



Report of the South East Area Manager

Inner South Area Committee

Date: Wednesday 11th November 2009

**Subject: Inner South Neighbourhood Improvements Plans –
Sustainability and future plans for managing priority neighbourhoods**

<p>Electoral Wards Affected: Beeston & Holbeck City & Hunslet Middleton Park</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (Referred to in report)</p>	<p>Specific Implications For:</p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Council Function <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Executive Summary

The Inner South Area Committee agreed at its meeting in September 2008 a further programme of Neighbourhood Improvement Plans (NIPs) for 2008-11. This built on an initial programme established in 2004.

This report provides the Area Committee with an evaluation of work undertaken in the first year of the NIPs programme and outlines proposals for the next phase of the programme to commence in January/February 2010.

In addition, building on corporate reports and discussions, this report proposes a series of options for sustaining existing resident involvement and participation and introduces proposals on the future management of priority neighbourhoods.

Purpose of this Report

1. This report seeks to provide members of the Inner South Area Committee with an evaluation of the first year of the 2008-11 NIP programme. It also outlines the priority neighbourhoods which will be addressed in the next phase of the NIP programme commencing in January 2010.
2. In addition the report requests that the area committee consider proposals relating to the sustainability of resident groups and the proposed future management of priority neighbourhoods. These proposals build on reports and discussions that have taken place at the Neighbourhood Policy Group on “ Neighbourhood Level Partnership Working” and with local partners on the area thematic partnerships. A report ‘Managing Priority Neighbourhoods’ was presented to the Area Committee’s Chairs meeting this summer.

Background Information

3. Within the ADP there is a commitment to increase the number of local people that are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery. This priority is integral to the objectives of the Area Committee to;
 - enhance both the representative role of local elected councillors and the connections with their communities;
 - improve the quality of democracy and find new ways to facilitate citizen participation in local government.
4. At its meeting in September 2008, the Area Committee agreed to address a number of priority neighbourhoods through Neighbourhood Improvement Plans (NIPs). The aim of the NIPs is to address recurring issues of significant concern to local people, such as anti-social behaviour and environmental issues in priority neighbourhoods.
5. The priority neighbourhoods were based upon the 2007 Indices of Deprivation statistics, which outlined specific domains where each neighbourhood was in either the lowest 3 or 10 percent. These domains included the living environment, income deprivation, crime, education, skills and training and health & disability.
6. The initial NIP programme agreed in 2004 identified 23 neighbourhoods. However, due to the complexity of some issues raised by local residents only the following 7 NIPs were actually implemented during the period 2005 – 2008.
 - Cottingley,
 - Manor Farms (twice),
 - Central Middleton,
 - Beeston Hill,
 - Recreations
 - Arthingtons.
7. It was recognised that a list of 23 priority neighbourhoods was overly ambitious and consequently a programme of 12 NIP areas, split down into a three phase approach

of 4 NIPs per year was devised and agreed by the area committee in September 2008.

8. To link in with the establishment of the NIP process for Inner South and to strengthen the development and implementation of the NIPs, the Area Committee agreed to fund a Priority Neighbourhood Development Worker (PNDW) to work with local community groups and residents to build their capacity to engage with the regeneration of their neighbourhood.

Current NIPs and achievements so far

9. The priority neighbourhoods for the first phase were identified through statistical analysis and local intelligence gathered through questionnaires and anecdotal information. From this information, the four Phase 1 (2008 – 2009) neighbourhoods selected were :

Beeston & Holbeck

- Cardinals area, covering Waincliffes, Cardinals, Thirlmere Gardens, Redhalls

City & Hunslet

- Garnets & Woodviews area, covering Trentham St, Oakleys, Garnets, Colwyns, Woodviews
- Northcoates & Greenmounts area, covering Bismarcks, Northcotes, Disraelis, Coupland St, Sunbeam Place, Flaxtons, Greenmount St, Fulham St

Middleton Park

- West Granges area, covering Winroses, Whitebeams, West Granges, Clearings, Blakeney

10. The NIPs have been operational since late 2008, and each have benefited from area specific actions and also standard actions which have been replicated across each area. The NIPs are aligned with key priorities and outcomes of the Leeds Strategic Plan and Area Delivery Plan. The general actions for each NIP area are:
 - A newsletter distributed to all households on a quarterly basis
 - An intensive clean up
 - A community/resident group established
 - A community consultation survey undertaken to feed into the NIP action plan
 - A multi agency steering group established and chaired by a Councillor

11. The section below highlights some of the achievements from the Phase 1 NIPs over the last 12 months:

Cardinals

- Links have been established with Leeds Met Sports Development Students to assist Beeston Juniors FC with the development of a programme of support for the club
- Dusk 'til dawn lighting installed at flats in Cardinal Square due to concerns highlighted through a crime reduction survey
- Operation Staysafe has taken place in area to address anti social behaviour problems in the area

Northcoates & Greenmounts

- Notice has been served on fly tipping in hotspot area and in response to resident concerns raised through the NIP consultation process, litter and refuse has been cleared.
- Activities for young people in the area have been promoted through the newsletter after residents requested more promotion of activities for young people
- Various areas of overgrown vegetation have been cut back

Garnets & Woodviews

- An event was held in August to give local residents and local businesses an opportunity to comment on regeneration proposals and form a residents group to drive these forward
- Following on from the above, the Garnets Pocket Park has been cleared by Victory Church and local residents
- Police have put a dispersal order in place to address concerns of anti social behaviour and community safety

West Granges – completed in September 2009

- In response to incidents of intimidation and abuse experienced by BME tenants, a hate crime meeting was set up
- A booklet was produced promoting activities for young people in Belle Isle in response to issues raised from parents and young people about not having anything to do in the area
- An unused bowling green has been brought back into action for local residents to use and a Belle Isle in Bloom Group established

12. Action plans in 3 NIP areas are still to be completed. It is suggested that all actions are completed no later than the end of January 2009 in order to begin the next phase.

Challenges and lessons learned

13. Against this backdrop of achievements, the evaluation of phase 1 of the NIP programme has identified the following key challenges:
- **Sustaining community involvement** - One of the critical elements of delivering and sustaining the NIP approach is the meaningful involvement of the local community in each area. Members have expressed some concerns that there is no forward strategy in place for sustaining resident groups established through the NIPS and that any momentum gained could quickly be lost. It is suggested that a key challenge is to build on the capacity amongst individuals, communities and partner organisations to realise the goals and objectives of the NIPs.
 - **Fragmented priorities** – Local priorities identified by our partners do not always agree with the NIP priorities and consequently their capacity to deliver intensive targeted work in the smaller geographical NIP areas is affected. For example, NHS has declared a focus on the worst 10% of areas.
 - **Funding** - Some of the NIP areas have benefited from additional funding, particularly Neighbourhood Renewal and Safer Stronger Communities Funding. A key test will be sustaining this work when funding ends in March 2010 and in light of possible future public spending cuts.

- While NIPs have been developed in areas that face a wide variety of issues associated with deprivation, activity has tended to focus on crime and environmental issues. It is apparent that the work undertaken through the NIP process and in priority neighbourhoods across the city has changed some of the ways in which key service providers operate. For example, Neighbourhood Policing and PACT meetings have been introduced and joint –tasking on crime and grime has proven to be of real value. The challenge is to now build on these initiatives and develop an expanded programme of interventions beyond environmental and crime and grime issues such as health and worklessness, delivered largely within mainstream resources.

Future management of priority neighbourhoods

14. Based on current national policy thinking, discussions have taken place between the Area Management Team and some services and partners on locality working and neighbourhood level partnership working. A report was presented to the Area Committee Chair's meeting in summer 2009 outlining these proposals. These discussions have made proposals around the concept of bringing all frontline staff, community activists, local businesses and voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) together as one "team" under the leadership of local ward councillors.
15. The aspiration is to embed a jointly owned and coordinated neighbourhood management service in priority neighbourhoods using a "team" approach within our current resources. The proposal is that each priority neighbourhood would need a small local steering group to provide the leadership for the team, adapting current arrangements where necessary, for example NIP steering groups. It is suggested that such a group is chaired by a local councillor.
16. Each partner organisation would need to reinforce the concept with their frontline staff - that they have dual accountabilities both to the priority neighbourhood community and to their respective organisations. The idea would have to be reinforced through day to day line management, induction of new staff and through local communications, for example ensuring that the whole "team" is loaded onto each team member's mobile phone. It is important to stress that there are no suggestions to abandon structures that currently work and deliver results but to draw these together for more coordinated action in priority neighbourhoods. For example it is suggested we build on initiatives such as joint tasking and the extended services clusters to sustain the improvement agenda and build sustainable communities, largely within mainstream resources. The proposed "team" approach is not starting from zero and would need to incorporate and adapt current neighbourhood partnerships and working arrangements by consensus.
17. It is suggested that sustainability will be achieved by this approach to team working in a priority neighbourhood - delivered within mainstream budget provision. The motivation and commitment that the team approach can generate will sustain improvements and augment local leadership and resident engagement. The sense of direction within a clear improvement programme (NIP), the monitoring of effectiveness and the release of creativity that the approach encourages will help with building sustainable communities. Supporting and being accountable to people within neighbourhoods is at the heart of the team neighborhood approach. The focus of intervention goes beyond the crime and grime agenda as services share intelligence to respond to issues such as safeguarding children and vulnerable people.

18. This “team neighbourhood “ approach is timely as we move into phase 2 of the NIP programme and members of the area committee are requested to consider this approach to address some of the challenges outlined above in paragraph 13.

Sustainability of current NIP resident groups

19. Members have raised concerns about the capacity and sustainability of some residents groups established through the current NIPs, particularly when targeted interventions cease at the end of the first phase of the programme. It has been suggested that there is a need for an immediate, deeper involvement with the council and other partners to help facilitate groups, which may otherwise be in danger of folding.
20. The aim of the NIPs is to put in place long-term measures that have a sustained effect in making inner south Leeds a better place to live. This is integral to the area committee’s commitment reflected in their ADP to increase the number of local people that are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery. A key role of the Priority Neighbourhood Development Worker funded by the Inner South Area Committee is to establish and build resident groups within each NIP area. Working at grass roots level, they encourage residents to take an active interest in their environment and the regeneration of their neighbourhoods to improve their quality of life. These groups are a way through which local people can be heard, make their views known and help to improve local service provision and delivery.
21. Since the NIP process commenced in 2004, eight groups have been established. The following outlines these groups with details of current and proposed future mechanisms for supporting them.

Beeston & Holbeck

- The Voice of Holbeck (Recreations NIP) – This group was originally supported by the PNDW and is now **resident led**.
- Whiterose Tenants & Residents Association (Cardinals NIP) – This group has just been formed. The Chair and Secretary are set to go on minute taking and charring courses to ensure that they are equipped to manage this group in future. It is anticipated that support will be required from the **PNDW for a further 2-3 months**.
- CAD Beeston (Normantons & St Lukes NIP) – The group was originally established by the Neighbourhood Renewal Team as part of a NIP in the area. Part of this area is covered by a phase 2 NIP and the group is **supported by the PNDW**.

City & Hunslet

- Northcoates & Greenmounts Community Group (Northcoates & Greenmounts NIP) – The group has recently been established as part of the NIP in this area and will require intensive **support from the PNDW**
- Garnets Community Group (Garnets & Woodviews NIP) – Similarly, this group has only recently been formed as part of the NIP and also to links into the demolition work that will be taking place in the area over the coming months. **It is currently being supported by the PNDW**

Middleton Park

- Manor Farms Community Association (Manor Farms NIP) – The group was originally established in 2005 but then disbanded. The group was re-established by the PNDW in 2007 and is chaired by a local resident. **Administrative and secretarial support is provided by Aire Valley Homes.**
- Middleton Community Group (Middleton NIP) – This group was established as part of the Central Middleton NIP in 2006. It is chaired by a local resident and **supported by Aire Valley Homes.**
- Winroses & West Granges Community Group (West Granges NIP) – Part of the Phase 1 NIPs. This group is strong and well attended. It is anticipated that some residents will be keen to take over the management of this group and it is suggested that training and support through Voluntary Action Leeds is made available to them. **This group will continue to be supported by the PNDW for a further 6 months**

22. In order to ensure that the resident groups are fully established, it is suggested that the PNDW supports them for 18 months. This will allow the groups to receive “on the job” training and support and establish a constitution and a clear set of Terms of Reference. This will also ensure a focus for the group and allow them to access future funding opportunities. The total number of groups therefore that will be supported by the PNDW at the start of phase 2 of the NIP programme will be seven.

Other options for supporting resident groups

23. The following range of options for supporting resident groups are currently being worked up by the Area Management Team and are presented below. It is suggested that a combination of support can help to build capacity of resident groups, ensure their sustainability and embed community engagement in priority neighbourhoods.
- Support from key housing providers, particularly Community Involvement Officers in Aire Valley Homes, BITMO and Leeds Federated Housing Association. The Area Management Team is currently discussing this with individual organisations.
 - The Area Management Team is working with Leeds Tenants Federation to negotiate a package of support for resident groups established through the NIPs. Leeds Tenants Federation support residents to work together for improvements in their neighbourhoods and to increase their involvement in local decision making. They provide a range of services to tenants and residents to enable them to participate in the running of their homes and neighbourhoods, including a programme of training, advice, access to fieldworkers and experienced resident volunteers. Their board will discuss proposals for support to the NIP groups at their next meeting.
 - In addition to this, the Area Management Team are working with partner organisations such as NHS Leeds and extended services clusters to secure their support for local resident groups in priority neighbourhoods.
 - Work is also being undertaken with Leeds Voice to seek the support of other established third sector organisations affiliated to the South East forum.
 - In the context of The Year of The Volunteer in 2010, the Council has recently launched a volunteering scheme. Called Leeds by Example, the scheme gives Council workers the opportunity to volunteer in a wide range of activities. One of the volunteering opportunities is support to local resident groups. It is suggested that the NIP community groups benefit from this approach where appropriate.

24. In addition to the above, integral to the work of the area management team on behalf of the area committee, are proposals for sustaining and building community engagement into the longer term. Key underlying principles include promoting opportunities for involvement in local governance; tackling social exclusion; promoting opportunities at neighbourhood level; continuing the strengthening of the voluntary sector; ensuring the continuing provision of good quality information; and continuing to challenge and influence service providers to ensure greater emphasis on resident involvement.

Phase 2 NIPs 2010- 2011

25. The following phase 2 programme for 2010/11 was agreed by Area Committee in September 2008

Beeston & Holbeck and City & Hunslet	Malvern Road, St Lukes, Lady Pit Lane, Normantons, Bartons, Cambrian St, Moorville Road
City & Hunslet	Thwaite Gate & Hunslet Green – Sussexs, Pepper Lane, Rochefords, Church St, Grove Road, Whitfields, Joseph St, Jack Lane
Middleton Park	Brooms, Nesfields, Orions, South Hills & East Granges, Low Granges, Windmill Road (part) / Approach, Winrose Grove, Middleton Road (part)

26. Maps outlining the specific geographical boundaries of these areas are available from Area Management on request.
27. It is suggested that the operational format is similar to phase1, however ward members will have the opportunity to discuss ward specific issues through future ward member meetings with the Area Management Team.
28. Following discussion with Middleton Park Councillors, it has been agreed that a wider, programmed approach is adopted in phase 2 , the whole area of Belle Isle will form the NIP area with more focused actions for the Brooms / Orions, The Clearings and parts of the Winroses / Windmills. The NIP steering group will drive action forward and co-ordinate specific projects relating to employment, training & enterprise and health & wellbeing in identified smaller neighbourhoods highlighted for intensive action. Progress on this approach will be closely monitored and reported back to the Area Committee through the actions and achievements report.
29. Thanks to the progress already made by the area committee, foundations are already in place for delivering services better locally that meets with the needs of local residents and to drive forward much of what has been set out in this report on the future management of priority neighbourhoods. It is proposed therefore that the “team neighbourhood” approach is piloted in the Belle Isle priority neighbourhood.

Future Funding

29. Each ward currently has a NIP pot of £5,000 to support activities in the priority neighbourhoods. It is requested that members give an in principle approval, subject to 2010/11 budget allocations, to commit a further £20,000 from their Harmonious Communities pot to fund the Phase 2 NIPs. The breakdown of this funding would be £10,000 from Middleton Park and £5,000 each from Beeston & Holbeck and City & Hunslet. It is suggested that an element of this funding is top sliced to create a community training budget. This training budget of approximately £1,000 will be used

to equip residents with additional skills they may require for example Chair and minute taking skills, in order for the community to take ownership and responsibility for managing the community group.

Conclusions

30. In the context of the emerging “team” proposals outlined above, members of the Inner South Area Committee are requested to allow the area management team to develop this approach further and present their findings in a report to a future area committee meeting.

Implications for Council Policy and Governance

31. There are no specific implications for Council policy and governance associated with this report.

Legal and Resource Implications

32. There are no legal implications associated with this report. There are some resource implications as the “ team neighbourhood “ approach will make better use of existing resources across the area.

Recommendations

33. Members of the Inner South Area Committee are requested to
 - note the contents of the report
 - Agree to allocate £20,000 towards the Phase 2 programme of NIPs
 - Support recommendations for immediate action to be put in place to support NIP community groups
 - Consider proposals for the future management of priority neighbourhoods and for more detailed proposals to be drawn up and presented at a future meeting of the area committee

Background Papers

- Inner South Area Committee, 18th September 2008
- Inner South Neighbourhood Improvement Plans Neighbourhood Policy Group and Area Committee Chairs Meeting “Managing Our Priority Neighbourhoods” Rory Barke, ENE Area Manager.