

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Narrowing the Gap Inquiry (2006/2007) - Recommendation Monitoring

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Where we are up to</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Cont'</b>
1	<p><b>That a work programme be developed by the Department of Neighbourhoods and Housing setting out a systematic and robust approach to community engagement in the Intensive Neighbourhood Areas in the first instance.</b></p> <p><b>That this be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and then rolled out</b></p>	<p>Work has commenced on identifying and sharing good practice with officers leading on community participation activities in the INM areas.</p> <p>It is planned to build on this work to develop a framework that promotes a more systematic approach to community participation and engendering good community relations. To take this forward a workshop is planned for early autumn with key service providers including Area Management Teams, ALMOs, Police, Primary Care Trusts and others to determine the key elements of the framework and minimum standards of activity. This will then support a consistency of approach to implementation across areas and partners through a menu approach of practical actions that will enable and support community participation and building positive community relations.</p> <p>As part of the Council's change programme a stronger focus is proposed on the delivery of key outcomes to build stronger communities. The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods proposes establishing a corporate grouping of Chief Officers to work collectively to deliver this. This development and implementation of the above framework in INM areas will be monitored and reviewed by this group.</p> <p>The Leeds Initiative framework for effective participation will be presented to the Narrowing the Gap Executive for approval at its September meeting and will be published and widely circulated by the end of the calendar year.</p> <p>The framework for effective participation has been produced jointly with Leeds City Council and Leeds Voice and is linked to work being developed in the department of Environment and Neighbourhoods with area management teams and in the intensive neighbourhood management areas.</p> <p>Work is yet to be done on agreeing monitoring processes, it is</p>		

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		<p>anticipated that this will be completed in the last quarter of this financial year – Jan – March 2008</p>		
<p>2</p>	<p><b>That the Regeneration Team adopt the model of data analysis and presentation used by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during this inquiry.</b></p> <p><b>That the draft Neighbourhood Improvement Plans developed in the Intensive Neighbourhood Management Areas are reviewed against the data profiles.</b></p>	<p>Neighbourhood profiles were produced for each of the INM areas adopting the format used for the Overview and Scrutiny Narrowing the Gap inquiry.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Improvement Plans have been reviewed against the neighbourhood profiles. The review revealed that issues and areas highlighted in the profile were identified for action in the plans. Where plans had not been completed, the profiles have proved useful in providing an evidence base for their further development. The profiles will be updated annually and will continue to provide useful baseline evidence against which plan priorities and actions can be checked and change tracked over time.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Management activity is primarily resourced through the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (DCLG) and therefore the programme’s key objectives to create safer and cleaner neighbourhoods underpinned by effective community engagement are central to the Neighbourhood Improvement Plans. The profiles do cover a broader range of issues than those eligible for SSCF grant funding but provide a robust evidence base that can be employed to inform the targeting of resources by other service providers to improve the quality of life in the target areas.</p> <p>The plans are also informed by direct input from local residents and residents’ perception surveys to ensure that the key issues identified reflect their needs and aspirations for the neighbourhood. It is hoped that this element will grow stronger over time.</p> <p>It is planned to further develop the neighbourhood profiles to capture residents’ perceptions of the area, the quality of services delivered and how these change in quality and importance over time and present this</p>		

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		<p>alongside the existing quantitative information.</p> <p>The Narrowing the Gap executive continues to be concerned about the deficit in monitoring equalities against key targets recognising that national monitoring requirements are unhelpful in gaining a consistent approach in Leeds.</p> <p>Issues about equality monitoring were raised again in the 2006/07 LAA performance report. <b>Action has been taken</b> by the policy and performance team in Leeds City Council in partnership with the central equalities team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure that all partners have an <b>up to date list of equality categories</b> against which to monitor</li> <li>- the LAA <b>monitoring template specifically requests equality monitoring information against each target.</b></li> </ul> <p>It will not be possible to know how successful these actions have been until information is gathered for the 2007/08 monitoring report.</p>		
3	<p><b>That Leeds Initiative undertakes a review of the district partnership structure alongside appropriate consultation with partners in order to mirror other existing administrative boundaries.</b></p> <p><b>We would also recommend that the connectivity and relationships between the Vision for Leeds, the Local Area Agreement and the Regeneration Plan is explored, thus making possible an integrated framework geared to tackling neighbourhood needs and priorities.</b></p>	<p>The Council's Executive Board has agreed a new corporate planning framework that clarifies the connectivity and relationships between the key strategies and plans of the Council and partners.</p> <p>The new framework integrates the Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Plan into a single document - The Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-2011- which becomes the key delivery plan for the Vision.</p> <p>The Regeneration Plan will be replaced by a Regeneration Programme to ensure the effective resourcing and management of all the Council's major regeneration schemes. Regeneration objectives will be incorporated within the Leeds Strategic Plan by means of key indicators and targets that aim to narrow the gap between localities, communities and key groups.</p>		

		<p>The Executive Board also made provision for a Member Reference Group to oversee the Leeds Strategic Plan and to facilitate greater elected member involvement. This will ensure that the planning framework promotes the delivery of improved outcomes for all neighbourhoods and that members are able to deliver on their leadership and extended scrutiny responsibilities across key partner agencies.</p> <p>Revised operational boundaries adopted by partners prompted a review of the existing arrangements for District Partnerships by the Narrowing the Gap Executive. A number of stakeholders have been consulted including Area Committee and District Partnership Chairs and further consultation will take place over the coming weeks and will be reported to the Narrowing the Gap Executive at the end of September 2007.</p> <p><b>A review of district partnerships began in May 2007</b> requested by the Narrowing the Gap Executive. The review remains underway and is considering how we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to changing boundaries</li> <li>• Respond to external factors – including those outlined in the white paper and to meet the requirements of the LAA</li> <li>• Balance thematic structures and district/locality working</li> <li>• Consider resources and co-ordination</li> <li>• Develop the “locality working” agenda</li> </ul> <p>A workshop was held in August 2007 to consult with area managers; chairs of district partnerships and area committees; and other officers from the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate and Leeds Initiative Office. The workshop forms part of the consultation process on the review of the district partnership structure and will form part of thinking on future structures. A report with recommendations will be presented for approval at the September meeting of the Narrowing the Gap Executive</p> <p>Proposals outlining changes to the DP structure will be presented to <b>Leeds City Council</b> Corporate Management Team and Leadership</p>		
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4	<p><b>That Leeds Initiative considers how strategic leadership is manifested and whether a more robust leadership model is required, taking into account the distinction between political and operational leadership.</b></p>	<p>A review of the Leeds Initiative strategy and development groups has concluded and recognised the need to enhance strategic leadership across all themes of the Vision for Leeds and the LAA. New groups are currently being established to oversee the ongoing delivery of the Vision priorities and outcomes set out in the LAA.</p> <p>It has been agreed that <b>all eight of the strategy and development groups should comprise all- party member representation</b> and nominations have been made. It is hoped that the new arrangements will contribute to more robust political leadership and engagement as well as providing a distinction between political and operational leadership.</p> <p>The <b>review of the corporate structures</b> of the Leeds Initiative <b>remains</b></p>		

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		<p><b>underway with the intent to enhance and make more robust political and partnership leadership</b> in driving forward the narrowing the gap and going up a league aims of the Vision for Leeds, as well as in overseeing the LAA delivery.</p> <p>A report with recommendations will be considered at the next meeting of the <b>Leeds Initiative Board to be held in October 2007</b>. Four options have been considered widely with the strongest support for option 2 which proposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evolving the existing Leeds Initiative Board into a broader Assembly to meet twice yearly to consider issues of particular interest in driving progress within the city, in particular, issues which provide an interface between the going up a league and narrowing the gap agendas;</li> <li>• evolving the existing two executives into boards – a Narrowing the Gap Board and a Going up a League Board;</li> <li>• a chair’s liaison group to reinforce connectivity</li> </ul>		
5	<p><b>That Executive Board have a debate on the levels of devolving services to area management, including the corresponding capacity of area management and District Partnership arrangements.</b></p>	<p>Councillor Chapman, Lead Member, Environment and Neighbourhoods portfolio, has completed her report on area management and this is due to be considered by Executive Board in October 2007, alongside a report from officers to further develop the role and responsibilities of Area Committees.</p>		
6	<p><b>That Leeds Initiative reviews its own structures to respond to the themes of the local area agreements.</b></p>	<p>The review of the L.I. structure has been undertaken in two phases:</p> <p><b>Phase 1 – strategy and partnership groups</b> Changes to this part of the structure were <b>agreed by the Leeds Initiative Board in April 2007</b>. The new structure is currently being implemented and will be <b>complete by September `07</b>.</p>		

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		<p>Changes to the strategy and partnership groups concentrate on emphasising the role of strategy groups in leadership and in delivering the vision for Leeds/LAA improvement targets.</p> <p>The new strategy and development groups <b>incorporate the themes of the LAA</b>. Additionally <b>delivery/commissioning partnerships are being established in partnership with the LAA team</b> to give a particular focus to delivery/commissioning issues.</p> <p><b>Phase 2 – Corporate level; board and 2 executives</b> Review of the corporate level of the Leeds Initiative structure was started in April 2007.</p> <p>The preferred option identified through the review is outlined in recommendation 4.</p> <p>Now complete, the preferred option is for an <b>assembly, 2 boards</b> (Narrowing the Gap Board and Going Up a League Board) <b>and chairs liaison group</b> to reinforce connectivity between narrowing the gap and going up a league.</p> <p>Of most significance to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the future of work to narrowing the gap and therefore of the narrowing the gap executive, which will become the Narrowing the Gap Board, increasing the authority and influence of the current executive.</p> <p>Discussions will be held by end of 2007 to discuss the future synergy of the executive and the LAA Strategy Group. Members of the executive and the LAA Strategy Group will be involved in these discussions.</p> <p>The revised <b>top level structure of the Leeds Initiative will be implemented by January 2008</b>.</p>		
7	<p><b>That the Narrowing the Gap Executive draws together the most influential partners and</b></p>	<p>Changes to the narrowing the gap executive from executive to board will include a <b>review of the executive’s terms of reference and</b></p>		

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	<p><b>council service providers to plan, monitor and bring coherence and connectivity to the numerous activities that take place at a local level.</b></p>	<p><b>membership</b> to ensure the most influential partners are engaged.</p> <p>This development will add coherence and connectivity to links between the LAA strategy group and the executive.</p> <p>The chairs liaison group will reinforce connectivity between the NtG and Going Up a League agendas.</p> <p>The neighbourhood policy strategy and development group will provide a focus for work at the local level to bring connectivity at the local level.</p>		
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