



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET
3 JULY 2007

ITEM 17

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood, Social Cohesion and Housing Strategy

FROM AREAS TO NEIGHBOURHOODS

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A review of the current arrangements for Area and Neighbourhood working has taken place following Council's decision in May 2006 to deliver more strategic management at a neighbourhood level. This has included an examination of Area Panels and the new neighbourhood management arrangements introduced in the priority neighbourhoods.
- 1.2 The conclusion of the review, which I support, is that a comprehensive new framework should now be introduced which replaces Area Panels with Neighbourhood Forums in each of the Council's 17 wards.
- 1.3 Subject to the views of Cabinet colleagues I support the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

To recommend Council

- 2.1 To approve in principle the transformation from Area Panels into Neighbourhood Forums as part of the new framework for neighbourhood working.
- 2.2 To agreed that within the rollout to new wards the basic structure within each ward will include a Neighbourhood Board of partner and resident representatives, led by elected members, and a Neighbourhood Forum open to all residents. Any supplementary resident engagement mechanisms will be agreed by each Neighbourhood Board.
- 2.3 To ask the Community Overview and Scrutiny Commission for its views on the implementation of these arrangements.
- 2.4 To ask officers to report to Council Cabinet on whether ward based neighbourhood arrangements should be integrated with the area management arrangements being developed for Children and Young People's Services.
- 2.5 To ask officers to report back to Council Cabinet and Full Council in September 2007 with details of the constitutional and financial implications.

- 2.6 To agree that, subject to Council's agreement of the final proposals, the final round of Area Panels will be in September 2007 with the new Neighbourhood Partnership Boards and Neighbourhood Forums being implemented throughout October and November 2007.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To promote and enhance the community leadership role of elected members working in partnership with other public agencies, residents and the private sector.
- 3.2 To respond to the experience and evidence from Government and good practice in neighbourhood management.
- 3.3 To improve community engagement at a local level.
- 3.4 To develop priority setting and increased accountability at a local level.
- 3.5 To shape a local identity when local problems are resolved with local solutions in partnership with communities and agencies.

FROM AREAS TO NEIGHBOURHOODS

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 In December 2001, the Council introduced new constitutional arrangements including five Area Panels based on ward boundaries. The aim was to improve service delivery by providing an opportunity to discuss local issues with partners and local residents. Area Panels have met five or six times a year since then and have been the subject of an annual review looking at performance and processes.
- 1.2 In January 2006 the Council and key partners agreed to introduce more localised neighbourhood management arrangements in the "Priority Neighbourhoods" and these are now operational in Austin, Normanton/Pearlton, Stockbrook, Osmaston/Allenton and Sinfen, together with the arrangements operating in the Derwent New Road area.
- 1.3 In May 2006 Council approved the need for a further review of Area and Neighbourhood working arrangements with the specific purpose of delivering a more strategic partnership agenda.
- 1.4 The Area and Neighbourhood Project Board took responsibility for co-ordinating the review on behalf of Derby City Partnership. The scope of the review was widened to include an evaluation of the work of the existing neighbourhood working arrangements in the priority areas.
- 1.5 The review included, piloting and reviewing area planning partnerships, holding visioning sessions with representatives from the Council, Derby Homes, Derbyshire Police, Derwent Community Team, Primary Care Trust, Derby Community Safety Partnership in December 2006 and February 2007, conducting desk top research, arranging Members' seminars, holding an Open Space event with residents and partners and reports to Area Panels.
- 1.6 Alongside the Area Panel review, both Derby Homes and Derbyshire Police have been reviewing their engagement processes to ensure that proposals are both integrated and fit for purpose.

- 1.7 In October 2006, while this review was taking place, the Government issued a White Paper on local government called 'Strong and Prosperous Communities'. The White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement and is built on the assumption that public services need to be made more personal and therefore community engagement at the neighbourhood level is paramount.
- 1.8 In the White Paper the Government recognises public services have improved, but to continue the improvement, Councils, their partners and local communities need more opportunities to shape their local services and communities. The White Paper put forward proposals to improve community involvement, partnership working and leadership as vital elements to create strong and prosperous communities.
- 1.9 The Area and Neighbourhood Board has now concluded the review and, having taken into account the outcomes from the review and the Government White Paper and the success of neighbourhood management arrangements in the Priority neighbourhoods, has proposed a new framework for neighbourhood working that transforms Area Panels into Neighbourhood Forums. The aim of their proposal is to embrace a partnership commitment while engaging local people so they can influence decision that affect their daily lives. There are five reasons for the proposal:
- to promote and enhance the community leadership role of elected members
 - to respond to the experience and evidence from Government and local neighbourhood management examples
 - to improve community engagement at a local level
 - to provide priority setting and increased accountability at a local level
 - to shape a local identity where local problems are resolved with local solutions in partnership with communities and agencies.
- 1.10 The Area and Neighbourhood Board proposes to roll out Neighbourhood Forums across the city as follows:
- 1.10.1 Council Constituted Area Panels are replaced with partnership oriented Neighbourhood Forums.
- 1.10.2 The current neighbourhood arrangements in Normanton, Arboretum, Abbey, Sinfen and Derwent wards will continue.
- 1.10.3 In wards where Neighbourhood Forums do not currently exist, the basic building blocks within each ward will be:
- a Neighbourhood Board, led by elected members, in partnership with other public agencies, resident representations and private sector organisations as considered appropriate

- a Neighbourhood Forum open to all residents and chaired by elected members
 - a Neighbourhood Manager and additional support as appropriate for the area (see 1.9.6)
- 1.10.4 Given the diverse nature of communities each Neighbourhood Board will consider the most appropriate community engagement strategy, taking into account:
- the make up and geography of local communities
 - the capacity of the Council and its partners to support and service the community engagement process
 - the statutory consultation arrangements of each agency
 - the need to balance objectives of bringing communities together (making them more cohesive, rather than reinforcing divisions) with accessibility and geographical spread
 - the wishes of the community.
- 1.10.5 Each Neighbourhood Board will consider and develop priorities, an action plan and a community engagement plan.
- 1.10.6 At an operational level, supporting Boards and Forums, three levels of neighbourhood management will be developed to reflect the intensity of interventions.
- Standard neighbourhoods, green, where a lighter touch of neighbourhood co-ordination will be provided; Darley, Allestree, Oakwood, Chellaston, Blagreaves, Littleover, Mickleover wards.
 - Enhanced neighbourhoods, amber, with support from Derby Homes Local Managers taking on the role of Neighbourhood Managers, with limited additional staff support, in Alvaston, Boulton, Chaddesden, Mackworth and Spondon wards
 - Priority neighbourhoods, red, already in place, each with its own Neighbourhood Manager and team, in Normanton, Arboretum, Abbey and Sinfin wards, together with the current arrangements in Derwent Ward through New Deal. (The priority neighbourhoods in these wards are Austin, Normanton/Peartree, Stockbrook, Osmaston/Allenton and Sinfin, along with Derwent).
- 1.11 In Area 1 (Derwent, Chaddesden, Oakwood and Spondon) a substantial start has been made on implementing integrated frontline services for children, young people and their families by the partner agencies in the City for Children and Young People. This aims to provide easier, swifter access to more effective joint services, in order to improve outcomes for the communities young people. The experience in Area 1 will inform the roll out of this model across the city and the link to specialist city-wide services. Current area boundaries provide the basis for this work, but it seems likely that ultimately, across the five areas, there will be three area structures within which there will be locality teams. Consultation with children, young people and their families, and involvement in decision-making are being integrated into the processes.

- 1.12 The proposal to transform Area Panels into Neighbourhood Forums will require further work on constitutional and financial implications including how to deal with Executive functions that are currently delegated to Area Panels, which are receiving and responding to area based petitions and allocating a delegated budget for local environmental and community purposes. There will also be a need to examine the best method of servicing the new Forums.
- 1.13 These issues will be the subject of a further report to the Council Cabinet and full Council in September 2007, following consultation with the Community Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The detailed financial implications will be included in the future report.

Legal

2. Area Panels are deemed to be committees for the purpose of the constitution. Proposals for changes to the constitution will be included in the further report.

Personnel

3. The proposals will have a direct impact on the Area and Neighbourhood and Constitutional Services Teams. There will be full consultation with the trade unions and the employees affected.

Equalities impact

4. None arising directly from the report.

Corporate Priorities

5. This accords with the Council's priorities of making us proud of our neighbourhoods, creating a 21st Century city centre, leading Derby towards a better environment, supporting everyone in learning and achieving, helping us all to be healthy, active and independent and giving you excellent services and value for money.