



Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

To: Inner West Area Committee

Date: 12th February 2009

Subject: Area Manager's Report

Electoral Wards Affected:

Armley

Bramley & Stanningley

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

The purpose of this report is to inform members of progress on a number of projects in Inner West Leeds as determined by the Area Delivery Plan 2008-11, which is in turn governed by the Area Committees functions and roles as agreed by Executive Board in July 2008.

1.0 Purpose of This Report

1.1 This report informs Members of the progress against Area Committee functions and roles as agreed by Executive Board in July 2008.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Area Management Review agreed by Executive Board in November 2007 proposed to further develop the responsibilities of the Area Committees during 2008/9. To this end, Area Committee functions and enhanced roles were agreed in July 2008.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 Area Functions

4.0 Community Centres

4.1 There are five community centres in Inner West, these being Moorside Community Centre, New Wortley Community Centre, Fairfield Community Centre, Strawberry Lane/ St.Batholomew's Centre and Wyther Community House. All of these are leased to independent organisations who manage the centres via their management committees. The exceptions are Strawberry Lane/ St Batholomew's Centre, which is vested with Environments and Neighbourhoods Directorate of Leeds City Council and Wyther Community House, which is managed by West North West Homes Leeds. The Heights Centre, which although located in Outer West, is part of the Inner West Community Centre Consortia group and it is close to the Armley ward boundary.

4.2 The community centres are a valuable asset in engaging with residents in deprived communities. They offer many services and facilities, as well as being a local focus from which partner agencies can deliver initiatives, such as worklessness and health. However within the next 12 months most of the community centres (with the exception of Strawberry Lane/ St Batholomew's) will run out of funding. Consequently a Community Centre Consortia group has been convened to address the impending funding issues and deliver a more sustainable management model.

4.3 To date a proposed business model has been drawn up as to how the community centres can be managed. This involves a lead organisation taking responsibility for managing the centres and co-ordinating the day to day running (recruitment, legal issues such as health and safety, organisation of staff etc.), which will free up community centre staff and volunteers to engage with local people and to develop and deliver programmes of work. A similar model exists in Huddersfield and has proved to be very successful; a visit by the Community Centre Consortia group has taken place.

4.4 To address the lack of funding a bid is currently being developed for submission to a consortia of funding organisations including the Tudor Trust, HBOS, and the Getty Foundation. A visit to these funding bodies to sound them out on this proposal is planned for the new year. The bid seeks funds to finance key staff, maintenance and capital issues for a three year period. The bid is at Stage 1 and if successful will move to Stage 2 with a final decision being made in early 2009.

4.5 New Wortley Community Centre

4.6 Interim funding for the Community Development Worker/ Centre Manager has been secured from the Inner West Area Committee and NHS Leeds (formerly Primary Care Trust). This amounts to £20,000, and will ensure the continuation of services until March 2009, following which it is hoped that the funding bid to Tudor Trust and others will have been successful. The centre offers a wide variety of services including an After School Club, Community Café, Job shop, Older Persons Luncheon Club, No Smoking Group, Construction Services Certification Scheme Training (CSCS), Stay and Play and Connexions. A drop in youth service is planned for the new year. New Wortley Community Centre are investigating other forms of funding and are making an application to the West North West Homes Leeds Area Panel.

4.7 **Strawberry Lane Centre/ St Bartholomew's Centre**

A Cultural Diversity Event called 'Spring Together' is planned for Armley ward on Saturday 21st March 2009. This will take place at Strawberry Lane/ St Bartholomew's Centre where Armley Helping Hands will be the host organisation. The event will involve a wide range of organisations, communities and all age groups from the community living in and around Armley. Armley Helping Hands, Leeds Voice, Area Management and Healthy Living Network Leeds are co-ordinating this event.

4.8 **Moorside Community Centre**

4.9 Moorside continues to provide services to the local community. Although funding has been provisionally allocated for the installation of a sports pitch the community association would like to undertake public consultation to clarify local need in the new year. This will help to inform the preparation of any designs and plans by Groundwork Leeds.

4.10 **Wyther Community House.**

4.11 The Community Development worker has been working extensively with partners to develop a range of projects that specifically target the needs of the locality. Regular events are now held with the unpaid service team, which have led to improvements both to the centre but also to the estate as a whole. The girls group, which was funded through WNWHL Area Panel, is starting in the coming weeks and is focusing on a baby reality scheme, this scheme is aimed at enabling young people to get an experience of how life would be with an baby. This type of project has been successful in other parts of the city and will hopefully have an impact on the Wythers.

5.0 **Neighbourhood Wardens**

5.1 There are 5 Neighbourhood Wardens working Inner West funded through Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Safer Stronger Communities Funding, Area Committee and West North West Homes Leeds funding. The wardens are based on the Wyther estate, Broadlea, Fairfield, and New Wortley area.

5.2 Specifically, the Wardens, have recently been involved in:

- Environmental audit in Little Scotland
- Assistance with the Blue Bell Wood clean-up in Bramley
- Assistance with the recycling project in the Wythers
- Environmental audits in the Cedar and Little Scotland area prior to Operation Champion
- Leaflet drop in the Cedar's and Little Scotland area to support Operation Champion.
- Checking vehicles for DVLA in the Cedar's and Little Scotland area
- Assistance with the Clydes garden and clean-up project with probation
- Assistance with the Broadlea Road communal garden project with probation
- Leaflet drop regarding the clean-up in little Scotland
- Assistance with the clean-up in the Little Scotland area
- Assistance with the shrubbery cutting project with probation in the Fairfield's

- Distribution of approximately 120 notices for bin yards on the Cedars with enforcement officers

6.0 Environmental Services

6.1 Leeds Waste Strategy update

- 6.2 Leeds City Council has agreed a very challenging strategy for the City to ensure major reductions in the environmental impact of dealing with its waste, in particular through minimising landfill. In addition to measures to reduce the levels of waste generated and to increase recycling significantly, the Council intends to enter into a contract with a private sector partner to develop and operate treatment facilities to recover value from waste that is not recycled by householders.
- 6.3 In line with Government requirements, the Council has had to identify 'reference sites' within its ownership on which these new facilities can be developed, and which can be made available to bidders. The former wholesale market site on the Cross Green Industrial Estate in the East of the city has been identified as the 'reference site' for a waste treatment facility. The existing Council waste transfer station on Evanston Avenue, Kirkstall, has been identified as the 'reference site' for a new transfer station where waste could be 'bulked up' for onward transfer to the main treatment facility.
- 6.4 These sites do not represent preferred options, and those bidding for the contract to construct and operate the waste facilities have been invited to propose alternative suitable sites. Similarly, the Council has not indicated any preference for the type of waste treatment technology to be used. Technology and site proposals will be assessed using the detailed evaluation model developed by the Council. This approach, including the evaluation model itself, has been approved by the Executive Board.
- 6.5 The Council started procurement in July 2008. It is anticipated that the current field of ten bidders will be reduced to four in April 2009 following the evaluation of their outline proposals. A preferred bidder is expected to be selected in early summer 2010, with the contract awarded and planning applications submitted in autumn 2010. Subject to gaining planning permission, the construction of the main treatment facility would commence in 2011, with full operations starting in 2014.
- 6.6 Although we have undertaken a great deal of communications activity surrounding the general waste strategy, we are entering a new stage in which specific proposals will soon become public. We therefore intend to undertake further communications activities, over the year ahead to educate and inform residents about the process and to understand any issues affecting them prior to the selection of the preferred waste treatment solution.
- 6.7 The nature of the project means that interest will be attracted from all Leeds residents, but there will be a particular interest in the main areas close to identified 'reference' sites or any alternative sites proposed. Any communications activity therefore needs to cover the entire Leeds area, but also to provide greater opportunity for those residents in these specific areas. The involvement of Elected Members is obviously key to the delivery of this communications activity. A more detailed communications plan is in

production and will be brought for consultation to the next round of Area Committees in March and April.

7.0 Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination

7.1 This covers the identification of priority neighbourhoods across the area that require more intensive resources to drive service improvements and better local outcomes. This includes improving the co-ordination of key services across the Council, and local partners.

7.2 Members are referred to three separate reports providing up-to-date information on the New Wortley and Wythers LAMP, and the Fairfield's Intensive Neighbourhood Management.

7.3 Priority neighbourhood projects

7.4 As mentioned in paragraph 4.3 it is planned to have a diversity event in March 2009 which will celebrate the different aspects of the community in Armley Ward. This event seeks to address the Area Delivery Plan priorities of improving community engagement and understanding and an increased sense of belonging and pride in local neighbourhoods to help build cohesive communities. The objective being to engage local people from different backgrounds and of all ages in activities provided by a wide range of community and voluntary sector organisations.

7.5 To date over 20 organisations have confirmed their attendance including the Sikh Temple, the Mosque, Radio Poplar and Russian Speakers Group. It is planned that the event will have a market stall focus with groups sharing information on what they do in the community but also their will be music, dance, food, puppet shows, arts and crafts etc., which will make the day a fun event to attend.

7.6 It is planned to have a similar project in Bramley and Stanningley ward following this, focusing on inter-generational issues.

8.0 Area Roles

8.1 Area Committees were recently given enhanced roles in relation to a number of services. It is intended that this report (which is a regular item on Area Committee agendas) will not comment on each of these services/areas, but a couple each time as and where relevant to the Area's work programme at that point in time.

9.0 Community Engagement

9.1 Under the new arrangements for Area Committees to scrutinise partnership working, the first themed event with Inner West Area Committee took place in September around the theme of Children and Young People.

9.2 The event was attended by partner agencies and several members of the public were in attendance. Discussion centred around the Extended Services agenda, with attendees contributing to suggested ways of improved working to further develop this work.

- 9.3 The second themed event took place in October around the theme of Community Safety, with a particular focus on drugs. The event was attended by partner agencies and several members of the public were in attendance. Discussion centred around the wider distribution of information and support available, support to access drug treatment, access to rehabilitation centres and awareness of the time it can take to access and receive drug treatment.
- 9.4 December's themed event prior to the Area Committee focused on business and economy. The event was attended by partner agencies and local businesses. Discussions centred on the current economic downturn and the impact on local businesses and employment, including the benefits of training and working in partnership, perhaps through a business forum.
- 9.5 A review of the outcomes and performance to date of the themed meetings will take place at the February Area Committee.

10.0 Area Based Regeneration Schemes and Town and District Centre Projects

10.1 Armley Town Street Town and District Centre Regeneration Scheme (TDC) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

10.2 Work to progress Phase 2 of the Armley Town Centre improvement scheme is now underway. Presently this includes working with local businesses with regard to the public realm works and working through the tender process. This scheme seeks to improve the vitality and viability of Armley town centre for workers, residents and visitors, reverse the physical decline and increase the popularity of the area as a desirable place to work and shop. This work will also contribute to improving the general appearance of Armley town centre and is an element of the West Leeds Gateway Regeneration Programme (WLGRP).

10.3 A THI officer has been appointed and starts in post in March. The post will be split between Chapeltown and Armley covering the two THI schemes.

10.4 Conservation Area Reviews

10.5 A total budget of £12,000 was secured from the Inner West Area Committee to undertake the conservation area reviews of Bramley Hough Lane and Bramley Town Street. Initial fieldwork is nearing completion, with initial stages of putting the document together having begun. The proposal is likely to be that the conservation areas of Bramley Town Street and Bramley Hough Hill will be amalgamated to form one fully encompassing Bramley Conservation Area which will look to protect the character of the whole place.

10.6 Field of Dreams

10.7 In April 2007 St Bartholomew's Primary School, Armley, applied to the People's Millions, Big Lottery, for a grant to create an informal community garden on designated public space adjacent to St. Bartholomew's Primary School. The application was successful and they were awarded £79,930.

10.8 The Deed of Dedication has been signed by the School Governors and the Council and a Certificate of Title and Deed of Dedication has been sent to the representatives of the Big Lottery.

10.9 It is intended that the scheme will be on site at the end of February 2009, and completed by the end of March 2009.

10.6 **West Leeds Gateway Update**

10.7 The West Leeds Gateway is one of the city's key regeneration initiatives aimed at narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged people and communities in West Leeds and the rest of the city. The council's case for focusing on West Leeds lies not only in the area's high levels of deprivation but also in the realistic opportunities for sustainable intervention by the council and other agencies which will ensure that West Leeds is well positioned to take advantage of anticipated future economic growth in Leeds and across West Yorkshire.

10.8 **Armley Mills** - the delivery of a sustainable development scheme at Armley Mills which will provide an enhanced cultural facility incorporating an improved Museum which complies with the Council's vision for the Museum and at the same time, exploits the potential of the whole Mill complex including Dunkirk Hill and Cardigan Fields, Waterways and surrounding areas. Soft market testing is currently underway, however this has been slightly delayed due to developer meetings being cancelled at their request. Most meetings are to be rescheduled over the next month or so. With regards to the museum collections audit, the full report and executive summary are to be finalised within next couple of weeks.

10.9 **West Leeds Gateway Stakeholders' Advisory Group** - the new Stakeholders' Advisory Group will seek to establish a more strategic and focused remit capable of aligning the social and economic priorities for West Leeds, in particular, worklessness, skills development and neighbourhood management with the physical work programme. The first meeting is scheduled for the 3rd February.

11.0 **Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

11.1 The Area Delivery Plan for Inner West is administered through the West North West Area Management Team.

11.2 Well-Being projects are derived from the Inner West Area Delivery Plan and developed via consultation with Area Committee Members. This Plan helps to fulfill the Council's Corporate Plan objectives by aiming to create better neighbourhoods and confident communities.

12.0 **Legal and Resource Implications**

12.1 In order to meet the Area Committee's **functions** funding is supplied via Well Being budgets, the Community Centres Budget and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

12.2 In order to meet the Area Committee's **roles**, funding is in the main supplied by other Leeds City Council Departments mainstream budgets, and external partner agencies e.g. the Police and Primary Care Trust, which is in turn reflected by the fact that the

Area Committee's role here is only to influence, develop and consult. However, wellbeing funding has resourced some projects here e.g. community engagement, area based regeneration schemes and conservation area reviews.

13.0 **Conclusions**

13.1 The functions and roles of the Area Committee aim to:

- Improve the quality and value for money of Council service delivery
- Improve the quality of democracy and find new ways to facilitate citizen participation in local government through the development of links between Ward Members and their communities.
- To co-ordinate policy and service delivery between the local service providers.

14.0 **Recommendations**

14.1 Inner West Area Committee members are invited to note the contents of the report and to comment on any aspect of the matters raised.

Background Papers

None