

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

24 JANUARY 2013

COUNCIL

11 FEBRUARY 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING – FORGING A MODERN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND RESIDENTS</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</i>
KEY DECISION?	<i>YES</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the development of a neighbourhood working approach across constituencies in Wirral, in order for services and community engagement to be more effectively and efficiently configured, targeted and delivered.
- 1.2 The proposed neighbourhood working approach will help to develop a closer relationship between the Council and residents, promote improved partnership working across the public sector and ensure future service delivery reflects an improved understanding of resident views through consultation and participation.
- 1.3 The proposed neighbourhood working approach also potentially offers a more cost effective approach to the future delivery of services by joining up front line delivery and tackling issues at their source. It is about changing ways of working for all public, private, social sector providers to deliver improvements for neighbourhoods.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Localism Act gives councils more freedom to work together with others in new ways and has introduced new rights for communities: including a 'Right to Buy' public assets and increased opportunities for participation in the delivery of services. Locally this presents opportunities to forge new partnerships with communities to evidence, shape and deliver public policy and services across the borough.
- 2.2 Strong neighbourhood working can provide the basis for the Council, public services and the wider community to facilitate a more flexible response to residents' issues through co-ordinated services and involving residents in shaping decisions and services. Local Councillors have a significant leadership role to play in this process.
- 2.3 The proposed method of neighbourhood working will operate across organisational boundaries ensuring residents and services work together to improve their neighbourhood. Positive discussions have taken place with the Police, Fire and Health partners who regard this new model as one which they intend to fully participate in.

- 2.4 A range of public, private and social sector community services can be linked together in terms of their operational activities on these Constituency footprints. Council Departments can reconfigure their delivery to fit this geographical model and deliver better coordination across Council services and improved multi-agency working.

The benefits of neighbourhood working include:

- Greater opportunities for Ward Members to lead and influence local service delivery within their localities and to respond to local needs and priorities
- Increasing community confidence to explore creative and innovative approaches to meet local needs
- Increased multi agency working so delivering better value for taxpayers' money by reducing duplication across service areas
- A local focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery by bringing the Council closer to the needs and priorities of local communities

3.0 PROPOSED APPROACH TO NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

- 3.1 It is proposed that a neighbourhood working structure replaces the current Area Forum arrangements, and is established based upon Wirral's four Parliamentary Constituency boundaries, with staff and services being located within Constituencies and a Constituency Committee established for each area.
- 3.2 Each Constituency will also have a Public Service Board which will bring together bodies including the Council, Police, Fire and Health services, to co-ordinate the strategic delivery of a Constituency Plan and report progress to the respective Constituency Committee.
- 3.3 Constituency Committees (see Appendix 2) will be responsible for producing the Constituency Plan (Appendix 3), that will outline priorities for each area. It is proposed that each Committee would consist of local Councillors and Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector Representatives. Consideration could also be given to the local MP being invited to participate.
- 3.4 A Strategic Director will be responsible for ensuring implementation of each Constituency plan, and for ensuring that the interface between each Constituency Committee and the Constituency Public Service Board is aligned and effective. There will also be officer support to ensure that constituency arrangements operate effectively and that full engagement takes place with the wider community.

4.0 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND REPRESENTATION

- 4.1 Good governance, transparency and accountability are essential for the Council and a cornerstone for improving public services. The Council is accountable for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. The Council must also ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 4.2 This proposal will include putting in place robust arrangements for the governance of neighbourhood working and the stewardship of resources allocated to it.
- 4.3 Underpinning the governance arrangements for neighbourhood working will be the principles of enhancing civic life, deepening democratic participation, strengthening community voice and strengthening the Council's responsiveness to residents.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 A robust risk register will underpin the implementation of the proposed neighbourhood working approach. The risk register will be developed and monitored in line with the project management arrangements which will be put in place.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 A range of options which operate in other Local Authority areas have been reviewed in order to develop the recommended approach set out in this report (Appendix 1). On consideration of best practice elsewhere it is recommended that the Constituency footprint provides the most effective footprint to achieve the benefits of neighbourhood working outlined within the resources available to the Council at a time of budget constraint.
- 6.2 It would not be possible to adopt a new model of working utilising the existing 11 Area Forum boundaries for the following reasons:
- a) 11 separate forums are costly to administer (currently £1300 per annum, per resident who attends, per Area Forum).
 - b) The Area Forum footprints are too small to co-ordinate services more effectively.

However, embedded neighbourhood officers with the responsibility to engage with all residents will ensure that the needs of all wards and communities are reflected in Constituency planning.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.2 The recent 'What Really Matters' consultation included questions on future working models. It is proposed that the Democracy Working Group be fully involved in taking the proposals forward and that further consultation takes place with partners and the Community Voluntary and Faith Sector.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR

- 8.1 The proposed model for neighbourhood working will strengthen the Council's partnership relationship with the voluntary and community sector, and will enable a more effective Wirral Compact.
- 8.2 A new social cohesion / social value model of commissioning neighbourhood services will need to be developed in order to promote sustainability and meet desired outcomes based upon a 2030 vision for Wirral. This would create more sustainable funding options currently open to voluntary and community sector organisations.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 This proposal will help to support efficiency savings in the following areas:
- a) Shared structures, services, budgets and assets
 - b) Eliminating duplication
 - c) Greater integration of services
 - d) Joint tendering programmes
 - e) Value for money and savings
 - f) Shared outcomes
 - g) Integrating council officers and communications across Constituencies

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 New governance arrangements will be developed to ensure participation of citizens, elected members and partners.
- 10.2 The proposal will enable the Council to deliver on the Localism Act and Social Value Act.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and the phase 1 equality impact assessment is attached to this report. The equality impact assessment will also be published on the following link:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/corporate-services>

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The proposal will encourage sharing of community assets, therefore supporting carbon reduction.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There will be positive implications arising from this proposal as local communities will have a greater role in commenting on planning proposals and having a more immediate and direct influence regarding community safety implications.

14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 Cabinet endorses the proposals to establish a new neighbourhood working approach across constituencies in Wirral and refers this report to Council for consideration and agreement.

14.2 Cabinet requests that a special meeting of the Democracy Working Group be held to discuss this report and make comment prior to the referral of this recommendation to Council on Monday 11th February.

15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

15.1 For services to be more effectively and efficiently configured, targeted and delivered.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Neighbourhood Working – Other Local Authority Examples
- Appendix 2 Neighbourhood Working – A Structure for Vibrant and Active Neighbourhoods
- Appendix 3 Constituency Plans – Proposed Themes

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – What Really Matters Consultation Findings	08/11/12

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (Phase 1)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Jacqui Cross

Email address: jacquicross@wirral.gov.uk

Head of Section: Emma Degg

Chief Officer: Graham Burgess

Department: Chief Executives

Date: 1 November 2012

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

A new Neighbourhood Working Model (Phase 1 EIA)

Section 2b: Will this EIA be submitted to a Cabinet or Overview & Scrutiny Committee?

Yes / No

If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date

Cabinet on 13 December 2012

Please add hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/corporate-services>

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

√ **Services**

√ **The workforce**

√ **Communities**

√ **Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)
Public sector, private sector, voluntary and community sectors, residents

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

None (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4: Does the proposal have the potential to maintain or enhance the way the Council (please tick relevant boxes)

√ Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

√ Advances equality of opportunity

√ Fosters good relations between groups of people

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 5.

No (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 5:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any of the protected groups (race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	Positive Impact – services more effectively and efficiently configured, targeted and delivered Positive Impact – outcomes focussed services and engagement		Strategic Director	From 1 April 2013	To be confirmed
All	Negative Impact – loss of jobs across the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fair redundancy criteria	Head of HR & OD	By 1 April 2013	To be confirmed

Section 5a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

Via implementation and reporting of the Wirral Improvement Plan and Corporate Plan

Section 5b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

Not applicable

Section 6: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Localism Act, Social Value Act, Compact, Council budget cuts, ‘What Really Matters’ consultation, neighbourhood working best practice examples

Section 7: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

No (Phase 1)

The results of the ‘What Really Matters’ consultation have been utilised in designing this proposal.

Yes (Phase 2)

The Council will drive the necessary changes required in order to adopt this proposed model of working across Wirral, in partnership with residents, public sector, private sector, and social sector.

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 8: How will consultation take place and by when?

Phase 1

Not applicable (completed via 'What Really Matters?')

Phase 2

Consultation and engagement of residents, public sector, private sector, and social sector as part of reconfiguring public services across Constituencies

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal requirements. The EIA will be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 5. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for re-publishing.

Section 9: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Add appropriate departmental hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published (section 2b)**
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts? (section 5)**
- c) **Send this EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 5 once consultation has taken place and sent your completed EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**

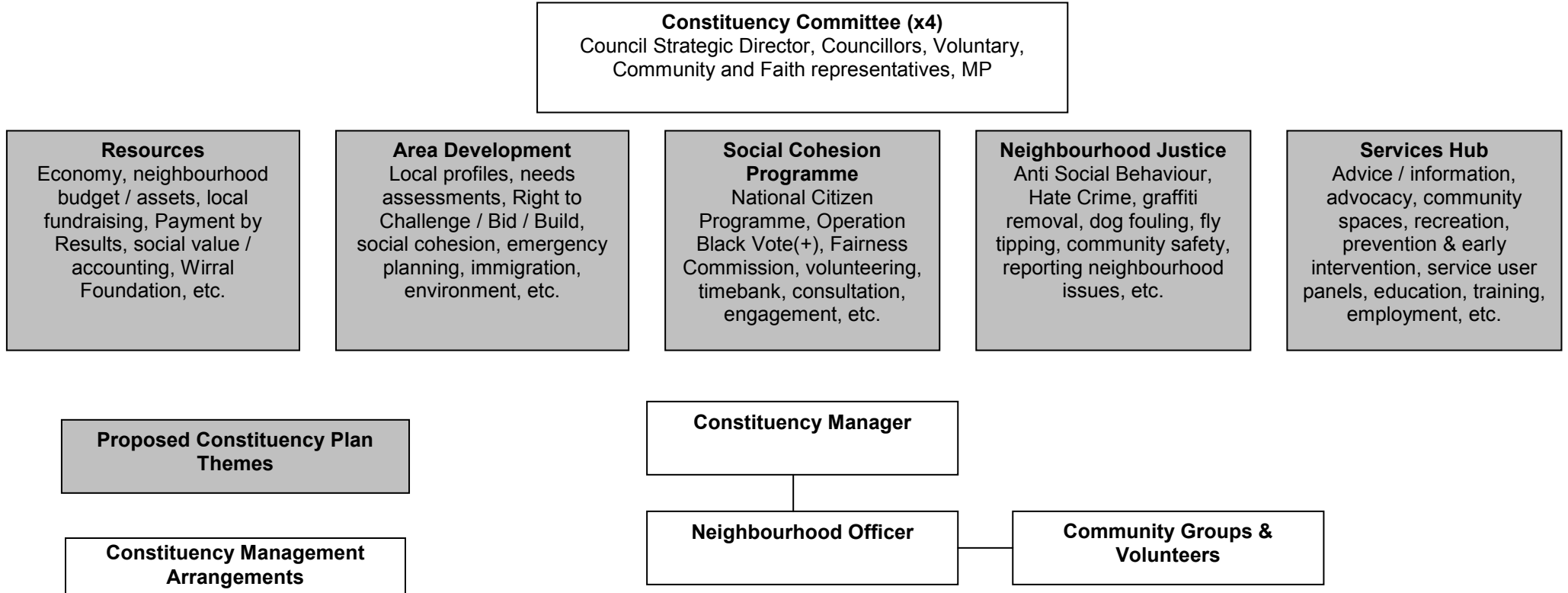
Appendix 1

Neighbourhood Working Examples

1. Salford Council and neighbourhood partners adopted a whole system approach focussing on five pathways to poverty (family breakdown, addiction, educational failure, debt, and economic dependency and worklessness). One troubled family used to cost £155,000 per annum to support. The new partnership approach has reduced this amount to £30,000 so far this year.
2. Cumbria County Council's Barrow neighbourhood partnership now provides joint advice and information services. This approach led to successfully dealing with 236 incidents of debt totalling £3.1 million from October 2010 to September 2011.
3. Tameside Council's Employment Partnership brokered job interview guarantee schemes and pre-recruitment training within neighbourhoods. In 2011, over 93% of jobs were obtained by local residents, and nearly 28% of the jobs were obtained by residents in priority neighbourhoods.
4. Bolton Council's neighbourhood approach with the wider public sector and voluntary and community sector to establish the Big Bolton Fund to award grants for community projects, has grown from £25,000 initial council investment to £145,000 in 2012 through donations from individuals and businesses.
5. Bradford Council, via a neighbourhood scheme introduced a resident-led 'street reps' initiative. Street reps are residents who volunteer to act as the 'eyes and ears' for their street, helping neighbours and reporting issues to the relevant council services.
6. Walsall Council was informed of anti-social behaviour near a recently installed play area, close to a number of homes. Residents had repeatedly complained to their Councillors. Partners met on site to experience the problems first-hand and work with residents to jointly agree a solution. This resulted in the play equipment being removed, outreach workers delivering diversionary activities, and the police increasing patrols to monitor the situation. Residents are now planning to form their own group to manage the site.

Appendix 2

Neighbourhood Working – A Structure for Vibrant and Active Neighbourhoods



Appendix 3

Constituency Plans – Proposed Themes

Theme	Ideas to include:
<p>Resources (delivering local priorities and aspirations)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local economy • Cross sector and community partnerships • Neighbourhood budgeting • Neighbourhood Dividends • Shared assets • Social value commissioning • Local fundraising • A Wirral Foundation
<p>Area Development (planning reform and decision making)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local profiling • Needs assessments • Community right to challenge / bid / build (Localism Act) • Emergency planning • Asset transfer • Environment
<p>Social Cohesion Programme (promoting rights and responsibilities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro social behaviour • National citizen programme • Operation Black Vote • Fairness Commission • Volunteering timebank • Consultation and engagement
<p>Neighbourhood Justice (addressing local justice and safety issues)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti social behaviour • Hate crime • Graffiti removal • Dog fouling • Fly tipping • Community safety • Reporting neighbourhood issues
<p>Service Hubs (strengthening welfare and reducing inequalities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and information • Advocacy • Community spaces and leisure • Community safety • Prevention and early intervention services • Environmental services • Streetscene services • Education and training • Employment • Service user panels • Shared services