

REPORT OF THE: Director, Neighbourhoods and Housing Department

MEETING: Inner North West Area Committee

DATE : 8th December 2005

SUBJECT : Area Manager's Report

Electoral Wards Affected :

Headingley

Hyde Park & Woodhouse

Kirkstall

Weetwood

Specific Implications For :

Ethnic Minorities

☐

Women

☐

Disabled People

☐

**Executive
Function**

x

**Council
Function**

☐

**Eligible
for Call In**

x

**Not eligible for Call In
(details contained in the report)**

☐

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

This report provides the Committee with an overview of significant current area management activities. It doesn't cover service activities which have been picked up in reports elsewhere on this agenda. The report focuses on:-

- the District Partnership – report from the members' seminar and possible priorities for the District partnership for 2006;
- the Town & District Centre regeneration scheme – progress with the Headingley scheme
- Little London – up to date position on the comprehensive regeneration proposals for Little London and a neighbourhood management proposal
- service issues – progress in tackling graffiti;
- Student Housing Group – update following the first meeting of the new group

1.0 District Partnership

- 1.1 ***District Plan*** - Key elements of the North West District Partnership Plan were outlined to the Area Committee at its meeting in June. The plan was approved by Executive Board and the Leeds Initiative Strategic Partnership in July this year. The North West District Plan is one of five district 'regeneration plans' developed by District Partnerships across the city, it has specific actions to address eight priority themes:

Harmonious and Safer Communities; Thriving Places; Environment; Transport; Learning; Enterprise and Economy; and Culture and Health.

- 1.2 **Board Meeting – 3rd October 2005** - Martin Drury (Chair of Leeds North West Primary Care Trust) took over as Chair of the Partnership for the year to October 2006. The board agreed its key priorities for the year which include.
- making demonstrable progress on 'Narrowing the Gap' through the delivery of the actions in the District Partnership Plan;
 - implementing an effective performance management process for monitoring the delivery of the plan;
 - developing the effectiveness of the Partnership board - this includes specific actions to ensure support and contributions to the delivery of the District Plan, better communication systems and working more closely with the Council's inner and outer area committees.
- 1.3 The board agreed proposals for a Health and Well-being Partnership Sub-Group. This group will lead on the delivery of Health and Well-being aspects of the District Plan as well as other partnership initiatives in this service area.
- 1.4 The Partnership Board also agreed proposals for Extended Schools Provision linked to Brudnell, Rose mount and Quarry Mount Primary Schools, and the Otley cluster of schools comprising Prince Henry's Grammar School, and All Saints, Bramhope, Westgate, Pool, Whartons, and Ashfield Primary Schools.
- 1.5 **Community Engagement and Service Delivery Conference - 15th July 2005** - The Partnership held its fourth major consultative conference in July focussing on community engagement and delivering the District Plan in local neighbourhoods. Over 70 delegates representing community, voluntary and public sector service providers from the area attended the event.
- 1.6 **Area Committee and Partnership Board Workshop – 28th October 2005** - Thirteen Elected Members from across North West Leeds met with the Partnership Board to discuss how the Area Committees and District Partnership could work more closely to tackle common priorities in the wedge. The District Plan was reviewed and a number of areas were identified for further work - these included:
- addressing strategic transportation gaps in the district now that Supertram has been cancelled, particularly in relation to the increasing pressures on the A660 and A65;
 - the need for the delivery of the District Plan to be effectively costed
 - how the Partnership will draw down additional funding both centrally and externally to deliver priorities;
 - the need to prioritise the Plan - focussing on and delivering what matter most first;
 - the need to develop a District Affordable Housing Strategy;
 - how the profile and of the Culture theme in the plan could be developed further to deliver on community priorities particularly in relation to tackling anti-social behaviour by young people.
- 1.7 A further Member/ Partnership Board workshop is scheduled for May/ June 2006

1.8 Examples of Project Work

- 1.8.1 **Fuel Poverty** - The District Partnership is developing an Affordable Warmth Strategy for the district. 23% of NW Leeds' population (14,000 householders) cannot afford to heat their homes to a 'decent' standard within the prescribed measure of 10% of income. The problems are significantly worse in: Hyde Park & Woodhouse Ward, amongst the over 65s, amongst disabled householders, those with long-term health conditions, and amongst low income groups. There were approximately 80 'excess winter mortalities' in North West Leeds last winter. A strategy and action plan is being developed between Leeds North West Homes, Leeds North West PCT, Social Services, Environmental Health and key voluntary sector service organisations. The strategy aims to: increase awareness of affordable warmth, identify and refer for support those living without affordable warmth, improve the energy efficiency of housing stock across all tenures with specific focus being given to vulnerable fuel poor households as a priority, and delivering a coherent package of support measures in partnership across a number of different service agencies. The strategy and action plan are due to be approved by the District Partnership at its next Board meeting in January.
- 1.8.2 **Regeneration framework** - the Area Management Team is developing a regeneration framework for the district which seeks to set out: where large-scale development is taking place; how current and planned developments and regeneration initiatives will impact on each other and upon services (now and in the future); and how connectivity between the themes of development and regeneration could be established e.g., Kirkstall Road/ A65 corridor/ Town and District Centres or the opening access to the riverside. The work is due to be completed by April 2006.

2.0 Town & District Centre scheme

- 2.1 The Headingley scheme which was given the 'amber' light by asset management group included, at an estimated cost of £200,000:-
- Improvements around the Arndale centre
 - A diagonal crossing at North Lane / Otley Road junction
 - Pavement improvements at North Lane
 - Improvements to the Rose garden
- 2.2 The feedback given to the area team about its bids was to be more ambitious, though not necessarily at extra cost.
- 2.3 Since the scheme was submitted, there has been an opportunity to think more strategically about how the resource could be used. At this stage the options being considered are:-
- To seek private sector contribution to any improvement around the Arndale centre;
 - To try to get the pavement improvements to North lane included as part of the current resurfacing project on North Lane as it is believed this was originally included;
 - To review the future use of the Headingley Primary School site with a view to securing the school building retention and the inclusion of services or facilities in the building that have some community benefit;
 - To review the future of the Headingley Community Centre and to try to secure the Headingley annex receipt for improvements to Headingley as part of this scheme.

- To look at the feasibility of creating a 'piazza' type area on North Lane linked to the rose garden improvement;
- Cost the diagonal crossing idea

The timetable for introducing improvements will depend on how adventurous the scheme becomes, but clearly if Headingley primary school becomes involved, no works would take place there until after the school closure.

2.4 The Committee's view of sought on these ideas to develop the scheme.

2.5 Officers are already in contact with members of the Central Headingley Strategy Group and will keep the group advised of the proposals.

3.0 Little London Regeneration and Neighbourhood Management

3.1 As the Committee will be aware, work has been taking place over a period of time to develop a comprehensive regeneration scheme for Little London. If a suitable scheme can be developed, funding in the region of £75m will be made available through the ODPM's Private Finance Initiative. The City Council has given its support to this scheme.

3.2 The comprehensive regeneration option could potentially include the following features:-

- All retained homes brought up to 'decency standard plus' including kitchens, bathrooms, heating, windows and doors to all properties and renewal of the first two items again after 15 years;
- Structural works where required to retained flat blocks, improvements to communal areas and external face-lifting;
- Potentially up to £14m environmental and community safety improvements;
- Three tower blocks to be disposed off to create home for sale, a high proportion of which would be affordable (up to £70,000) within the Council's guidelines;
- 40 maisonettes and 12 bedsits would be demolished;
- Two smaller tower blocks (Carltons, 100 flats) would be demolished;
- A minimum of 35 new houses and 90 new flats will be built, of which a minimum of 125 will be Council owned

3.3 Ward members are being briefed about the scheme on a regular basis with the Executive Member Neighbourhoods & Housing (Cllr Carter), and Lead Member Regeneration (Cllr Brett)

- 3.4 A task group which includes representatives of the Tenants and Residents Association has looked at this option, and has also looked at what potentially could happen without the PFI resource but by the ALMO using decency money to about £15m to pay for home improvements where needed on the estate to reach decency standard now. Whilst this approach is not necessarily the ALMO option, the LLTRA clearly see this as a viable Option 2 and probably do not appreciate that in practice the ALMO may also have to consider demolition or potential disposal of tower blocks in order to facilitate low cost home ownership and meet decency requirements to the rest of the estate.
- 3.5 The next stage for the Task Group is to consider the details of the formal consultation with tenants and residents that will take place in January.
- 3.6 Whilst the Tenants & Residents Association has been involved in the task group and its representatives have not expressed a preference, it is clear they have had reservations about the upheaval involved in a major scheme and are opposed in any case to any demolition. Some are opposed in principle to a PFI scheme. In addition the representatives are concerned that the consultation period in January may be too short and that the premature appearance of an article in the YEP concerning the scheme, has given the impression that the Council has already made its final decision. As a result, it is feared that LLTRA may withdraw from the Task Group. Should this be the case, the consultants employed by the ALMO, Banks of the Wear, will take responsibility for liaising with LLTRA.
- 3.7 In addition to proposals for physical improvements to the estate, a neighbourhood management proposal is being drawn up. Neighbourhood management is seen as essential to the sustainability of any physical regeneration scheme. Neighbourhood Management in Little London could include:-
- Community safety provision – policing, PCSOs, neighbourhood wardens;
 - Environmental management – estate management, caretaking, street scene and enforcement services;
 - Social / community services – voluntary and community sector provision, education welfare, social work, youth work, health provision, early years;
 - Education and access to employment initiatives.
- 3.8 Additional resources may be available through NRF to bring the neighbourhood management work together and possibly provide a shared office base if needed. Otherwise, it is about using existing resources more effectively. Discussions are, or will be, taking place with service providers and the voluntary sector about how to make this scheme work.
- 3.9 Neighbourhood management could be introduced whether or not there is a physical regeneration scheme for Little London. At present there is already a neighbourhood board which has an action plan dealing with current issues on the estate. However, long term, service delivery will be made easier if investment is made to improve the environment and security of the estate. It is also hoped that changing the face of the area will have a positive impact on people's lives and aspirations.

4.0 Children's Centre for Headingley

- 4.1 The Early Years Service is currently drawing up potential options for the location of a new children's centre in Headingley. Possible locations include:
- Headingley Primary School

- Beckett Park Primary School
- St Michael's Primary School

4.2 Formal consultation will take place through the Area Childcare Planning and Consultation Network to which ward members will be invited.

5.0 Service Issues

5.1 Graffiti – in response to a wave of graffiti affecting the central and south Headingley area a week-long blitz of the area will take place from 5th December. Five graffiti teams will be deployed in the Headingley Ward (Hyde Park part and the Arndale Centre) for one week to blitz the area of graffiti. During this week both plain clothed and uniformed police officers will provide additional surveillance in the area to try and catch the perpetrators. In addition Welton Road, Thornville Road and Headingley Arndale Centre have been selected for special measures which will continue after the week long blitz. PCSOs will inspect these streets daily to check for graffiti and all incidents will be reported directly to Streetscene, who will respond within 24 hours. Every incident will be logged in order to measure how quickly the graffiti returns and identify repeat 'taggers'. Data will be collated to establish patterns in incidents of graffiti. PCSOs will also monitor the CCTV footage from the cameras located on Headingley Arndale Centre, to identify any suspicious incidents that could be related to graffiti. City Services and West Yorkshire Police are currently drafting a leaflet to be delivered to properties in graffiti 'hotspots' to inform the public that graffiti is a criminal offence and to promote the telephone number for reporting offenders. A report will be prepared for the February Area Committee to provide Members with an update on the outcome of these actions.

6.0 Student Housing Group

6.1 The Student Housing Group has been reconvened, with a focus on the inner North West Leeds area and is chaired by the Area Committee Chair. The Group met on 29th November to discuss its terms of reference and membership, consider a proposal to undertake research into market change, and begin to consider priority issues for action. Comments on the terms of reference and the issues for action will be fed back to the Area Management Team.

6.2 It was agreed that the group would meet on a bi-monthly basis. Prior to the next meeting at the end of January, a steering group will be convened to agree the following:

- The detailed scope of the research brief, which Re'new has offered to undertake as part of the development of a Student Housing Strategy for the city;
- Priority actions within a wider action plan;
- Consider producing some baseline information for the area (population figures, crime statistics etc.) to inform the current position.

6.3 The next full meeting at the end of January will aim to ratify the terms of reference and agree a new Action Plan.

7.0 Woodsley Road Multi-cultural Centre

- 7.1 A request has been made to the Council by the management committee of the Woodsley Road Multi-cultural centre for the purchase of the centre. A meeting will take place with VAL and the management committee on 1st December to discuss this matter.
- 7.2 At this stage there are a number of issues which would need to be addressed before such a proposal could be considered:-
- Community centre review does not indicate a reason to dispose of this centre;
 - Recent investment in the centre for multi-cultural purposes, and the need to protect general use of the centre e.g. by the youth service
 - debts currently outstanding that would need to be paid off

The committee will be advised of future progress.

8.0 Recommendation

8.1 Members are asked for views on:-

- a) issues being tackled by the District Partnership and member involvement in the District Partnership;
- b) the proposed potential revisions to the Headingley Town and District Centre Scheme;
- c) the Little London Comprehensive Regeneration Scheme and Neighbourhood Management Proposals;

8.2 Members are asked to note:-

- a) new children's centre in Headingley area;
- b) progress with tackling recent increase in graffiti in Headingley;
- c) progress with the Student Housing Group;
- d) the request to sell Woodsley Road Multi-cultural Community Centre to the Management Committee.