



Report of South East Area Manager

Inner South Area Committee

Date: Wednesday 23rd September 2008

Subject: Community engagement activity in Inner South Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected:

Beeston & Holbeck
City & Hunslet
Middleton Park

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 Inner South Area Committee has an enhanced role in community engagement with responsibility for overseeing the work of the Area Management Team in relation to community engagement activity in the Inner South East area.

This report provides Members with an update on local community engagement activity. It includes details of events undertaken so far and arrangements for events to be held in the Autumn. Members are also requested to comment on proposals for events planned for Spring 2010 to assist in the development of a calendar of community engagement events to ensure that partners, service colleagues and local residents are aware of opportunities to get involved.

Purpose Of This Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide feedback of the community engagement events which have taken place so far and outline future community engagement activity.

Background Information

2. Area Committees now have an enhanced role in community engagement and have responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the work of the Area Management Team in relation to local engagement activities. This involves the production of an area plan for community engagement which will include:
 - A community profile of local data and intelligence with information about the local communities, identified key contacts and routes to reach local neighbourhood and interest communities;
 - A calendar of planned communication and engagement activity, including information in “About Leeds” at least once each year;
 - Community engagement activities within particular neighbourhoods and communities, linked to ADP priorities.
3. Information for a community profile, including community contacts and statistical information is maintained by the Area Management Team. A calendar of community engagement activity is being prepared which will include details of planned consultation events, area committee meetings and local events. It is recognised that there needs to be increased emphasis on engagement in conjunction with partners to ensure that community engagement is fully reflected in the Area Delivery Plan and helps inform the service planning of our council colleagues and partner organisations. Work is underway corporately to secure commitment to this approach through various Chief Officer and Strategic Management Meetings.

Community Engagement in Inner South Leeds

4. What have we done so far?

The section below provides an overview of the community engagement activities undertaken in 2009 so far to create opportunities for local people to influence local decision making and public service delivery.

5. Beeston & Holbeck Ward

On 9th May a community engagement event branded “Have Your Say” took place in Beeston at the newly refurbished former library, now a community facility. The purpose of the event was to inform residents of the priorities of the council and its partners and give them the opportunity to comment. A range of partner organisations attended to present their actions for the coming year. Alongside this, other fun activities were organised, such as face-painting, free refreshments, football and bird-box making. Residents were encouraged to put their ideas and views forward by entering them into a free-prize draw. 107 attendees signed in on the day and 65 comment cards were filled in. The completed cards and comments residents made to staff meant that a total of 97 issues were raised. The majority of these were environmental concerns.

6. City & Hunslet Ward

The Area Management used a “Planning for Real” style technique to engage local people at the Hunslet Gala on 27th June. A map of the ward was set up in the form of

a treasure hunt where local people could mark with a flag where they thought treasure was buried. The flag in the correct location won some shopping vouchers. At the same time people were asked to highlight their priorities for the area on another flag. 42 flags and 17 “have your say cards” were completed on the day which highlighted a range of issues from highways to housing repairs.

7. Middleton Park Ward

On Saturday 14th February, the first Inner South Area Committee community engagement event took place. The event branded ‘Have your say in Middleton’, was an opportunity for local people to put forward their views on key issues in their neighbourhood to help inform the development of the 2009/10 Inner South Area Committee Area Delivery Plan. 24 local residents completed the ideas form and a number of other immediate issues were reported. It is estimated that around 100 people attended the event which had a number of stalls providing information and activities for all the community. The event also saw the launch of the Middleton Bright Ideas, the participatory budgeting project for the area.

8. Neighbourhood Improvement Plan Consultation

Consultation and engagement has also taken place in each of the four priority neighbourhoods. Initial consultation was undertaken through ‘Big Issues, Big Ideas’ feedback cards. Local people were also invited to form community groups for their area which were then established and supported by the Area Committee funded Priority Neighbourhood Development Worker.

9. What are we planning to do next?

10. Autumn 2009 Engagement Events

A series of Autumn community engagement events are already in the process of being planned. Venues and dates have already been agreed for events in Beeston & Holbeck and Middleton Park Wards, with details for City & Hunslet still being finalised. The dates agreed are as follows:-

Ward	Date and Time	Location
Beeston & Holbeck	Thursday 15 th October	Cottingley Primary School
City & Hunslet	Tuesday 13 th or 20 th October	New Bewerley Community Primary School
Middleton Park	To be confirmed	Windmill Primary School

11. Engagement activities should be an integral part of the service planning process so that results can be fed directly into decisions about service provision. It is intended that these events will provide an opportunity for local residents to identify local priorities and help shape the Area Delivery Plan for 2010/11. By defining issues and solving problems together, the public and local services can target resources where they are most needed. This helps the Area Committee Council to provide services that are more responsive to the needs of local communities (within available resources).

12. The events have been scheduled to avoid the school half term holiday at the end of October. It is intended to use creative and innovative methods of engagement with a fun element that appeals to families to generate greater participation. The events will take place straight after school to attract young people and their parents/families. Officers from the Area Management Team will discuss the style of the events with individual ward members.

13. **Spring 2010 Engagement Events**
To assist with the development of the calendar of community events the Area Management Team has started to plan the Spring 2010 events. Officers from the Area Management Team will discuss proposed dates and venues with individual ward members.
14. **Calendar of community events and community charters**
The Area Committee agreed at its meeting in June to develop a simpler, more user friendly and accessible document or “charter” as the public facing version of the ADP. Along with the calendar of community engagement this could be delivered to every household. In this way it is felt that the work of the area committee, local councilors and public service providers can be better understood and held accountable to local people.
15. **Year of the Volunteer 2010**
It has been proposed to make 2010 the Year of the Volunteer. This will be a chance to celebrate the work of volunteers on various community projects across Leeds. It has been proposed that Area Committees hold a volunteer celebration event some time within the year to recognise the valuable work and dedication of volunteers in the community. It is anticipated that this event would take place in late 2010 to ensure that the community engagement event cycle of Spring and Autumn is not disrupted or clash with any other major events taking place.
16. **Implications For Council Policy and Governance**
17. There are no implications for Council Policy and Governance associated with this report.
18. **Legal and Resource Implications**
19. There are no legal implications associated with this report.
20. The Inner South Area Committee have already allocated £12,000 towards community consultation and communication for 2009/10 financial year. When the community charter is being produced in early 2010 some additional funding may be required to cover printing and distribution costs of the document. Details around the cost and distribution options will be presented to Area Committee at a later date.
21. **Recommendations**
22. The Area Committee is requested to;
- Note the contents of this report
 - Consider and agree dates and venues for Spring 2010 events

Background Papers

Community Engagement Plan – 11th November 2008
Area Delivery Plan – 23rd June 2009