

Strategy for tackling neighbourhoods with long standing environmental problems

Background

Members have asked for the development of a strategy/action plan to tackle specific neighbourhoods in Inner East that have suffered significant environmental problems over a sustained period of time. A recent example highlighted by Members is parts of Harehills triangle and the adjoining Back Hill Tops area.

Problem

Over half the street cleansing and enforcement resource of the ENE Locality Team is deployed in the Inner East area, at a cost of over £1M per year.

Despite this, the environmental conditions in a number of neighbourhoods across the Inner East are the worst in the locality. Many of these neighbourhoods have been in this position for several years.

Clearly therefore the current approach to improving conditions in those neighbourhoods is not working, just spending more money alone is not making the difference and is not a sustainable long term answer anyway.

With the introduction of a new Locality Team and greater local influence on how the service is delivered, there is an opportunity to look afresh at how we tackle these neighbourhoods and use what resource we do have more wisely and effectively.

Proposed Strategy

The Area Committee has established 5 priority neighbourhoods and employs two neighbourhood managers to oversee partnership working in those areas. This approach has helped support the successful development of close partnership working across Inner East and focused work on a issues identified and agreed through Neighbourhood Improvement Plans. The three key mechanisms for identifying the local problems/priorities are ward members, local residents through Community Leadership Teams/Forums and the neighbourhood index.

It is proposed to work within that framework to identify a relatively small group of streets ("zones") that display the greatest environmental problems. The Locality Team will then reshape its service and how it works to lead and deliver interventions in those "zones" that lead to a sustainable improvement in the condition of the streets and opens spaces.

The sorts of interventions that the team will concentrate on are:

- **Zero tolerance enforcement** – waste in gardens, litter dropping, dog nuisance, commercial waste, bins in street, condition of property where it is a hazard/blight. Targeted at those house/business owners and tenants causing the most problems and negative impact on the neighbourhood. Possibly using an adaptation of the Police Persistent and Prolific Offender model.
- **Education** – to work with local community groups, businesses, landlords, schools to develop and support a greater understanding of responsibilities, ways of disposing of waste/litter and pride in the neighbourhood
- **Street Cleansing review** – the way we deliver street cleansing in each zone will be reviewed to see if we could use the resource in a more effective way.
- **Community Clean Ups** - to work with local councillors/community leaders in delivering one-off deep cleanse style clean ups to get the zone to an acceptable level of cleanliness. To complement the zero tolerance enforcement and education work.

The Locality Manager will reconfigure the enforcement section of the team to support a concentrate effort on the proposed small number of improvement zones.

Recommendations

The sub-group as asked to consider the proposed approach and decide whether it is something they would like the Locality Manager to take to the Area Committee to agree, with their recommendation to develop further. With the identification of the improvement zones to be then brought back to the next sub-group together with the rationale and further details of how the interventions will be delivered and how it will support/be supported by partners in those areas.