

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

13 MARCH 2014

SUBJECT:	NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report details the progress made by the Neighbourhoods Programme, established in July 2013 to ensure that every community, group and resident has the opportunity to influence Council resources in their neighbourhoods, across the four constituencies of Wirral.
- 1.2 We will continue to drive forward this approach, empowering our elected members as community leaders to fully utilise the devolved powers and responsibilities given to Constituency Committees to maximise public resources in their areas, and increase community resilience within neighbourhoods to encourage greater independence.
- 1.3 The Council has embarked on a significant agenda of strategic and operational change. Together with our partners we are committed to new ways of working and service transformation based on the principle of finding local solutions to local problems.
- 1.4 We are devolving decision making to Constituency Committees wherever it makes sense to do so, and elected members will inspire communities to come together to find the right solutions to address local need and improve residents' lives. This approach will not just deliver more cost effective services; it will deliver better outcomes for local residents.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 **Governance:** 4 Constituency Committees have been established and are implementing 2013/2014 priority activities within the allocated budgets. Each committee is responsible for producing annual outcomes focussed Constituency Plans based upon the priorities for that area and linked to the Council's Corporate Plan, and will report on progress via an annual report to full Council. Committees will commission activities accordingly with devolved constituency budgets and in accordance with the Council's new Commissioning Strategy (please note this is currently being developed and is yet to be approved). Committees consist of all ward members (15-18 ward members per constituency) and 2 of the 4 Committees have community representation. Handbooks are currently being produced for the committees setting out, within the framework of the terms of reference in the Council's Constitution, how they will operate. Public questions and answer sessions have also been included at Committee meetings.

- 2.2 Constituency data profiles have been developed to support the Constituency Committees in identifying priority areas for budget investment. Elected member training sessions have also been delivered focussing specifically on the content of the data profiles.
- 2.3 The Wirral Public Service Board (WPSB) has been established to act as the strategic driver for transformation across public sector services. The WPSB is working on a number of common principles and cross-cutting issues, for example mapping and sharing data, identifying the joint cost of providing services that are delivered across Wirral, prevention and early intervention, and ensuring residents can actively shape and influence new service design and delivery.
- 2.4 **Delivery:** With our key public, private and community partners the Council will develop more joint commissioning and joint working activities and a new way for local providers to work together to meet local needs, thus improving outcomes for local people and reducing duplication. 4 Local Public Service Boards have been established to act as the operational co-ordination of implementing Constituency Plans and for dealing with residents' issues at source in a multi-agency / multi-disciplinary way.
- 2.5 Soon to be based within the 4 constituencies, the Council has established 4 Constituency Teams (Constituency Managers and Neighbourhood Engagement Officers) to manage and implement this new way of working and to co-ordinate the activities of new multi-agency / multi-disciplinary service hubs. These teams will also support services by putting them in touch with residents and community organisations in order to involve people in the design, delivery, commissioning and evaluation of the services they use.
- 2.7 Full service reviews are taking place across the Council, as part of the Future Council programme. As well as reviewing which services will be invested in for the future, there will also be the opportunity for service re-design as well as redeployment of services to the constituencies.
- 2.6 Wirral's role in the Government's Public Service Transformation Network (PSTN) aims to build on the opportunities created by Community Budgets around the country, leading to more joint working and shared services; a new way for local public service providers to work together to meet local needs. Community Budgets aim to bring public service partners together to share budgets, improve outcomes for local people and reduce duplication and waste. Community behaviour change projects will be piloted in constituencies as part of Wirral's PSTN work streams in 2014/2015.
- 2.7 **Community Engagement:** Through an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach and by implementing a constituency engagement framework and communication strategy, constituency teams will map current and future assets within communities (people, buildings, resources, etc.) and work to equip residents with the tools and knowledge to enable them to make choices that are right for them and their families. We will also encourage residents to have the same level of ambition for their communities as we have for Wirral and utilise all community assets and voluntary efforts.
- 2.8 'Future Conversations' events will be held with residents and the public / private / social sectors within constituencies to develop a shared understanding of the priority issues in

Wirral, to develop solutions to address them, and including a co-design / co-production approach to re-designing services.

2.9 A 12 week 'What Really Matters' consultation programme with residents, businesses, community organisations and partners was implemented by the Constituency teams between September-December 2013. The results of the consultation were used to recommend budget options for 2014/2015 to Cabinet and Council.

2.10 **Constituency Budgets:** For 2013/2014 each Constituency Committee was allocated £50,000 Council funding and £50,000 Public Health funding to spend on deprivation and health inequalities projects:

a) Wallasey Constituency: £15,250 funding towards piloting an outreach service to provide an holistic advice package ('Money MOT') to reduce residents' expenditure through seeking the best energy tariffs, cheaper food shopping, affordable lending, etc. £4,750 to increase residents' awareness of Wirral Well, a voluntary sector service directory to tackle social isolation. £10,000 towards road maintenance and improving road safety, £40,000 towards a Wallasey Bright Ideas fund, £5,000 towards a Problem Solving Fund, £1,500 towards Community Safety Week, £3,500 towards reducing criminal damage by young people, and £20,000 towards Rampworx Youth Village (an extreme sports facility for young people). The remainder of funding is yet to be decided on by the Constituency Committee.

b) Wirral South Constituency: £50,000 Council funding towards traffic surveying projects, footpath resurfacing work, drop kerb installation to enhance accessibility, installation of planters in retail areas and the reinvigoration of neglected horticultural locations. £50,000 Public Health funding towards a voluntary sector support fund (£25k) for projects to apply for up to £3,000 funding, and the further £25k towards the same support fund but for applications to be open to all.

c) Wirral West Constituency: For the £50,000 Council funding, the Committee has invited bids for projects that improve quality of life in West Wirral, and positively impact on local people and places. Up to £10,000 is available per ward, with a limit of £1,000 per project. For the £50,000 Public Health funding that aims to improve health outcomes in the constituency, organisations have been asked to submit project ideas which address a number of specific priorities, including child poverty and social isolation. Decisions on which projects will be funded will be made at the March 2014 Committee meeting.

d) Birkenhead Constituency: The Committee agreed 4 priorities for 2013/14 to utilise the £100,000 funding allocation. These are (i) Improving the Environment, (ii) Improving data collation (public sector expenditure on services and impact), (iii) Improving services for Young People, and (iv) Improving Communication. A task and finish group is currently developing proposals for initiatives to deliver against these 4 priorities. As part of community engagement to support developments, the Committee has also completed a piece of research with residents and social sector organisations to ascertain their vision and aspirations for Birkenhead.

2.11 The Council's £40,000 Love Wirral grants programme has also been administered via the Neighbourhoods Programme, a campaign to encourage people to take greater responsibility and pride in their own local environment, whether they live, work or visit

Wirral. A public voting system was used to rank and prioritise applications, and final decisions will be taken by the Constituency Committees.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 A risk register underpins the implementation of the neighbourhoods programme, developed and monitored in line with quarterly performance management arrangements. Examples of risk include:

- Effectively forecasting impacts from social / demographic change.
- Potential disconnect between local priorities and the Corporate Plan.
- Insufficient capacity within social sector to fully engage with the neighbourhoods programme.
- Key partners using different systems for reporting residents' issues.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Upon considering best practice elsewhere, operating neighbourhood working on a constituency footprint provides the most effective way of ensuring that every Wirral community, group and resident has the opportunity to influence Council resources in their neighbourhoods.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Future working models questions were included in the 'What Really Matters' consultation exercise in 2012 with residents, staff and partners, as part of developing a neighbourhood approach to working.

5.2 'Future Council' conversations events will be held within constituencies with residents and the public / private / social sectors to develop a shared understanding of the priority issues in Wirral, to develop solutions to address them, including a co-design / co-production approach to re-designing services.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 'Future Council' conversations events will be held within constituencies with residents and the public / private / social sectors to develop a shared understanding of the priority issues in Wirral, to develop solutions to address them, including a co-design / co-production approach to re-designing services.

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

7.1 The Neighbourhoods programme will support efficiency savings in the following areas:

- Sharing resources (workforces, services, budgets and assets)
- Eliminating duplication
- Service redesign
- Service integration (e.g. health and social care)
- Joint, outcomes focussed commissioning and procurement
- Prevention and early intervention programmes
- Increasing neighbourhood resilience
- Less demand for public services

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Localism Act 2011 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 Wirral.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

(a) No because equality impact assessments are being completed for all service area reviews prior to devolving to constituencies, and as part of the future council remodelling exercise.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Neighbourhoods Programme will encourage sharing of community assets, therefore supporting carbon reduction.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Positive implications will arise from the Neighbourhoods Programme 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

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 12.1 Cabinet note the progress of the Neighbourhoods Programme.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

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

REPORT AUTHOR: Emma Degg
Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement
telephone: (0151) 691 8688
email: emmadegg@wirral.gov.uk

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – WHAT REALLY MATTERS CONSULTATION FINDINGS	08/11/12
Cabinet - NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING –FORGING A MODERN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND RESIDENTS	24/01/13
Council - NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING –FORGING A MODERN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND RESIDENTS	11/02/13

