

Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Customers and Communities)

Report to South Leeds (Inner) Area Committee

Date: Wednesday 19th June 2013

Subject: Appointment of Area Lead Members, Cluster Representatives and Corporate Carers

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. A review of area working was completed in December 2012 with a number of recommendations agreed by Executive Board. One of the recommendations was to develop and strengthen the existing local "champion role" and re-launch this as an Area Lead Member role. On 9th May Executive Board approved a report setting out the role itself along with training and support arrangements with further details on the number and titles confirmed at the Annual Council Meeting on 20th May. Another recommendation of the review was that nominations to local Children's Services Cluster partnerships across the city also becomes an Area Committee appointment. This aims to strengthen local working arrangements by clearly establishing a formal link between Area Committees and Clusters to better support the needs children and families across the city. This change was agreed at Member Management Committee on 4th June. At this time of year Area Committees are also asked to nominate their representative on the Corporate Carers Group and in light of the development of the Area Lead Member for Children's Services it is proposed that these roles are combined.

Recommendations

2. The Area Committee is invited to appoint to the following roles for the next municipal year:
 - at least one member to each of the Area Leads Member role listed in section 3 below.

- confirm that the Area Lead Member for Children's Services will also fulfil the role of the committees representative on the Corporate Carers Group.
- member representatives to the local Children's Services Clusters relevant to the Area Committee as listed in section 3.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report invites Area Committees to make appointments to Area Lead Member roles, Clusters and Corporate Carers Group for the next municipal year 2013-14.

2 Background information

Area Lead Member Role

- 2.1 A review of area working was completed in December 2012 with a number of recommendations agreed by Executive Board. One of the recommendations was to develop and strengthen the existing local “champion role” and re-launch this as an Area Lead Member role. This role was further clarified and agreed by Executive Board on 9th May with the number of roles and functional area covered agreed at the Annual Meeting of Full Council on 20 May 2013.
- 2.2 Overall this role is seen as important in providing a local “Lead Member” perspective on various issues and in driving democratic accountability by providing Area Committee based leadership on key issues. The Area Lead Member role would also work closely with Executive Members and Directors to better align city wide and local policy making, share best practice, provide support and challenge and help embed the locality working design principles.
- 2.3 It also links to the Commission for Local Government which identified the critical importance of local democratic leadership in driving the way in which local government responds to a changing and ever more challenging environment. Within the current financial context where budgets are shrinking and difficult decisions need to be made in terms of service delivery the importance of ensuring a strong local perspective and driving more local decision making is seen as an essential ingredient to making the right decisions.

Children’s Services Cluster Partnerships

- 2.4 The Children’s Cluster Partnerships evolved originally in response to the extended schools initiative, then as extended services partnerships but have evolved to be an integral part of the locality model which sit under the Children’s Trust Board. They provide an inclusive partnership offer to our universal services in schools and children’s centres. Increasingly council services are being re-shaped to strengthen and develop relationships through the cluster model. The purpose of cluster partnerships are to:
- Enable local settings and services to work together effectively to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families, focusing on what will make the biggest difference in that area;
 - Build capacity to improve preventative / early help services to meet local needs;
 - Promote the ambition of a child friendly city across the locality.

- 2.5 In April 2011 the Children's Trust Board agreed the adoption of a minimum standard for the terms of reference across the cluster partnerships which included elected members as standing members of the governance group for each partnership. Elected Members also sit alongside a senior leader (local authority partner) from the Children's Services Directorate to be part of the Council's representation on each cluster partnership.
- 2.6 In October 2011 Member Management Committee agreed to categorise the cluster partnerships as Strategic and Key Partnerships and appointed a number of representatives to sit on the clusters. However, another recommendation of the Review of Area Working was that nominations to local Children's Services Cluster Partnerships across the city also becomes an Area Committee appointment. This is in order to clearly establish a formal link between Area Committees and Clusters and enable and support the building of closer working arrangements to better support the needs children and families across the city.
- 2.7 On 4th June 2013 Member Management Committee delegated the nomination of Elected Members representatives to local Children's Services Cluster partnerships to Areas Committees with effective from the new municipal year.

Corporate Carers' Group

- 2.8 Under the Children's Act 1989, all local Councillors are corporate parents (usually referred to in Leeds as corporate carers), this means they have responsibilities relating to the quality of services for those children who have been taken into care by the local authority (children looked after). In July 2006, the Council's Executive Board agreed a clearer framework for the corporate carer role in Leeds. This included establishing a core group of councillors with a special interest in leading the work on Corporate Parenting - the 'Corporate Carer' group. This core group includes representation from each of the 10 Area Committees in the city and takes particular responsibilities relating to influencing, performance monitoring, and governance of those issues and outcomes that affect looked after children. The group meet approximately once a month (though the regularity of these meetings is under review and may become bi-monthly) and consider information including fostering services, residential care, looked after children's educational attainment and their voice and influence across the city. Representatives are asked to link back to local looked after children's issues through their Area Committee and champion the importance of effectively supporting those children.

3 Main issues

Area Lead Member/Corporate Carers Group

- 3.1 The Area Lead Member role aims to provide a local "lead" perspective and further facilitate local democratic accountability; particularly in conjunction with the relevant Executive Member. It is formally defined as covering the following areas:
- To provide local leadership and champion the agenda at the area committee.
 - To represent the area committee at relevant meetings, forums and local partnerships.

- To build links with key services and partners.
- To provide a link between the area committee and the Executive Member to ensure local needs are represented, issues are highlighted, best practice is shared and to facilitate local solutions to any issues.
- To maintain an overview of local performance.
- To consult with the area committee and represent local views as part of the development and review of policy

3.2 As set out in the Constitution the Area Committee is invited to appoint to the following Area Lead Member roles, in respect of:

- Environment & Community Safety
- Children's Services
- Employment, Skills and Welfare
- Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

3.3 In recognition of the differing size of individual Area Committees and that these roles may need to be tailored to best reflect specific local needs and circumstances Area Committees may wish to consider splitting two of the roles namely:

- Environment & Community Safety – with one member focusing on the environment agenda and another community safety.
- Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care – with one member covering public health and wellbeing agenda and another focusing on adult social care and community health services.

3.4 The Area Committee is also required to nominate a representative on the Corporate Carers Group and in light of the development of the Area Lead Member for Children's Services it is suggested that these roles are combined.

3.5 Work is underway to develop supporting briefs for each Area Lead Member role that define in more detail the role, the link to the relevant Executive Member, links to Area Committee sub-groups (or other local mechanisms for all members to provide views and input), key officer and partner contacts, training and support arrangements and any formal partnership meeting that the Area Lead Member is required to attend. In line with member feedback these aim to define the minimum only with scope for each Area Lead Member to further develop arrangements their suit their own style of working and the particular local needs of the area.

3.6 The effectiveness of this approach will be monitored through Area Chairs and Area Leaders with updates provided within the Area Working Annual Report to Executive Board (first report due Autumn 2013). The number and functional areas covered by Area Lead Members will be reviewed annually as part of the Annual Council Meeting to ensure it is working and continues to align to the Executive Member portfolios.

Children's Services Cluster Partnership Representatives

- 3.7 The Area Committee is invited to nominate members to each cluster partnership within their area. The table below sets out the suggested numbers and ward links as a basis for discussion:

Cluster	Number of Elected Members suggested	Suggested Ward link
Beeston and Cottingley and Middleton	2	1 Beeston and Holbeck 1 Middleton Park
JESS (Joint extended schools and services: Beeston Hill, Holbeck, Belle Isle and Hunslet)	3	1 Beeston and Holbeck 1 City and Hunslet 1 Middleton Park

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The development of the Area Lead Member role falls directly out of the recent review of area working which was subject to significant consultation with a range of stakeholders including members and officers. An all party working group also further debated and shaped the review findings. A further consultation was undertaken subsequently with Area Committees in order to better define the role itself and to understand the training and support required. The output of this consultation was considered by Executive Board on the 9th May and influenced the final definition of the role and functional areas.

- 4.1.2 Public consultation was not considered necessary for this decision as it relates to internal arrangements to the council.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Equality is clearly represented within a number of the formally stated roles of an Area Committee. These include: to act as a focal point for community involvement, help members listen to and represent their communities and help members understand the specific needs of the community in their area. The development of the Area Lead Member role aims to support members in undertaking this role of championing local needs by providing clear links to both the relevant Executive Member, council service staff and to partners agencies. In addition it provides the mechanism for, and encourages, the negotiation and development of local solutions that suit local circumstances which will in turn address any issues of inequality.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 These arrangements aim specifically to support in the delivery of improved outcomes in line with the City Priority and Council Business Plans with many of

the proposed roles lining directly to key priorities. The aim being to ensure that local needs are represented better in policy/strategy setting, decision making, service design and delivery and partnership working through this key role. The development of the Area Lead Member role provides an opportunity for members to develop their community leadership role as set out within the Commission for Local Government.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this proposal.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications and the report is available to the public. In line with the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules, the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions taken by Area Committees.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.2 This report implements a recommendation made by Executive Board and as such there are no direct risks arising from the proposals. Improving the governance and accountability of local partnerships through challenge and support from area leads is seen as important in delivering improved outcomes and tailoring services to local needs. There are also clear links to a number of the budget and financial risks and the development and strengthening of our locality working arrangements and local decision making will help to minimise key financial risks going forward.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The review of area working in 2012 recommended the development of the existing “champion” role into an Area Lead Member role in order to provide a local “lead” perspective on various issues, drive democratic accountability at a local level and better link Area Committees to Executive Members. This report invites Area Committees to make appointments to Area Lead Member roles, Clusters and Corporate Carers Group for the next municipal year 2013-14.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Area Committee is invited to appoint to the following roles for the next municipal year:

- at least one member to each of the Area Leads Member role listed in section 3 below.
- confirm that the Area Lead Member for Children’s Services will also fulfil the role of the committees representative on the corporate carers group.
- member representatives to the local Children’s Services clusters relevant to the area committee as listed in section 3.

Background documents¹

There are no background papers associated with this report

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.