



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

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Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

Outer West Area Committee

Date: 11th September 2009

Subject: Area Manager's Report

Electoral Wards Affected:

Calverley & Farsley
Farnley & Wortley
Pudsey

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call in Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform members of progress on a number of projects in Outer West Leeds as determined by the Area Delivery Plan 2009-12. The Area Delivery Plan is the key strategic document produced by Area Committees and the local expression of the Leeds Strategic Plan.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 This report informs Members of the progress against the Area Delivery Plan 2009-12 as agreed by Executive Board in July 2008. The report is structured around the Leeds Strategic Plan themes.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Area Delivery Plan for this Area Committee was agreed by Executive Board in July 2009 together with the Area Committee functions and enhanced roles. The Area Committee approved the ADP at its last meeting. However, since then, there have been some amendments to the profile information and introduction. Members should note that this revised information, along with the action plan is available to view on-line on the Leeds City Council website via the following path: Council and democracy / Councillors, democracy and elections / Council documents, Area Committee

information / West Outer Area Delivery Plan / West Outer Area Delivery Plan 2009-12 (pdf).

3.0 Main Issues

Environment

- 3.1 The Area Committee received full reports at its February meeting on Health and Environmental Action Service (HEAS) and Streetscene Services in its area. As a result of these reports, it was decided that separate meetings should be held with these services and a Member representative of each ward, to discuss the proposals more fully and to give a ward based perspective on issues to be addressed. Meetings were held between Members and Officers in June and it was decided that each service would report back to the Area Committee on a six monthly anecdotal basis i.e. against their areas of work, such as fly-tipping, trade waste dumping etc showing what they have found in the Outer area to be the main areas of work / requests for service.
- 3.2 A full report on community green space is presented elsewhere on this agenda, outlining area specific work to date and plans for the future for the Parks and Countryside Service in the Outer West area.
- 3.3 Farsley schools, in conjunction with FYDP, have been taking part in various community activities, which are hopefully a pre-cursor to a full Farsley in Bloom initiative next year. Farsley Spring Bank Primary School has taken part in 'Ginnel Fix It', clearing up areas of Farsley. They have also developed a hanging basket initiative with local shops, providing 18 baskets to different businesses, with the agreements that the shops will maintain them. Farsley Farfield Primary School has implemented a similar scheme with a parade of shops near the school and they also supported the Farsley Festival by selling plant tubs to the community.
- 3.4 The Area Management Team have met with the Floral Initiative Officer to seek support for this scheme. It is proposed to hold an initial meeting in September to launch the scheme and get local people on board with bulb-planting. The Farsley Community Festival in July advertised for volunteers for the In-Bloom group, with a view to establishing some inter-generational work between local schools and the local Live at Home scheme.
- 3.5 The Area Management Team continues to work closely with Groundwork Leeds to improve run down areas and poor quality green spaces in Outer West. They particularly focus in areas in the bottom 10% in terms of deprivation statistics. However, where additional funding is provided, this allows them to work more flexibly. The Outer West Area Committee, has in the past, supported Groundwork to deliver projects in areas outside the bottom 10% to facilitate environmental improvements and community cohesion. They have also supported the Green Check Project to work in 2 primary schools in Outer West.
- 3.6 Of particular interest, is the work which is taking place as part of the LAMPs in the Outer West area. A scheme designed by Groundwork has now been completed to provide a kick around area at the Stone Circle on Gamble Hill.
- 3.7 The Area Committee has approved funding for a Junior Warden's scheme. Groundwork in conjunction with the Youth Service, will initiate the Junior Warden scheme on the Gamble Hill estate, to provide some ownership of the stone circle

scheme and therefore, hopefully reduce vandalism. In addition, this scheme will to pick up on wider issues such as healthy eating, obesity etc by looking at growing food.

- 3.8 West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre will be dedicated to the wildlife of west Leeds. The new collections will contain only native British species which can mainly be seen in and around the West Leeds Country Park. There will be six new aquariums, enlarged aviaries housing native birds and mammals, an interactive woodland area and 'Nectar Corner' housing an observation beehive. There will also be an community area in which activities will be run throughout the year, including bird box building, arts and craft sessions, learning to be responsible and safe when fishing and "meet the wildlife" sessions. The centre is due to open in Spring 2010.

Thriving Communities

- 3.9 A full Community Safety update report is attached elsewhere on this agenda, including details about the implementation of a Designated Public Place Order in Farsley.
- 3.10 A number of area based regeneration schemes are underway in Outer West. The Farsley Town & District Centre (T&DC) scheme is nearing completion. Outstanding works to be completed include resurfacing works to High Street with stone setts laid as an entrance feature. It is also proposed to replace the cenotaph railings. The condition of the ginnel adjacent to 52 Town Street is currently being reviewed and ownership details being sought.
- 3.11 The Pudsey T&DC scheme is largely completed. The bus lay-by was due to be funded through a section 106 agreement linked to the proposed Cemetery Road development. However, that development has not proceeded. Fortunately however, this work will now be funded through the Local Transport Plan. Site investigations have been undertaken to identify underground services and work is likely to start on site during 2009/10.
- 3.12 The heritage lighting element of the scheme is yet to be completed as the Area Management Team is trying to ensure that the lighting style ties in with the bus station scheme.
- 3.13 A Feasibility Report on Pudsey Leisure Centre was presented to Pudsey Members earlier this year. The proposals include new entrance, active frontage, new public toilets, interior refurbishment and extended Bodyline gym and would cost approximately £2 million. These proposals supersede the T&DC plans for demolition and re-provision of public toilets. The August 2009 Executive Board recommended that the proposals to modernise and refurbish the facilities provided at eight sites, including Pudsey, be approved. Executive Board also noted an indicative timescale of 2011/15 for the Pudsey scheme, whilst the proposals for Aireborough, Kirkstall and Wetherby would be prioritised.

- 3.14 The Lower Wortley Road Improvement Scheme is progressing. The Stopping Up Order of the Bull Ring has been confirmed by the Secretary of State. Notices now have to be posted to this effect around the relevant area to allow six weeks for objections. Providing that the Order is not challenged, work can begin on site on 3rd September 2009. Contact has been made with the Headteacher at the local Lower Wortley Primary School with a view to work commencing in the autumn term with some of its pupils to design the artwork for the bullring.
- 3.15 It should be noted that Accent Housing and Unity Housing have now legally acquired the site at Highfield Gardens from Leeds City Council to develop affordable housing comprising 33 houses and 8 bungalows. This site forms part of the West Leeds Gateway area. Accent Housing will be drawing down the grant from the Homes and Communities Agency imminently and it is anticipated that work will start on site shortly. In addition, work is also planned to start on site on Farrow Road,
- 3.16 The Gambles and Heights LAMPs are moving away from concentrating on crime and grime issues, to tackling longer term issues such as young people and anti-social behaviour on the Gambles, and Health and Well-being in its widest sense on the Heights. Meetings have been held with Armley Juniors and the Youth Service to ascertain what youth provision is currently available in the area, and an approach has been made to the Heights Church to see whether their hall could be used as a youth venue, in order to widen the opportunities available to all young people on both estates.
- 3.17 It should also be noted that communities are benefiting from CCTV systems, the installation, monitoring and maintenance of which has been supported by the Area Committee. Recently, a CCTV camera in central Pudsey recorded suspicious activity outside B&M stores and a subsequent break-in to the store.

Stronger Communities

- 3.18 Members will be aware of the 'Your Communities, Your Priority' events that took place in February, March and April of this year across the West North West area. In the Outer West area, the Area Management Team held three events which were attended by a total of 94 residents.
- 3.19 The aim of the events was to engage the public in the process of setting local priorities to inform the development of the 2009-12 Area Delivery Plans for the four Area Committee Areas. Evaluations of the events have highlighted some areas for improvement in relation to future community engagement work.
- 3.20 Across WNW, only 412 residents attended the 12 events. As a proportion of total population for the WNW area this is very low and unrepresentative in terms of community profile. Given this experience, the WNW Area Management Team is seeking to review the Committee's existing Community Engagement Strategy which was agreed in December 2008 with a view to enhancing the way in which we support strong and inclusive communities. The Committee is clear that it wants to strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities for local people and groups to influence what happens in their communities. The Committee has also stated that it wants to provide opportunities for communities to shape and influence the development and delivery of services that reflect local needs and priorities. Critically, the Area management Team needs to manage and co-ordinate engagement activities to ensure partner participation and consistency so that we provide opportunities for participation for all

sections of the communities.

3.21 In order to make both the committee's and its partners' community engagement work more meaningful – over the next few months the AMT will be developing:

- a) a dedicated Area Committee website to promote and communicate the work of the Area Committee more effectively along with a web based community engagement survey platform with a menu linking all partner initiatives, latest news, and a means to undertake and evaluate web-based surveys on local matters. This will either be linked to the Council's 'Talking Point' portal or operate as a stand-alone survey tool.
- b) An Area Committee Citizen's Panel – currently city-wide panel has 2000 residents across the whole city. Alongside existing community engagement structures the Area Committee's Citizen's Panel will provide a representative view of public opinion and will be useful when considering the impact and effect of changes to public services. It will also be an on-going sounding board and will be more likely to provide useful results than the recent engagement events and traditional ward forum structures.
- c) A promotional Area Committee leaflet highlighting the Committee's main achievements over the last couple of years and its priority themes and projects for the next couple of years. The leaflet will also include information on how local people can get more involved in the work of the Area Committees and its partners in the Outer West area and;
- d) More thematic and issue based consultation using outreach as a model for gauging the views of communities of interest – our experience has been that where residents and stakeholders really care about an issue and can relate to outcomes e.g. a DPPO or a high street improvement scheme, or a neighbourhood planning exercise we tend to get more people getting involved and participating. The AMT will be looking to develop a programme of such consultation with partners through existing ward forum structures.
- e) A full community engagement strategy report will be presented to the Committee at one of its future meetings for approval.

3.22 It should be noted that Councillor Richard Brett is driving forward a plan to designate 2010 as the Leeds Year of Volunteering. Area Teams have been asked to participate in a programme to increase the number of volunteers and improve access to a wide range of volunteering opportunities. The leaders of the main political parties have given their broad support to this. It will be steered and approved by a Political Steering Group that Councillor Brett will Chair.

3.23 It is being suggested that each Area Committee could fund and promote two Volunteer Promotion or Celebration events in their area during the year - specifically aiming to increase volunteering opportunities and volunteer activity by individuals. One of these events could be to run a Volunteer of the Year Awards scheme for their area - with area winners going forward to a City Wide Celebration Event and Award Ceremony at the end of 2010. Further details will be brought back to a future Area Committee with a possible request for funding to support this work in 2010/11.

Learning

- 3.24 A full report on Children's Services (including a Youth Service update) will be presented at the October Area Committee.
- 3.25 A report was submitted to the Council's Executive Board in July 2008 detailing the proposed role for Area Committees. In the appendix to this – "Area Committee Roles for 2008/09" – the role of Committees in supporting locally the delivery of the Leeds Children and Young People's plan was outlined. This document highlighted the role for members to work as "champions for children's services and act to influence where appropriate". With this in mind a specification for the role of the Children and Young People's Champion (across all Area Committees) has been drafted. Similarly, specifications are being drawn up for the role of Champions for Health and Wellbeing, Worklessness and Community Safety.
- 3.26 The Area Committee may be aware of the recent sad news that Dr Bill Pullen, the head teacher at Farnley Park High School unfortunately passed away after a short illness. He was a well-loved and respected figure at the school and in the community and had also supported the Area Committee in its partnership work to deliver improvements in the Outer West area.

Health & Well Being

- 3.27 Health & Well Being themed event took place prior to the July Area Committee. This allowed partners to debate health and well being issues and inform the work of the Area Committee.
- 3.28 The theme of September's Area Committee event is Environment and Well being. This session will focus on how healthy environments and partners' actions to further this can contribute to community well being. The Area Committee will hear about the work of partners such as Groundwork Leeds, Park Spring Primary School, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) and West Leeds Healthy Living Network.
- 3.29 NHS Leeds representatives are attending the autumn round of community forums in the Outer West area. They were due to attend this Area Committee, but due to other priorities, they have had to re-prioritise work and hope to attend a future meeting to update the Area Committee.

Enterprise & Economy

- 3.30 There are few signs of recovery yet in Outer West in the current recession. Unemployment continues to increase. Out of 44,210 people of working age in the area, 2,104 people were claiming benefits in July 2009, compared with 2,037 in April 2009, representing 4.3% of the local workforce (source Leeds Economy Bulletin Summer 2009). The number of investment enquiries coming to the Council has also continued to fall in Outer West over the last six quarters, from 90 industrial enquires to 30, from 43 office enquiries to 25, from 53 retail enquiries to 29 and 42 land enquiries to 29.
- 3.31 Pudsey Business Forum continues to be held monthly although attendance has dropped notably over the summer. It continues to be a useful arena for business consultation and informing the work of the Town Centre manager (TCM).

- 3.32 Regular steering group meetings are held, including local businesses, Councillors, Police, Leeds Ahead and Area Management to help focus the work of the TCM. Pudsey's 'Shop Local' scheme which was launched in April 2009, will be strengthened in early autumn with the introduction of a loyalty card scheme. This will involve shoppers using a reward card and having their card stamped at participating stores. Once six stamps have been collected the card is entered into a monthly prize draw to win £50 of Pudsey shopping vouchers.
- 3.33 On August 16th the TCM ran a Teddy Bear's picnic in Pudsey Park. This was a very successful day with approximately 500 people attending. In response to a flyer distributed locally, parents and children brought a teddy and a picnic and enjoyed entertainment from Suitcase Circus and also the Friendly Band who performed as part of the Bands in the Park season. The aim was to combine these events with the Artsmix Market which also took place that afternoon, to create a critical mass and help ensure the success of each event. The events in the park were very enjoyable and well supported. However, the Artsmix Market was reported to be fairly quiet.
- 3.34 Pudsey featured on BBC Radio 5 Live as the TCM was interviewed for the Drivetime Show in July. The TCM highlighted the work that is going on in Pudsey to address issues associated with the current recession and the tone of the interview was positive and helped promote Pudsey.

Culture

- 3.35 The fifth 'I Love West Leeds' festival took place between 3rd-19th July, with the festival day being held in Hainsworth Park, Farsley. Highlights of the festival fortnight included a photography exhibition, bike-in movie, two new plays, music and dancing. This year Farsley Youth Development Project's 'Farsley Community Festival' was combined with the 'I Love West Leeds' festival to provide one larger scale event. The festival day included free workshops, a pamper zone, 5-a-side football, arts and crafts. The festival has been short listed for Regeneration & Renewal magazine's award for culture-led project of the year. The results will be announced on September 23rd.
- 3.36 The Area Committee has already supported additional summer band concerts throughout Outer West. The Area Management Team continues to support Artsmix in establishing a regular arts and crafts market throughout the year in Pudsey and where possible is attempting to tie these in with other events, for example the summer band concerts and Teddy Bear's Picnic, to generate greater visitor numbers.
- 3.37 A junior music concert took place on the 21st July on Pudsey's Market Place car park and was very well supported. This was delivered by the TCM in conjunction with Interplay.

Transport

- 3.38 The key current transport scheme for Outer West is Pudsey bus station. Tenders have been returned within budget and have been appraised by Metro and LCC. A report went to Metro's Executive Board on 25th August 2009 including recommendations on a preferred contractor. Briefings have taken place with ward Members and the matter is due to be discussed at the Pudsey Business Forum on September 23rd. Public notices will be displayed around the site to provide information to the public. An autumn start on site date is likely, but will need to be agreed through discussions with the selected contractor.

3.39 Highways have confirmed that they are now in a position to implement the 20mph zones in the Dragons and Whincovers / Cobdens area of Farnley & Wortley ward, after some considerable public consultation. This scheme is referred to in the well-being budget report elsewhere on this Area Committee's

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

Member Consultation

4.1 Members are consulted on projects and initiatives within their wards. In addition each Leeds Strategic Plan theme has a Member champion to progress work in this area.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

5.1 In order to meet the Area Committee's functions, funding is available via Well Being budgets, the Community Centres Budget and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

5.2 In order to meet the Area Committee's roles, funding is in the main supplied by other Leeds City Council Departments mainstream budgets, and external partner agencies e.g. the Police and Primary Care Trust, which is in turn reflected in the fact that the Area Committee's role here is only to influence, develop and consult. However, wellbeing funding has resourced some projects here e.g. community engagement, area based regeneration schemes and conservation area reviews.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The functions and roles of the Area Committee aim to:

- Improve the quality and value for money of Council service delivery
- Improve the quality of democracy and find new ways to facilitate citizen participation in local government through the development of links between Ward Members and their communities
- To co-ordinate policy and service delivery between the local service providers.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Outer West Area Committee members are invited to note the contents of the report and to comment on any aspect of the matters raised.

Background Papers:

None