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## Report of Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

### Report to North West (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 14 January 2010

Subject: Community Engagement

#### Electoral Wards Affected:



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

Following an April 2009 review of community engagement practices linked to the development of Area Delivery Plans, the West North West (WNW) Area Management Team undertook a series of actions to strengthen its community engagement programme of work.

This report seeks to inform the Area Committee of the WNW Community Engagement Programme and the two pilots the team propose to undertake: Citizens Panels and Online Services. The report will conclude that both pilots represent a valuable opportunity to strengthen the team's approach to community engagement. It will recommend that the Area Committee take note of these pilots and provide any comments.

#### 1.0 Purpose Of This Report

To provide the Area Committee with a summary of the West North West Area Management Team's Community Engagement Programme.

To highlight the implementation of the WNW community engagement pilots:

- Citizens Panel
- Online Service

## **2.0 Background Information**

### **WNW Community Engagement Programme**

A review of the team's community engagement practices was undertaken by the West North West Area Management Team following the production of the most recent Area Delivery Plans in April 2009. The resulting report identified areas where the process could be strengthened. From the recommendations of this review, a new and more robust approach to community engagement has been developed that seeks to achieve two key aims:

- Increase the number of local people contributing their views and
- Increase the demographic representation of those consulted
- Enhance local decision making

### **City Wide Residents Survey**

The Leeds Residents Survey is conducted on a bi-annual basis and managed by a cross-council Residents Survey Group. The West North West Area Management Team will use the results of this survey as a point of reference from which to undertake more detailed investigations through the implementation of the team's Community Engagement Programme.

## **3.0 Main Issues**

Using the Delivering Successful Change (DSC) project management approach, a WNW Community Engagement Programme Board, and a range of project teams have been assembled to develop and manage the roll out of this package of work. The WNW Area Management Team (AMT) has developed the following project areas as part of its Community Engagement Programme:

### **Citizens Panel**

Following a series of detailed discussions with the Corporate Communications Team, the WNW Area Management Team propose to enhance the use of the city-wide Citizens Panel by developing an area-based approach to conducting surveys and focus group sessions. Existing city-wide panel members have been asked to join one of the four area based panels. As members of the Area Citizens Panel they will be invited to respond to print and on-line surveys and to attend focus group discussions. This element of the community engagement plan will make an important contribution to achieving the team's goals for achieving diversity within the demographics of its consultation responses. This is one of the pilots for WNW Area Management Team.

### **Online Services**

This project will see the development of a Leeds City Council webpage for the West North West area of the city with the aim of raising the profile of Area Committees, Area Management Team and the Area Delivery Plans. In addition to providing a source of useful information to the public on pages that relate to their locality, it will provide a vehicle for conducting on-line surveys which will be undertaken through Talking Point. The online services project will provide an important mechanism for undertaking surveys and will serve as a "shop front" to engage with the public and partners on a range of issues. This is the second pilot for WNW Area Management Team.

### **Printed Communications**

To develop and distribute a leaflet for each area in WNW that will serve to promote the work of the Area Committee, the role of the Area Management Team and the opportunities for resident involvement in the development of Area Delivery Plans. Following the completion of the Neighbourhood Charter Pilot currently being undertaken in the East North East area, this project team will consider the recommendations and feedback from the pilot and begin to develop a charter specific to the WNW area.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

This project will seek to strengthen the WNW Area Management Team's approach to engaging with a wide range of stakeholders for the purpose of developing Area Delivery Plans. A key outcome of the project will be to secure partner 'buy in' with the Area Delivery Plan development process and to map partners' service planning cycle. Through a series of meetings and workshops, partners will be asked to contribute actions to the ADP and agree to participate in an ongoing process of monitoring service delivery.

## **4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

There are no implications for Council Policy and Governance.

### **Member Consultation**

Reports were brought to the June and September Area Committee for Member consultation.

## **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

As two of the projects are pilots, any resource implications will be considered and identified as part of the feasibility studies that are currently underway. This will be reported on at future meetings. There are no other resource or legal implications at this stage.

## **6.0 Equality Considerations**

## **7.0 Conclusions**

The use of area-level Citizens Panel for the West North West wedge will make a significant contribution to the means by which residents can identify local priorities and engage in the development of the Area Delivery Plans.

A development of web pages for the WNW wedge and each of the 4 areas represents a considerable step forward in how the public is able to access information about the area where they live and will provide a useful means by which members of the public can be directed to online surveys.

The Citizens Panel and On-line Services pilots form part of a WNW toolkit of engagement will collectively provide a robust framework for local decision making. This content of this Community Engagement Programme has been directly informed by a review of community engagement.

Lessons learned from the implementation of these community engagement pilots are likely to have a direct relevance to the other two Area Management Teams in the city. The Programme Board will seek to capture this learning to feedback to other area management teams in the future.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and make any comments.

**Background Papers: None**