

**Report of the East North East Area Manager**

**North East (Inner) Area Committee**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**Subject: Inner North East Community Engagement Strategy**

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b> All Inner East Wards</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ward members consulted (referred to in this report)</p>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input 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**

This report presents for approval a refreshed Community Engagement Strategy, "Working Together", for the Inner North East Area Committee for 2011/12.

It explains the role of the proposed Community Leadership Teams and how this aims to strengthen the links between residents and the business of the Area Committee.

The report also provides members with feedback on Community Engagement undertaken during 2010/11.

## **Purpose of this report**

1. This report seeks Area Committee approval of the refreshed Community Engagement Strategy for 2011/12 (appendix A). The strategy sets out the how the Area Committee will consult, engage and communicate with residents, within the resources it has available, or is able to lever in from partner organisations (such as the Police and East North East Homes).

## **Background Information**

2. Community Engagement is one of the Area Committee's key delegated functions and as such it is important that there is a clear strategy in place for this to take place and be assessed against.
3. In 2009/10 the Area Committee's strategy was focussed on ward engagement events to fit in with the Area Delivery Plan cycle.
4. In 2010/11 the Area Committee approved a new, more comprehensive community engagement strategy aimed to help:
  - improve everyday engagement and relationships between local staff and residents
  - improve residents influence on the planning and improvement of services to tackle local priorities
  - improve local accountability for promised actions
  - support the civic role of residents to help build stronger and more sustainable communities
5. The full background and strategy is attached at Appendix A.
6. This more comprehensive strategy was also to assist in discussions with key partners and lead to proposals for a partnership strategy for the Area Committee in 2011/12. The ambition is to reduce duplication and reduce public confusion about consultation, as well as embed community engagement as something done as part of the "day job" rather than just through "meetings". Overall this is now being achieved.
7. Progress has been made and assisted in streamlining engagement activity. Although it is fair to say there is still progress to be made.

## **Core Elements of the Strategy**

8. The strategy sets out how the Area Committee will work with partner organisations to ensure that, in every ward, the following minimum public engagement will take place with residents:
- ✓ Two community engagement events a year to fit in with the ADP planning cycle (formats to be agreed with relevant ward members)
  - ✓ Ad-hoc public meetings to be held to debate and discuss important issues as the need arises. This includes bespoke consultation as required (e.g. school places, major planning issues etc).
  - ✓ 4-6 weekly public Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings to allow residents to focus on local policing, crime and ASB issues, agree top 3 current priorities with progress reported at next meeting.
  - ✓ Support for existing community events and summer galas, with attendance and information from local services where possible.
12. In the priority neighbourhoods the following additional engagement will take place:
- ✓ Quarterly meetings of the Community Leadership Team held in public (split into a business meeting and open meeting incorporating a “have your say” item)
  - ✓ An annual community conference (incorporated into one of the CLT meetings) which brings the team of local services/front line staff together with residents to help plan improvements for the year ahead
13. These commitments will complement existing public engagement that is supported by partner organisations such as tenant and resident association meetings.

### **Community Leadership Teams**

14. The strategy sets out to create a more empowering role for local residents by establishing Community Leadership Teams (CLT) for each of the two priority neighbourhoods that fall wholly within the Inner North East area, namely:
- Chapeltown & Scott Hall
  - Meanwood
- (note – discussions with relevant ward members and the existing partnership arrangement will take place regarding the best approach for the Moor Allerton priority neighbourhood)
15. Although CLT meetings will be held in public, there will be a core membership who will be responsible through the business part of the meeting for discussing, debating and agreeing issues for which the CLT is responsible as set out in their terms of reference (see appendix C).
16. A role of the CLT is to support and develop civic involvement within the priority neighbourhood and to broaden influence beyond the traditional meeting attendees that have hitherto dominated discussions.

17. The Area Committee is asked give authority for the Area Management Team to work with ward members on establishing a CLT for their priority neighbourhood(s) based on the framework set out in the strategy. Core membership is proposed to be drawn from:
- ✓ local Governing Bodies to nominate a parent or community governor resident in the area
  - ✓ local tenant and resident associations to nominate a local resident
  - ✓ Community Champions – selection to cover a range of skills and background
  - ✓ youth councils and/or school councils to nominate local young people
  - ✓ Good Neighbour and Elderly Action groups to nominate local older people
  - ✓ Local Children Centres to nominate a local parent from their advisory boards
  - ✓ Further places will be filled by local residents to bring contributions from the business sector, disabled residents and other significant elements of the community not represented through the above.
18. To ensure consistency across the CLTs it is proposed that the core agenda for every meeting will be:

*Business Meeting (45mins)*

- Neighbourhood Improvement Plan (NIP) – to receive an update from the Neighbourhood Manager on progress against the agreed priorities, to identify where key priorities/ADP promises are at risk of not being delivered and agree what actions should be taken. To report concerns back to the Area Committee.
- Community Relations/Engagement – to share, plan and agree support for engagement activity over the coming quarter.
- Team Neighbourhood - to receive quarterly highlight reports from Crime and Grime Tasking meetings and other partnership activity not covered by the NIP. To provide opportunity to refer concerns in the community back through the Neighbourhood Manager to the relevant tasking team/service.

*Open Meeting (45 mins)*

- To focus discussion and debate on one of the key priorities in the NIP with relevant organisations present to take part.
- “Have Your Say” session at the end of the meeting – 15 minutes for residents to raise issues that haven’t been covered for which they would like responses.

**Improving Every Day Engagement**

21. A key aim of the strategy is to improve everyday engagement and relationships between frontline services and residents. There should be fewer residents who feel they have to raise issues at public meetings in order for them to be listened to and resolved.
22. The strategy therefore emphasises development and support for Team Neighbourhood as a mechanism for empowering front-line staff to be able to build trust and good relationships with each other and residents alike.

23. As part of the engagement strategy, Team Neighbourhood will be rolled out across the priority neighbourhoods with an increasing emphasis on preventative working and community relations and will follow the set up of the Community Leadership Team and Local Management Team.
24. Team Neighbourhood aims to create a sense of dual accountability for front-line staff – both to their organisation and to the neighbourhood in which they work.
25. Examples of work that will take place in 2011/12 to help develop this include:
  - neighbourhood extranets to help frontline staff (teachers, youth workers, tenant officers, pcso's, health visitors etc) share ideas, request help and build local contacts
  - neighbourhood training – to ensure all local staff have basic awareness in cross cutting issues such as safeguarding, offender management and housing allocation policies.

### **Working Better With Existing Networks**

26. A further core element of the strategy is to work better with what is already out there. This includes where groups of residents are already being brought together either as part of an association, resident network or by a particular organisation/service as a user or advisory group.
27. As part of an annual programme for engagement in each priority neighbourhood, the Area Management Team will work with local ward members to identify where there are significant gaps in who is being engaged and where opportunities are greatest for reaching more people. Within the resources available, Area Management or partners will seek to factor in engagement with these groups/opportunities at the appropriate stage in the ADP planning cycle.
28. For example, this may involve staff (and perhaps local councillors) getting a slot on the local school council meeting, a luncheon club meeting, a childrens centre advisory group or a "friends of" group. The purpose would be to raise awareness of the work and role of the Area Committee, the Area Delivery Plan and to consult on future priorities.
29. The Corporate Communications Team are in the process of reviewing the Citizens Panel and consider options for future use of the panel and increased membership to better reflect the demographical make up of the City and areas within.
30. Subject to the outcome of this review further use of the panel will be sought to conduct surveys to gauge satisfaction levels with residents in the area as well as helping influence local priorities and decision making.

## **Implementation**

31. The first meeting of the Chapelton Community Leadership Team was held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February and a verbal update on this will be provided at the Area Committee Meeting.
32. The Management Team is established for the Meanwood Priority Neighbourhood and will continue to progress and move towards the establishment of the Community Leadership Team.
33. Discussions have taken place with ward members from Moortown and Alwoodley together with stakeholders on the existing Moor Allerton Partnership (MAP) as to how best to develop work in that priority neighbourhood a smaller group is now being established to focus work for the Queenshills and develop a specific action plan for this part of the MAP area.

## **Engagement Carried out in 2010/11**

34. During 2010/11 community engagement was undertaken to fit in with the Area Delivery Plan/Community Charter cycle.
35. During the summer months attendance at various community events to promote the work of the Area Committee, promote the Community Charter, feedback on the achievements over the past year and encourage community groups to make use of the Well Being and POCA grants available to them to deliver projects relating to priorities within the Community Charter.
36. Events attended during the summer included:
  - West Indian Carnival
  - Scotthall Breeze
  - Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods fun day
  - Beckhills Fun Day
  - Oakwood Farmers Market
37. The Autumn period was used to consult with residents and local groups on what they felt the priorities for the new Area Delivery Plan/Community Charter ought to be, information on some of the feedback is included within the Community Charter report.
38. Following the methodology set out in the 2010/11 Community Engagement Strategy the approach of using pre-existing networks were utilised to maximise the number of people engaged. A questionnaire was developed to seek views and distributed using the following methods:
  - Mail shot to the various groups held on the Area Management database
  - Distributed at the Volunteer Thank You event
  - Drop in events at the Reginald Centre and Open Door
  - Youth Services sessions
  - PACT Meetings
  - Area Management attendance at various community group meetings
  - Schools Cluster Leadership meetings

39. In taking this approach it enable views from a more varied and broader audience to be obtained with a much smaller resource input.
40. Work is currently ongoing to undertake the Spring cycle of engagement seeking residents views on the suggested promises and developing the various partnership actions beneath to deliver them. This is being done using the pre existing networks and groups in the inner north east.
41. In addition to the above, during the year festive light switch on events have been held in each ward, and public meetings have been organised and held at members requests to focus on 'hot topics' including:
  - Scot Hall Square development
  - Chapel Allerton selective licensing and street lighting

### **Equality Implications**

42. Consideration is given to the equality impact of delivering the engagement strategy and a 'soft touch' equality impact assessment will be carried out for activities within the strategy. The aim of the strategy is to enable a greater engagement with equality groups under represented.
43. Where a negative equality impact is identified action will be taken to mitigate the impact or risk.

### **Recommendations**

44. The Area Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and:
  - a) approve the "Working Together" community engagement strategy for 2011/12 and
  - b) note the intention to make use of the Citizens Panel subject to the outcomes of the review by Corporate Communications.

**Background Papers:** Area Committee Roles and Functions 2010/11