
Report of the East North East Area Manager

East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 24th March 2010

Subject: Inner East Community Engagement Strategy

Electoral Wards Affected:

Burmantofts & Richmond Hill
Gipton & Harehills
Killingbeck & Seacroft

Ward members consulted
(referred to in this 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

This report presents for approval the Community Engagement Strategy, "Working Together", for the Inner East Area Committee for 2011/12.

Purpose of this report

1. This report seeks Area Committee approval of the refreshed Community Engagement Strategy for Inner East which sets out the methods of consultation, engagement and communication with residents within the resources available to the Area Committee, or is able to lever in from partner organisations such as the Police and East North East Homes.
2. It also outlines the proposals for co-opting community representatives to the Area Committee for 2011/12.

Background Information

2. Community Engagement is one of the Area Committee's key delegated functions and as such it is important that there is a clear strategy in place for this to take place and be assessed against.
3. In 2009/10 the Area Committee's strategy was focused on a cycle of local community engagement events and forums.

4. Following a review of this strategy a new, more comprehensive community engagement strategy was approved by the Inner East Area Committee in March 2010. The aim of the strategy is to help:
 - improve everyday engagement between local staff and residents
 - improve residents influence on the planning and improvement of services to tackle local priorities
 - improve accountability for promised actions
5. The full strategy is attached at Appendix A.
6. The introduction of a more comprehensive strategy has assisted in discussions with key partners and led to proposals for a partnership strategy for the Area Committee in 2011/12. The ambition is to reduce duplication, reduce public confusion about consultation and to embed community engagement as something done as part of the day job rather than just through “meetings”.
7. The strategy aims to create a more empowering role for local residents in the establishment of Community Leadership Teams for each priority neighbourhood.
8. Community Leadership Teams have been successfully established in Gipton and Seacroft and will be rolled out across the Inner East Area. The community forums are no longer operating in Gipton, Seacroft or Harehills, but they are continuing to operate in Richmond Hill and Burmantofts.

Core Elements of the Strategy

9. The strategy sets out how the Area Committee will work with partner organisations to ensure that, in every ward, the following minimum public engagement will take place with residents:
10.
 - ✓ Quarterly meetings of the Community Leadership Team held in public (split into a business meeting and open meeting incorporating a “have your say” item)
 - ✓ An annual community conference (incorporated into one of the CLT meetings) which brings the team of local services/front line staff together with residents to help plan improvements for the year ahead
 - ✓ Ad-hoc public meetings to be held to debate and discuss important issues as the need arises. This includes bespoke consultation as required (e.g. school places, major planning issues etc).
 - ✓ 4-6 weekly public Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings to allow residents to focus on local policing, crime and ASB issues, and agree top 3 current priorities with progress reported at next meeting.
 - ✓ Support for existing community events and summer galas, with attendance and information from local services where possible.

Equality Implications

11. Consideration is given to the equality impact of delivering the engagement strategy and a 'soft touch' equality impact assessment will be carried out for activities within the strategy. The aim of the strategy is to enable a greater engagement with equality groups under represented.
12. Where a negative equality impact is identified action will be taken to mitigate the impact or risk.

Appointment of Co-optees

13. The Area Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the constitution "Rules of Procedure"), state that:
 - a. Each Area Committee may select up to five co-opted members to assist in the discharge of Committee's role, in accordance with Article 10 of the Constitution,
 - b. Co-opted members may participate in the debate in the same way as Elected Members but have no voting rights.
 - c. No co-opted member shall be appointed beyond the next Annual Meeting of the Council. In other words, the appointments are annual, but people can be re-appointed by the organization they represent or by invitation of the Area Committee itself.
14. There is a formal process for the selection of candidates from each forum. There is a criteria for the appointment of co-opted members:
 - Live or work within an East Leeds forum area
 - Be willing to support the ethos of Area Management
 - Represent the interests of all individuals and organisations making up the forum
 - Not act to further own interests to benefit self / or own organisation without regard for the best interests of the forum
15. Previously the Area Committee nominated one co-optee from each of the geographically based forums covering the Inner East area. However in 2010 the Area Committee adopted a new community engagement strategy which offers a more empowering role for local residents through the establishment of Community Leadership Teams (CLTs).
16. CLTs are now established in Killingbeck & Seacroft and Gipton. Work will be undertaken to develop a CLT for Harehills during 2011/12. Two Community forums are still running – Burmantofts & Lincoln Green and Richmond Hill.
17. For 2011/12 it is proposed that the Area Committee seeks nominations for co-opted members from Gipton, Seacroft and Harehills (when it is formed) CLTs, plus Burmantofts & Lincoln Green and Richmond Hill forums, for appointment at the first meeting of the Area Committee in the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

Implications For Council Policy and Governance

18. Area Committees have an enhanced role in community engagement as outlined in the Area Functions scheduled agreed at Executive Board.

Legal and Resource Implications

19. Area Management is responsible for organising and co-ordinating community engagement activity. This is undertaken in conjunction with other council services, and partners.
20. There is a need for a decision to be made on the appointment of the co-optees in order to comply with “Rules of Procedure” as set out in the constitution.

Conclusions

21. The Area Committee now has a specific role in relation Community Engagement, and a strategy has been put in place to support this which will give residents an empowering role which links to Neighbourhood Improvement Plan and Community Charter priorities. The appointment of co-optees for 2011/12 will be in accordance with the new strategy.

Recommendations

22. The Area Committee is asked to:
 - (a) note the contents of this report
 - (b) approve the continuation of the “Working Together” community engagement strategy for 2011/12.
 - (c) seeks nominations for co-opted members from Gipton, Seacroft and Harehills (when it is formed) CLTs, plus Burmantofts & Lincoln Green and Richmond Hill forums for appointment at the first meeting of the Area Committee in the 2010/11 Municipal Year.