



Derby City Council

Neighbourhoods Board
29 April 2014

Report of the Strategic Director of
Neighbourhoods

ITEM 5

Update on Neighbourhood Working

SUMMARY

1.1 The current Labour administration made a commitment in its 2012 manifesto to: 'revitalise neighbourhood working' and to work with local people to tackle the issues that matter to them. Council Cabinet approved in August 2012 a change of approach to neighbourhood working.

A framework was agreed for implementation as follows:

- A dedicated neighbourhood officer in each neighbourhood, forming a team of 17.
- To move to an area based neighbourhood approach with 4 neighbourhood managers.
- To establish a lead officer post for community cohesion and integration and a lead officer post for public protection
- Neighbourhood devolved community budgets
- Support of the elected members in their community leadership and case work role
- Community engagement, consultation and communication (including Neighbourhood Boards and Forums)
- Tasking and Co-ordination of local issues and problems
- Responsive and reactive problem solving
- Area-based strategic management and planning.

1.2 A re-structure of staffing and resources was implemented to deliver this new service, which began operating in April 2013. The new structure is:

- 4 Neighbourhood Managers (covering 4 areas of the city)
- 17 Neighbourhood Officers created from previous roles of Anti-Social Behaviour Officers, Derby Homes Officers and Partnership Development Officers. 15 of these posts are from existing resources, 2 further posts are funded from the Administrations' priority fund. The neighbourhood officers to split their time between activities and projects as tasked by their respective Boards, and the rest of the time supporting other neighbourhood workers and the neighbourhood manager on projects within their area.
- In conjunction to this the devolved budgets (including community budgets and devolved Streetpride budgets) were re-distributed based upon the index of

multiple deprivation so those neighbourhoods with the highest level of need and demand received a greater proportion of the budget (Appendix 2).

- 1.3 A city-wide neighbourhood board, to task at a tactical level. The city wide board uses an intelligence led approach to allocate resources across a range of council and partnership services to respond to neighbourhood issues and to agree city wide and neighbourhood specific projects.
- 1.4 The introduction of Neighbourhood Charters enabling Neighbourhood Boards to communicate their priorities and encourage a real partnership and shared responsibility between the public, local agencies and councillors for delivering priorities in their neighbourhoods.
- 1.5 To enable neighbourhood officers to respond to local environmental issues quickly and effectively, they are to be given enforcement powers to issue fixed penalty notices. These powers are under the 2005 Cleaner Neighbourhoods and environmental Act 2005 and includes the power to issue fines for environmental crimes such as littering, fly-posting and dog-fouling
- 1.6 Key to the proposals was the delivery of the Administration's commitment to build on the success of Streetpride and Neighbourhood Management to create teams to deliver services in neighbourhoods so that local people get to know the people who work for them and staff identify with the neighbourhoods in which they work and feel a pride in the communities they serve.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the report.
- 2.2 To make any recommendations to the Cabinet member for Streetpride and Neighbourhoods.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Board has the responsibility for scrutinising items that fall within its remit.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Based upon the priorities outlined in 1.1 and the Neighbourhood Working document from 2013 (Appendix 1), below is an update on those key areas:

A dedicated neighbourhood officer in each neighbourhood. There are 17 Neighbourhood Officer posts; currently 15 of these are filled. One is subject to recruitment and an agreed start date and one member of staff has been on sickness absence for 10 months. The Neighbourhood Officers have been recruited from a number of different professional backgrounds and disciplines, despite this they have responded positively to the new framework and expectations.

A key focus was to remove some of the bureaucracy and red tape they had in their previous roles, to enable them to spend a greater proportion of their working week in the community and be more visible and responsive to local problems. This has been achieved, with on average around 20% of their working week spent in the office. Due to recruitment and sickness some neighbourhoods have not benefitted from dedicated officers, however, by working as an area team each neighbourhood has continued to receive the service.

- 4.2 **Management of the neighbourhood areas:** In the original proposal, there were to be four senior neighbourhood officers whose roles was to deputise for the Neighbourhood Manager and the five Derby Homes Housing and Neighbourhood Managers retained management of one or more neighbourhoods in each area. To ensure a consistent approach to delivery of the framework across an area it was agreed that all neighbourhoods fall under the management of the Neighbourhood Manager, allowing the Derby Homes managers to play a stronger strategic and partnership role in each neighbourhood.
- 4.3 **Managing and monitoring performance of Neighbourhood Officers**
Officers' tasks and work is managed through the introduction of the neighbourhood log, which enables officers to case manage issues and will enable performance and information reports to be produced for Neighbourhood Boards and the City-Wide Board.
- 4.4 **Neighbourhood devolved community budgets**
Each Neighbourhood Board continues to receive community budgets to allocate to neighbourhood priorities. As mentioned in 1.2 these budgets were re-distributed in 2013 to reflect the greater need and demand in more deprived communities.
- 4.5 **Support of the elected members in their community leadership and case work role**
Neighbourhood Managers and Officers play a crucial role in supporting local councillors in their community leadership role. For example, through supporting them to identify priorities, engaging local people, identifying and delivering solutions to local problems and promoting their leadership role. They also provide support in the form of contributing to case-work, where the solutions are more complex and require a level of planning and partnership work with local service providers and agencies and have an impact on several people or a large section of the community.

4.6 **Community engagement, consultation and communication (Neighbourhood Boards and Forums)**

Community engagement is a crucial element in the role of neighbourhood working. This engagement has taken a wider role over the last year. Neighbourhood Boards and Forums are still important, but a number of neighbourhoods are utilising a wider range of tools and approaches to engage local people and identify key issues and priorities, such as Councillors on Patrol, walkabouts and street audits, increased communication, trialling of the use of social media and networks of community champions.

4.7 **Tasking and Co-ordination of local issues and problems and Responsive and reactive problem solving**

Neighbourhood tasking continues to be a strength of neighbourhood working. This has recently been reviewed and streamlined, to reflect the growing maturity of our local partnership working. Neighbourhood managers attend and contribute to Police section tasking and Neighbourhood Officers lead on neighbourhood tasking arrangements which include a range of local partners such as the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, MAT Teams, Streetpride, and Derby Homes. Neighbourhood tasking is a framework to identify the more complex and long-standing issues in the neighbourhood associated with crime, community safety and environmental issues and develop partnership responses and actions. The introduction of neighbourhood officers has enable a more reactive and real time response to these issues, by the officers being more locally based, developing closer ties with the community and partners and developing a real understanding of the nature and issues within their neighbourhood.

4.8 **Area-based strategic management and planning and the City Wide Board**

The introduction of Neighbourhood Officers has enabled Neighbourhood Managers to be less operationally involved and develop more robust long-term plans and strategy, working across a range of neighbourhoods that share similar issues and priorities to join up more effectively neighbourhood working with other council priorities and service areas. The City Wide Board has tasked neighbourhood teams to respond to deliver targeted campaigns.

4.9 **Key Achievements:**

A summary of key activities in the neighbourhoods is outlined below. Over 2,000 cases have been referred, including crime, community safety, neighbourhood disputes, traffic and parking problems, environmental problems and community tensions.

A number of neighbourhoods have introduced 'Adopt a Street' initiatives and Neighbourhood Charters.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	N/A
Financial officer	N/A
Human Resources officer	N/A
Estates/Property officer	N/A
Service Director(s)	N/A
Other(s)	Andy Thomas, Head of Service - Partnerships and Communities

For more information contact:	Andy Thomas 01332 643020 andy.thomas@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 - Neighbourhood Working 2013 Appendix 3 – Breakdown of Neighbourhood Board budgets

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Neighbourhood working has been 'revitalised' within existing City and Neighbourhood Partnership budgets, alongside significant budget reductions from 2010 to 2012. A further 2 Neighbourhood Officer posts have been funded on a temporary basis of 18 months from the administrations priority fund

Legal

- 2.1 None

Personnel

- 3.1 None, previous re-structuring has taken place

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None

Health and Safety

- 5.1 None

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 None

Property and Asset Management

- 7.1 None

Risk Management

- 8.1 None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 Safer and Stronger Communities

