

LOCALITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (LAP) REVIEW UPDATE

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships – Mark Bailey

Portfolio: Safer and Stronger Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

This paper has been produced to provide an update on the progress of the Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) Review and Development Plan.

The report builds on the work undertaken as part of the Borough Council's Transformation Programme, previous reports to Cabinet and the Locality Action Partnership Review and Development plan recommendations submitted to the Executive Management Team and Cabinet in October 2011.

Recommendations

- (a) That Cabinet notes the contents of the report.**
- (b) That Cabinet supports the continued work and development of LAPs**
- (c) That Cabinet further notes the potential issues relating to the full time LAP co-ordinator post and also issues around small projects funding related to the LAPs**

Reasons

Cabinet approved the Locality Action Partnership review report – The Story of 'Our Place' on 7 September 2011 with the caveat that a development plan be put together to support the report.

The development plan was requested to enable actions, milestones, leads and timeframes to be clearly set out and to ensure that progress is made and monitored. The development plan was approved by Cabinet at their meeting held on 19 October 2011.

This report provides an update on the progress made to date.

1. Background

1.1 Locality Action Partnership Review and Development Plan

The LAP Review Development Plan was constructed around the priority review areas, as presented in the recommendation section of the full LAP Review: 'The Story of 'Our Place' report. The priority areas are: -

- **GENERAL FUNCTION** – Definition, constitution, terms of reference, roles and responsibilities, action planning, 'step-in' mechanism, branding, reward scheme and community engagement.
- **RESOURCE** – Chairs, community/residents, partners and Councillors
- **COMMUNICATION** – Partner, social media, website and newsletter.
- **COMMUNITY PRIDE** – Structured approach.
- **FUNDING** – Current, future, external and LAP Support.

- 1.2 A series of actions, milestones, lead/others involved and timeframes form key elements of the development plan. Many of the recommendations are the responsibility of Business Improvement and Partnerships but there are a number of actions that will require input from other Borough Council service areas and also from external partners.
- 1.3 There remain challenges in some of these priority areas as many of those involved in Locality Action Partnerships give their time on a voluntary basis and therefore some actions will need to be approached with caution.
- 1.4 The development plan was put together by request of Cabinet at their meeting on 7 September 2011 and incorporates many of the suggestion made throughout the review. This report was requested by Cabinet at their meeting in January 2012.

2. **Progress to Date**

2.1 **GENERAL FUNCTION**

The original deadline for the main actions within the general function section of the action plan to be achieved was December 2011. These dates, however, were amended in order to embed the Locality Action Partnership review within the wider review of Strategic Partnership Arrangements of the former LSP and now Newcastle Partnership.

This delay has enabled a constitution to be developed which clearly links LAPs with the wider strategic partnership. Documents in draft form to date include; definition of a LAP, Newcastle Partnership Constitution, Strategic Board Terms of Reference, LAP Terms of Reference and Roles and Responsibilities. Sign off for these documents is anticipated at April 2012 when the Newcastle Partnership Strategic Board holds their first meeting.

Action plans are now in place across ten of the LAPs and eight of the LAPs have developed a logo to use with promotional material – one LAP is currently working with a school to develop a brand and the other with Newcastle-under-Lyme College.

There remains some work to be carried out with two of the Parish Councils and this will need to be completed on a locally based arrangement. The Staffordshire Parish Council Association continues to discuss links between LAPs and Parish Councils, although this may change in the coming months.

In relation to community engagement, Aspire Housing have agreed to work with the Business Improvement and Partnerships Team to draft a community engagement strategy linked to the partnership and this is currently in development.

2.2 **RESOURCE**

Newcastle Borough Council is currently working with Staffordshire County Council Member Services to examine opportunities for sharing training. This piece of work has been linked to 'The Business of the Council' project internally at Newcastle Borough Council. The Borough Council's Member Services team are undertaking an exercise to determine and map training required for Borough Council elected members. An induction programme is being developed to include Partnerships and Locality Working as key topics and one session of "The Effective Ward Member" training has taken place.

The Business Improvement and Partnerships Team are working with Newcastle Community and Voluntary Support (NCVS) to map local third sector organisations and facilities and to increase the number of residents involved in LAPs. The delay in this piece of work has been

due to staff changes at NCVS. A letter is prepared and is to be sent to local education providers in the next few weeks to engage different age groups in the LAP process and the Partnerships Manager has met with Staffordshire Young People's Service Manager to investigate how the Newcastle Young Persons Association can work locally with the LAPs. A partnership group is currently looking at gaps in partner attendance at LAPs and Staffordshire LINK are attending the next LAP Chairs group to investigate and progress making links between LAPs and health-related issues.

A data profile template has been developed and has been presented and agreed by the LAP chairs at their meeting on 16 February. The profiles will now be populated with locality data for each of the areas and be presented to LAP chairs by the end of April 2012. The development plan outlined a number of areas for action within the Partnership Constitution that would enable clear rules and processes to be in place and these have now been included. There has been general recognition of the importance of the role of elected Members in driving the LAPs forward and developing them further.

2.3 COMMUNICATION

The Business Improvement and Partnerships team are currently examining the potential for community and partnership newsletters. The most recent edition of the Newcastle Partnership newsletter focused on LAPs and the progress and work developed by them. LAPs will remain a key feature of the Partnership Newsletter over the next 12 months. Two projects relating to communication were highlighted for development with Newcastle College – unfortunately the College were unable to progress this for the academic year but did suggest that this could be something for the next academic year. Keele University are also actively seeking new ways of getting involved with the local community and the Business Improvement and Partnerships team will therefore be approaching Keele to consider closer working relationships. A presentation has been delivered to the LAP chairs to promote use of the Partnership website.

2.4 COMMUNITY PRIDE

A number of events are planned to take place over the next few months, although there has been more requests from LAPs to focus on other areas of need – in particular health awareness raising events. A Financial Inclusion event linked to health, took place in the Town Centre during January 2012 and health events are planned for Knutton and Cross Heath and Silverdale during March 2012. Work has started on developing a 'how to' guide in putting on a community event which will be in draft by the end of April 2012. The Partnerships Officer (Projects) is attending the Community Safety Environmental group on 22 February 2012 to commence discussions on presenting options for a more structured approach to delivering Community Pride. This will include looking at other partners to lead on Community Pride events across the borough to enable an increased coverage of events over a 12-month period. LAPs continue to suggest events and projects that they would like to develop including Newcastle Rural LAP currently working on a project to look at skills sharing between different generations and a bid for this has recently been submitted to the Social Action Fund. Audley LAP is investigating the development of a 'be-frienders' service for the area.

2.5 FUNDING

Funding remains a key issue for the development of LAPs. There are a number of funding issues, for example, relating to the LAP co-ordinator post, which may have a significant impact on both the operation of LAPs and their continuing development. Additionally, funding for small projects for LAPs remains an issue, although if the Newcastle Partnership constitution is agreed and signed off in April 2012 this may provide alternative options for the

LAPs to apply for and hold external funds. An application to the Social Action Fund has provided the partnership with some potential options where funds can be applied for by a partner organisation, on behalf of the Partnership.

2.6 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

There remain a number of national developments that will link to the work of the LAPs, particularly the Localism Act 2011 and the Police and Social Responsibility Reform Act 2011. LAPs continue to be a fundamental structure that offers the Borough Council and the Partnership the ability to provide communities with the opportunity to get involved and be empowered, where appropriate.

3. Options Considered

3.1 Option A – to note the contents of the report.

4. Proposal

4.1 It is proposed that Cabinet notes the contents of the report and the progress made in implementing the proposals coming from the LAP review.

4.2 It is proposed that Cabinet notes, in particular, the funding issues relating to the LAPs Co-ordinator post and also relating to LAPs being able to use funds on small projects in their localities.

4.3 It is also proposed that Cabinet identify any additional areas of development that they feel may have been missed out of the report.

5. Reasons for Preferred Solution

5.1 Locality Working has operated in different guises over a number of years and LAPs have been under various review processes since 2007. The current review links into developing policy, strategy and legislation and therefore the recommendations are integral to the ongoing development of LAPs, to ensure delivery against the emerging agendas. Additionally, LAPs are part of the transformation programme and as such have already been highlighted for development.

5.2 The recommendations have been identified through detailed consultation with partners, LAP chairs, elected members and the community and attempt to meet a broad range of requirements.

6. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

6.1 Locality Action Partnerships were initially developed to deliver local solutions to both Corporate and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. It is proposed that the LAPs continue to focus on local priorities and deliver against the local Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

7.1 None at present although the review has established a widely acknowledged opinion that LAPs are a good structure for the emerging agenda. There may be future implications based around the proposed Localism Act 2011 and other statutory duties.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment of the review has been completed and is available. The review has not raised any specific issues relating to equality, however, the recommendations in the partnership report have areas of work that have potential relevance to equality and they will be identified and impact assessed.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 Locality Action Partnerships were allocated £5,000 each to develop local solutions to issues with the community. Funding was identified as a priority area as part of the review and therefore will need consideration, although it is recognised that this is a difficult issue at a time of uncertainty and retraction generally in public spending.
- 9.2 The review has a number of recommendations that require officer time both from the Business Improvement and Partnerships team and other departments across the borough council. Current administrative support to the LAPs is provided by a LAP Co-ordinator. This is a key role in supporting the future development of Locality Action Partnerships.

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 The GRACE risk assessment for Locality Action Partnerships is currently being reviewed and is being linked with the wider Newcastle Partnership risks. Two areas of potential future risk are the emerging gaps in Big Society and the delivery against the Localism Act 2011.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 As one of the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, where possible issues are identified by individual Locality Action Partnerships relating to sustainability and climate change and the work is subsequently linked to the Newcastle Partnership Sustainable Development group.

12. **Key Decision Information**

- 12.1 This item is included in the forward plan.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

5 Sept 2007 – Partnership & Neighbourhood Working
20 February 2008 – Ward Councillors and community leadership
17 February 2010 – Developing Locality Working
7 September 2011 – Locality Action Partnership Review – The Story of ‘Our Place’
19 October 2011 – LAP Development Plan

14. **List of Appendices**

There are none.

15. **Background Papers**

None.