

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member - Performance and Governance
Cabinet Member – Communities

DATE: 3 November 2010

SUBJECT: Development of Area Partnerships

WARDS All

AFFECTED:

REPORT OF: Alan Lunt – Director of Neighbourhoods and Investment Programmes

CONTACT OFFICER: Steph Prewett Asst Director Neighbourhoods and Investment Programmes Ext 3485

EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL: No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To inform Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance and Cabinet Member for Communities of the outcomes of consultations with elected members and key partners on how they feel Area Partnerships could develop and work.

To request the views of Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance and Cabinet Member for Communities on the proposals for Area Partnerships to inform the recommendations to Cabinet on 25 November 2010

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

The Governance Review determined that most decisions should be implemented in the Municipal Year 2010/11. A previous Cabinet Member meeting on 17 February 2010 agreed that the Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance could approve any in year changes to the principles agreed in the report relating to the Governance Review – Workstreams on the Sefton Borough Partnership and Area Management, but where the development relates to area management any proposals would be approved by Cabinet.

It has also been agreed that any changes to area management needed to be reported to Cabinet Member for Communities.

As this report deals with area based governance structures, which would enable the delivery of area management, views are sought to inform Cabinet on 25 November 2010.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance and Cabinet Member for Communities:

- (i) Consider the outcomes of the consultation with elected members and key partner organisations
- (ii) With due consideration to (i) puts forward views on whether the proposals are appropriate and feasible

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: No

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: December 2010

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

To retain the existing Thematic Groups as the link into the Sefton Borough Partnership. This is not seen as a viable option based on the outcomes of the Governance Review.

Discussions have been held around the number of Area Partnerships developed. An alternative to the 5 proposed would be to have 3 focused around South, Central and North. This idea has not been put forward as Members in particular have felt these areas are too disparate to be incorporated in one Area Partnership.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: No Implications.

Financial: There are no additional financial implications of this work

Legal: No implications

Risk Assessment: No implications

Asset Management: No implications

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

Details of the outcomes of the consultation are contained within the report or will be reported back verbally at the meeting if they are yet to meet. Details of future meetings to also inform the development of the Area Partnerships are included for information.

Liberal Democrats Meeting 7 October 2010

Labour Meeting 8 October 2010

Conservative Meeting 18 October 2010

Southport Partnership 4 November 2010. Session planned with members to discuss what the North Area Partnership could look like

Party Leaders and Area Committee Chairs 21 October 2010 to discuss outcomes of consultation and provide views to inform recommendations to Cabinet.

One Vision Housing 1 October 2010. Discussion around what they could bring as a provider and their thoughts on the initial proposals

Neighbourhood Regeneration Thematic Group 14 May 2010 agreed in principle, 20 October further discussion to be held on what South Area Partnership would look like

Merseyside Police 8 September 2010. Discussion around what they could bring as a provider and their thoughts on the initial proposals. Meeting scheduled 22 October 2010 for further discussion.

Sefton CVS on behalf of Community Empowerment Networks 17 September. Discussion around what they could bring as a provider and their thoughts on the initial proposals

NHS Sefton September 2010. Discussion around what they could bring as a provider and their thoughts on the initial proposals

Parish Councils individually and through Sefton Ten Parishes 18 May 2010. Initial consultation on area governance arrangements. Future date to be arranged for further discussion.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Governance Review: Cabinet Member Performance and Governance, 17 February 2010, Cabinet, and Council 4 March 2010.
- Proposed Area Committee Changes, Joint Meeting of Party Leaders and Area Committee Chairs 15 July 2010.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	√		
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability	√		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People	√		

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 One of the outcomes of the review of Sefton Borough Partnership and the Governance Review so far was the corporate commitment to introducing area management in Sefton, with Area Committees being the lead and key decision makers.
- 1.2 The drivers for area management were set out in the Governance Review paper that went to Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance on 17 March 2010, which was subsequently agreed by Cabinet and Council in March 2010. This included a summary of work that had already been done informally with the Area Committees to discuss how area management could work in their areas. Key points included:
- Equal service will not tackle inequality
 - Engagement by partners is very important
 - Need for services to know and understand their areas
 - Recognition that the evidence needs to be enhanced and can be better interpreted by using local knowledge
 - Recognition that there is an overlap on issues and there are benefits to working together on joint priorities
 - Need a mechanism to be able to manage issues around disparate priorities between Area Committees
 - Recognition that partners will need to discuss how best to meet need, and have a greater understanding of what resources are being spent in areas.

However, any change in structures need to be considered in the context of the current budget constraints experienced by both the Council and other public sector organisations.

- 1.3 National policy is also indicating that area working and budgeting will become a more prominent feature in how local authorities and key partners deliver their services. Big Society, the Localism agenda and Place Based Budgeting are all key policies to be considered.
- 1.4 Following the initial discussion with Area Committees, further work has now been done to develop a model for the area based thematic groups that will have direct links to both the Sefton Borough Partnership and the Area Committees. To understand how the Area Partnership proposals could work in the different areas a wide consultation process has been taking place over the last couple of months, the results of which are outlined below.

2. Outcomes of Consultation to Date

Incorporating the information gathered so far from the Political Groups and key partners, the following proposals are suggested. Further consultations are ongoing and will be verbally updated at the meeting

2.1 Initial Key Principles for Area Governance

- 2.11 One size doesn't fit all. Whilst having a key underpinning and overall consistency to their approach, each Area Partnership will need to develop differently to ensure they reflect the needs of their area(s).
- 2.12 Each area will need to set out how their Area Partnership can work for them and who needs to be on them.
- 2.13 Area Partnerships will not have decision making powers and could only make recommendations. However, there should be a senior level of partner representation to be able to go back into organisations and influence policies and strategy direction.
- 2.14 Area Committees are part of the Council and have their own decision making powers and would be responsible for setting local Council priorities.
- 2.15 Recognition of what can and can't be dealt with at a local level and local priorities should reflect this. However, wherever possible services should be considered at the lowest level of decision making.
- 2.16 Realism about what can be achieved in the light of budget constraints, which will result in doing more with less.
- 2.17 There needs to be an agreed protocol signed up to by all partners. The Neighbourhoods Division would be the corporate facilitator to drive this forward.

2.2 How many Area Partnerships have been suggested?

- 2.21 It is proposed that there would be 5 Area Partnerships in all. In two areas there are existing partnerships that could be refocused to take on the responsibilities of an Area Partnership.
- Southport Partnership would become the North Area Partnership, subject to further discussion.
 - The Neighbourhood Regeneration Thematic (NRTG) would become the South Area Partnership, subject to further discussion.
- 2.22 In recognition of the difference in the areas covered by Central, it is proposed 3 Partnerships are developed:
- Sefton East Area Partnership
 - Crosby Area Partnership
 - Formby Area Partnership

2.3 What could be their roles and responsibilities?

- 2.31 A place where partners come together at an area level. The Sefton Borough Partnership Strategic Board model is suggested of a core group of members with other partners joining around specific themes. However, this will be based on the wishes of each area.
- 2.32 Consideration of how they may contribute towards strategic Borough priorities, but not having to sign up to Borough priorities if they aren't relevant for the area.
- 2.33 Identification of key priorities for their areas, which might be different from Borough ones.
- 2.34 collaborative partnership approach to dealing with area priorities and determining whether policies/strategies and services could be influenced to meet their priorities
- 2.35 Producing Area Plans (which will include Area Committee Plans) and listening to what the Area Committee feel about progress on them
- 2.36 Being the place where the Area Committee can escalate concerns to.

2.4 How are they different to Area Committees?

- 2.41 Area Partnership membership is wider than the Council and therefore issues at an area level could be looked at as whole, rather than just by department or individual organisation.
- 2.42 Area Committees are a mechanism for listening and responding to community concerns, and are an engagement route into the Council for local people. This information will be fed into the Area Partnerships to build up the local evidence base.
- 2.43 Area Committees are the consultation point for the Council and partners about any plans they may have that affect the area.
- 2.44 Area Committees will agree Council priorities for action at an area level and will produce community plans based on these.
- 2.45 The Area Committees will be responsible for monitoring plans and services at a local level and for providing feedback on performance to the Area Partnerships.
- 2.46 Area Committees will escalate issues that can't be dealt with at a local level or the Council alone to the Area Partnerships for discussion.

3. Suggested Next Steps

- 3.1 Subject to the views of Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance and Cabinet Member for Communities, the proposals will be taken to the next Cabinet meeting on 25 November 2010.
- 3.2 Following the agreement of Cabinet, the core group for each area will be engaged individually to establish the roles and responsibility of their Partnership and how they will take things forward.
- 3.3 It is also suggested that a briefing session is held for the Strategic Directors and Directors of the Council with elected members within the next couple of months to set out the details and processes of new governance arrangements.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance and Cabinet Member for Communities:
 - (i) Considers the outcomes of the consultation with elected members and key partner organisations.
 - (ii) With due consideration to (i) puts forward views on whether the proposals are appropriate and feasible