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**Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**To: Inner West Area Committee**

**Date: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

**Subject: Area Managers Report**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Armley  
Bramley & Stanningley

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

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**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to inform members of progress against Leeds Strategic Plan and the Inner West Area Delivery Plan.

**1.0 Purpose of This Report**

1.1 This report informs Members of the progress against Leeds Strategic Plan and the Inner West Area Delivery Plan.

**2.0 Background Information**

2.1 The Area Delivery Plan is the delivery of the Leeds Strategic Plan in the Inner West area. This report identifies progress against the themes of the Leeds Strategic Plan.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

#### **Culture**

- 3.1 The work of the Town Centre Manager in Armley has included developing a proposal with I Love West Leeds to install 'Art in Unusual Spaces'. The initiative has now taken possession of the former Cooperative on Town Street after seven volunteers worked hard for several days to clean and paint the unit. A rolling four month programme of exhibitions and activities is now developing. A live drawing event took place in mid November where two artists drew Armley as it passed by the unit. The artwork is now displayed in the old co-op and there will be film footage too. Other activities include Christmas craft, a photographic project with shopkeepers on Town Street and an interactive exhibition for young children. The project is being promoted via social networks such as Facebook and Twitter and it is hoped that it will encourage more people to Armley.
- 3.2 The first Armley Christmas lights switch on took place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Town Street was closed to traffic from 10am till 9pm and the Town Centre Manager arranged fair ground rides, Punch & Judy, Santa's Grotto and a hot chestnut stand from 12 noon. On stage from 5.30pm there was Titan the robot who interacted with the crowd and a performance by Scott Bruton, an X-Factor finalist. The event was very popular and some shops stayed open later than normal as customers still wanted to shop. Although some retailers had concerns early on regarding the road closure, they were generally pleased with the event and encouraged by additional shoppers.
- 3.3 The Town Centre Manager (TCM) is planning a number of events for next year including the annual summer celebration. The TCM will be drawing on his experience from past events to constantly improve the entertainment offer, publicity and attendance. Events may include teddy bears' picnics in Charlie Cake Park and Armley Moor. These are relatively inexpensive to organise.
- 3.4 Community Sports Development has reported that three applications have been submitted to the West Leeds Coaching Scholarship. This will offer four young sport leaders in West Leeds the opportunity to enhance their sporting qualifications by providing a 12 month coaching scholarship. One very positive submission is from a young man from Armley who is currently unemployed but very keen to develop his skills. Community Sports Development will be supporting him through the programme with transport to the university and a learning mentor.
- 3.5 The Museums Service and City Projects team are currently looking at ways to revitalise Armley Mills. A Conservation Appraisal for the site and neighbouring Dunkirk Hill has been completed and consultation is currently ongoing, including a presentation to the Armley Forum in November. This will inform the development prospectus which is now being prepared and effectively identifies how the various elements of the site can be treated. Soft market testing with private sector investors and developers has been ongoing and it is anticipated that this will continue with those who are interested in progressing a comprehensive scheme for the site, which will incorporate a revitalised museum. There may be potential for developers to work in collaboration to utilise expertise and spread risk.

- 3.6 The Townscape Heritage Initiative Officer is proposing to hold a heritage crafts fair on Armley Moor as part of the popular Armley Fun Day. This will provide an opportunity for the local community to find out more about the techniques used by crafts people working on historic buildings.

### **Enterprise and Economy**

- 3.7 It should be noted that five of the eight previously vacant units on Armley Town Street have now been let. New businesses include a veterinary surgery, hair dresser, Polish butchers, mini market and clothing store.
- 3.8 The Economic Policy Team have been working in Inner West with partners including West Leeds Debt Forum, Leeds City Credit Union Ltd, Bramley Credit Union Ltd and NHS Leeds Health Improvement Team to organise a 'Break the Chains of Debt' event in Bramley on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October. This featured a Credit Union incentive of £20 when people open an account and use it to save. The event attracted a large number of local residents and was attended by local MPs, a Leeds Rhinos star as well as the local PCSOs. West North West Homes Leeds reported that five of their tenants arranged to meet with a debt advisor. Five people joined the Bramley Credit Union as a result of the event.
- 3.9 There are plans to run a series of 'Making Every Penny Count' events across Inner West. The aim is to co-ordinate a series of events in priority neighbourhoods in order to increase the financial capability of local people. The events will:
- Provide local people with information about financial support that is available to them (citywide and locally), including debt advice, CAB sessions, benefits advice, tenancy support, energy efficiency
  - Provide local people with money saving tips
  - Help raise awareness of the Credit Union
  - Raise awareness of illegal money lenders and how to get support from the Illegal Money Lending Team
  - Provide information and practical demonstrations on how to involve children in cooking and cooking on a budget
  - Promote free and low cost services available to families such as the Children's Centre, Library Services, after school activities, swim4 free
- 3.10 The Armley Credit Union, which has been supported this year by the Area Committee, continues to grow. Final figures for quarter 3 (September – December 2010) will be available for the next Area Committee.
- 3.11 Jobs & Skills are supporting recruitment for a number of city centre employers. West Leeds residents have or could benefit from these opportunities. Examples include Waitrose, the Leeds Arena, Trinity and Eastgate developments and the Census. If the supermarket development in Armley Town Centre goes ahead, this will present local employment opportunities.
- 3.12 Through Jobs & Skills, all businesses have been offered training from a number of different sources. Jobs and Skills are currently engaged with the Chamber of Commerce to help support businesses with any training and development needs as well as engaging with BARCA and Business Link. The response from businesses has been poor and ways of getting businesses to engage and make the most of these opportunities while they are available are being explored. Jobs and Skills are

also targeting people who might be thinking of starting a business through advertising the availability of free business advice and support. Flyers and posters are being distributed to local retailers and community centres in and around Armley.

- 3.13 Jobcentreplus hosted a benefit / provision awareness session for West North West Homes Leeds frontline staff. The event was well attended and extremely well received. It has provided the frontline housing advisors with a much greater awareness of benefits and support available to help customers back into work and has strengthened the partnership work in the locality. Further follow up work is planned to build on the knowledge given to determine progression and to look at how locality work can be developed, although no firm dates have been agreed.

#### Town Centre Manager (TCM) update

- 3.14 The Armley Business Forum is sustaining reasonable attendance levels and adopting a more proactive approach to town centre issues. The Forum's request for an increased Police presence on Armley Town Street has been noted and Police support has notably improved. Retailers have commented positively on the increased Police presence.
- 3.15 Some retailers such as Yorkshire Linen are reporting good recent sales figures due to various promotions they are running. One of these is a 'shoppers market' scheme where customers can haggle on prices. This has proved to be a successful initiative and could be rolled out to other businesses and possibly developed into a promotion across Armley.
- 3.16 The TCM is hoping to offer training and development for businesses in Armley to increase footfall. This will be particularly important if the proposed new superstore comes to Armley.

#### **Transport**

- 3.17 Many of the schemes proposed for Inner West are on hold due to funding shortages. However, on Armley Town Street, works to install traffic calming measures, including carriageway narrowing, speed tables and speed cushions, started on site in August 2010 and are largely completed. There are some signing works still to complete and it has been confirmed by Members and Highways that the scheme is proving effective. Highways will carry out surveys to check that speeds have been reduced.

#### **Environment**

- 3.18 The work on bringing together the services identified in the report to the last Committee cycle has progressed as follows:
- A Project Board has now been established to oversee delivery which includes Senior Officers from Environmental Services, Regeneration and Governance. The project is being led by Helen Freeman, Chief Environmental Health Officer.
  - A work programme has been produced which aims to achieve the delegation of the services being pulled together by the beginning of the new municipal year. The main tasks to be achieved are:

- Integrating the currently separate services and recruit to the new structure
- Mapping current resources and assessing the environmental management needs of localities
- Delivering a programme of Member Development to equip Area Committees to take on the new responsibilities and manage the Service Level Agreements
- Design and agree the SLAs with Committees

- 3.19 A full progress report and module of Member Development will be provided for the next Committee cycle. Interim progress will be reported at the next Area Committee Chairs meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The Environmental Action Team (EAT) and Police are now looking at improving the action days. They will comprise a Police officer accompanying an EAT officer for two hours once every two weeks to patrol Town Street and tackle any littering or environmental issues. The proposed format of the action days will be reviewed after a three month period and its effectiveness evaluated. In the meantime, the Area Manager for Streetscene Services has confirmed that the mechanical cleaner will be deployed on Town Street regularly on a Sunday.
- 3.20 The TCM will be developing the Keep Armley Tidy campaign in the New Year, in conjunction with local primary schools. The TCM met with local schools during November and several have showed an interest in taking part in the scheme which will begin in January. The EAT are planning to deliver litter prevention education work before the end of March 2011.
- 3.21 Streetscene Services are progressing with a pilot scheme in West Leeds to review street cleaning services as part of the Streetscene Change Programme. The West North West Area Management Team are assisting in Streetscene Services in reviewing current cleansing frequencies to identify which areas need more regular attention. Streetscene Services will be briefing Members as the pilot develops and further details will be reported to the Area Committee in due course. It is anticipated that the pilot will take place during December.
- 3.22 The Bramley Shopping Centre environmental improvements scheme, funded through £8,730 of Area Committee funding was completed in September 2010. This scheme which includes removing the old shrubs, re-planting, a history panel and two benches, has significantly improved the appearance of the shopping centre. The scheme was officially opened by Councillor Harper on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and positive comments have been received from the shopping centre manager.
- 3.23 BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) is working with the Aire Action Leeds Partnership on a proposed project to improve an area of land vested with Environment and Neighbourhoods; supporting the towpath improvement scheme in Kirkstall. The land adjoins the Wyther Lane car park off Broad Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds. The aim of the project is to improve the public greenspace around a busy junction where footpaths, cycle routes and the Leeds-Liverpool canal towpath meet. It is hoped that the work to the area will lead to it become a more inviting space, with reduced instances of fly-tipping, encouraging it to be better used and the community to take ownership of it. The current LCC maintenance programme was supported by volunteer action days in October 2010. The works will be delivered by BTCV using Leeds Met staff and students, West Yorkshire Police PCSOs, and community volunteers. Leeds City Council's interests in the area will be protected by way of a license produced by Legal Services.

## Health & Wellbeing

- 3.24 A task group has been established to address the issue of teenage pregnancy across West Leeds, with a particular focus on the hotspot area of the Broadleas. Inner West and Outer West representatives from the Area Management Team are part of this group and Cllr Taggart has also been invited to attend as a representative of the Area Committee.
- 3.25 Leeds has consistently high teenage pregnancy rate and within West Leeds there are seven postcode areas with particularly high rates within Inner and Outer West. These are LS13 2, LS13 3, LS13 4 (Bramley) LS12 2 (Armley), LS12 4 and LS12 5 (Farnley) and LS28 7 (Pudsey). A group has been set up including Area Management staff, Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator, Youth Service, NHS Leeds, Hollybush Childrens Centre, Education Leeds and Barnados. These postcode areas would benefit from targeted work to reduce teenage conceptions including repeat conceptions. Pudsey Crawshaw, Priesthorpe, Pudsey Grangefield, West Leeds Academy, Swallow Hill and Farnley Park have been identified as schools most in need of support.
- 3.26 Looked after children and care leavers are three times as likely to become teenage parents / pregnant teenagers as the general population. Other at risk group include unaccompanied asylum seeking children, boys and young men, mental ill health including low esteem , young people with learning difficulties, those with low educational attainment / poor school attendance young people with anti social /offending behaviour and BME communities. A targeted, data based approach to supporting local initiatives to raise awareness of the needs of children and young people in relation to sex and relationships education, access to contraception and raising aspirations is proving successful in the south and East of the city. An initial scoping of the needs in the West in consultation with the youth service would suggest that these needs are also prevalent in the West.
- 3.27 The next steps for West Leeds are the establishment of a local tasking group to map existing services, identification of gaps and planning appropriate responses in full consultation with children and young people and their families and carers. An all day event is planned (provisionally booked for 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011) at Stanningley Rugby Club, to raise the profile of the work and provide an opportunity for partners to share ideas and good practice. A local area action plan will be published at the end of March with clearly identified roles and responsibilities.
- 3.28 The West North West Health & Wellbeing Partnership meets every two months to address priority issues in the area in relation to health. The last meeting was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> November. A working draft of the City Priority Plan for Health and Wellbeing 2011-2015 was presented to the meeting detailing the strategic priorities for the next four years. The consultation has commenced on this via the Vision for Leeds but further contributions were requested on local priorities and targeting of local partnership actions to incorporate into the final plan. Consultation will take place with The Councils Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Boards, the third sector and NHS Leeds.
- 3.29 The meeting also received a presentation on Telecare Leeds which is a new initiative which uses simple monitors to help people feel safer in their home. The Telecare service builds upon the already existing Care Ring emergency alarm service

operated by the Council. It is an intervention which helps to address one of the West North West health and well being priorities of excess winter death.

- 3.30 The Partnership also received an update on the next steps that are being taken in tackling the alcohol challenges in West North West Leeds which will include work to be undertaken with GP's and Adult Social Care on the 'frequent flyers' (those who are admitted to hospital more than 3 times a year with alcohol conditions) to look at a team approach to treating people in their communities. Progress has also been made on a number of other initiatives including improved care pathways from WNW Homes and Childrens Services for those with families, a coordinated response to specific alcohol 'hotspots' and communities e.g. the Slovakian community in Armley, a successful health promotion campaign at Leeds University and working with GP's to identify patients with alcohol issues through the use of NHS healthchecks.
- 3.31 A cooking skills group has been running at Hollybush Primary School. It has been supported through Extended Services and the Family Support Worker and recruitment has been targeted. The course will run for six weeks, three hours per week offering basic cooking skills and healthy living messages, for example the 'change4life' campaign.
- 3.32 BARCA's community development work has included the delivery of physical activity sessions in the Wythers. BARCA has also delivered over 30 hours work across West North West, predominantly in Inner West, promoting immunisations through community events, health fayres and group sessions. BARCA has continued to support the work of the Local Area Management Plans and Neighbourhood Improvement Plans within Inner West.

### **Thriving Communities**

- 3.33 A detailed annual community safety update report is presented elsewhere on this agenda.
- 3.34 Prevent is one of four strands of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, **CONTEST**. The overall aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. The Prevent strategy has five objectives, which respond to each of the factors above:
1. to challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices;
  2. to disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the places where they operate;
  3. to support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment, or have already been recruited by violent extremists;
  4. to increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism; and
  5. to address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting. These objectives are supported by increasing the understanding of radicalisation and improving communications.
- 3.35 The Leeds Prevent Programme is offering a series of free half day workshops aimed at staff across all statutory agencies who feel they would benefit from a deeper knowledge of the Prevent agenda and how it fits in with the work being delivered within their respective services.

- 3.36 A site meeting has taken place to confirm the exact location for the Area Committee funded CCTV camera for the Broadleas. The specified location will provide coverage of the bus stops, youth club and shop. A planning application will now be submitted and it is expected that the camera will be operational in February.
- 3.37 The Alert Box scheme is continuing to prove successful. Traders are responding to activations both in person and over the phone. A recent example is that Boots the chemist activated their alarm and several neighbouring businesses came to their assistance as a customer was verbally abusing staff at the store. In response, the offender left the store.
- 3.38 The Armley Moor improvement scheme has been revised to take into account a smaller budget following confirmation that Grantscape are unable to support the current scheme. The bid to Green Leeds is still being considered and all issues raised by the board have been resolved. It is hoped that this funding will be confirmed in January for work to commence on site in the spring. Section 106 monies have been provisionally allocated subject to ward Member approval. This will cover capital elements of the scheme and provide funding for future maintenance which Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside section will undertake for a period of 10 years.
- 3.39 In New Wortley, work continues to support the community in progressing projects identified in the Community Plan. This includes proposals for a Community Garden on a cleared site made available following demolition of properties at Holdsworth Place. Funding is in place to support the project and a lease agreement which will allow the community to establish the garden has been prepared but can not be entered into until the New Wortley Residents Association provide evidence of their public liability insurance cover.
- 3.40 At 2 Branch Road, the property owner has failed to comply with enforcement timescales as set out in a letter sent in June. The owner has failed to fully complete the works relating to stages 1 and 2 of the enforcement notices. Stage 1 works relate to roof and rainwater goods repairs, removal of salt deposits from the walls and removal of debris from the site. A prosecution case has been prepared and the owner is due in court on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.
- 3.41 The scope of a potential Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme is currently being considered and will be presented to the building owner prior to Christmas. The owner will then have a limited amount of time to accept the proposal and to progress a scheme. However, he will be required to complete all outstanding enforcement works prior to a grant offer being made. Further enforcement action is also being considered to secure further preservation and restoration of the property.
- 3.42 Approval for using Leeds Local Government Growth Fund (Leeds LEGI) funding to top up the THI grant is in progress. This would involve an additional £125,000 of grant funding. A two stage process is proposed which would increase the grant rate from 80% to 90% whilst the LEGI funding lasted:

Stage1 - A property owner will be able to receive grant payment for professional fees incurred for obtaining planning permission and / or tender figures for the work

Stage 2 – a property owner will be able to receive a 90% grant rate for implementing a grant scheme including associated professional fees



- 3.43 Should the Leeds LEGI funding become available, it is hoped that this will provide an additional incentive for property owners to develop schemes. The THI programme has a £10,000 budget for raising heritage awareness amongst property owners and the local community. The proposal is to hold a series of seminars to highlight the use of appropriate traditional materials and techniques for preserving historic buildings. The seminars will also explain the long term damage that the use of inappropriate repairs will cause to historic buildings. It is expected that the seminars will commence by March 2011.
- 3.44 As part of the THI scheme, a group consisting of local community and business representatives, Armley ward Members and the THI officer, has been set up to address heritage issues. The group is currently working on developing a keystones leaflet. The keystones are based on historical events and local celebrities associated with Armley and is part of the public art featured in the natural Yorkstone pavement scheme on Town Street.
- 3.45 The site was included within the Council's Outline Business Case for the Round 6 Housing PFI programme, which was submitted to the Homes and Communities Agency in September. Outline planning permission for older people's housing was secured for the site in August to support the Council's case. However, the HCA have announced that they are unable to continue to support projects where Outline Business Cases have not been approved. As such, alternative development options are now being considered for the delivery of new housing on the site.
- 3.46 The Youth Service continue to run 24 weekly sessions in Armley, including joint working with LAZER. Sessions are varied including centre based youth programmes, mobile sessions, Duke of Edinburgh award, motorbike sessions and health drop-ins. New sessions have been arranged at the Lazer Centre including 'baby reality'. Over the summer a successful programme was run from the Lazer Centre attracting over 500 young people. The Friday Night Project is now permanently based at the Lazer Centre. The Area Committee received an update on this project earlier in the year and requested a further update. Appendix 1 provides an evaluation of the project from April to June 2010. The Youth Service have been raising the profile of the Lazer Centre through offering it as a meeting space in the mornings so that more people get to know the site and what can be provided there.

### **Harmonious Communities**

- 3.47 The Area Management Team organised a West North West Volunteer Thank You Event on 9<sup>th</sup> November as part of the Leeds Year of Volunteering 2010. This was an opportunity for the Area Committees in West North West Leeds to recognise the role of volunteers in improving their area and thank them for their efforts.
- 3.48 The event took place in the Lord Mayors banqueting suite of the Civic Hall with the participation of the Lord Mayor of Leeds (Councillor James McKenna), local Councillors as well as approximately 120 volunteers and their supporters. Certificates of appreciation were presented to 25 volunteers who had been nominated for their valuable contribution to West North West Leeds. In addition, an award was also given to one volunteer from each of the four Committee areas for their outstanding contribution. Entertainment was provided by Bramley Primary School's choir and The Citizens Orchestra and volunteers had the opportunity to

network with other organisations. An evaluation of the event generated very positive comments – attendees enjoyed the event, felt it was well organised and felt the venue was appropriate. Comments included:

- "the choir was extremely good and the citizens orchestra. Thank you to everyone who made this evening so enjoyable
- "Very Good, it was a nice way to say thank you"
- "Lovely to see so many selfless people being appreciated. Particularly enjoyed the children's singing and the citizens orchestra"

3.49 The ADP for 2008 – 2011 is a local expression of the Leeds Strategic Plan. It provides a detailed framework for partnership working and sets out the Area Committee's priorities in relation to the eight LSP themes. The Community Charters represent a shorter and more accessible version of this document which will help communicate the council's and its partners' commitment to addressing important local issues in the coming year. Printed copies of the charter will be made available to the public in a range of locations across the area. A draft of the Inner West Area Committee Community Charter is enclosed as appendix 2 of this report for members' comments.

3.50 The Area Management Team is currently examining how the community cohesion pilot on the Wythers can be rolled out to other areas. Some of the recommendations within the Wyther Cohesion Audit report prepared by COGS (Communities & Organisations: Growth & Support) are being implemented through the Wythers Improvement Group. However, other priorities identified through the COGS work will be addressed through specific actions through the work programme of the Area Management Team and partners.

3.51 Some positive interventions have already taken place – Armley Induction Programme to increase frontline workers' understanding of different faiths, Operation Champion on the Wythers and an opportunity for school children to meet faith leaders at Safety Central, organised by the Prevent Team in July, a Police led consultation event at the mosque in September, and a financial inclusion event at Bramley Shopping Centre in October as well as the first Armley Christmas lights switch on event in November. In addition, an action day is planned for the Raynville area of the Wythers in December of January.

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

4.1 The Area Delivery Plan for Inner West is administered through the West North West Leeds Area Management Team.

4.2 Well-Being projects develop from Inner West's Leeds Area Delivery Plan and through consultation with Area Committee members. The plan helps to fulfill the Council's Corporate Plan objectives by aiming to create better neighbourhoods and confident communities.

#### **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

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

## **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 The Inner West Area Committee is asked to

- note the contents of the report and comment on any aspect of the matters raised
- Members are asked to review the content of the Community Charter enclosed as appendix 2 and provide comment as necessary
- suggest items for inclusion on future Area Manager's reports

## **Background Papers**

none