

Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services –

Report of the Director of Adult Community & Housing Services

Area Committee Community Renewal Working Groups

Purpose of Report

1. (1) To provide the members of the Select Committee with an update on the progress of the Area Committee Community Renewal Working groups and a summary of the broad issues arising from them

(2) The report is for information only and no decisions are required as a result of the report

Back ground

2. As members will be aware from previous reporting, the delivery of the neighbourhood strategy for the borough has been restructured into a broader Community Renewal approach which allows for a focus on neighbourhoods and the wider community within area committee areas.
3. Each area committee has a Community Renewal Working Group and through this it oversees the direction of Community Renewal for its area, in addressing gaps in strategy and delivery and in responding to issues of importance to the community.
4. Elected members as community leaders and representatives are ideally placed for this task and their role is being strengthened by the newly developing community renewal forums, one for each area committee area. This has been led by the North Dudley area committee and is in the process of being rolled out to each area committee area. The aim is to ensure strong local community buy in and accountability for the plans, through its communities of interest and area based groups, and to share and involve local people in the development and delivery of the plans for their area.
5. Each area committee working group and community renewal plan is also supported by neighbourhood services groups where public agencies and voluntary sector providers come together to plan and problem solve service delivery and strategic implementation issues for that particular local area.
6. In Central Area and Brierley Hill, the pattern is slightly different in that there are additional partnerships at ward level for implementation of city strategy and the local skills and unemployment strategy which, although led by Community Renewal, are accountable through the regeneration team in DUE (Directorate of the Urban Environment) to the City Region.

7. In Brierley Hill, the Area Committee Working Group has merged its children and young people's working group with its Community Renewal Working Group to enable a more concerted focus on the related issues.
8. All the Area Committee Community Renewal plans are aligned to the Council Plan and the Dudley Borough Community Strategy and are underpinned by locality action plans or thematic plans where relevant or necessary.
9. Each Area Committee Community Renewal Working Group has now entered its second year of deliberation – each working group receives a plan for its area and a table of completed actions. Elected members show keen interest in the issues and debate is lively with cross party collaboration for the benefit of communities featuring.
10. Although the work has traditionally focussed on areas “managed “ under the previous neighbourhood management arrangements members of the working groups have also recognised the needs of other poorer performing areas and the plans and activities are now broadening out as the issues are fed into the Community Renewal and Area Committee mechanisms.

Information

11. Common issues are emerging from the working groups and responses vary according to circumstance. The table below illustrates this.
12. In addition the Community Renewal team work with Adult and Family Learning, Dosti, DCVS and the Tenant Participation team to develop groups and to enable people to become involved in community life and to participate in the delivery of the plans .
13. Multiagency working through Community Renewal is focused on to areas through the use of community intelligence, broad deprivation data and more localised thematic data such as public health data or educational data or crime data. This approach is based on shared intelligence, unity of purpose, reduction in duplication and conflict between services, improved accountability and added value and is leading to improvements in community safety, learning and skills and the environment which would not have been delivered in a single agency mode. Additional external funding to address issues has been levered in by community groups adding further value.

14.

Main common issues	Response	Mechanism
Antisocial behaviour associated with criminal damage, underage drinking, open spaces such as parks and estate hot spots such as around shops	Joint working with police , health, environmental services, ASBU, youth service, Connexions and local communities to develop local responses and feed into strategy development	Neighbourhood partnerships , Neighbourhood services groups, JAG, Town centre management, Youth service, Green Spaces Management Team, DCVS, Trading standards, Aquarius, Policing teams
Poor environments associated with smaller derelict land sites, pre-development sites, overgrown gardens, street scene, older inner urban Victorian terraces and deck access and high rise estates and empty commercial premises;	Joint working with Housing, DUE street and green care teams, Parks teams, Planning, PCT, Princes Trust , DCVS, Groundwork Black Country, BCVS and local communities Special projects such as Beat Sweep, Hawbush Community Gardens, Dudley No2 Canal, Barriers to prevent fly tipping, tackling abandoned cars	NGLAA Environmental Task Group, Green Spaces Management Team, neighbourhood services groups, neighbourhood partnerships, Fire service, Police service, Parks service, town centre management team and voids and derelicts working group
Youth provision which works closely with the voluntary and community sector to maximise provision and provides the positive opportunities that young people want to take up	Joint mapping with CVS and youth service .Provision of comprehensive list of activity via Family Information Service. Close liaison with neighbourhood policing teams Engaging communities in voluntary youth work. Supporting community centres to provide youth facilities/space. Involving young people in positive activities through sports, drama and other opportunities	Neighbourhood services groups, NEETs steering group, Integrated children's services ,
Community provision for the 8 -13s and for the elderly.	To support the development of community led activities for these groups with various community groups and volunteers.	Play pathfinder Community kitchens and luncheon clubs, bingo, pensioners clubs. Play rangers , Family learning , extended schools activities
Unemployment associated with the recession and with skills and barriers to work and other educational and economic factors.	Maximising opportunities for people to connect with relevant training and support and removing the barriers to work such as ill health, childcare, skills, Learning revolution. Creating volunteering opportunities.	Joint working with JCP, Connexions, Family and Adult learning, private and voluntary skills and training providers, substance misuse team, mental health, tenancy sustainment and housing voluntary agencies
Poor health associated with poverty isolation, low expectation, ageing population, managing illness, alcohol, obesity and nutrition.	Engaging people in activity ranging from dancing , expert patient, social groups, sports teams, football, fishing, crafts counselling and social groups Children's centres /GPs	Healthy towns, SRS, Debt management and CAB. Engagement with PCT community development teams and LINK.

Finance

15. The Community Renewal plans identify work which is being undertaken through mainstream or other budget source and gaps in provision or need. The Community Renewal Service seeks to maximise the benefit derived by local communities by focusing day to day activities in a different way into a defined area to achieve shared intelligence, common purpose, reduction in duplication and added value.
16. From April 2010 Community Renewal and Community Centres are financed entirely from DACHS

Law

17. The Local Government Act 2000 places 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.
Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Government in Public Health Act 2007) 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.
The 1998 Crime & Disorder Act places an obligation on local authorities and the police to exercise its functions with due regard to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

Equality Impact

18. One of the objectives of Community Renewal is to promote social inclusion and social cohesion and equality of access and opportunity.
Information is collected through each Community Renewal intervention or consultation to monitor various groups and people involved. Where inclusion is an issue Area Community Renewal Officers engage with various communities of interest groups locally, to design appropriate responses to different circumstances. Children and young people are included in the term "community" are actively involved and consulted in designing the response to local issues.

Recommendations

19. That members note the work of the Area Committee Working Groups and the broad issues emerging



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Background papers: Community renewal strategy

Area committee Community Renewal Working group minutes
Area committee community renewal plans
Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Partnership minutes, plans
and action plans