

Report of the Community Planning Officer

Report to the Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 20th September 2012

Subject: Community Planner Update Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Headingley Hyde Park and Woodhouse Kirkstall Weetwood		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: N/A Appendix number: N/A		

Summary of main issues

1. The objectives of the community planner role include providing advice to ward members and community groups on planning matters, working with the inner north west Area Committee (INWAC) Planning Sub Group to respond to local planning issues, and working with council officers from a range of service areas to co-ordinate planning responses in the inner north west area.
2. The Community Planner Update Report submitted to Area Committee in February 2012 outlined the key projects and themes that would form the community planner work programme for the year 2012/13. These focused on a number of general topic areas such as neighbourhood planning and housing strategy, but also included specific areas of work relating to Houses in Multiple Occupation, Letting Boards, Community led planning documents and the Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy. In addition the work programme also included the coordination of the Planning Sub Group and outlined that the community planner would continue to be available to advise and assist community groups on a range of planning issues.
3. This report gives an update on how the projects and themes outlined in the February 2012 report have progressed over the past eight months. The report also notes that alongside work on these projects and themes, the community planner resource has

continued to be well used by community groups and individual residents over the period.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to note the contents of the report and comment as they feel appropriate.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report is intended to give an update to Ward Councillors on the community planner work programme since the previous report to Area Committee in February 2012.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The overall objectives of the community planner role are outlined below:

- To advise and assist Ward Councillors, community groups and individuals on planning related matters;
- To work with the INWAC Planning Sub-Group to raise awareness of area specific planning related issues and to support the planning related initiatives of the Area Committee;
- To work alongside Council officers from a wide range of service areas to co-ordinate planning responses in the inner north west area.

- 2.2 The Community Planner Update report to Area Committee on 23rd February 2012 outlined a number of existing and emerging projects and themes which would form key parts of the Community Planner work programme for the year 2012/13. These included:

- The co-ordination of the INWAC Planning Sub Group;
- Responding to the emergence of Neighbourhood Planning from the Localism Act 2012;
- Co-ordinating a response from Area Committee to the Local Development Framework (LDF) Draft Core Strategy;
- Advising groups in relation to the Article 4 Direction and assisting the City Development Planning Policy team where appropriate in relation to the creation of related planning policy;
- Assisting the steering groups of community led planning documents;
- Assisting the City Development Planning Enforcement team on the monitoring of the Area of Special Advertisement Control and the Letting Board Code;
- Advising and Assisting Community Groups and Residents on significant planning applications;
- Working with Housing Services to respond to housing strategy issues in inner north west Leeds;
- The continued development of the Community Planner Website.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The below provides an update in relation to how the nine key projects and themes outlined in paragraph 2.2 have progressed in the last eight months.

INWAC Planning Sub Group

- 3.2 The community planner has continued to co-ordinate and support the INWAC Planning Sub Group. The group has met seven times since the February meeting of Area Committee to discuss significant local planning applications and locally relevant planning mechanisms. The group has recently expanded its membership to include additional community representatives and continues to lead, and provide support for local community groups, on emerging issues such as neighbourhood planning and the monitoring of community planning documents such as Neighbourhood Design Statements.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.3 There is significant local interest in Neighbourhood Planning in inner north west Leeds. Neighbourhood planning is one of the key outcomes of the Localism Act 2012 and offers opportunities for local communities to shape their neighbourhoods through the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans and other related mechanisms.
- 3.4 The Community Planner has continued to work with the INWAC Planning Sub Group to advise and support local community groups in relation to neighbourhood planning. Following on from the report submitted to Area Committee in October 2011, which gave members an introduction to the new neighbourhood planning mechanisms, the Community Planner has produced an issues and options paper which looks at the potential introduction of a Neighbourhood Development Plan in inner north west Leeds. This paper is available to download from the Community Planner website.
- 3.5 The Planning Sub Group will continue to monitor issues arising in relation to neighbourhood planning and have committed to provide support to local community groups where it is able to do so.

Local Development Framework Core Strategy - INWAC Consultation Response

- 3.6 The LDF Core Strategy is one of the most significant emerging local planning documents in Leeds. It sets out the Council's vision for the future development of Leeds over the next 15 years. The publication draft of the Core Strategy was subject to public consultation in March and April 2012. The Community Planner resource was used to draft a consultation response to the Draft Core Strategy on behalf of the Area Committee and INWAC Planning Sub Group. The consultation response incorporated comments from the Area Committee meeting of 8th March 2012 and the Planning Sub Group meeting of 11th April 2012.
- 3.7 Amendments are currently being made to the Draft Core Strategy through a number of meetings of the Council's Development Plans Panel which is considering responses received during the public consultation. Of the policies which have been discussed by the Development Plans Panel to date, many have

been amended in line with the consultation response submitted on behalf of Area Committee and the Planning Sub Group. The policies which have been amended to address the comments and concerns of Area Committee and the Planning Sub Group include those relating to Houses in Multiple Occupation, Purpose Built Student Housing Developments, Affordable Housing, Design and Car Parking.

Article 4 Direction and Related Planning Policy

- 3.8 The Community Planner has continued to advise community groups, landlord groups, the universities, student groups and other interested parties on matters relating to the Article 4 Direction since its introduction on 10th February 2012.
- 3.9 Following the introduction of the Article 4 Direction the Council has looked to develop new planning policies against which planning applications for new houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) will be considered. The intended policy response is to include an overarching planning policy in the Local Development Framework Draft Core Strategy alongside more detailed planning policy which will follow later. As is alluded to in paragraph 3.7 above, the Core Strategy policy has now been drafted with the Core Strategy scheduled to be adopted in 2013. The Community Planner will continue to provide support to the City Development Planning Policy team, where appropriate, in relation to the creation of more detailed planning policy.

Community Led Planning Documents

- 3.10 In the recent past the community planner post has supported the steering groups of the Far Headingley, Weetwood and West Park Neighbourhood Design Statement (NDS), the Headingley and Hyde Park NDS, the Little Woodhouse NDS and the Vision for Kirkstall Ward. The steering group for the Far Headingley, Weetwood and West Park NDS are currently drafting an update to the NDS which was originally adopted in 2005. The community planner will continue to support the steering group through this process.

Letting Boards

- 3.11 The community planner has continued to provide support to the City Development Planning Enforcement team in relation to the monitoring of the Letting Board Code in the Area of Special Advertisement Control (Regulation 7 Direction area). The community planner has also assisted in the production of an updated version of the Letting Board Code which is currently subject to public consultation. This has been produced in response to the emerging issue of advertisements being displayed in windows of residential properties which are seen to be contrary to the spirit of the Code. A report has been submitted to this meeting of Area Committee giving further details in relation to this.

Advice on Planning Issues/ Applications

- 3.12 The community planner resource continues to be well used by local residents and community groups as a first point of contact for general planning related queries. Responding to such queries forms a significant part of the community planner workload. The community planner continues to attend community and resident

group meetings, where appropriate, to advise groups on a range of topics. The community planner has also continued to advise prospective developers on appropriate local consultation strategies.

Housing Strategy

- 3.13 Discussions have taken place with officers from Housing Services through the Planning Sub Group in relation to housing strategy issues. The recent publication of the report from Re'new and Unipol titled "An Assessment of Housing Market Conditions and Demand Trends in Headingley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse" was discussed at the Planning Sub Group meeting in September.

Community Planner Website

- 3.14 The Community Planner webpage has now been incorporated into the Council's new website and continues to act as a resource for local community groups to access inner north west Leeds specific planning information.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 This report is intended to give an update to ward members in inner north west Leeds on the community planner work programme. As such this report has not been subject to public consultation.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.2 There are no specific equality considerations arising from this report. As such it has not been necessary to prepare an Equality Impact Assessment.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 This report does not have any direct implications for Council policy.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The community planner is funded from the Wellbeing Fund and works alongside existing Council resources.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications as this report does not relate to a key or major decision.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There are no significant risks identified in this report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The community planner resource has continued to be well used by ward members, community groups and local residents since the previous Community

Planner Update Report in February 2012. Those projects and themes outlined in section 3 of this report will continue to form the bulk of the community planner work programme over the next six months when a further update report will be brought to Area Committee.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and comment as they feel appropriate.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans in inner north west Leeds - Issues and Options Paper (September 2012) – also available to download at <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Inner-North-West-Community-Planner.aspx>
- 7.2 LDF Core Strategy (Publication Draft) Consultation Response from INWAC and Planning Sub Group (11th April 2012)

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.