



SCRUTINY BOARD (NEIGHBOURHOODS AND HOUSING)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds on
Wednesday, 11th April, 2007 at 10.00 am

A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board
in a Committee Room at 9.30 am

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

J Akhtar	-	Gipton and Harehills
S Armitage	-	Crossgates and Whinmoor
D Atkinson	-	Bramley and Stanningley
P Ewens	-	Hyde Park and Woodhouse
R Finnigan	-	Morley North
A Gabriel	-	Beeston and Holbeck
G Hyde	-	Killingbeck and Seacroft
M Phillips	-	Garforth and Swillington
R Pryke (Chair)	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
M Rafique	-	Chapel Allerton
D Schofield	-	Temple Newsam

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded on tape

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded.)</p>	
2			<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p>To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public.</p>	
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>To declare any personal / prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81 (3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 13 of the Members Code of Conduct.</p>	
5			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	
6			<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 7TH MARCH 2007</p> <p>To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th March 2007.</p> <p>(Copy attached.)</p>	1 - 6

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
7			<p>MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 5TH MARCH 2007</p> <p>To receive and note the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th March 2007.</p> <p>(Copy attached.)</p>	7 - 10
8			<p>MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD - 9TH FEBRUARY 2007</p> <p>To receive and note the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.</p> <p>(Copy attached.)</p>	11 - 20
9			<p>MEMBERS' QUESTIONS</p> <p>To receive the report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development on the opportunity to raise questions and issues with the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing.</p> <p>(Report attached.)</p>	21 - 22
10			<p>DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS</p> <p>(Report to follow.)</p>	
11			<p>AREA DELIVERY PLANS</p> <p>(Report to follow.)</p>	
12	Beeston and Holbeck		<p>REGENERATION IN BEESTON HILL AND HOLBECK - SCRUTINY INQUIRY FINAL REPORT</p> <p>To consider the final report concerning the Board's Inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck.</p> <p>(Report attached.)</p>	23 - 36

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
13			<p>ANNUAL REPORT</p> <p>To consider the report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting the draft of the Board's contribution to the Scrutiny Board Annual Report.</p> <p>(Report attached.)</p>	37 - 42
14			<p>DEMOS REPORT ON BRINGING IT HOME - COMMUNITY BASED APPROACHES TO COUNTER-TERRORISM</p> <p>To consider the report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing providing an overview of a research report published by Demos in December 2006 entitled Bringing it Home – Community Based Approaches to Counter-Terrorism.</p> <p>(Report attached.)</p>	43 - 52

Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (NEIGHBOURHOODS AND HOUSING)

WEDNESDAY, 7TH MARCH, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor R Pryke in the Chair

Councillors D Atkinson, P Ewens,
A Gabriel, G Hyde, M Phillips and
D Schofield

93 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared personal / prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81 (3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 13 of the Members Code of Conduct:

Councillor Gabriel – declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Supporting People Programme) as a relative was receiving support from the service (Minute No. 101 refers.)

Councillor Hyde – declared a personal interest as a Director of East Leeds Homes ALMO (Minute No. 98 and 100 refers.)

94 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Armitage, Finnigan and Rafique.

95 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 7TH FEBRUARY 2007

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th February 2007 be approved as a correct record.

96 MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 5TH FEBRUARY 2007

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th February 2007 be noted.

97 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD - 24TH JANUARY 2007

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 24th January 2007 be noted.

98 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which afforded Scrutiny Board Members the opportunity to put questions to the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing, Councillor J L Carter, and the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing, Neil Evans.

To summarise, the discussion focussed on the following topics:

- The recent relocation of the Homelessness Advice Service to new offices on Great George Street and the hope that any disruption would be kept to a minimum;

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 11th April, 2007

- Short staffing / vacancies in the Homelessness Service and moves being made to alleviate these pressures and the affect on service provision;
- Whether recent publicity surrounding successful prosecutions for anti-social behaviour in Bramley was reported wholly accurately;
- The effect of the implementation of the new licensing laws upon crime statistics;
- Whether the performance indicator target for reducing crime in Leeds by 35% was achievable given that West Yorkshire Police had now reduced their target to 25%, and the possibility for altering the figure;
- The moves being made to tackle the displacement of criminal activity in East Leeds caused by the crackdown on known criminals;
- The scope of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in preventing youths from simply moving from one area to another to cause disturbance;
- The need for ASBO's to be widely publicised to the local community in order to maximise their effectiveness and the accompanying restrictions on this;
- The importance of Police attendance at Neighbourhood Watch meetings in order to increase community confidence;
- The possibilities for scrutiny of the Police arising out of the forthcoming Crime and Disorder Act;
- Forthcoming plans to reduce the number of Area Managers from five to three in line with the recent restructure of the ALMOs and disappointment that this news had not been more widely disseminated more quickly, particularly to Area Committee Chairs;
- Assurances that there was to be no change to the funding set aside for decency works by the Authority.

With reference to the discussions surrounding the target to reduce crime by 35%, whilst recognising that the high target was unlikely to be met, the Executive Member stated that the Board was ideally placed to investigate the performance against this target to assist the Executive Board and Safer Leeds in identifying ways of maximising the progress in reducing crime. Executive Board would welcome the conclusions and recommendations from the Board around this crucial area of performance.

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the discussion be noted.

(Councillor Gabriel joined the meeting at 10:15 am during consideration of this item.)

99 DEMOS REPORT ON BRINGING IT HOME - COMMUNITY BASED APPROACHES TO COUNTER-TERRORISM

The Chair sought Members permission to defer consideration of this item until the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That consideration of the report be deferred.

100 THE LEEDS HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing submitted a report concerning the Housing Investment Programme (HIP.) The report sought to improve Members understanding of the HIP and identified the key pressures and challenges facing the authority and its partners in sustaining investment in the programme that responded to corporate objectives.

The Board heard that the report gave a summary of the history of the programme in Leeds, including how practices and funding have changed over recent years. The current spending programmes centred around the ALMO decency scheme, three separate PFI schemes in Swarcliffe and Little London (which had been granted funding) and Holbeck and Beeston Hill (currently on a first reserve list having failed in the first bid in late 2006) and work around the Single Regional Housing Pot and the Housing Market Renewal Fund (involving acquisitions / demolitions, private sector decent homes standard and group repair schemes.)

Neil Evans, Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing, and Ernie Gray, Housing Strategy Manager, Neighbourhoods and Housing, attended the meeting to present the report and respond to Members questions and comments.

The Board discussed the following issues arising out of the report:

- Whether the target for achieving the decent homes standard was still 2010 in Leeds, despite a recent shift by the Government;
- The need to distinguish between the separate areas of Beeston and Beeston Hill when discussing regeneration initiatives;
- The issue of whether private owner-occupiers in areas targeted for housing market renewal works should be compelled to participate in decency works.

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED –

- a.) That the contents of the report be noted;
- b.) That a further report be submitted to the Board in December 2007 to review progress in terms of delivering the various programme schemes and obtaining further investment.

101 THE LEEDS SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing presented a report briefing Members on the Supporting People programme in Leeds. The Board heard that the programme was established in 2003 as part of a national plan to provide commissioning and funding for supported housing services for vulnerable people to enable them to continue to live independently in the community. The programme took the form of a wide range of services, from

providing wardens in sheltered accommodation to staff for temporary hostel accommodation.

Members were informed that the programme had a limited cash budget and had been subject to significant cuts in grant allocation in recent years. However, Officers were keen to highlight the success and achievements of the scheme, despite these financial constraints.

Neil Evans, Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing, and Bridget Emery, Head of Strategic Commissioning, Neighbourhoods and Housing, attended the meeting to present the report and respond to Members questions and comments.

The Board briefly discussed the following issues in relation to the report:

- Whether current staffing levels within the team were affected by sick leave and whether this had any affect on service provision;
- The progress being made on the recently launched pilot scheme to provide floating units of housing support aimed at vulnerable older home owners;
- The fact that services provided by the Supporting People team had actually increased following the withdrawal of the use of Council-owned temporary hostel accommodation in favour of privately owned facilities;
- The improved services provided at the new Housing Advice Centre which had recently opened on Great George Street.

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

102 MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided Members with monitoring information in relation to the previous Inquiry into Housing Conditions. The inquiry had been undertaken during the previous Municipal Year by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.

Members were reminded that provision was made for the Board to monitor the implementation of any agreed actions and recommendations on a six-monthly basis.

The Board requested that Neil Evans, Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing, ask the department to give serious consideration to granting Priority Extra status to tenants in larger properties who wished to downsize, so as to free up more family housing.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

103 WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which detailed the current work programme of the Board, including scheduled and unscheduled items.

Appended to the report for Members' information was a copy of the Forward Plan for March to June 2007

It was agreed that the DEMOS report would be reported to the next meeting for consideration.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and the revisions to the Work Programme be noted.

104 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 11th April 2007 at 10:00 am (pre-meeting for Board Members at 9:30 am.)

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5TH MARCH, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor G Driver in the Chair
Councillors B Anderson, J Bale, B Cleasby,
P Grahame, T Leadley and R Pryke
Apologies Councillor B Lancaster

81 Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Councillor Anderson – General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 – personal interest in his capacity as a Director of Leeds West/North West Homes ALMO (Agenda Items 8 and 12, Min No 83 refers)

Councillor Grahame - General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 – personal interest in her capacity as a resident of Swarcliffe (Swarcliffe PFI Scheme) and as Chair of Swardale Swarcliffe Eastwood Residents Association (Agenda Items 8 and 12, Minute No 83 refers)

Councillor Bale – Request for Scrutiny – Disability Equality Scheme – personal interest in his capacity as a joint carer for his disabled daughter (Agenda Item 7, Minute No 82 refers)

Councillor Leadley – (a) Request for Scrutiny – Disability Equality Scheme – personal interest in his capacity as a relative of a disabled person (Agenda Item 7, Minute No 82 refers) and (b) Planning Performance – Final Inquiry Report – personal interest in his capacity as a Member of Plans Panel West and the Development Plan Panel (Agenda Item 11, Minute No 86 refers)

Councillor Cleasby – (a) Planning Performance – Final Inquiry Report – personal interest in his capacity as a Member of Development Plan Panel (Agenda Item No 11, Minute No 86 refers) and (b) Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, 9th February 2007 in his capacity as a Member of the Leeds Bradford Airport Consultative Committee (Agenda Item 12, Minute No 87 refers).

82 Minutes - 29th January and 5th February 2007

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 29th January and 5th February 2007 be confirmed as correct records.

83 Request for Scrutiny - Disability Equality Scheme

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 2nd April, 2007

The Committee considered a request from a Leeds resident, Mr Doug Paulley, for an inquiry into why the City Council had not produced a formal Disability Equality Scheme under the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, with separate policies covering the various equality strands of race, disability, gender, religion and faith, sexual orientation and age. Other local authorities had done so, but Leeds had instead chosen to adopt an all-encompassing Equality and Diversity Strategy 2006-2008. Mr Paulley's request also made reference to other alleged defects in the Council's approach to the subject – lack of evidence gathering and insufficient involvement of disabled people in producing the current Strategy document, action plan and performance monitoring.

In addition to hearing verbal evidence from Mr Paulley and Ms Jill Jones, who accompanied him, the Committee had before them a report from the Chief Officer (Executive Support) and also took evidence from Anne McMaster and Pauline Ellis of the Council's Equality Unit.

The Committee concluded that whilst it accepted that the Council's current Equality and Diversity Strategy met the Council's legal obligations, it could not at this stage make a judgement as to whether the Council's current approach, involving an all-encompassing Strategy, could be regarded as best practice compared, say, to the Disability Equality Scheme suggested by Mr Paulley and Ms Jones. The Committee also wished to see the performance indicators and timescales associated with the Action Plan for the current Strategy.

The Committee therefore agreed that a further report was required in April, which would include information on the practices adopted by other comparable local authorities, and would also show in greater detail the Action Plan, performance indicators and timescales associated with the current Strategy, in order that the Committee was in a better position to judge whether or not further scrutiny was regarded as necessary.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted, and Mr Paulley and Ms Jones be thanked for attending the meeting.
- (b) That a further report be submitted to the April meeting containing information relating to the approach of other similar local authorities to this subject, further explanation of the reasons behind Leeds' approach and further information in relation to the Action Plan, performance indicators and timescales to assist the Committee to form an opinion regarding best practice
- (c) That on receipt of this further report the Committee consider whether or not to recommend to its successor Committee to pursue an Inquiry in the new municipal year

84 General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 - Month 9 Update Report

Further to Minute No 46, 6th November 2006, the Committee considered a financial monitoring report submitted by the Director of Corporate Services, first submitted to the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.

Alan Gay, Director of Corporate Services and Helen Mylan, Corporate Services Department, attended the meeting and responded to Members' queries and comments. In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- The continuing trend for year on year increases in expenditure on Social Services , and the monitoring process
- The under-estimate of the take-up by landlords of the HMO Licensing scheme
- The current financial situation of Roseville Enterprises
- Various matters included in the separate report on the HRA budget for 2007/08, including the increases in ALMO management fees, service charges for blocks of flats, additional costs in respect of Little London PFI scheme and the current surplus in respect of the Swarcliffe PFI scheme, and the effects of any possible re-financing scheme. Councillor Pryke stated an intention to pick up some matters at the Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing) and Councillor Grahame indicated that she would be pursuing the latter point separately outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

85 CPA - Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In the light of the recent CPA announcement regarding the Council's drop from a four star to a three star rated authority, the Committee had invited Steve Clough, the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement, to the meeting to discuss whether revisions to the performance monitoring framework, recently adopted by the OSC, required amendment. The Committee also discussed the CPA service assessment framework in general.

The Committee concluded that whilst the framework for quarterly reporting on Corporate Plan indicators which measure the delivery of the Council's priorities, together with any performance indicators which could impact on the Council's CPA score, was robust and should be continued, this could be enhanced by 'in-year' statements on predicted CPA scores. This would provide an opportunity for scrutiny to make appropriate interventions.

RESOLVED – That the existing performance monitoring arrangements adopted by this Committee be maintained, but be enhanced by timely 'in-year' predictions on CPA scores.

86 Development of Information Management in Leeds

Further to Minute 77, 5th February 2007, the Committee considered the draft final report of its review of the development of information management in Leeds and progress in implementing the recommendations of the April 2006 Inquiry Report of the Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services).

RESOLVED –

- (a) That subject to the addition of an extra recommendation regarding the proposed establishment of a Lead Member with specific responsibility for Information and Knowledge Management within the Council, the draft final report be approved.
- (b) That OSC receive six monthly update reports on this subject, in order to monitor progress.

87 Planning Performance - Final Report

Further to Minute 74, 29th January 2007, the Committee considered the draft final report of its Inquiry into Planning Performance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the draft final report be approved;
- (b) That a formal response to the Committee's recommendations be requested from the Chief Planning Officer;
- (c) That OSC receive regular update reports on this subject, in order to monitor progress.

88 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the Committee's current work programme, updated to reflect decisions taken at previous meetings, together with a relevant extract of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and a copy of the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.

RESOLVED – That subject to any changes necessary as a result of today's meeting, the Committee's work programme be approved and accepted.

89 Dates and Times of Next Meeting

Monday 2nd April 2007, at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting at 9.30 am)

EXECUTIVE BOARD

FRIDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, R Brett,
J L Carter, R Harker, P Harrand, M Harris,
J Procter, S Smith, K Wakefield and
J Blake

Councillor Blake – Non-Voting Advisory Member

169 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of the exempt information so designated as follows:

- (a) Appendix 1 of the report referred to in minute 178 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) and on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because disclosure to the public would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Council.
- (b) Appendix 1 to the report referred to in minute 180 under the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the appendix contains commercially sensitive information which if disclosed may prejudice the future negotiations of the contract for the project.
- (c) Appendix 1 to the report referred to in minute 185 under the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules 10.4(3) on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the information relates to the financial and business affairs of the tenderer and disclosure of the figures would be prejudicial to the competitive tendering exercise.

170 Declaration of Interests

Councillors D Blackburn, J L Carter, Harker, Harrand and Smith declared personal interests in the item relating to Leeds City Varieties Music Hall (minute 178) as Board members of Leeds Grand Theatre.

Councillor Blake declared personal interests in the items relating to Leeds City Varieties Music Hall (minute 178) as a Board Member of Leeds Grand

Theatre and Otley Prince Henry Grammar School (minute 185) as a governor and a parent of a pupil at the school.

171 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th January 2007 be approved.

CENTRAL AND CORPORATE

172 Council Change Programme - Phase 1 Implementation

Further to minute 54 of the meeting held on 20th September 2006 the Chief Executive submitted a report updating Members on the work progressed to date and on proposals that are intended for implementation on or around the 1 April 2007.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the remit, role and purpose of the proposed new director posts, as detailed in paragraph 3.2.3 of the report and as set out in appendix 1 of the report be endorsed.
- (b) That the proposals in respect of revised managerial arrangements for learning and leisure with effect from 1 April 2007 be endorsed and the proposed realignment of responsibilities as outlined in paragraph 3.4.2 of the report be noted.
- (c) That the proposals in respect of revised managerial arrangements for social services from 1 April 2007 as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report be endorsed.
- (d) That the intention to establish a new post of Chief Officer (Highways) with revised delegation arrangements as detailed in paragraph 3.7 of the report be noted.
- (e) That the proposal for revised leadership arrangements for central and corporate functions as proposed in paragraph 3.8 of the report be endorsed.
- (f) That the proposals for the Officer Employment Rules to be amended to provide for appointments to all posts defined as deputy director or above to be made by a committee or sub-committee of the Council, involving at least one member of the Executive be endorsed.

173 Local Area Agreement - Mid Year Review and Refresh

The Chief Officer (Executive Support) submitted a report informing members of the key findings and outcome of the review of the Local Area Agreement for the period 1 April 2006 to 30 September 2006 and seeking endorsement to the amendments to the Local Area Agreement from April 2007. The report also highlighted anticipated future changes to the role of Local Area Agreements in public sector delivery.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress to date on delivering against Leeds' Local Area Agreement be noted.
- (b) That the revisions of the Local Area Agreement to be implemented from April 2007 onwards be endorsed.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 14th March, 2007

- (c) That a further report be submitted in due course outlining plans for the development of a revised Local Area Agreement to be implemented from April 2008.

174 Leeds Learning Network Capital Scheme

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report seeking approval to inject £4.6m into the capital programme in respect of the new contract for the provision of the Leeds Learning Network.

RESOLVED – That the partially funded injection of £4.6m and the incurring of expenditure be approved.

175 General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 - Month 9 Update Report

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report setting out the Council's financial health position for 2006/07 after nine months of the financial year, in respect of the revenue budget for general funds services including expenditure and income to date compared to the approved budget.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the authority be noted.
- (b) To recommend to Council the budget adjustments detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
- (c) That the transfer of the projected surplus to general reserves be approved.

(The matters referred to in part (b) of this minute, being matters referred to Council were not eligible for Call In).

176 Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2007/2008

(A) Revenue Budget 2007/2008

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report on the Council's budget for 2007/08 following detailed consideration of services requirements and taking account of the Local Government Finance Settlement. The report indicated that the budget would result in a Band D Council Tax of £1,016.16 for consideration by Council.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That Council be recommended to approve the Revenue Estimates for 2007/08 totalling £505.223m, as detailed and explained in the submitted report and accompanying papers, including a 4.5% increase in the Leeds' element of Council Tax.
- (ii) That the development of medium term realignment proposals as detailed in 10.7 of the report be approved.

(B) Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/2008

The Directors of Corporate Services and Neighbourhoods and Housing submitted a joint report on the Housing Revenue Account budget and ALMO management fee distribution for 2007/08.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the Council be recommended to approve the budget and that, in order to meet the requirement of the Department of Communities and Local Government average rent increases be kept to 5%, pro rata reductions be applied to the rent restructuring figure of 7.3% in respect of all tenants' rents.
- (ii) That the Council be recommended to approve that service charges be increased in line with average rent rises and that the charges for garage rents be increased to £5.25 per week.
- (iii) That the Council be recommended to approve that the reserve of £2m established to cover the risk of not meeting the subsidy trigger be released and a virement of £1.369m be actioned to reflect the increase in Major Repairs Allowance as detailed in paragraph 3.2.3 of the report.

(C) Capital Programme 2006/07 to 2010/11

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report setting out the updated capital programme for 2006/2011.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the Council be recommended to approve the capital programme as attached to the submitted report.
- (ii) That the Director of Corporate Services be authorised to manage, monitor and control scheme progress and commitments to ensure that the programme is affordable.

(D) Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statements

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2007/08, and provided an update on the implementation of the 2006/07 strategy.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the initial treasury strategy for 2007/08 as set out in Section 3.2 of the report be approved and that the review of the 2006/07 strategy and operations set out in Section 3.1 be noted.
- (ii) That the council be recommended to set borrowing limits for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 as set out in Section 3.3 of the report.
- (iii) That the Council be recommended to set the treasury management indicators for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/2010 as set out in Section 3.4 of the report.
- (iv) That the Council be recommended to set the investment limits for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/2010 as set out in Section 3.5 of the report.
- (v) That the Council be recommended to reaffirm the Treasury Management Policy Statement and note the amendments to Section 7: "Approved instruments and Organisations for Investments" as attached at Appendix C of the report.
- (vi) That the officers who have worked on the preparation of the budget documents referred to in this minute be informed of the thanks of this Board.

(The matters referred to in parts A(i), B(i),(ii) and (iii), C(i) and D(ii),(iii), (iv) and (v) of this minute, being matters reserved to Council were not eligible for Call In).

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillor Wakefield required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions contained in this minute).

DEVELOPMENT

177 Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan

The Directors of Development and Corporate Services submitted a joint report seeking Executive Board approval to the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2007/08 which was appended to the report.

RESOLVED – That the council's Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan be approved.

LEISURE

178 Leeds City Varieties Music Hall

The Directors of Development and Learning and Leisure submitted a joint report providing an update on the refurbishment project for the City Varieties.

Following consideration of appendix 1 to the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That an injection of £8,835,000 into the Capital Programme be authorised and the proposed inclusion of £9,200,000 in the Capital Programme 2006/07 to 2010/2011 for the City Varieties Music Hall refurbishment project be noted.
- (b) That additional expenditure of £170,000 for the preparation of the Stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund be authorised.
- (c) That expenditure of £495,000 for the preparation of the Stage 2 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund provided the Stage 1 bid is successful be authorised.
- (d) That the submission of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £3,000,000 grant towards the cost of the refurbishment project be authorised.
- (e) That the proposed funding contribution of £1,000,000 by the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd be noted.
- (f) That officers be instructed to seek acquisition of the third party property, the purchase price not to exceed the estimated upper limit valuation figure quoted in the report, with any purchase being funded in the first instance through prudential borrowing subject to the cost of this being containable within existing revenue budgets.

179 Policy on the Safety Management of Open Water

The Director of Learning and Leisure submitted a report informing Members of the outcome of the Coroner's Inquest into the tragic drowning of 2 teenagers at Roundhay Park, the subsequent actions regarding water health and safety issues and to seek approval of the Policy on the Safety Management of Open Water which was attached as Appendix 3.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Policy on the Safety Management of Open Water be approved and adopted and that Directors be requested to implement the Policy as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report.
- (b) That the 'Wise up to Water' lifesaving Water Safety Project for young people be endorsed.
- (c) That provision within the Capital Programme to ensure that the result of the remaining risk assessments can be implemented be approved.

180 Approval of New Leaf Leisure Centres Outline Business Case

Further to minute 283 of the meeting held on the 18th May 2005 the Director of Learning and Leisure submitted a report seeking Members' approval for the Outline Business Case and its submission to the Department for Culture Media and Sport.

Following consideration of Appendix 1 to the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of this report be noted and the submission of the Outline Business Case for the new Leaf Leisure Centres Project, subject to the approval of the PPP/PFI Coordination Board be endorsed.
- (b) That the combining of the New Leaf Leisure Centres Project under the Education PFI Project Board for the project in accordance with paragraph 9 of the report be approved.
- (c) That the delivery of the New Leaf Leisure Centres PFI project through the Local Education Partnership as described in paragraph 8.2 of the report be approved.
- (d) That the creation of a new East Leeds leisure centre be pursued through the EASEL proposals.
- (e) That discussions with DCMS be instigated to seek the utilisation of additional PFI credits as identified in the report for the development of a new replacement leisure centre at Holt Park.

181 Governance Arrangements for Leeds Sports Trust

The Chief Legal Services Officer submitted a report drawing to the attention of Executive Board the present position with regard to the governance arrangements for the proposed Leeds Sports Trust (the Trust) and to consider suitable arrangements for the appointment of trustees, including the Chair.

- (a) That Mr John Davies be appointed to act as Chair of the Shadow Trust and thereafter as Chair of the Trust until its first Annual General Meeting.
- (b) That the intention not to offer payment to the trustees be noted.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillor Wakefield required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions contained in this minute).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

182 Childrens Trust Arrangements - Update on progress

Further to minute 54(b) of the meeting held on 20th September 2006 the Director of Children's Services submitted a report updating Members on the progress on these arrangements, including the creation of the Director of Children's Services Unit. The report also set out more detail about these new ways of working to improve services for children and families.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That progress on matters agreed at the meeting on 20 September 2006 in relation to children's trust arrangements, including the creation of the Director of Children's Services Unit be noted.
- (b) That the proposal for the accountability and intervention framework and hosting arrangements be endorsed.
- (c) That the nature of the work to be undertaken in coming months be noted and that further regular updates be provided.

183 General Surestart Grant - Extended Schools Capital 2006/08

The Director of Learning and Leisure submitted a report seeking authority to incur expenditure of £1,508.9k on other payments from the General Surestart Grant – Extended Schools 06/08 parent scheme 13178.

RESOLVED – That the incurring of expenditure of £1,508.9k on other payments from the General Surestart Grant – Extended Schools 06/08 parent scheme 13178 be authorised.

184 General Surestart Grant - Sustainability Capital 2006/08

The Director of Learning and Leisure submitted a report seeking authority to incur expenditure of £537.3k on other payments from the General Surestart Grant – Sustainability 06/08 parent scheme 13179.

RESOLVED – That the incurring of expenditure of £537.3k on other payments from the General Surestart Grant – Sustainability 06/08 parent scheme 13179 be authorised.

185 Otley Prince Henrys Grammar School - Provision of Specialist Science Accommodation

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report updating Members on the proposed scheme to provide a new build specialist science

block at Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School, and seeking approval to proceed with the scheme.

Following consideration of appendix 1 to the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposal to proceed with the scheme in respect of the scheme to provide additional specialist science accommodation at Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School be approved.
- (b) That the incurring of additional expenditure as detailed in the exempt appendix in respect of the above from Capital Scheme No 12051/SC1 be authorised.

ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

186 Commissioning Plan for Day Services for Older People

The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report recommending a programme of detailed work, local consultation and involvement with ward members to finalise the details of the new service model and to undertake its implementation.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That a programme to develop further and introduce the new service model which is outlined in this report be agreed. This will follow a full consultation process, more detailed work and the development of implementation plans.
- (b) That further reports, following consultation with ward members and the development of locality implementation plans, outlining the progress made be submitted to the Board.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillor Wakefield required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions contained in this minute).

CITY SERVICES

187 Progress Update on Integrated Waste Strategy

The Director of City Services submitted a report providing Members with an update on key areas of progress in implementing the Integrated Waste Strategy for Leeds 2005-2035.

RESOLVED – That the contents of this report and the progress to date on the implementation of the Integrated Waste Strategy be noted.

188 Establishment of a Leaders Waste Strategy Review Party

The Director of City Services submitted a report seeking approval for the establishment of a Group Leaders' forum to review the implementation of the

approved Integrated Waste Strategy for Leeds 2005-2035 and to advise the Executive Board.

RESOLVED – That a Working Party comprised of the leaders for the time being of the political groups represented on the Council, or their nominees be established for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the approved waste strategy and tendering advice to the Executive Board.

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND HOUSING

189 East and South East Leeds Regeneration Area

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing submitted a report seeking approval of the headline Regeneration Programme for the EASEL Joint Venture and advising members of whether Bellway had met the first key milestone of the Additional Negotiation Period and also an assessment of what progress Bellway had made regarding fulfilling the requirements of the longstop date of 28th February 2007 when the EASEL regeneration project procurement process will be ended.

RESOLVED –

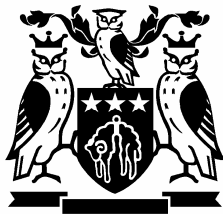
- (a) That the headline Regeneration Programme that the Council is seeking to achieve through the EASEL Regeneration Project and the key interventions set out in Sections 3 and 4 of the report which will form the basis of the Regeneration Plan for the first 5 years be agreed.
- (b) That the commitment of sufficient resources to fund the Regeneration Plan be agreed in principle.
- (c) That the progress that has been made in relation to completing the tasks that require to be completed as part of the Additional Negotiation Period be noted.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 13th February 2007

LAST DATE FOR CALL IN: 20th February 2007 (5.00 pm)

(Scrutiny Support will notify relevant Directors of any items Called In by 12 noon on 21st February 2007).

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Originator: S Winfield

Tel: 24 74707

Report of the Head of Scrutiny Support and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing)

Date: 11th March 2007

Subject: Members' Questions

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Members of the Board have requested an opportunity to raise a number of issues with a representative of the Neighbourhoods and Housing department at this Scrutiny Board meeting.
- 1.2 This is the last meeting of the municipal year and should any issues arise during this session that Members feel should be subject to further scrutiny, the Board may suggest carry over items to be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Board in the new municipal year.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are requested to identify any issues for further scrutiny following the discussion with the departmental representative, which can be put forward for the next Board to consider.

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Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck

Scrutiny Inquiry Report

Introduction and Scope



Introduction

Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing) agreed to undertake an inquiry into the regeneration activities taking place in Beeston Hill and Holbeck. It was felt that whilst the regeneration of this area would clearly be taking place over a period of years, the PFI bid attached to this project was time constrained and would benefit from the open discussion provided by the Scrutiny inquiry. Members were pleased to have been able to have input into this at an early stage in the process. Given that such a regeneration project is a major long term approach, involving different phases and intending to influence long term trends, we accept that this report can only be an interim one. We hope that this project will continue to be on the future work programme of the relevant Board, particularly as there are financial developments yet to be finalised (either through PFI or alternative potential funds).



Scope

Whilst our initial interest was in the PFI process, we deliberately kept the scope of the inquiry broad to allow us to make comments on the strategic direction, past, present and future of the area as a whole, as well as looking at investment in housing and the impact Single Regeneration Budget money has had on the area. We also wished to discuss the partnership infrastructure and the role of the private sector.

Towards the end of the inquiry, it became apparent that the PFI bid was not initially successful and we acknowledge the disappointment shared by all those involved in the project. However, we were also heartened to hear that the Government considered the bid a high priority for any future round of bidding and that further developments on this may be reported in the Summer. One of our recommendations, however, errs on the side of caution and we recommend that contingency plans be discussed in terms of where alternative funding may be accessed should the PFI credits not materialise.

We acknowledge that regeneration is more than the built environment and that issues such as community safety and youth engagement are just as important. We have not intended to underplay these areas, however, projects such as Signpost, working with families involved in anti-social behaviour, have been thoroughly

Introduction and Scope

covered in a previous inquiry and we are discussing the Safer Leeds Prostitution Strategy separately. Clearly, all strands of the Council's activity impacts the area and the regeneration activities and we have had to restrict our discussions to the major themes of housing, jobs and skills and the PFI bid.

Our inquiry included a visit to the area which showed us the detail of what had developed to date and what was part of the future vision for the area. We were particularly struck by the importance of the housing stock, having seen an example of the outdated back to back terraced housing, which we felt did not provide adequate accommodation. In contrast, we were impressed by the visual impact of the group repair improvements, which was significant.

Our inquiry attempted to take into account a range of views from stakeholders, including the private rented sector. We are grateful for the time both officers and external witnesses gave to the inquiry.

This inquiry has been a 'health check' of our ability to inject resources in a focused way and to engage in renewal activities with partners in an area at risk of long term decline. Our overall conclusion at this stage of the project is that the regeneration of this area of Leeds demands our wholehearted support, particularly as we, as a Council, hold the narrowing the gap agenda as one of our highest priorities.

The regeneration of Beeston Hill and Holbeck must be key to realising this aim.



Conclusions and Recommendations



The impact of housing

1. During our discussions and our visit to Beeston Hill and Holbeck, it has become apparent that the physical regeneration of the area depends largely on the quality and type of accommodation provided there. We understand that traditionally there has been a transient element to the population, catered for by private rented accommodation. Whilst we are not suggesting that this in itself is detrimental to an area, we believe that there is a distinct advantage for a community to have a large proportion of permanent residents who have a stake in the area's success. We believe the encouraging of good quality, but affordable, accommodation, meeting the needs of local people across all tenures is key to supporting a thriving community. We noted that a wider range of housing types need to be constructed in the area.
2. We learned that the private rented sector plays an important role in this area due to low income levels or benefit dependency precluding wider home ownership, and the near-absence of very small flats for purchase. Even the recently-proposed chance to acquire equity stakes for as little as 10% of a property's value would cause little notice here. Evidence from the housing sector in Leeds and elsewhere indicates that the government's refusal to control

rents, and its restrictions on housing benefits, have exacerbated difficulties for tenants with lower incomes seen since the introduction of shorthold tenancies in 1988. A growing proportion of local residents have no security of tenure, and face severe limitations on the quality of their accommodation if they lose employment and become dependant on housing benefit. Unemployment in both Beeston and Holbeck and City and Hunslet wards is increasing

3. The evidence we received suggested that the back to back terraced properties were an issue and that research and action planning on dealing with this type of inadequate accommodation is being applied city wide by the Department in association with re'new. We noted that some back to back terraced housing has been demolished and we learned that other streets had been identified for acquisition and demolition. One of these sites is in the process of being redeveloped to provide 7 new family homes – a project being led by Unity Housing Association. We initially expressed concerns regarding the cost of this project and studied in detail the breakdown of the £1.8m price tag. We understand that the increase in the cost of acquiring properties is an issue, though it does seem to us that the gain of 7 new homes is at a high cost. If that level of cost is found from later experience to be an

Conclusions and Recommendations



average or minimum cost of replacing what are, frankly, slums, expectations of the entire regeneration initiative in this area will of necessity have to be scaled down.

4. We have recognised that as property has gained in value generally, the opportunity to buy blocks of housing for development purposes is reduced.
5. Whilst discussing the built environment, we have also seen first hand the visual impact of the Shaftesbury House which will, as long as it remains empty and unused, be an eyesore to the local population. We are aware that contracts have been signed for private development along the lines of an innovative environmentally friendly project of 172 units.

Recommendation 1:
Shaftesbury House be used as a flagship for promoting the regeneration of the area.

6. We noted the impact that the group repair scheme has had on individual streets. We believe this kind of scheme, whilst being part of a wider strategy, provides an immediate 'lift' to a street and gives encouragement to residents, at least in the short term, that the area is being regenerated. During our discussions we were aware of the value of the 'quick wins' to maintain confidence in the regeneration

scheme and its momentum. We do urge the department to recognise, however, that those residents due to be included in group repair projects at a much later date, may become disillusioned if visible progress is not made. We suggest that communication is the key to maintaining interest and commitment to the regeneration of the area. We believe that residents recognise the restrictions in budget and the need to be methodical in programming improvement works, however, those with the longest wait before being included should be kept up to date with progress around the area.

Recommendation 2:
That clear and regular communication is offered to residents currently not included in regeneration projects in order to keep them informed of progress and the likely timescale of future schemes and that the strategy for achieving this is reported back to the Board.

7. We noted the improvements planned by Leeds South Homes to their stock, however, we recognise that some of the decency works were dependent on the success of the PFI bid. We await the outcome of discussions around contingency planning now that it is known the PFI bid has not been initially successful.

Conclusions and Recommendations



8. We were pleased to note that complementary work has also been undertaken by Leeds Federated Housing Association, though it is disappointing that the Housing Corporation will no longer be funding whole house improvements.
9. We were particularly grateful for the opportunity to talk to a private landlord with a number of properties in the area. A number of issues were raised during this discussion, including the need to challenge landlords who do not keep properties properly maintained and the need to deal quickly with empty properties which contribute to a deteriorating environment, although we received figures that showed a significant improvement in bringing empty properties back into use. We understand a valuable forum has been established under the Beeston Hill Landlords Accreditation Scheme, aimed at partnership working and enforcement activity against poor landlords. It was noted that many landlords (particularly with the rising number of private landlords in the area) remain outside the scheme. Whilst the Council has introduced a licensing process for landlords of houses of multiple occupation, there has been the suggestion that in Beeston Hill and Holbeck, selective licensing be extended to all private landlords. We believe that there is a difficult balance to be struck here. On the one hand, we appreciate the need

to be able to have an impact on the quality of private rented accommodation and the enforcement against poor landlords. However, over regulation may stifle the private sector, particularly as many landlords own only one or two houses as a personal investment. We are pleased that there is good communication with landlords currently within the accreditation scheme and we recommend that recruitment activity is a priority to encourage all private landlords to join as partners. We would welcome further discussion about the extension of licensing conditions to all private landlords, but we would particularly wish to see evidence that this would be an advantage to the area.

Recommendation 3:
That the department report back to the Board outlining the benefits and risks of extending the licensing scheme to all private landlords.

10. We also discussed the importance of improving the shop fronts. There was a consensus that the area had improved in this regard. Anecdotally we heard that new businesses were being attracted to the area that had enlivened the shop scene. As part of a package of physical and visual regeneration activities we recommend that the local shop frontages, where this has not already been done, are targeted for improvements. We also suggest

Conclusions and Recommendations



that this incorporates studies of traffic flows and parking provision to allow maximum footfall for local businesses.

**Recommendation 4:
That the Regeneration Board make shop fronts a priority (where this has not already been done) and that such schemes include wider factors such as traffic and environmental improvements**

11. In terms of dealing with the physical environment, we wish to stress the need to target unsightly areas. We have discussed the empty property strategy at length within the Board, both as part of this inquiry and as a separate item and we hope this strategy will continue to be rigorously applied in Beeston Hill and Holbeck. The undesirable effects of long term empty properties were emphasised in our discussion with a private landlord, who urged the Council to continue to be proactive in Beeston Hill and Holbeck to maximise the use of existing property and to minimise the presence of properties that seriously detract from the area.
12. We also wish to mention particular sites which seem to offer opportunity to the area. The Matthew Murray school site is of tremendous importance and we understand that this is now ready to be demolished in preparation for development. We would wish to

see, ideally, the site used for provision of a significant percentage of affordable housing (please refer to the Board's previous inquiry into Affordable Housing 2006). We acknowledge that there is a lengthy process ahead of the disposal and development of the site, but at this early stage we wish to emphasise the urgent need for affordable, good quality and appropriately sized accommodation.

**Recommendation 5:
That consideration is given to the appropriate development of the Matthew Murray school site. We recommend that the primary consideration should be the development of affordable housing.**

Skills and Training

13. Whilst undertaking this inquiry we have also had discussions regarding social enterprise and the Council's position in supporting such businesses. This has linked into our thoughts on supporting the economic and social renewal specifically in Beeston Hill and Holbeck. We have discussed the need to consider longer term advantages of encouraging local training and skills development. We were pleased to receive information on schemes such as the Job Shop, which brings information on jobs and training right into the heart of the area.

Conclusions and Recommendations



14. Officers acknowledged that jobs and skills are crucial factors for regeneration and that support is sought from Construction Leeds, as city wide partnership, as well as local schools. Whilst we understand that a skills audit has taken place, we wish to suggest that a thorough approach is taken to maximising the opportunities for local businesses to take part in regeneration activity in the area.

15. We acknowledge that it is not always possible to employ local businesses and that for larger projects national or regional companies are more likely to have the wherewithal to provide the necessary labour and skills. However, we feel that wherever possible, local businesses should be benefiting from the regeneration money that is being introduced into the area. We feel that this could have a significant, if indirect, impact on opportunities for young people in terms of apprenticeships and other types of training. We have noted that the group repair procurement process does support the recruitment of local labour, however, this applies to the whole of Leeds and not to the specific area of Beeston Hill and Holbeck.

**Recommendation 6:
That wherever possible, local businesses within the regeneration area are employed to undertake regeneration activities.**

16. This concept also fits in with our discussions on Social Enterprise and the level of support given to businesses that work for the social good of a community. This has been an excellent discussion and we have already suggested to officers that the Council itself may have procurement opportunities for such businesses. We feel it is entirely appropriate to bring this thought process into this inquiry. Whilst we do not suggest that other areas of Leeds are neglected, we would like to strongly encourage a close look at small businesses, community projects and current voluntary activities within Beeston Hill and Holbeck to establish whether such businesses and groups would be eligible for Social Enterprise support. We feel that a proactive approach in this area would be entirely appropriate.

**Recommendation 7:
That the Regeneration Partnership Manager is proactive in promoting Social Enterprise support in Beeston Hill and Holbeck with the aim of increasing the number of social enterprise businesses being supported specifically in this area.**

Community consultation and participation

17. We are aware of the significant liaison taking place with the area's Residents Forums which are represented on the Partnership

Conclusions and Recommendations



Board. We are also pleased to learn about the amount of contact that is being made with residents in other groups.

18. We have already discussed the importance of maintaining clear communication with residents throughout the life of the regeneration project. We would like to underline this necessity by recommending that lessons are noted and learned from other consultation processes. The Neighbourhoods and Housing department has considerable experience of large scale consultation exercises, but we also wish to suggest that the smaller scale communication with individual groups of residents should not be underestimated, such as the work currently being done with residents' forums and we suggest that this continues to be developed. We believe that good quality, timely information and consultation is an integral part of the regeneration process and is an important factor in its success.

Recommendation 8:
That the department ensures that lessons from previous consultation exercises are applied to the ongoing communication and consultation within Beeston Hill and Holbeck.

PFI

19. We have closely followed the progress of the PFI bid and share the disappointment of the officers with the initial failure to secure significant funds for the regeneration project. However, we are heartened that this is not the end of the process and that the Beeston Hill and Holbeck bid remains a high contender for a future round. We were particularly interested to note that the Government has appointed a case officer to continue to support the bid. We are concerned that there is unlikely to be a 'plan B' to replace the significant boost hoped for from the PFI bid and we therefore lend our full support to the continued bid for future PFI credits, recognising the enormous potential the success of the bid represents.

Recommendation 9:
Having emphasised the continued importance of Government financial support, we also wish to urge the Regeneration Board to continue with those activities that are still viable and to begin to seek contingency arrangements should future PFI credits not be forthcoming.

Partnerships

20. We have discussed some elements of partnership working such as the private rented sector and Housing Associations. We are encouraged

Conclusions and Recommendations



by the level of potential private investment such as with Shaftsbury House. We received information on other levels of partnership working, not least the Beeston Hill and Holbeck Regeneration Partnership, which forms the hub of regeneration activity.

21. We have also learned of the amount of liaison occurring between social landlords, and between service providers. We understand that this type of partnership working has brought improvements to the delivery of services and the co-ordination of resources. Re'new has been an organisation at the forefront of some of this activity and is clearly a significant partner.

22. The results of our discussions clearly show that Beeston Hill and Holbeck benefits from a wide range of activity in terms of networking and partnership working. Our only comment would be that residents should benefit directly from this, such as improved environmental services and good quality housing.

23. Our final comments are regarding funding in general. We have discussed PFI in more detail, but we do acknowledge that the picture is far more complex. Investment from the private housing sector continues and funding streams are possible from the Regional Housing Board and Yorkshire Forward for example. Officers were clear in explaining the reliance on external funding,

particularly for staff involved in the regeneration agenda. We feel it would be unfortunate, if not serious, if current staffing levels involved in this regeneration process are jeopardized through the interruption of external funding. Whilst we are reserved in making recommendations that add to the Council's own budget pressures, we feel that this issue is one which should be revisited by Scrutiny Board to ensure that Members are kept informed of the specific financial shifts that happen. We link this into the above discussion on the availability of PFI credits.

Recommendation 10:
That the appropriate Scrutiny Board receives six monthly updates on the status of the funding streams on which the current level of regeneration activity depends.



Conclusions and Recommendations



Evidence



Monitoring arrangements

Reports and Publications Submitted

Report on Housing Based Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck

Summary of key research findings – Sheffield Hallam University

Report on Partnership Infrastructure and Finance Issues

Report on the role of the private sector and complementary service delivery and environmental factors

Evidence



Witnesses Heard

Neil Evans - Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing

John Bracewell – Area Regeneration Manager

Chris Kwasniewski – Project Manager

Mark Ireland - Environmental Health Service Manager

Steve Williamson – Chief Executive, re’new and Chair of the Narrowing the Gap Executive

Mr Frantzis - Private Landlord

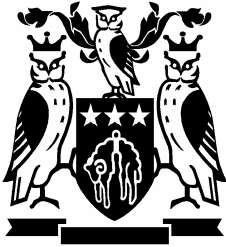
Andy Beattie – Deputy Chief Environmental Health Officer

Evidence



Dates of Scrutiny

20th July 2006
6th September 2006
8th November 2006
10th January 2007



Originator: S Winfield

Tel: 2474707

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing)

Date: 11th April 2007

Subject: Annual Report 2006/2007

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft of the Board's contribution to the Scrutiny Board Annual Report.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Members will be aware that the operating protocols for Scrutiny Boards require the publication of an Annual Report to Council. This year the report will combine a commentary on each of the Board's work, progress on the Action Plan 2006/07 and details of the Action Plan being developed for 2007/2008.

3.0 Draft report

3.1 Attached is a draft of the Neighbourhoods and Housing Board's proposed contribution to the Annual Report which includes an introduction from the Chair and details of the some of the work undertaken by the Board in this municipal year.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to amend and agree the Board's contribution to the composite Annual Report.

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Scrutiny Board

(Neighbourhoods and Housing)



*Cllr Ralph Pryke
Chair of Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing)*

Membership of the Board:

Cllr Ralph Pryke (Chair)
Cllr Denise Atkinson
Cllr Angela Gabriel
Cllr Graham Hyde
Cllr Mohammed Rafique
Cllr Suzie Armitage
Cllr Javaid Akhtar
Cllr Penny Ewens
Cllr Mark Phillips
Cllr David Schofield
Cllr Robert Finnigan

The Chair's Summary

This year our programme has ranged from the highly strategic priorities of the Council to the study of the impact of frontline services on communities. We have discussed issues that are affecting vulnerable individuals and been involved in the discussions around fundamental structure shifts and broader partnerships such as Safer Leeds.

My colleagues on the Board have injected a great deal of compassion and understanding of individual topics, which has been of immeasurable value and has breathed life into some of the difficult subjects we have chosen to tackle as a Board. I have appreciated the personal illustrations that Members have shared, which have reminded us all that whilst we are discussing strategies and policies, there are real people with real issues at the end of the process. We have tried to make these links in our main inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck and our discussions around the ALMOs and Area Management.

We are grateful to the department for the amount of information they have produced and discussed in great detail with us. We all acknowledge that part of our job is to hold decision makers to account and to drive improvement in performance and we have undertaken this role with co-operation and good humour from officers and Members alike.

Our aim has been to challenge and hold to account the decision makers, and we were therefore pleased eventually to begin a meaningful dialogue with the Executive Board Member under our 'Members Questions' item. This resulted in a lively, incisive and informative session resulting in a number of suggestions for further scrutiny, particularly in the area of community safety. I am particularly keen to see this type of dialogue continue and deepen, as it is vital that Scrutiny Boards and the Executive Board both understand each other's issues.

I have included two detailed reports on items of work we have undertaken. One is the Inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck – a project that is likely to be raised in Scrutiny again. The other, the Respect Agenda, illustrates the link between a number of pieces of work and demonstrates how the issues discussed in Scrutiny are 'live' and impact directly on people's lives.

I would like to thank Members of the Board for the time and effort they have contributed to the Board this year in developing an interesting and stimulating work programme.

Cllr Ralph Pryke
Chair of Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing)

Inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck

This year our main focus has been on regeneration. Whilst this is a huge topic, we felt it was important to look at the detail and the ‘nuts and bolts’ of a regeneration programme and physically see the outcomes of completed schemes. This gave rise to our inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck. We included a site visit in the initial stages, which rooted our discussions in actual places and programmes.

Another reason we chose this particular scheme was the potential PFI funding hoped for. We felt that it was important for Scrutiny to have some input into this process at the very beginning. We, like the officers, were disappointed that the initial bid did not generate the funds that were needed to underpin the major regeneration taking place. However, we understand that this project will be first in line for a future round of funding. Clearly, any future Scrutiny Board will seek to be kept informed of developments here.

Our report sets out a number of observations and recommendations. We are particularly interested in how affordable housing can be introduced into the area and the huge potential of the school site that is currently being prepared for development. Shaftesbury House is also a key building for the area and we look forward to this being a ‘flagship’ project.

“Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck has largely been housing based. We have seen at first hand the issues inappropriate housing raises, particularly for families. We hope that the regeneration activity goes a long way to remedying this.”

Cllr Pryke – Chair

That the department ensures that lessons from previous consultation exercises are applied to the ongoing communication and consultation within Beeston Hill and Holbeck.

Having emphasised the continued importance of Government financial support, we also wish to urge the Regeneration Board to continue with those activities that are still viable and to begin to seek contingency arrangements should future PFI credits not be forthcoming.

That the appropriate Scrutiny Board receives six monthly updates on the status of the funding streams on which the current level of regeneration activity depends.

Our main recommendations were:

Shaftesbury House be used as a flagship for promoting the regeneration of the area.

That clear and regular communication is offered to residents currently not included in regeneration projects in order to keep them informed of progress and the likely timescale of future schemes and that the strategy for achieving this is reported back to the Board.

That the department report back to the Board outlining the benefits and risks of extending the licensing scheme to all private landlords

That the Regeneration Board make shop fronts a priority (where this has not already been done) and that such schemes include wider factors such as traffic and environmental improvements

That consideration is given to the appropriate development of the Matthew Murray school site. We recommend that the primary consideration should be the development of affordable housing.

That wherever possible, local businesses within the regeneration area are employed to undertake regeneration activities.

That the Regeneration Partnership Manager is proactive in promoting Social Enterprise support in Beeston Hill and Holbeck with the aim of increasing the number of social enterprise businesses being supported specifically in this area.



Respect Agenda

Respect is a major government initiative that broadens the drive to address anti-social behaviour. This report outlines the Respect Action Plan and the activity underway in Leeds that contributes to this agenda. Leeds has been chosen by the government to be one of the pilot areas for implementing Respect. The Respect Action Plan builds upon the government's previous work to address anti-social behaviour and we were particularly keen to be involved in the discussions around how Leeds will be implementing this. We understood that the principles apply city wide.

At an operational level, we understand that there are a number of tangible examples of delivery. Significant investments have been made in a large anti-social behaviour unit (ASBU), in joint-funding PCSOs and in neighbourhood wardens. We have made great efforts this year to review and study these elements closely, not only to gain and understanding of the relationships between these various officers but also to influence the flow of information, particularly to Elected Members.

We have acknowledged that the Authority uses the full panoply of powers available – housing powers, ASBOs, dispersal orders, crack house closures, Drinking in Public Places Order (DPPOs), and so forth. We were particularly pleased to note that the use of multi-agency targeted operations was shortlisted for the Tilley Award for best practice in crime reduction. The Signpost project has also been a feature in previous scrutiny work and we have noted how this project engages with problematic households to address anti social behaviour.

We noted that a number of the five principles on which the Action Plan is built have been covered by work already done by the Scrutiny Board, including the establishment of a family intervention project and methods of tackling anti-social behaviour. Other issues likely to be raised at future Scrutiny Boards include how the authority is establishing parenting programmes for families at risk of behaviour anti-socially, how the Face the People Sessions will be facilitated as well as a continuing focus on the role of key landlords (an issue that has also been picked up as part of the Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck inquiry).

We have done significant work on the relationship between the Police and the Council, particularly with regard to the Safer Leeds Partnership and the performance indicators related to crime reduction and community safety. By discussing the Respect Action Plan we raised the issue of how this relationship and the engagement with the public can be further enhanced, particularly through the 'face the people' mechanism now being developed. This will be a future topic for Scrutiny in the months to come.

"We have done work previously on anti-social behaviour. The Respect Action Plan was of particular interest to us as it is an extension of the work already done by the department. We hope this initiative will provide a boost to the established process of dealing with anti-social behaviour."

Cllr Pryke - Chair

Respect your street... to fight the jobs

LEEDS has been thrust into the forefront of Tony Blair's fight to stamp out the scourge of anti-social behaviour.

The city is one of 40 places nationwide which have been chosen as Respect Action Areas by the Government, it was announced today. Civic chiefs will now be able to tap into tens of

The Respect Action Area has been covered in the local press

PCSO Evaluation

The evaluation of PCSOs and their impact on the local communities was an item of work that began last year. A full study was commissioned by the Scrutiny Board and we received the results of this.

This study has found that PCSOs and wardens are highly valued and have generally made a significant impact in Leeds. We acknowledge that there is however ongoing debate regarding their roles and responsibilities, particularly in terms of environmental enforcement work. Currently PCSOs prioritise anti-social behaviour and intelligence gathering while wardens concentrate on tackling environmental issues. Both have made promising achievements in terms of public reassurance, although the study has identified differences between the impact of PCSOs in inner and outer wards.

We have discussed the communication mechanisms between PCSOs and other relevant officers and Ward Members at a local level. We have been particularly keen to evaluate the role of PCSOs, not only to ascertain their level of effectiveness in the community, but also how intelligence in a local area is passed between active personnel and the local Members.

This piece of work also linked in to discussions on tasking meetings, Wardens and how we as a Council deal with ASBO enforcement and breaches.

The Board's full work programme 2006/07

Inquiry into Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck
Partnership Working
Supporting People
Performance Indicators
Respect Agenda
Emergency Accommodation for Young People
PCSO Evaluation
EASEL Update
Lettings Policy
Ombudsman Briefing
Area Management Review
Social Enterprise
Wardens Briefing
Asylum Seekers
Prostitution Strategy
Single Regional Housing Pot
Demos Report
Monitoring Report
Communications Publications



Originator: Lelir Yeung

Telephone: 247 4152

Report of : Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing

Meeting: Neighbourhoods and Housing Scrutiny Board

Date: 7th February 2007

Subject: Demos Report on Bringing it Home – Community Based Approaches to Counter-Terrorism

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity



Community Cohesion



Narrowing the Gap



1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of a research report published by Demos in December 2006 entitled Bringing it Home – Community Based Approaches to counter-terrorism.
- 1.2 The report also summarises recent cohesion developments, work being undertaken across the authority and outlines some of the challenges ahead for Leeds City Council to progress the cohesion agenda and the issues raised in the Demos Report.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In December 2006 a report was published by Demos which was the outcome of a year long research project into the government's response to terrorism and in particular the London bombings on 7th July 2005.
- 2.2 This research project was supported by financial contributions from the Cohesion and Faiths Unit at the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Economic and Social Research and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.
- 2.3 Demos describe themselves as the think tank for local democracy and they analyse social and political change.

3.0 Report Findings

- 3.1 Bringing it Home outlines what Demos think are the problems with the official response so far and the causes of grievance and mobilisation. The views outlined below are direct quotes from the research

- 3.2 Bringing it Home states that ‘Our Muslim communities suffer some of the worst indicators of deprivation, discrimination and social exclusion, and many are deeply unhappy about aspects of the government’s foreign policy towards the Islamic world, which they feel constitutes a ‘war on Islam’.
- 3.3 Bringing it Home states that ‘the government’s response to terrorism is alienating the very communities it needs to engage, and that their growing sense of grievance, anger and injustice inadvertently legitimises the terrorists’ aims, with or without their active consent.’
- 3.4 The research reported that ‘the London bombings highlighted the importance of community engagement and the government responded accordingly. Less than two weeks after the attack, the Prime Minister had gathered Muslim leaders into Downing Street, and soon after the Home Office had launched its Preventing Extremism Together (PET) initiative to work with the community on ways to combat extremism and its causes.’
- 3.5 The government’s attempts to engage Muslims in the policy-making process have been criticised as being rushed, conducted on the government’s terms, failing to break away from the usual suspects, and with little follow through. The government has also been highly reluctant to engage with the many reasonable grievances of the community - from Iraq to social justice – in the fear that any kind of acknowledgement could suggest that the terrorists have just cause or that the government is somehow complicit.
- 3.6 This has made honest conversation difficult, as too many vital subjects remain out of bounds.’
- 3.7 Bringing it Home recommends a community – based approach to counter-terrorism must be underpinned by four principles:
- It must be locally based and recognise and respond to the differences within the Muslim community, which is far from homogenous.
 - It needs to be rooted in an understanding of faith, without which it is easy for government and security forces to misread the signs within the community.
 - The government must make the policy-making process as transparent and accountable as possible, opening up decision –making processes and engaging on issues where there is political discontent. Only then will trust be forged between the government and Muslim communities.
 - The government must get over its hang-ups about responding to the grievances of the Muslim community. In many instances, they are well founded and deserve to be recognised, but in others the government must be more confident about taking the debate out to the communities, rather than sulking in Whitehall.
- 3.8 Bringing it Home sets out a six-pronged strategy for a community-based approach to counter-terrorism, which spans social justice, community cohesion and counter-terrorism. The breadth of the strategy is important in reducing the inconsistencies between different approaches across government and security forces. The conclusion provides greater detail, but in short, the strategy aims to:
- enhance the lives of Muslims by tackling poverty, low attainment and discrimination.
 - strengthen community infrastructure
 - improve leadership, both by the government and within the Muslim community
 - open up the foreign policy-making process to greater scrutiny and provide opportunity for input from all parts of British communities
 - divert youth from extremism
 - put communities at the heart of counter-terrorist intervention and policing, as an integrated part rather than an add-on or an afterthought

4.0 Leeds Context

- 4.1 Community Cohesion is seen as a key policy driver for the organisation. Cohesion is a priority for the Council and the Leeds Initiative. It is an integral part of the Council Plan and the Vision for Leeds.
- 4.2 The first community cohesion action plan and annual report was approved by the Thriving Community Priority Board in March 2006. Within the Council Plan 2006 – 2007 there are commitments to review the community cohesion action plan and annual report and develop systems to monitor progress.
- 4.3 The community cohesion annual report also includes an overview of the impact of the London Bombings on Leeds.
- 4.4 Monitoring of the action plan at a departmental level is co-ordinated by the departmental Equality and Community Cohesion Champions. The corporate action plan is the responsibility of the Head of Equality.
- 4.5 Summarised below are the key community cohesion challenges ahead for Leeds. These have been discussed by CMT and LMT who support the proposals support to progress the next phase of the cohesion agenda. The outcomes of the Bringing it Home report will also be taken into account in any future action planning.

5.0 Community Cohesion Challenges

- 5.1 The creation of strong, vital and cohesive communities is one of the most important issues that we face. This is a critical factor in the quality of people's lives and for the harmony of the nation as a whole.
- 5.2 Community cohesion goes beyond the issues of tackling racial equality, discrimination and social exclusion. It is about all kinds of relationships within communities and closing the divides between them.
- 5.3 Cohesion includes a focus on breaking down tensions and building relationships within and between all communities: recognising that there can be tensions within and between communities of race, faith and national identities; between old and young; urban and rural; settled and traveling communities; host and new migrant and refugee communities. Acknowledging that lesbian and gay people, disabled people, people with mental health problems, people who are homeless and many others can become a focus of tensions.
- 5.4 Most of the debate about equality and more recently community cohesion has tended to revolve around ethnic and faith divisions. But it is a broader discussion than that and we must tackle the divisions within society where too many people are left disaffected and apart from the mainstream of life.
- 5.5 A divided neighbourhood with no sense of place or belonging in which one or more sections of the community are disaffected and constantly in dispute with each other is unlikely to attract people to live or work and still less to attract capital investment. Having to cope with tensions in the present takes attention away from the focus on improvements for the future.
- 5.6 Failure to address some of these issues could lead to increased tensions and divisions within communities and geographical locations and could increase further people's sense of geographical isolation.
- 5.7 Examples of how some of this disaffection can manifest itself could be pride in an area, levels of crime and grime, increased mistrust between communities, levels of anti-social behaviour, changes in patterns of voting etc. This can then become the indicators that a community is under stress.
- 5.8 Councils need to know how the local community is changing, in particular:-

- Who is moving in and who is moving out
- Is one group harbouring a grievance against another
- Do some communities feel they are no longer getting a fair deal
- Do local people feel let down by statutory agencies

5.9 Local authorities should never forget that their principal role is to represent their community – and that depends upon them knowing what’s going on.

5.10 It needs to be acknowledged that cohesion is about dealing with ‘perceptions’ not just facts; recognising that perceptions and myths fuel tensions between communities.

5.11 There are a number of factors identified in key service delivery areas that could be seen as barriers to achieving cohesion and these need to be addressed. These are:

- The concentration of particular groups of people in some residential areas can result in a lack of contact between communities, resulting in them leading parallel lives.
- If schools have an overwhelmingly majority of pupils from one particular background or varying outcomes in educational achievement between different groups tensions could increase between these communities.
- Postcode discrimination and the link between certain minority groups concentrated in certain jobs can lead to low expectations and aspirations.
- Opportunities to engage young people in cross-cultural activities could be limited by the poor state of facilities and under resourced projects, as well as a lack of a voice in local decision making
- The funding process for regeneration could be seen as a divisive force within communities creating barriers to integration and participation.

5.12 The changing demographics in Leeds and increasing numbers of people migrating to the City for employment means that we have an incomplete picture of who the communities of Leeds are and their impact on service delivery.

5.13 Leeds City Council will have to demonstrate they can comply with the following which is one of the Key Lines of Enquiry for the next Corporate Assessment Level 3 criteria for judgement:

‘The council has developed an overarching, strategic vision and set of clear and challenging ambitions, aims and objectives for the community that promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Steps have been taken to understand the scale of the social, economic and environmental challenges and opportunities it faces in the area including those related to diversity, race equality and deprivation. It makes decisions based on the information produced through research on local needs and engagement with local citizens, communities and partners.

As a result, the council understands its communities and uses this knowledge to determine how its own services and activities, and those of partners and stakeholders, can contribute, and has shaped its forward planning accordingly.’

6.0 The White Paper

6.1 In November 2006 the Local Government White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities was published.

6.2 The White Paper proposes a new approach to local partnership to give local authorities more opportunity to lead their area, work with other services and better meet the public’s needs. It is also pushing very strongly for the need for local authorities to have a systematic approach to intelligence on local people’s needs and wants.

6.3 There is a specific section on Community Cohesion and the role of local government and the white paper outlines eight guiding principles:

- Strong leadership and engagement
- Developing shared values
- Preventing the problems of tomorrow
- Good information
- Visible work to tackle inequalities
- Involving young people
- Interfaith work
- Partners such as local third sector organisations

6.4 The White Paper states that community cohesion is not an add on or an optional extra to the overall local government reform agenda.

6.5 The impact of these proposals is currently being analysed for further consideration as part of the Council's improvement agenda.

7.0 Commission for Integration and Cohesion

7.1 In September 2006 the Commission for Integration and Cohesion was launched. It is a fixed term advisory body which will consider how local areas can make the most of the benefits delivered by increasing diversity.

7.2 The Commission will consider how local areas themselves can play a role in forging cohesive and resilient communities by:

- Examining the issues that raise tensions between different groups in different areas, and that lead to segregation and conflict
- Suggesting how local community and political leadership can push further against perceived barriers to cohesion and integration
- Looking at how local communities themselves can be empowered to tackle extremist ideologies
- Developing approaches that build local areas' own capacity to prevent problems, and ensure they have the structures in place to recover from periods of tension

7.3 The Commission will deliver its findings in June 2007. The work of the Commission may impact on the proposals being developed by Leeds and linkages are being made with the Cohesion and Faith Unit at the Department for Communities and Local Government to try and establish how the work in Leeds can support this national initiative.

8.0 Preventing Extremism

8.1 On 16th October a meeting was hosted by Ruth Kelly and Joe Montgomery to discuss the role of local government and preventing extremism. Attendees included Local Authority Chief Executive's, Police and Government Office staff from across the country. This included representatives from West Yorkshire.

8.2 Since then the Association of West Yorkshire Authorities (AWYA) have met with Police colleagues to agree a West Yorkshire response.

8.3 The key focus of the discussions has been about creating good community relations, promoting community cohesion, working with young people and building shared intelligence across the region and agencies.

8.4 One of the key issues raised is the need to have a complete picture of who our communities are and up to date community intelligence.

- 8.5 Further meetings have been held at a national level to identify practical steps to help Local Authorities, Police and partners tackle extremism.
- 8.6 The Government are due to announce details of a funding package to support local authorities helping to tackle violent extremism. The funding will support local authorities to make the step change necessary to tackle violent extremism in local communities, helping local authorities to understand their local areas better and have the skills and structures in place to address any threat of violent extremism.
- 9.0 Way Forward**
- 9.1 There are a number of initiatives that could be considered to try and address the issues identified above.
- 9.2 Key policy and service delivery areas that could impact on cohesion and people's civic identity and sense of belonging could be reviewed. In addition decisions taken by the Council should be cohesion proofed and consideration given to their impact on all sections of the community. For example, an explicit statement in the LAA refresh outlining the commitment to community cohesion.
- 9.3 One of the five critical factors for improving equality and diversity identified by the Audit Commission is leadership.
- 9.4 In addition both the Equality Standard and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment identify leadership as a major contributor to improving performance including in the areas of equality, diversity and community cohesion.
- 9.5 The development of a leadership challenge could assist with driving this agenda forward. The leadership challenge could primarily be developed as a programme of activities for all leaders (political and officer level) to take forward in order to develop the equality, diversity and community cohesion agenda. Although it would be developed as an activity programme it would in effect be a change programme which, through transformational leadership, would need to engage all members, managers, staff and partners and embed the agendas at cultural, behavioural and competency levels.
- 9.6 It would need to be firmly routed in achieving specific objectives around both leadership itself and equality, diversity and community cohesion. The challenge could:
- build on LLP1,
 - provide leaders, both elected members and senior managers with a mechanism for undertaking learning (likely to be through specific coaching activities),
 - result in real tangible outcomes for communities,
 - involve staff and partners,
 - ensure that outcomes and methods of involvement/engagement will be formally assessed, and be fully and formally recognised by both Leeds City Council, and other local authorities.
- 9.7 This challenge could raise the profile of the key roles and responsibilities for all elected members and officers. These include:
- reaching out to all community leaders and community representatives
 - strengthening and developing key policies, strategies and programmes
 - rebutting or challenging contentious and negative views about sections of the community
 - championing a cross-party consensus on community matters
 - developing a programme of positive statements in the local media

- challenging some of the narrow – and often populist sentiments – which threaten community harmony by unfairly isolating and targeting minority groups
- meaningful measurement of the impact of council activities on cohesion
- brokering practical solutions with other delivery agents
- ensuring that all staff are suitably trained and informed about the authority's cohesion vision

- 9.8 Recent Cohesion guidance states that all elected members have a leadership role in relation to their local communities. Whilst councilors are elected to represent their constituents, they must avoid simply representing sectional interests, which are likely to damage or disadvantage others with equally legitimate and evident needs.
- 9.9 This guidance also states that elected members also have a responsibility to promote wider community interests and to be fair minded when considering resource allocation. Elected members have a wealth of local expertise and knowledge that should be utilised.
- 9.10 Elected members should have an understanding of the needs of all groups, whether or not they are represented by their constituency interests. They should also be prepared to promote an interchange and dialogue between different groups and to promote tolerance and mutual respect.
- 9.11 Consideration could be given to the development of a cross-party and cross-agency protocol. The purpose of these would be to reassure local communities that no one individual or organisation will seek to heighten tensions or exploit divisions.
- 9.12 This should not inhibit free speech but will ensure that any debates are held within a responsible context.
- 9.13 In addition ward-level members are very well connected and are the first to recognise where tensions might arise. Keeping in touch with local people – through surgeries, meeting people in the neighbourhood, or any form of local meeting – is essential. This is also the case for a lot of front line staff, such as, street scene, youth workers etc.
- 9.14 All departments will also have a lot of local knowledge at their disposal, but they need to marshal it effectively.
- 9.15 A multi sector task group with responsibility for taking a city wide overview of cohesion related tension identification, risk assessment, avoidance and management across Leeds has been established.
- 9.16 The current tension tracking process could be extended to ensure that all elected members and front line staff are able to report any tensions and intelligence within their wards and areas of service. There are barriers to progression at the moment which include improving data and intelligence reporting and a lack of a dedicated analytical resource and collation of partnership activity.
- 9.17 Work needs to take place to track changes in communities in order that we are able to establish the 'bigger picture'. This will enable the Council to demonstrate that it understands its communities and uses this knowledge to determine how its own services and activities, and those of partners and stakeholders, can contribute, and has shaped its forward planning accordingly for CPA purposes.
- 9.18 Leeds borders several different local authority areas which can sometimes raise issues when considering initiatives and projects. The development of cross border work around creating cohesive communities could be considered to increase capacity in the event of any incidents occurring across geographical boundaries.
- 9.19 Working with and involving young people is crucial and is one of the guiding principles in the White Paper to achieving cohesive communities. This should include reaching out to

young Muslims and to wider communities. Work will continue on building community cohesion through the Change for Children programme and supporting key actions , for example, the development of a Community Cohesion Toolkit for working with young people.

10.0 Recommendations

- 10.1 Members are asked to note the information and make comments and recommendations as appropriate.

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