

Halesowen Area Committee 12th November 2008

Report of the Director of Adult, Community, and Housing Services

Community Renewal Working Group

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on the progress made by the Working Group in developing the Halesowen Area Committee Community Renewal Plan.

Background

2. The Draft Plan was included with my report to your July meeting, and the establishment of the Working Group was approved by that meeting.
3. The first meeting of the Group took place on 18th August, and the Head of Community Renewal presented members with a report and outline of the Area Community Renewal Officer's (ACRO) role. Members were also provided with:-
 - A draft of "A strategy for Community Renewal in Dudley"
 - Community Profiles of localities within their Wards – cross border issues in Cradley & Foxcote Ward were identified by Cllr Partridge, and this was to be taken forward to the Steering Group.
 - A framework for thinking matrix to assist members in considering and prioritising issues.
4. It was also agreed that the Community Renewal Officer would provide members with "Issue Logs" so that they, or their other Ward Members, could raise new issues.
5. Terms of reference were agreed subject to clarification of the inclusion of the Area Committee Chair – subsequently identified that Item 17(2) of Halesowen Area Committee minutes of minutes dated 2nd July 2008 specified membership of the Working Group comprise Chairman of the Committee and one Member from each Ward. Terms of reference to be amended accordingly. No representative partners were co-opted, and it was decided that they be invited as and when considered necessary and appropriate.

Youth issues, and representation of their views at Area Committee was considered a priority, and the ACRO promised to consult with the Youth Service and report back on their plans for a Youth Forum in Halesowen.
6. The second meeting took place on 28th October. The cross border issues in Cradley & Foxcote Ward had been taken to the Steering Group, and the decision taken for the Service to continue working on a Community Locality basis meaning that the Stourbridge ACRO would still cover the Wollescote area included in Cradley & Foxcote Ward. To compensate for this any Wollescote related issues in

the Stourbridge Plan would be duplicated at the end of the Halesowen Plan. In addition the ACROs for Halesowen and Stourbridge worked closely together, and Cllr Partridge would be invited to any open meetings in Wollescote which affected her Ward. Cllr Partridge's dissatisfaction with this arrangement was noted.

7. A report on progress to establish a Youth Forum was tabled, and it was clear that much more work and co-ordination was needed to make it a truly representative body for the young people of Halesowen. With the Youth Service Consultation now on-going it was felt that this could be an opportunity for the Area Committee to help shape service availability in Halesowen. It was agreed that Community Renewal would take forward the Youth Representation and provision with the Youth Service, and jointly attend a special meeting of the Working Group to discuss this single issue.
8. Some Members have yet to share the issue logs with their fellow Ward Councillors, but would attend to this.
9. Members went through the draft plan, and, apart from Youth Issues, health and environmental issues (especially Parks) were considered priorities.

Finance

10. In line with the draft local community plan, Area Committees plan in line with the overall Council Plan and priorities whilst encouraging innovation in the commissioning of activities from a variety of partners which will add value and achieve objectives for their area.

Law

11. The Local Government Act 2000 placed a duty on local authorities to establish a Local Strategic Partnership to address collaborative working and develop a community strategy and local neighbourhood renewal strategy. Community Renewal is part of that approach.
12. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1980 enables the Council to do anything which is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well being of the area.

Equality Impact

13. The objective of Community renewal is to promote inclusion and social cohesion. Community renewal plans target those most in need in terms of deprivation. Information is collected through each CR intervention or consultation to monitor the inclusivity and difference made for various groups and people involved. Where inclusion is an issue ACROs engage through various community or interest groups locally to design appropriate responses to different circumstances

Where children and young people are involved they are directly consulted and frequently design the response to local issues - such as youth PACT, Junior rangers, Breakfast clubs, Dance groups, football league, homework mates, places to play , young consultants, intergenerational work

Recommendation

14. That Committee Members note the report and continue to support the work of the Community Renewal team in community localities.



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Linda Sanders
Director of Adult Community & Housing

Contact Officer: Arwyn Thomas
Telephone: 01384 815964
Email: arwyn.thomas@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Community Renewal Strategy
Halesowen Area Committee Community Renewal Plan.