

## Report of the Chair Inner West Community Committee

### Report to Full Council

**Date: 11th November 2015**

**Subject: Inner West Community Committee**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Armley, Bramley & Stanningley & Kirkstall Wards		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

### Summary of main issues

This report provides an overview of the progress, achievements and opportunities for the Inner West Community Committee over the past year. Key achievements include:

- Hosting four themed meetings around key community priorities;
- Training and Induction event for nine resident co-optees;
- Generating a new multi-agency pilot around mental health.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 2 The purpose of this report is to outline the progress, achievements, opportunities and challenges of the Inner West Community Committee over the period since the last update to Full Council in January 2015.

## **3 Background information**

- 4 Area Committees were established in 2004 to improve service delivery at local level and deliver projects and programmes of work on priority issues in the locality. In 2014 Community Committees were established to build on the successes of Area Committees but to better engage with communities, and in particular increase the attendance and active involvement of local people at Community Committee meetings.

- 5 This report looks at the achievements of the Community Committee over the past year, and highlights the opportunities and challenges for the future.

## **6 Progress**

7. The Community Committee has made considerable progress in refining the style of meeting and looking at how to best engage with a wider audience. Part of this has involved the production of a user friendly discussion paper that describes elements of the topic in bite sized and colourful format.

8. This year the Committee has considered some important topics and has held the following workshops:

- ***Childhood Obesity & Family Health (January 2015)***
- ***Mental Health (March 2015)***
- ***Housing (June 2015)***
- ***Domestic Violence (September 2015)***

9. ***Childhood Obesity & Family Health*** – This themed workshop focussed on how to improve the health of children, young people and families in the Inner West.

10. The discussions and presentations focused on the various initiatives that are in place to tackle childhood obesity; understanding what the barriers are and looking at who can influence change.

11. Discussion workshops looked at if there are local barriers to change such as lack of local greenspace, access to fresh fruit and vegetables as well as whether there was a wider education campaign needed on healthy eating.

12. The Inner West Committee agreed to promote the 'Food Dudes' food programme to schools, and create new opportunities for children and young people to be more active within their local communities. Eight schools signed up but unfortunately the company went into administration, so work is underway to commission a new provider of this service.

13. In order to increase the opportunities for physical activity for young people in the area, the Committee funded over £18,000 worth of sporting activities. This has included summer and weekend activities for young people and a new Bramley Parkrun run every Saturday morning.



The Bramley 'Mummy' spent the summer at Manor Park Surgery teaching children about healthy eating and how their bodies work.

14. **Mental Health** - In March, the Community Committee was joined by experts from Public Health and mental health charities to ask a key question - how can we support people suffering from mental illness to access services in the community? The planning, preparation and delivery of this Committee involved the Community Committee Champions who are also professionals in the field of mental health.
15. Councillors discussed how the public and voluntary sectors can work more closely together, bringing in partners from across all services. They heard about the new 'Patient Empowerment Project' championed by local GPs and how their outreach workers are helping people access all sorts of community activities.
16. At the meeting, it was agreed that tackling social isolation is a priority area of work, and that the Committee would look to fund a bespoke project with Public Health and Housing in the Armley tower blocks to try out new ways of engaging residents in need. The Councillors agreed £15,000 of funding for this project at the Committee and following this, Officers worked to agree a match funding of £35,000 from Environment and Housing which has enabled this unique pilot work to get underway.
17. Following the Committee the topic of Mental Health was also discussed at the Armley and Bramley Forums and generated lots of interested discussion.
18. **Housing** - The Committee looked at how good quality housing impacts positively upon the physical and emotional health of tenants, looking at housing stock, what works well and where improvements need to be made. Key to the discussions was the drive to engage more with a broader range of tenants, particularly younger tenants. Time was also spent looking at issues around fuel poverty and what can be done to support tenants to make the most cost effective choices around energy usage and suppliers.

19. The Committee is promoting the new 'YAGI' engagement programme for young tenants and will support a campaign around fuel poverty when the new initiatives proposed at the meeting are launched.
20. Since the meeting, officers from Housing Leeds have been recruiting to two new resident groups for the Broadleas in Bramley and Ley Lane area of Armley. Ward Members have supported these initial meetings and consultation events.
21. ***Domestic Violence and Abuse*** - The meeting in September looked at domestic violence and abuse and how it affects individuals, families and communities in the Inner West where there are higher levels reported than the City average. The meeting was led by contributions from Safer Leeds and Behind Closed Doors, a domestic violence charity who provided information on bespoke projects that are taking place in the area. The aim of the workshop was to increase knowledge on the subject and to raise awareness of the support that is available.
22. Since the Committee it has been agreed that the Inner West will aim to raise the profile of domestic violence and abuse during the Leeds 16 Days of Action, including a poster on the Armley billboard and a social media campaign.



Jane Thoy from 'Behind Closed Doors' delivering a powerful presentation on Domestic Violence to the Community Committee.

23. **Priority Neighbourhoods**
24. The West Neighbourhood Improvement Board meets quarterly and oversees partnership work in the five inner West priority neighbourhoods. Over the past year, targeted and measurable improvement plans have been drawn up for each neighbourhood, focussing on a few key priorities for change.
25. A new Neighbourhood Improvement Partnership has been established for Hawksworth Wood and is focussing on better connecting young people's services, connecting local people and local job opportunities and a variety of health and greenspace matters. The Our Place programme in Bramley is co-ordinated by Barca Leeds and has the support of the Community Committee. An action plan has

been agreed and work has begun on securing funding to improve the Broadleas and Fairfield community centres and identifying projects to support young parents.

26. Our Place in New Wortley has achieved a lot over the last year with support from a range of agencies and the Community Committee which has invested over £20,000 Wellbeing funding this year on projects including an employment worker, the community centre and youth activities.



Adult learners at New Wortley Community Centre receiving their certificates



Saleem Shafi from 'Money Buddies' who are working in all three wards

27. **Wellbeing projects & Youth Activities Fund**

28. The Inner West Community Committee has approved schemes worth £174,000 so far this year. The vast majority is given to voluntary organisations to deliver important projects within our communities such as the 'Children's Champion' in Hawksworth Wood supporting young people with the transition to high school, the 'Community Shop' in Bramley hosting a range of financial inclusion services and a counsellor for young people in Armley and Bramley.
29. The Committee also invests in projects that bring people together, from the ever popular Christmas Light switch on events in Armley and Bramley to family fundays in Kirkstall and art projects in Charlie Cake Park in Armley.
30. The majority of the Committee's Youth Activities funding was spent on summer activities such as the mini Breeze events and play schemes across the three wards. A brand new youth club has been established in Kirkstall ward in partnership with local residents, and thanks to the Community Committee, the Saturday Night Project at Armley Leisure Centre was able to continue, entertaining over 100 young people every week.



Young people supported by Angel of Youths delivering a community project at Armley Library



Another hugely successful Kirkstall Festival was held in July with thousands of people attending

### Social Media

31. The introduction of Facebook and Twitter has allowed the Community Committee to interact with a wider audience by developing a stronger social connection with residents who have not necessarily previously engaged. Social media has provided a platform to build relationships and share useful and interesting information from local media, community groups and residents. The Facebook page is specifically for the Inner West area, the Twitter page @\_YourCommunity is a city wide account for all Community Committees.
32. The Communities Team have publicised a range of messages on Facebook around consultation, community events or improvements to an area, which have proven to be very popular, with some posts reaching up to 6,000 views. The most popular posts have been about Ley Lane greenspace and the Craggside Rec dog show.

### Community Committee Co-optees

33. The Inner West Community Committee is unique in having as many Co-optees as Elected Members. In the summer the nine co-optees were given an official induction in Civic Hall which included a presentation from Corporate Governance around the Council's decision making structure; information on the importance of local accountability and guidance around communication and engagement. Feedback from the event was very positive.
34. The co-optees are actively involved in the three subgroups of the Committee and play a vital role of feeding in local information.

### Community Committee Champions & Subgroups

35. Community Committee Champions positions are held by the following Members in Inner West during 2015/16:
  - Children & Young People – Cllr Caroline Gruen
  - Environment & Community Safety – Cllr Smart and Cllr Ritchie
  - Health & Well Being and Adult Social Care – Cllr Lowe and Cllr Venner



- Employment, Skills & Welfare – Cllr McKenna and Cllr Heselwood
- Housing Advisory Panels – Cllr Ritchie, Cllr McKenna and Cllr Illingworth

36. Through the sub groups local Ward Members have supported and championed a range of engagement activities including a very successful dog fouling campaign and family dog show in Hawksworth Wood. Through the Children & Young People sub group Members have been involved in consulting with young people in schools on the Youth Activities Fund which has resulted in better targeting and tailoring of projects.



One of the posters used on lamppost signs as part of the Environment Sub Group's dog fouling campaign in Hawksworth Wood

### 37. **Corporate Considerations**

#### **Consultation and Engagement**

38. The Inner West Community Committee has good working relationships with the communities it serves. The Committee will continue to support and enable local people and communities to engage and interact with us on issues that are important to them.

#### **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

39. The Inner West Community Committee is committed to equality and cohesion. Specific equality impact assessments are undertaken on community engagement plans, specific initiatives and decisions as required. All projects funded from Well Being must have an equal opportunities policy and outline which group the project will work with, and how equality and cohesion issues have been considered. Internal and statutory partners are committed to equality and cohesion and all projects they are involved with will have considered these issues.

#### **Council policies and City Priorities**

40. The Best Council Plan 2013-17 includes the key outcome to make it easier for people to do business with us, and the move to community committees makes a significant contribution to the delivery of this.

#### **Resources and value for money**

41. There is no new resource implications detailed within this report.

**Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

42. There are no legal, access to information or call in implications arising from this report.

**Risk Management**

43. There are no risk management issues of any significance arising from this report.

44. **Conclusions**

45. The Area Committees were established in 2004 to improve service delivery at local level and deliver projects and programmes of work on priority issues in the locality. The Community Committees have since built on the successes of Area Committees and developed on the engagement and involvement of local communities in the decision making process.

46. All themed meeting have allowed the Community Committee to work with a bottom-up approach by engaging with stakeholders to envision ways to strengthen the way in which citizens are involved in local decision making.

47. The Community Committee already has good relationships with its local communities and utilises its available funding streams to support local projects. It recognises that there are challenges ahead especially with engaging with hard to reach groups, but will continue to strengthen its positive working relationships with stakeholders to improve local services and facilities.

48. **Recommendations**

49. Members are asked to note the content of this report..

50. **Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.