Leeds CITY COUNCIL

Originator:
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Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement)

Meeting: Inner West Area Committee

Date: 15th December 2010

Subject: Towards Integrated Locality Working

Electoral Wards Affected: All ☐ Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)	**Specific Implications For:** Equality and Diversity ☐ Community Cohesion ☐ Narrowing the Gap ☐

Eligible for Call In [x]   Not Eligible for Call In [ ]
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report informs the Area Committee on the progress of pathfinder work on locality working in Leeds that commenced earlier this year and -

a) Informs Members on what the Pathfinder is and its initial findings
b) Describes a proposal to implement a new locality leadership model to lead the integration of council services locally
c) Outlines a set of design principles (**Appendix 1**) to form the basis of what we are seeking to achieve through locality working in Leeds.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 This report informs Area Committees on the progress of recent work on locality working through a Locality Working Pathfinder in the South East wedge of the city. The report invites Members to comment and support the initial proposals arising from the Pathfinder.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The council first introduced locality based arrangements when it established a community involvement team structure in 1999. In 2004, these arrangements evolved into the current Area Committee structure set alongside five District

Partnerships. A number of Functions, known as Area Functions, were delegated to the Area Committees, along with a revenue and capital budget for the committees to allocate as local priorities dictated.

2.2   Five Area Management Teams were established in the Environment and Neighbourhoods directorate to support both the Area Committees and the District Partnerships. In 2007, the numbers of Area Management Teams were reduced from five to three and the District Partnerships were wound up.

2.3   Since 2007, senior locality-specific roles in Children's and Adults Services have been established to promote the local integration of services in those professional areas, with Children's Services opting for a five wedge structure for integration. As a consequence, considerable and important progress has been made in those professional areas at a local level.

3.0   Main Issues

3.1   The focus on local priorities, by Area Committees and others, has led to real achievements in community engagement, partnership working, and in improvements at neighbourhood level right across the city with good examples of locality working in every wedge. Nevertheless, there remains a challenge to develop the scope of decision-making at a local level as only modest levels of real delegation to Area Committees have been achieved. Similarly, given our individual council directorate approaches to local leadership, the collective impact of locality based roles might be lost and we could duplicate effort and increase costs at a time of financial constraint.

3.2   **Locality Working Pathfinder:** In 2010, a Locality Working Pathfinder was initiated by the Corporate Leadership Team in the council's South East wedge area of the city, seeking to develop more integrated locality working across public services in Leeds. The main reasons for initiating this Pathfinder were to examine –

- The barriers to resolving longstanding problems largely as a consequence of deprivation
- The impact of reductions in public sector spending
- Methods of ensuring democratic accountability at local level
- Approaches which may enable neighbourhoods and communities to be more resilient

3.3   The work was overseen by a Locality Working Pathfinder Programme Board of chief officers from all Leeds City Council directorates and by the senior managers of partner organisations. The Board is chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement). Through the exploration of live case studies from the South East wedge, the Board has considered issues such as –

- The fragmentation and duplication of services
- Our inability to jointly resolve deep rooted issues
- The need to improve join-up between what we do locally and what we do corporately
- Insufficient involvement of Elected Members in setting and progressing local priorities for council services

3.4   **Delegation of services to Area Committees:** Through the Pathfinder, the Board has promoted and supported development work to assess the potential for

delegating some environmental services to a more local level. The work has sought input from Area Committee Chairs and Area Committees on the viability of this delegation to improve the accountability of those services to local needs. The results and success of this piece of work will be used to help identify other areas of council activity for delegation to Area Committees in due course.

3.5   **Area leadership:** Again, through the work of the Pathfinder, the Board and Corporate Leadership Team have also explored and identified the need for a single 'One Council' Area Leader role – similar to that established in the South East - to operate in each of the council's three wedges. Key features of these new roles are –

- Supporting the further development of Area Committees
- Enhancing customer engagement and empowerment
- Strengthening local leadership and management of a range of council services
- Developing closer working with partner organisations

The Area Leaders will work closely with Area Committees, report corporately to the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement), drive forward change in local services, and address the issues identified by the Locality Working Pathfinder Board.

3.6   **Locality Working design principles:** Ten design principles have been drawn up through the Pathfinder to underpin the further development of locality working in the city. These are attached as **Appendix 1**. These design principles outline the ambition we are seeking to achieve through our locality working agenda. They seek to build upon the strengths of work by Area Committees, address the issues identified earlier in the paper, and provide a consistent framework and approach for council services to work within a local context.

3.7   Area Committee may wish to consider whether the design principles –

- Cover and reflect the key aspects of locality working that are important to them?
- Will engage stakeholders in their area?
- Take into account the diversity of communities in the area and the range of issues they face?
- Will help lead to the improvements required?

4.0   Implications for Council Policy and Governance

4.1   There are policy and governance implications for the creation of an area leadership function and its reporting corporately via the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement). These will be highlighted in an Executive Board paper.

4.2   The responsibilities for Area Management, currently assigned to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, will be transferred to the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) and arrangements are being made to formalise this transfer of responsibility. As a consequence, Area Committees will continue to be supported in their function and this support will be strengthened through a developing Area Leadership role.

5.0   Legal and Resource Implications

5.1   These proposals will be taken forward in the context of core and resourcing pressures facing the Local Authority and will be highlighted in an Executive Board paper.

5.2   Specifically, with the creation of new Area Leader posts, savings will be made from a reduction of eight locality roles in Children's Services and Environment and Neighbourhoods graded Director 60%. Savings will be generated through the deletion of existing posts.

6.0   Conclusions

6.1   Our history of locality working provides opportunities to learn from and improve upon our experiences across the Local Authority and through the Pathfinder in working and thinking more local.   The current financial climate demands a consistent approach to locality working that is sensitive to the differences in our neighbourhoods and communities. This consistency is best achieved through the implementation of a shared set of ten design principles for locality working (**Appendix 1**) and the recruitment of three 'One Council' Area Leaders to implement these design principles and drive change in local services.

7.0   Recommendations

Members of the Area Committee are recommended to:
   a) Note the progress made on the Locality Working Pathfinder to date.
   b) Comment on and support the approach of a 'One Council' Area Leader to lead the integration of services locally.
   c) Comment on and support the set of design principles (**Appendix 1**) to form the basis of what we are seeking to achieve through locality working in Leeds.