day event. The applications were appraised using pre-agreed criteria. In West Leeds, only project ideas developed by community groups were accepted. In South Leeds, ideas from agencies such as the Police and the Youth Service were also accepted. In each of the pilot areas, 11 projects were submitted for appraisal.
4. All residents from the relevant communities were invited to a '**Decision Day**' event where each of the applicants was invited to present their project idea to the meeting. Some residents found this too daunting and did not turn up for the event; others brought many of their group members and clearly enjoyed the experience. Certainly, for those who did participate, it was a very positive experience that has had other spin-off benefits, such as the residents' association which has been able to increase its membership significantly.
5. All attendees were invited to take part in the **voting process**. This proved to be the most difficult and time-consuming aspect of the event. People were asked to score on the basis of value for money, achievability and benefit to the community. The voting rules, designed to avoid tactical voting and to ensure people who voted had attended all the presentations, were thought to be too complex by some members of the community.
6. Funding for the following projects was approved:

**South Leeds:**

Morley Scouts		Improvements to scout hut	£6,638
Drighlington Citizens	Senior	Trips and transport	£3,000
Neighbourhood Team	Policing	Bikes	£2,400
Drighlington Parish Council		Quiet garden	£4,500
Youth Services		Activities for young people	£2,200
Drighlington ARLFC		IT club and summer activities	£11,262

**Inner West Leeds:**

Broadleas residents		Informal play area	£5,000
Broadleas residents		Broadlea Hill Roundabout and environmental improvements	£5,000
Friends of Bramley Fall Woods		Bluebell Woods improvements	£1,000
Broadleas Youth Steering Group		Environmental improvements	£5,000

7. The process in South and Inner West Leeds was initiated in December 2007 with officer training and funding approvals. The main public events were organised throughout the first half of 2008. The four Inner West Leeds projects have all been progressed.
8. Greenspace improvements will provide an **informal play area** between Broadlea Street and Broadlea Terrace and are designed to remove the risk of children playing in the busy road off the Terrace. The plan is to make improvements to the site to allow future development of the area for use by all, especially children. The project has secured additional funding from the WNW Area Panel to allow it to be delivered fully.
9. The Broadleas Tenants and Residents' Association has agreed a choice of fencing for the **Broadlea Hill roundabout** to maximise the restriction on cars and motorbikes trying to cross the middle of the roundabout. WNW Homes is now progressing this.
10. The Friends of Bramley Fall Woods have already organised one community clean-up event in **Bluebell Woods** with more planned in the New Year. The event was attended by BTCV, local residents, neighbourhood wardens, Bramley Youth Steering Group and the WNW homes contractors.
11. The **Youth Steering Group** is to transform the rear of the Youth INC centre into a community space for use by all. The Participatory Budgeting funding will provide match to the proposed bid being drafted to the Youth Capital fund by the young people. Talks are underway about the delivery of the scheme.