

**Area Chair's Forum
2 November 2012, West Room, Civic Hall**

Discussion note on the Role for Area Committee in Neighbourhood Planning

What is Neighbourhood Planning ?

1. Neighbourhood planning is one of the five key measures in the Localism Act and specifically relates to the production of neighbourhood plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) and Community Right to Build Orders (CrTB).
2. A neighbourhood plan must be in conformity with the Council's Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and human rights and equality legislation.
3. A neighbourhood plan can be used to determine where development should take place and what it should look like.
4. The content of the plan will be decided by local communities, as will the decision to prepare a plan.

Local Authority roles and responsibilities

5. The Local Planning Authority has responsibility for determining applications for Neighbourhood Plan areas and designating Neighbourhood Forums.
6. The Council has a 'duty to support' local communities. How this is done is left to local authorities.
7. The Council will pay for and organise the examination and referendum on the plan.

The role of Area Committees

8. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations do not specify a formal role for Area Committees in neighbourhood planning.
9. It was agreed at Executive Board (June 2012) that Area Committees will have a consultative role to play in all aspects, including advising, signposting, empowering and providing mediation where necessary.
10. There is an opportunity for neighbourhood plans to include 'non-planning' opportunities. This is something Area Committees could take a lead on.
11. Experience so far shows that Area Committees have an important role to play in adding value, resolving conflict, partnership working and delivery.
12. Given the frequency of Area Committee meetings it was agreed that the Chairs of the Area Committees (and local ward members) would be consulted on the designations within their area.

The level of interest (neighbourhood plans)

13. The first 10 neighbourhood area designations have been made in the **Outer North East** area.
14. There are a further 15 (or more) possible designations across the city.
15. There is a medium-high level of interest in some parts of the city (parished and outer areas) but a low level of interest in the inner areas.
16. Aberford, Barwick in Elmet and Scholes, Horsforth, Thorner and Adel have submitted applications to be designated a neighbourhood area, decision pending.
17. Collingham, Headingley and Hyde Park, Carlton, Rothwell, Oulton & Woodlesford, Aireborough, East Keswick, New Wortley, Pool in Wharfedale and Micklefield have all expressed an interest in producing a neighbourhood plan but have yet to submit an application.

Area Committee involvement

18. The Chair of **Outer North East** Area Committee and local ward members have been consulted on the 10 designations. The Localism Officer is advising, signposting and supporting communities.
19. **Outer North East** and **Outer East** ward members are currently seeking to resolve boundary disputes in Aberford and in Barwick in Elmet and Scholes.
20. In **Inner South** Holbeck is making impressive progress and is seen by DCLG as a national exemplar for neighbourhood planning in the inner-city. The Area Support Team is supporting the local community in setting up the neighbourhood forum.
21. In **Inner North West** Headingley and Hyde Park have expressed an interest in preparing a neighbourhood plan. The Community Planner supports Area Committee on neighbourhood planning and planning issues generally.
22. In **Inner West** community representatives from New Wortley have expressed an interest in preparing a plan. Area Support Team to provide support.
23. In **Outer South** Rothwell, Oulton and Woodlesford and Carlton are all preparing to be designated a neighbourhood area/forum. Area Support Team will assist in setting up the forum.
24. In **Outer East** Kippax Parish Council is being assisted by the Area Support Team on plan preparation
25. In **Outer North West** the Area Committee has supported local interest in neighbourhood planning with a £500 grant to fund awareness building, publicity and consultation in Guiseley and Yeadon.
26. There is no interest so far in **Inner East, Inner North East** or **Outer West**

Clarifying the role for Area Committees

Area Chairs are asked to consider the questions posed in column three of the table below as to whether these are potential roles they would wish to consider and any associated resource implications.

Neighbourhood plan stage/task	Agreed role for Area Committee	Other questions for Area Chairs to consider as possible roles
1. Promotion of neighbourhood planning in inner-city/deprived areas	Support where interest has been expressed.	Actively promote awareness in inner-city areas?
2. Designation of Neighbourhood Area	Area Committee Chair consulted on timescales, issues and boundary.	Report to Area Committee prior to designation in non-parished areas?
3. Designation of Neighbourhood Forum	Area Chair consulted on application, Area Committee provide support, advice and mediation.	Report to Area Committee – early stage and on the application?
4. Preparation of neighbourhood plan	Area Support Team to advise on complimentary content.	Provide local-specific guidance on non-planning opportunities, partnerships and delivery?
5. Consultation on the draft plan (undertaken by local community)	Advise and support community consultation.	'Non-planning' feedback agreed at Area Committee?
6. Examination	Contribute to examiner's advisory report.	Report examination recommendations to Area Committee?
7. Referendum	No role defined.	Advise on timing, assist electoral services.
8. Delivery	No role defined.	Delivery of 'non-planning' content, partnership support.