



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

Originator: Kevin Bruce

West North West homes
Leeds

Report of West North West Homes Leeds

Report to Outer West Area Committee

Date: 8 July 2011

Subject: West North West homes Leeds involvement in Area Committees

Electoral Wards Affected:
Calverley and Farsley; Pudsey; Farnley
and Wortley

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 outlines the purpose of WNWhL involvement with the Area Committee, and explores ways of making WNWhL involvement as productive and meaningful as possible. Members are asked to note this report and make comment as to how joint and collaborative arrangement can be established.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 To outline the purpose of West North West homes Leeds (WNWhL) involvement in Area Committees, and to explore ways of making that involvement as meaningful and productive as possible.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 WNWhL is one of three Leeds ALMOs and provides a range of housing management services under the terms of a Management Agreement with Leeds City Council. Amongst the services we provide are management of the Leeds Housing Register, repairs and property improvements to Council homes, tenancy management including rent collection. We also manage the Leeds Anti Social Behaviour Team following the recent QUEST Review, and have an extensive Customer Involvement network.

- 2.2** In 2010, WNWhL was inspected by the Audit Commission and received a '2 star' rating, equating to the delivery of good housing management services, along with promising prospects for improvement.
- 2.3** WNWhL, along with the other ALMOs, has been invited to attend and work with the Area Committees across Leeds. WNWhL welcome this invite, and are keen to explore the opportunities for increasing co-ordination and co-operation within localities.
- 2.4** WNWhL Neighbourhood Performance Managers have been tasked with working with Area Committees, and have been attending Area Committee meetings over the last few months. The Neighbourhood Performance Manager post forms part of the wider Senior Management Team for the ALMO. Work has also been undertaken with Area Management colleagues to develop this approach.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1** The ALMOs are by definition arms length from council governance. However, as the experience of having ALMO's within the broader provision of council services within Leeds matures there is a recognition that there needs to be a balance between achieving creative approaches to meeting the challenges of providing council housing in Leeds, and ensuring that provision through the ALMO's is contributing to meeting the wider strategic needs of service provision across a range of services within Leeds. This is particularly true at local level, where there is the opportunity to tailor services to meet specific housing related and broader service objectives. We welcome the opportunity to participate in Area Committees and to develop our approaches within local communities.
- 3.2** Participation in the Area Committee structure allows WNWhL to ensure that we are developing our approaches in ways which are consistent with the broader area management objectives and strategies, and to seek support in meeting the objectives of our service and our customers.
- 3.3** Within the current financial constraints we are keen to explore the patterns of provision of services within local communities and to contribute to joined up working which assists in developing service provision and quality, while generating savings and efficiencies in the provision of council services. There have been frequent references to joint funding arrangements in recent Area Committee reports, for example ALMO contributions to the Covert and Crime Reduction Team, and parking improvements at The Green, Farsley. This report envisages building on existing arrangements to further cement WNWhL's relationship with the Area Committees.
- 3.4** Through our recent involvement we have become more aware of the broad range of issues being discussed at Area Committees. While some of these do not seem at first to be directly relevant to WNWhL, it is envisaged that over time beneficial linkages may be found. We are very aware that the broad range of neighbourhood issues are of major relevance to our tenants and customers and that these issues strongly affect their experience and perception of the area they live in.
- 3.5** The Area Committees emerging role in relation to Streetscene, youth services, along with community safety reviews and opportunities for joining up community engagement present clear points of connection between the work of Area Committees and the ALMO. WNWhL has an established and extensive network for customer consultation, which could be used to promote further feedback from the community on how services are being delivered locally. We need to ensure that there is effective

joined up working to drive efficiency and satisfaction in our communities that effective services are being delivered.

- 3.6** Conversations are underway on ways that the Streetscene services being overseen by Area Committee's and the caretaking services provided by WNWhL can work in mutually supportive ways. There are many areas throughout the West North West area where there is an interface between land which is maintained by Streetscene and WNWhL. WNWhL attended the Environmental Sub-group meeting on the 7th April and there is clearly a commitment from all parties to ensure joined working in the provision of environmental services to communities. This approach is consistent with our Place Making Strategy, which identifies how WNWhL will influence how neighbourhoods are shaped to become places where people choose to live, learn and work.
- 3.7** We need to ensure that there is effective joined up working to drive efficiency and confidence in our communities that effective services are being delivered. We would welcome thoughts and ideas from Area Committee members for any ways that we can make our involvement in area committees more meaningful and productive.
- 3.8** Following discussion with Area Management it is suggested that WNWhL provide a six monthly update to Area Committee of progress with areas of mutual interest.

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 4.1** Council Policy and Governance arrangements will not be affected by these proposals.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1** There are no legal implications of this report. No additional resources are needed to deliver the approach outlined in this report, which will be delivered within existing resources.

6.0 Equality Considerations

- 6.1** There are no specific equality considerations arising from this report.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1** It is concluded that there are clear benefits and opportunities for WNWhL working closely with Area Committees as outlined in this report. Developing this approach provides the opportunity to develop services and join up working to the benefit of residents.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1** Members are invited to note this introductory report, and it is recommended that WNWhL provide a six monthly update to Area Committee of progress with areas of mutual interest. It is proposed that the first of these reports is presented to the Area Committee in September 2011, with the second report presented in March 2012.

Background Papers

None