

**Area Chairs Forum  
Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013  
Committee Room 4, Civic Hall**

**Attendance:**

Councillors: P. Gruen (Chair), G. Hyde, G. Hussain, G. Wilkinson, A. McKenna, A. Gabriel, K. Bruce, J. Akhtar, P. Wadsworth, J. McKenna, J. Jarosz  
Officers: J. Rogers, K. Kudelnitzky, R. Barke, S. Mahmood, J. Maxwell

Minutes: S. Warbis

Attending for specific items: H. Pinches, I. Mackay, K. Morton, Cllr. J. Blake, P. Broughton

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Action</b>      |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>1.0</b>  | <b>Apologies</b>  |                    |
| 1.1         | None  |                    |
| <b>2.0</b>  | <b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>  |                    |
| 2.1         | The minutes of the previous Area Chairs Forum meeting on 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.  |                    |
| 2.2         | Cllr Gruen thanked the efforts of the Area Chairs and officers over the previous year with this being the last meeting before the new municipal year. Good progress has been made over the use of and monitoring of Area Committee budgets, and also regarding the review of area working and the development of new and improved delegations.  |                    |
| 2.3         | <u>3.9 of previous minutes – Financial Inclusion</u><br>The March round of Area Committee meetings came too quickly after the last Area Chairs Forum meeting for David Roberts to arrange attending meetings with his presentation on Financial inclusion. David Feeney is able to attend future meetings if Area Chairs feel this is appropriate.  |                    |
| 2.4         | <u>5.9 of previous minutes – Transform Leeds Programme</u><br>It was agreed that discussions regarding transform Leeds would continue outside of this meeting.  |                    |
| 2.5         | <u>6.7 of previous minutes – Environmental Enforcement Fines</u><br>The question had been raised as to whether income from environmental fines could be used in the areas where they had been gathered. The meeting was informed that although this was possible, in practice there is little left over after costs for administering the fines are taken into account.   |                    |
| 2.6         | <u>7.1 of previous minutes – Health</u><br>Due to diary commitments it was not possible to arrange appropriate attendance at this meeting to have a focused agenda on health matters. It was agreed that this would be arranged for a future meeting.   | <b>Sarn Warbis</b> |
| <b>3.0</b>  | <b>Area Lead Member Report</b>  |                    |
| 3.1         | Heather Pinches attended to provide an update on progress in the development and implementation of the Area Lead Member role.   |                    |
| 3.2         | A report is being taken to the Executive Board meeting on 9 <sup>th</sup> May which is asking for Area Committees to appoint to the roles in the new municipal year. Concerns over capacity of Area Committees and the number of roles has been taken into account, and details of the number and scope of the new roles will be considered at the Annual General Council Meeting as necessary amendments to the constitution are made. |                    |
| 3.3         | It was felt that a background supporting brief for the role would be more   |                    |

appropriate than a prescriptive description, to enable some consistency across Area Committees but to also allow appropriate local variations. A draft supporting brief indicating the potential content was circulated.

3.4 Heather Pinches informed the meeting that a report is being taken to Member Management Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> June to give Area Committees the role of appointing elected members to school clusters.

3.5 Concerns were raised over the increased work for Area Committees and resulting pressures on agendas at meetings. It was explained that in areas where the current champion role is working effectively there wouldn't be an increase in workload. The intention is to build in close links with appropriate executive members and also establish effective support from and links to relevant services. The new roles will be closely monitored and adjustments will be possible as the roles develop.

#### **4.0 Neighbourhood Planning**

4.1 Ian Mackay attended to give an update on Neighbourhood Planning.

4.2 There has been progress since his last attendance at the Area Chairs Forum. There have been 14 designations in parished areas with 4 more on the verge of being designated. 18 expressions of interest have been received including 14 from non-parished areas.

4.3 Meetings with Area Chairs to discuss the role of Area Committees in Neighbourhood Planning went well. Although there is no formal role in the process Area Committees have a critical role in influencing and promoting neighbourhood plans.

4.4 There are now better relationships between communities and planning officers in many areas. Links need to be established with Neighbourhood Planning activity and other Area committee work.

4.5 Ian Mackay went through a table identifying the role of Area Committees at various stages in the neighbourhood planning process. This had been drawn up following discussions with elected members. The key roles are seen as being promoting plans and encouraging communities, consultation on plans drawn up, delivery/monitoring of non-planning elements of neighbourhood plans.

4.6 Area Chairs mentioned good work that was being carried out in Inner West and Outer South in encouraging and informing communities about neighbourhood plans and Ian was thanked for his efforts in these areas.

4.7 It was mentioned that there were some practical issues around the capacity of staff in Area teams and planning to manage the amount of interest that had been generated. There were also issues about the level of support that LCC can give to communities while plans are being developed.

#### **5.0 Youth Services Review**

5.1 Cllr Judith Blake and Ken Morton attended to provide an update on the review of youth services.

5.2 It is important to link up LCC youth activity funding with other streams. There has been a recent government announcement about additional sports resource going into primary schools. Ken Morton has also been talking to schools about the post 16 agenda and issues around efficiencies regarding small 6ht form provision.

5.3 A briefing note provided an initial estimate of youth Activity budget to be allocated to each Area Committee in 2013/14 and the increased allocation in 2014/15. Budgets should be transferred over to Area Committees during this

month.

5.4 Vicky Marsden will be co-ordinating the transition of responsibility. Sessions are being organised with members to map existing provision. Area Support Teams will be provided with named links within Children's Services and City Development to provide support with youth work, sport, arts, music experience and connections.

5.5 Cllr Gruen requested a timeline to be drawn up and brought back to this meeting outlining the stages when provision will be transferred over to Area Committees.

**Ken Morton**

5.6 Some concerns were raised by Area Chairs over the level of funding being transferred for breeze activities in 2013/14. It was questioned what was the total amount in pounds, including staffing costs, that was being delegated. It was raised that members would be more interested in the £2.53m targeted youth budget rather than small activity budgets. It was also raised that there was a risk of more work being put onto the Area Support Teams. Issues were also raised regarding asset transfers, particularly regarding the South Leeds Hub.

5.7 It was pointed out that this delegation was a positive step forward and included new money for Area Committees to spend to add value to their local areas. More would be delegated next year.

5.8 Cllr Blake pointed out that there was a real attempt to bring more influence to the Area committees here. There will be support from within the service, particularly around commissioning. It was vital that young people could contribute and also feedback on performance.

5.9 Ken Morton added that a team will be pulled together to support the Area Teams, and this will include a role in quality assurance over the commissioned provision. This team will evolve over time.

5.10 Cllr Gruen asked for a paper to be brought back to Area Chairs detailing how commissioning could be carried out more locally, to meet both local needs and central requirements.

**Ken Morton**

5.11 It was also requested that capacity issues needed to be discussed openly between Ken Morton and Area Leaders on how the teams in Children's Services can link to the Area Teams. Cllr Akhtar offered to be involved in discussions on capacity and engagement particularly in relation to reaching into Muslim communities.

**Ken Morton  
/ Area  
Leaders**

5.12 Cllr Blake informed the meeting that early intervention grant funding had been removed by government which has affected the capacity for youth work. Much of the resource is tied up with staffing and external providers which needs to be rationalised before handing over to Area Committees. A paper on the targeted youth formula should be going to Executive Board in June. A restructuring of Youth Services is underway, and although the proposals are not firm yet, they are radical. There will be a review of management posts, an intention to increase the number of Youth Support Workers, and a review of 9-5 roles.

5.13 Regarding the South Leeds Hub, there have been issues with the facility not meeting the needs of the whole of South Leeds and there are now options to bring in a partner to improve the facility. Discussions will take place between Cllr Blake and local Members as options are developed.

## **6.0 Locality Asset Planning**

6.1 Paul Broughton attended to provide an update on the asset review and talked through a presentation handout.

- 6.2 The review is about rationalising the LCC asset portfolio in the face of increasing financial pressures. It will attempt to tackle the issues of a backlog in required maintenance and repairs, and the financial burden associated with this, and also will look to realise the capital value of some of our assets.
- 6.3 Previous attempts to rationalise assets have always had some service perspective; this is the first time that rationale has been based on the needs of localities. There are many buildings in use that could be linked better with other services and that could be used to integrate services more effectively.
- 6.4 The locality approach to looking at assets will look at:
- The citizens and households in an area
  - The condition of properties
  - What services local people need
  - Where do current visitors come from
  - Changes in customer demands
- 6.5 Work is being undertaken with Area Leaders and Area Team staff using Area Committee areas as a starting block. Pilots will be undertaken in each of the three areas to identify issues around stock profiles, customer needs and service requirements. There are some services that clearly need a locality base and others that clearly don't.
- 6.6 The asset review will consist of a two stage process focusing on quick wins and medium to longer term approaches. The pilots will inform the approaches taken in other areas.
- 6.7 Leeds is also taking part in the "one public estate" programme, along with 11 other councils, which is a government approach to looking at assets used by communities.
- 6.8 It was requested that the presentation should be emailed to Area Chairs.
- 6.9 The question was asked as to what the policy was for the use of any capital receipts. Currently 15% of receipts will remain for use in the locality. It was suggested that there needed to be more pace to the work on asset disposal and that there should be better use of external agencies. Also that there should be better exit strategies across the council, and that asset transfers should be sped up with less time arguing about rents and rebates.
- 6.10 It was generally agreed that services should be focussed on activities and not buildings. There needs to be better use of assets and this will need a move away from parochial attachments to buildings.
- 6.11 The next steps will be informed discussions with Members in pilot areas and establishing approaches for each of the areas.
- 7.0 Wellbeing Budgets**
- 7.1 A positive story has resulted from a lot of hard work by Area Committees and Area teams. There was a £366k carry forward at the end of 2012/13 opposed to approx. £1m the previous year. Thanks were given to all concerned.
- 8.0 Area Leaders Annual Roundup**
- 8.1 A report was circulated outlining the key achievements and future challenges for each of the Area Leader's areas. See appendix 1.
- 8.2 Positive comments from Area Chairs included:
- good work with faith leaders forum, Jobfair and Asian Women's groups
  - environmental delegation embedded and working well
  - anticipation for the Youth Service delegation

**Sarn  
Warbis**

- innovative and fresh approaches from Area Staff
- good use of wellbeing money
- neighbourhood networks are extending the reach into communities
- agendas of meetings becoming more localised
- the work of Youth Councils
- the work of Planning Officer with parish councils
- welfare reform support – partnership approach
- themed approach to Area Committee meetings
- partners working better together
- outcomes improving

8.3 Challenges highlighted included:

- tackling fear of crime in certain areas
- promoting the use of sub groups
- improving engagement with wider communities by Area committees and services
- joined up commissioning

8.4 There was general thanks to the Area Leaders and their teams for their efforts and commitment in the current climate for local government.

8.5 It was highlighted that three years ago there had been frustrations within Area Committees and there had been a concerted effort to reinvigorate them. The work carried out on the environmental delegation, and the re-engineering of the service would be used to inform changes to other services.

8.6 It is important that Area Committees don't allow certain parts of their areas to be neglected, and that initiatives and focus should be spread across the whole area.

8.7 It was mentioned that there should be concerted efforts to raise the profile of Area Committees and to promote the work that is carried out and supported by Area Committees. It was mentioned that at the moment the titles of area committees don't have much meaning to residents. People could not explain what Inner South or Inner North East meant to them.

**9.0 Any Other Business**

9.1 It was agreed that the Housing Management review should be brought to the next meeting.

**Sarn Warbis**

9.2 It was requested that future Area Chairs Forum meetings should be scheduled on Fridays or Mondays where possible.

**Sarn Warbis**

**10.0 Date of Next Meeting**

10.1 Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013, 11:00 – 13:00, Committee Room 4 - Civic Hall

# Area Committees

## Achievements and Challenges of Locality Working 2012-2014

### Area Chairs Forum 3 May 2013

#### EAST NORTH EAST

##### 2012/13 Achievements

- Excellent start to the environmental services delegation/SLA to Area Committees. Increased satisfaction reported from Councillors, Parish Councils and the public. New Environmental Improvement Zones working well to improve targeted 'grot spot' areas.
- Area Leadership Team priorities being successfully addressed to-
  - Work in partnership to reduce numbers of NEETS in ENE Leeds Welfare Reform partnership project team has raised awareness, increasing digital access, targeting vulnerable families, established new projects supporting getting people back into work.
  - Multi-agency locality action agreed to tackle the priorities identified by the ALT consideration of the JSNA data
  - Work begun to embed restorative practices as the 'way we do business' across partner agencies involved in the ALT.
- Neighbourhood Planning supported with the ENE Parish Councils and now starting across the inner East Area linked to the existing community leadership teams.
- Total Crime across North East Police Division reduced by 10.6% (2,290 less crimes) during 2012/13 compared with the previous year, an improvement on the 7% reduction made last year. Overall year to date offences for burglary is down 28.35% on the same period last year (833 less offences).
- Collaboration between the Area Support Team, the police, ENEHLtd, and two private sector businesses to support two new apprentices funded by the inner NE and inner East Area Committees.
- Generally improving indices of multiple deprivations across the ENE priority neighbourhoods – supported by a 'team neighbourhood' approach and community leadership teams overseeing Neighbourhood Improvement Plans.
- Partnership support for gang prevention work, community cohesion activities, youth activities (successful diversionary projects linked to key dates such as bonfire night) and the new 'families first' initiative.

##### 2013/14 Challenges

- Implementation of the actions from the Review of Area Working.

- Delivery of the asset rationalisation agenda whilst improving service delivery and making significant savings.
- Remaining responsive to the issues arising from Welfare Reform.
- Development of neighbourhood planning in the inner urban areas.
- Supporting new delegations to Area Committees and the wider locality working agenda.
- Improving integrated partnership work to address worklessness.

## **SOUTH EAST**

### **2012/13 Achievements**

- Area Committee chairs delivered a refreshed approach to Area Committee business. Cross ward and cross area committee working improved considerably with sharing of resources increasingly normalised. 90% of wellbeing fund spent, committed, or approved within the financial year
- Ginnel priority lists developed and mechanical sweeping routes revised leading to improvements in the cleanliness of the environment and response rates. Crime and grime collaborative arrangements reviewed and revised by Area Champions.
- Employment and Skills Board pilot delivered aligning employability and skills, NEET, welfare reform, and the enabling of local economies. 'Windows of Opportunity' project delivered. South East NEET Reduction Plan developed and currently being implemented. Frontline staff briefings on welfare reform for 150 staff delivered improving knowledge, awareness and the quality of customer response.
- South Leeds Community Life Magazine, South Leeds Life Blog and Middleton and Belle Isle Neighbourhood Improvement Board Facebook page established for a modern 'sociable' approach to communication, improving resident engagement levels.
- Project to reduce smoking rates initiated, action plan developed and weekly smoking cessation drop-in clinic delivered. Local Alcohol Licensing Policy for South East Leeds developed and being implemented. Obesity review completed and next steps being considered.
- Neighbourhood Plans (planning) in rural and urban areas underway supporting local people to shape their area with further planning areas being considered. Neighbourhood Framework developed and delivered in consultation with local residents shaping their places alongside their local elected members.
- Derelict land redeveloped through 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector social enterprise approaches providing for greater local ownership. Derelict and nuisance properties substantially reduced improving local conditions for residents. Community centres successfully supported towards community led operations providing for greater local ownership.
- Neighbourhood Improvement Plans delivered with and alongside residents improving the quality of the environment and access to local services to improve outcomes.

- 27 community events supported e.g. Beeston Festival, Morley Literature Festival and Older Peoples Event Week improving the civic life of areas. 2 Area Committee celebration events delivered highlighting the achievements of projects funded by Area Committee and promoting local groups & services.
- Excellent programme of out of school activities for children and young people delivered and a further comprehensive programme of children and young people activities commissioned to improve NEET levels, attendance, and transition to high school.

### **2013/14 Challenges**

- Maximising employability and skills
- Shaping our local neighbourhood economies
- Minimising the impact of poverty
- Maximising the efficient and effective use of local council assets and their rationalisation.
- Implementing new delegations & the actions of the Area Working Review.
- Tackling significant local health and wellbeing issues.

### **WEST NORTH WEST**

#### **2012/13 Achievements:**

- Environmental delegation well embedded. Environmental sub-groups working well and leading to member-led improvements and challenge.
- Good progress on developing a working relationship with West CCG. Local discussions and priorities have influenced the CCG resource priorities e.g. specific programme of investment in alcohol identified and community well-being around suicide prevention and joint working with the WellBeing Centre developments.
- Local partnership infrastructures in place to respond to challenges in disadvantaged communities and support integrated working at locality level. Examples include Neighbourhood Boards and new format for Community Forums increasing community involvement.
- Over 50 Community Forums have taken place and new forum events have been developed. Various community events have been supported such as Christmas Lights, community fund days and community days of action. Social media has been piloted as a way of communicating with residents and it is attracting 1,080 followers.
- Enabling community asset transfer to local community organisations. Strong support from Area Committees to facilitate the development of locally-led and community responsive asset transfers.
- Good progress with the Big Local project – elected Community led-Board in place, community profile complete and a programme for community engagements in place.



- Progress with Neighbourhood Planning and engagement with Area Committees. A number of Neighbourhood Forums have been supported. Effective working relationships are in place with the Town Councils.
- The Council's Partnership around Student Changeover and Fresher's week continues to improve. There has been excellent resident and partner engagement and last year was viewed as very successful. Despite continued environmental challenges there has been an improvement in resident satisfaction with the management of the changeover process.
- Good progress through Area Committees and the Area Leadership Team to drive programmes of work focused on:
  - Employability –locally-led programmes for some of the inner city communities and working with partners and clusters on local action to support targeted work with people who need access to training support and job guidance.
  - Welfare Reform – good partnership with the ALMO and Health to promote better understanding of the Welfare Reform changes.
  - Health and Well Being – Locally led programmes of work on Suicide Prevention and Alcohol misuse
  - Communities- Locally led approach to Operation Optimal to reduce burglary.

## **2013/14 Challenges**

- Further work to integrate environmental services locally using the opportunities of the Parks and Countryside delegation and the ALMO Review
- Asset Review – managing the change and exploring the new opportunities around the reconfiguration of the asset base
- Implementing the Area Review and driving the pace of and shaping new delegations
- Driving a local approach to Poverty – focusing on Employability, Welfare and Debt.

## **Authors**

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