

Halesowen Area Committee 10th November 2010

Report of the Interim Director of Adult Social Services

Community Renewal Working Group

Purpose of Report

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

Background

2. At the meeting of the working group on 12th October an updated copy of the Area Committee Community Renewal Plan had been made available to Members, and they were advised that the minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Group held on 20th September were due to be circulated to all Halesowen Members.
3. In response to Members' request at the previous meeting the Youth Service Area Team Leader attended the meeting, and was able to advise Members on events organised for the area and on joint working with the Police to tackle hot spot areas. A Christmas Disco was to be held at Benjamin's Night Club, and Members felt there was a need for events like "Coffee in the Dark" at the parks within the town. These would be considered on a multi agency basis in line with respective agency resources. The Area Community Renewal Officer was also able to inform Members on a Police operation over the Halloween/Bonfire period working with the Fire Service, Trading Standards and Community Renewal to tackle illegal sale of alcohol and fireworks in hot spot areas – Members would be advised if their wards were to be targeted.
4. A Member informed the Group that the football pitch on Huntingtree Park would be available for use from September 2011 following the installation of a new drainage system. This would compliment the Healthy Hub activities on the park, and improve facilities for young people. The Member also reported on possible "Schoolympics" opportunities for young people.
5. The Group was advised that following discussions with the Leader of the Council and the Assistant Director, Culture and Leisure, it had been decided that a site visit would be arranged for Ward Members and Officers in May 2011 with a view to a Multi Use Games Area being installed in Highfield Park during 2011. The Member had been assured that the funding remained available for the project.

6. It was reported that following Anti Social Behaviour fuelled by alcohol in Halesowen North the Police were considering an alcohol ban, and were gathering evidence to support an application. A Member commented that the Police could be more proactive in enforcing the ban in the Town Centre.

Shaping Community Centres for the Future

7. The Council's Cabinet approved a Report on 'Shaping Community Centres for the Future' on 22nd September 2010. The Report proposed a positive vision for Community Centres as "*A network of local community hubs and resources meeting the needs and aspirations of local communities*" and principles for engagement. Engagement with the Community Centres and any interested party was approved by the Cabinet and an Engagement Plan has been developed. Arrangements have been made for the Plan to be sent to Community Centres and e-mailed to Elected Members. The Plan briefly sets out arrangements for engagement over the next eight months with:
 - Community Centre members and any other interested parties including the Community Centres Support Group;
 - Elected Members through the routine Area Committee Local Community Renewal Plan up-date Report as well as the Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services prior to submission of a concluding Report to Cabinet in Summer/Autumn 2011;
 - Voluntary and Community Sector engagement being organised by the DCVS.

The Halesowen Area Committee will be kept informed of progress routinely through this Report and any comments that Members wish to make about making the vision for Community Centres a reality in the Area Committee area at this stage will be gratefully accepted.

Finance

8. 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

9. 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.

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

10. One of the objectives of Community Renewal is to promote inclusion and social cohesion. The Community Renewal strategy addresses those in areas which suffer from inequality in terms of social and economic outcomes.

Information is collected through each Community Renewal intervention or consultation to monitor the exclusivity and difference made for various groups and people involved. Where inclusion is an issue Area Community Renewal Officers 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 involved in designing solutions.

Recommendation

11. That Committee Members note the report and accept the Plan as a working document for the current year, and with the Community Renewal Service reporting progress to the Committee through the Working Group.

Richard Carter .

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Richard Carter
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List of Background Papers

None