



Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

South East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 7th January 2010

Subject: Development of Priority Neighbourhoods

Electoral Wards Affected:

Beeston & Holbeck
City & Hunslet
Middleton Park

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 follows a report to the area committee in November 2009 which provided the area committee with an evaluation of the first year of the 2008/11 Neighbourhood Improvement Plan (NIP) programme and outlined proposals for the future management of priority neighbourhoods in inner south Leeds.

This report suggests that there is scope for driving improvements in priority neighbourhoods and that this must be achieved within existing mainstream resources. It proposes the selection of targeted priority neighbourhoods that incorporate the current NIP areas, evidenced by the latest IoD analysis and local statistics and agreed by stakeholders and partners responsible for the delivery of services in inner south Leeds.

In addition this report builds on proposals for a "team neighbourhood" approach to be piloted in Belle Isle. These proposals are based on the concept of bringing all frontline staff, local businesses and the voluntary, community and faith sector together as one "team" under the leadership of the local councillors.

Purpose of Report

1. This report proposes a set of priority neighbourhoods, incorporating the current NIP areas already identified by the area committee, to achieve greater improvements in local service delivery by maximising the scope for further involvement and greater effectiveness of partnership working.
2. The report also updates the area committee on progress to pilot a “team neighbourhood “ approach in Belle Isle as agreed by the area committee in November 2009.
3. As the city loses the benefit of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) and Safer Stronger Communities Funding (SSCF), future neighbourhood management must increasingly rely on mainstream resources. This report builds on discussions that have taken place on the future management of priority neighbourhoods given the loss of this funding in April 2010. It proposes a way that, by improving the way we work together within neighbourhoods, we can still drive improvement and ‘get things done’ that lift the fortunes of our most deprived communities and their super output area rankings.
4. Thanks to the work already undertaken by the Inner South Area Committee in developing a programme of NIPs, there are examples of good co-operation on specific projects in neighbourhoods. Some local structures have been developed that could lead to a fully joined up approach, however there are challenges in the scope and geographical location. This report proposes that we now build on these initiatives to sustain the improvement agenda within mainstream resources.

Aspiration

5. Tackling the key issues that determine well-being in a community, like crime, jobs, education, health and housing requires a number of organisations to work together in a concerted and co-coordinated effort. Recognising that many of the issues facing our community are inter-related, we believe we can achieve more working together than any single organisation, community group can working on its own. The aspiration is to embed a jointly owned and coordinated neighbourhood management service in our most deprived neighbourhoods using a ‘team’ approach that was outlined to the area committee in November. The objective will be to raise the Super Output Area (SOA) rankings within the neighbourhood, contributing to the vision for Leeds to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged communities and the rest of the city. Ultimately, the aim is to build sustainable communities identified by good quality service provision and residents able to share in taking responsibility for improving their quality of life.
6. It is not the intention of the proposals in this report to undermine those initiatives and structures that are already bearing fruit – such as the ALMO area panels, school cluster arrangements, joint tasking with the police on crime and grime, etc. The aspiration is to build on these and adopt a ‘team’ approach to priority neighbourhoods and to do this from within current resources.

Characteristics of Priority Neighbourhoods

7. The area committee are requested to determine their priority neighbourhoods on the back of advice, evidence and support from their officer coordination group (OCG). Each area management area has an OCG that brings together chief officers from across agencies and council services to support the work of the area committees and the delivery of the area delivery plans. Through the Officer Coordination Group, the council and its key partners have proposed 6 areas as priority neighbourhoods in inner south and are seeking approval for these by the Area Committee. The defined areas across the city will also need endorsement by the Neighbourhood Policy Group and the Narrowing the Gap Board. The recommended defined areas have been established by considering a number of factors:
 - evidence of deprivation using the new Neighbourhood Vitality Index and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation;
 - by the geography of a neighbourhood and resident perceptions of their neighbourhood; and
 - the perspective of service providers and organisational effectiveness.
8. They share a number of characteristics in implementing a coordinated neighbourhood management approach through the proposals in this report. These are:
 - Frontline staff working in the neighbourhood and resident activists will recognise themselves as part of a 'team' responsible to the local neighbourhood community and to their organisation and profession;
 - There will be good communications between frontline staff and with local residents;
 - There will be a neighbourhood improvement plan in place following a planning template that is shared across all priority neighbourhoods and is linked to the LSP and area committee ADP;
 - There will be clear leadership through a small steering group Chaired by a local councillor;
 - The area will be a high priority for basic services; and
 - All involved in the 'team' will be encouraged to take an entrepreneurial approach to their work, finding creative solutions to problems that may involve some risk taking.
9. At the heart of the matter is the proposal to establish the 'team' approach to make all this happen.

The 'Team Neighbourhood' Approach

10. Members of the area committee will recall that it was agreed at the November 2009 meeting that the "team neighbourhood" approach will be piloted in the priority neighbourhood of Belle Isle. Officers from the area management team will be working with partners to undertake a review of resources in the neighbourhood and bring these resources together with a common vision, understanding and purpose. Progress on the development of this approach will be closely monitored by the Middleton Park ward councillors through ward member meetings. More detailed proposals will be presented at the February 2010 meeting of the area committee
11. Members are asked to note that there is no suggestion that we should abandon structures that currently work and deliver results – so 'team' members would still participate in joint tasking, ALMO area panels, local forums, resident & tenant groups,

police PACT meetings and school cluster arrangements as appropriate. This approach is not starting from zero and would need to incorporate and adapt current neighbourhood partnerships and working arrangements by consensus.

Sustainability

12. Sustainability will be achieved by this approach to 'team' working in a priority neighbourhood being 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 all help with building more sustainable communities.

Proposals for Inner South Leeds

13. Thanks to the progress already made by the area committee, foundations are already in place to build on much of what has been set out in this report and make some immediate decisions about the initial priority neighbourhoods, how they will be supported and an outline work programme based on the current NIP areas for phase 2 of the 2008/11 NIP programme.
14. The proposed priority neighbourhoods are:
 - Middleton
 - Belle Isle
 - Beeston Hill, West Hunslet & Hunslet Hall
 - Holbeck
 - Beeston – Cottingley and Cardinals
 - Hunslet
15. Maps and a statistical analysis of each priority neighbourhood are provided in Appendix 1. These are part of an enhanced area profiling system and "neighbourhood index" recently developed by the council and partner organisations. The neighbourhood index is a tool which brings together a wealth of information that paints a broad picture of an area and helps to describe local conditions.
16. It is important to note that not all of a priority neighbourhood will be tackled at once – decisions will need to be made within each priority neighbourhood and a programmed approach adopted which targets hotspots. To begin this process it is proposed that the following phase 2 NIP programme for 2010/11, agreed by the area committee in September 2008, is aggregated into the wider priority neighbourhoods outlined in paragraph 14.

Current Phase 2 NIP programme 2010/11	Proposed Priority Neighbourhood
Malvern Road, St Luke's , Lady Pit Lane, Bartons, Cambrian St, Moorville Road -	Beeston Hill
Thwaite Gate & Hunslet Green – Sussexs, Pepper Lane, Rochefords, Church St, Grove Rd, Whitfields. Joseph St, Jack Lane	Hunslet Green
Brooms, Nestfields Orions, South Hills & East Granges, Low Granges, Windmill Road Approach (part), Winrose Grove, Middleton Road (part)	Belle Isle

17. The Beeston – Parkside/ Cross Flatts area is an area that falls out of the proposed priority neighbourhoods. Across all domains, the scores for this area broadly reflect the averages for the city, the exception being the education domain where the score is notably lower. It is suggested that the area committee delegated functions and responsibilities represents a key opportunity to enable improved joined up local service delivery. The area management team will ensure that service area based management structures are aligned to the area delivery planning process to ensure improvements to basic core services and to maintain good standards of universal service delivery.

Next Steps

18. In order to ensure a consistent approach with partner agencies across the city to the neighbourhood planning and implementation process, the Neighbourhood Policy Group has established a working group to develop a neighbourhood improvement plan template, drawing on current, local good practice This will outline a set of operating principles, including a detailed community engagement strategy, and be a consistent basis for performance management.
19. Lessons from other areas in the city have demonstrated the value of a dedicated neighbourhood manager role in developing operational and local practices that better connect professionals working in priority neighbourhoods and increasing the number of residents involved in influencing decision making and shaping how local services are delivered. The area committee is requested to allow the area management team to work up proposals for such a role in the inner south to focus on the priority neighbourhoods. If the area committee agree to this proposal, detailed options will be submitted to the February 2010 meeting.

Recommendations

20. The Area Committee is requested to:
- a. Approve the priority neighbourhoods proposed for the Inner South Leeds as defined in Appendix 1.
 - b. Note the contents of the report and provide feedback on the proposed “team neighbourhood” approach
 - c. Consider a dedicated neighbourhood manager role to focus on the priority neighbourhoods and for more detailed proposals to be drawn up at the February meeting of the area committee.

Background Papers:

- ‘Neighbourhood Level Partnership Working’ – Neighbourhood Policy Group, Dave Richmond, 27th March 2009.
- Managing our Priority Neighbourhoods – Neighbourhood Policy Group, Rory Barke, ENE Area Manager, July 2009
- Inner South Neighbourhood Improvement Plans – Sustainability and future plans for managing priority neighbourhoods – Inner South Area Committee, 11th November 2009.