



## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

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**Report of:** Executive Director, Communities

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**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013

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**Subject:** Proposal for a new approach to engaging and involving local communities

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**Author of Report:** Vince Roberts, 0114 273 4486

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### Summary:

This paper seeks to reshape the Council's current local partnership arrangements and community engagement work that goes on in our *geographic communities*.

It proposes the Council:

- take a **Ward based** approach where Ward Councillors are supported to take the lead for engaging with the communities they serve;
  - establishing a **Ward Pot of £300,000**;
  - establishing **seven Local Area Partnerships**, one for each Area of four Wards, chaired by a lead Elected Member selected by Full Council with an appropriate Special Members Allowance.
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### Reasons for Recommendations:

The proposed model is recommended on the basis that it:

- targets support to communities where engagement and involvement is most needed and where capacity for self-support may be limited;

- develops the community leadership role of councillors in working with communities to support their interests;
- makes the ward and neighbourhood the focus of most activity rather than the much larger former Community Assembly area/meetings which few residents identified with, while acknowledging that some partnership working is required at a wider area level;
- would enable the Ward Pot arrangements to be up and running before the summer to ensure that the small investments that make a big difference can enhance provision during the summer holidays. These proposals would establish the Ward Pot guidance and decision making process as soon as possible;
- has taken into account the consultation and equalities impact assessment;
- is within the budget set by the Council.

### **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to agree the proposals set out in this report and in particular:-

- (a) to agree the creation of a Ward Pot Budget of £300,000 to be allocated between the City's 28 electoral wards as described in paragraph 3.3;
- (b) to note that the appointment of the Lead Ward Member for each ward and their resulting appointments to sit on an appropriate Local Area Partnership, will be matters for the Full Council to determine, and that the Council has now appointed the 7 Local Area Partnership Chairs;
- (c) to recommend to the Council that, in view of the role profile attached to the report now submitted, it confirms that the role of Local Area Partnership Chair be established with a Special Responsibility Allowance included in the new Band C (old Band B2) of Schedule 1 to its Members' Allowances Scheme, and that the payment of this allowance be backdated to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 in recognition that the Chairs have been operating in shadow form since that date, helping to lay the foundations for the new ways of locality working;
- (d) to request the Chief Executive:-
  - (i) to establish a pool of 14 senior officers and allocate them to an area/s to support the work of the elected ward members and the work of each Local Area Partnership;
- (e) to authorise the Director of Community Services:-
  - (i) to determine how the Ward Pot Budget for each ward is spent, subject to the proviso that this authority must be exercised in close consultation with all the elected Members for the ward concerned with a view to

wherever possible achieving consensus over the use of funds, and to determine the terms on which such expenditure is incurred including authorising the completion of any related funding agreement or other legal documentation, subject to compliance with Contracts Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;

- (ii) to determine the composition of and settle the terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Local Area Partnerships, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion;
  - (iii) to agree the detailed arrangements for the Local Area Team, subject to Council policies and procedures and due consideration of the outcome of any related consultations, and provided the arrangements are within the maximum available initial budget;
- (f) to request the Chief Executive to make appropriate arrangements, in consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee and the Chair of the LAP Chairs' group [or whatever it's called], to facilitate the consideration of issues of local concern through the Council's scrutiny arrangements.

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**Background Papers:** Consultation Materials  
Equality Impact Assessment

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**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Andrea Nix
<b>Legal Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Andrew Bullock
<b>Equality of Opportunity Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Phil Reid
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities Implications</b>
YES
<b>Human rights Implications</b>
NO:
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
YES
<b>Economic impact</b>
YES
<b>Community safety implications</b>
YES
<b>Human resources implications</b>
YES
<b>Property implications</b>
NO
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
ALL
<b>Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader</b>
Cllr Mazher Iqbal, Cabinet Member for Communities & Inclusion
<b>Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee if decision called in</b>
Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
NO
<b>Press release</b>
NO

## Proposal for a new approach to engaging and involving communities

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This paper seeks to reshape the Council's current local partnership arrangements and community engagement work with our *geographic communities*. These replace the previous Community Assembly arrangements.
- 1.2. The proposals contained within this paper have come about following extensive work by the *Members' Voice and Influence Task and Finish Group* and the consultation with the public that was undertaken between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013. A further consultation on the detailed proposals took place between 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013.
- 1.3. Further work is being undertaken to reshape how, as a Council, we engage with communities of *interest* (such as those with a common interest who want to come together on a city wide basis, for instance tenants or environmental groups) and *identity* (e.g. older people, or people with disabilities).
- 1.4. The report makes proposals for how the Council could support and facilitate our work with geographic communities work more efficiently within the overall budget set by the Council, and provides a structure for the expansion of support at a later date if more resources become available. In developing proposals we want to support communities to become *stronger* and more *resilient* – more able to help themselves, gain influence, and deal with what the world throws at them.

As a result of unprecedented Government cut-backs, the Council is facing extreme pressures on increasingly limited budgets. Over the past two years the Council has received heavy cuts to its funding from Government, and has had to find savings of around £140 million. Over the last two years the Council has found these savings whilst avoiding significant impact on visible frontline services.

This year the Council had to find a further £50 million of savings, with more cuts in the following years. Efficiency savings will not be sufficient and the Council consequently has to reduce the budgets of many frontline services.

Within these constraints, the Council's approach is to protect where possible those services provided for the most vulnerable people in our community and to examine where they spend on discretionary provision.

- 1.5. Our aims are to ensure we reinvest the remaining resources we have in the most efficient and effective ways. This means fundamentally redesigning our approach by:
  - Targeting support to communities where engagement and involvement is most needed and where capacity for self-support may be limited;

- Developing the community leadership role of Councillors in working with communities to support their interests;
  - Making the ward and neighbourhood the focus of most activity rather than the much larger former Community Assembly area/meetings which few residents identified with while acknowledging that some partnership working is required at a wider area level.
- 1.6. It is clear that, with the scale of reductions proposed, we will not be able to resource the breadth of locality working and associated governance arrangements across the city to former levels and support communities through grant funding to anything like the current provision. The proposals in this report provide a solid basic framework that is affordable within the budget set by Council and can be used as the foundation of locality work, which can be enhanced at a later date if required.
- 1.7. Our proposals are summarised in section 2. Greater details are provided in sections 3-7 and further work will be undertaken to further develop the proposals.
- 1.8. A new approach requires the development of new community planning mechanisms, new ways of undertaking community scrutiny and creative ways of involving local people, including use of social media and on line approaches. The resources available will have to:
- be targeted towards enabling communities to help themselves;
  - be prioritised to areas of greatest need and tension;
  - foster good relations, reduce barriers to involvement and enable inclusive communities;
  - support and develop new ways of engagement; and
  - support Councillors to lead in their local area.
- 1.9 The proposals have been developed in line with the Council's values and priorities in our corporate plan, Standing up for Sheffield, including our commitment to fairness; enabling individuals and communities; and working better together. We have been particularly mindful of the work of the Fairness Commission, and have used the Fairness Framework developed by the Commission to guide our thinking during the development of these proposals.

*They particularly recognise the Commission's priority to tackle and ameliorate those inequalities that cause the greatest damage to the life-chance and wellbeing of some Sheffield communities and individual citizens. Those in greatest need should take priority.*

The proposals will also help to contribute to the Council's outcomes of making everywhere a great place to live, and tackling poverty and increasing social justice.

## 2. Proposal Summary:

Outlined below are the key elements of the new operating model.

- 2.1 Setting up a **ward based** approach where Ward Councillors are supported to take the lead for engaging with the communities they serve. To support the administrative and decision making processes, a **Lead Ward Member** will need to be appointed for each Ward who will be the first point of contact for communication and also represent the Ward on the **Local Area Partnership** (see 2.4 below). It is proposed that there will be a senior officer of the Council available to support the work of the Ward Councillors, covering between one and three Wards, depending on need with fourteen in total. Administrative support will be provided by the **Local Area Partnership Team**.
- 2.2 Establishing a **ward based discretionary budget of £300,000, called the Ward Pot**. This will be allocated at £2,000 per ward (£56,000 in total) plus £244,000 to be distributed by IMD. (Ecclesall approx. £3,570 and Manor Castle £19,664). Ward Councillors, working together and with the allocated senior officer will develop a '**Ward Plan**' consisting of a small number of priorities to inform spending decisions. These funds will then be allocated with regard to the ward priorities.
- 2.3 Recognising the move away from Community Assemblies as part of the City Council's formal governance structures. The former **Community Assembly geographical boundaries will continue** to support partnership working and service delivery by the Council and partners. These will be called the North Area, North East Area, East Area, South East Area, South Area, South West Area and the Central Area.
- 2.4 Establishing **Local Area Partnerships** for each of the Areas chaired by a lead Elected Member with an appropriate Special Member's Allowance called the **Local Area Partnership Chair**. The Local Area Partnerships will have a membership appropriate to the priority issues identified for each area. Each Local Area Partnership will be chaired by an Elected Member agreed at Full Council and include a **Lead Ward Member** from each of the remaining three wards. At a minimum, membership will include representatives from the public sector, local VCF sector, private sector and others as appropriate. Support will be provided by the Local Area Partnership Team and in addition there will be a Lead Council Officer. The LAPs will be responsible for establishing an area plan taking account of the priorities identified by the Ward Members (three per Ward.)
- 2.5 The arrangements will be supported by the centrally managed, flexible **Local Area Team** of officers at an initial cost of £400k. There will be a named officer for each area who will be primarily responsible for supporting the Member led Local Area Partnership which will be underpinned by the Ward based arrangements and priorities. Administrative support will be provided by the Local Area Team for the Ward based structures.

- 2.6 It is recognised that from time to time there will be issues arising at Ward level that will require additional resourcing and attention by the Council and partners. In such circumstances it will be for the Local Area Partnership through the Lead Council Officer and Local Area Partnership Chair to raise the issue with the Director of Community Services and the relevant Cabinet Member. Following consultation with the Corporate Management Team and discussion with appropriate services, additional resourcing may be made available as required, but this would need to be found within the Council's approved budget and be approved in accordance with the Council's usual governance arrangements. It is also proposed that there be a **Local Area Partnership Chairs Group**, chaired by the relevant Cabinet Member with membership of the Chairs of the Local Area Partnerships.
- 2.7 Cabinet in the Community will continue on a rolling basis around the City and will be held in a Ward, but with an invitation to attend being extended specifically to residents and businesses in neighbouring Wards with meetings being generally open to members of the public.

Outlined below is additional detail in relation to each area identified above.

### **3 Locality Working – replacement of Community Assemblies**

#### **3.1 The Ward Structure:**

It is proposed that we recognise what works for communities and move to a flexible, rolling programme of Ward based events that focus on the big issues in different communities and provide an opportunity for the community to engage with their Ward members and scrutinise local services. The previous approach to formal Community Assembly meetings did not attract or engage many local people. Key features of the proposals will include less bureaucratic meetings, more opportunities for local people to discuss and engage with local councillors, and more consistent links with other local events such as Police and Communities Together (PACT) and Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) meetings, etc. These events will be led by Ward Councillors with administrative support offered by the Local Area Team.

- 3.2 Under a Ward based approach, we propose that as a minimum, once a year communities and local partners get together to develop ward based Ward Plans, agreeing 3 key priorities for their area. Local Councillors will lead in these events, with some administrative support from the Local Area Team and engagement by the Lead Council Officer. Depending on the type of key priorities and actions required these could be supplemented by additional Councillor-led ward based events and meetings. Where issues and activity require, local Councillors could initiate events crossing ward boundaries, to link in with the Local Area Partnerships and events.
- 3.3 The proposed delivery model will focus on the work of Ward Councillors at a Ward Level. A Lead Ward Councillor will be selected who will act as the key point of contact for the new structure and represent the Ward Councillors on the Local Area Partnership.



- 3.4 Each Ward will be presented with a periodic Ward profile that can be used, alongside the knowledge of the Ward Councillors and their engagement with their community, to establish a small number of priorities that will form the basis of a plan and for periodically reporting on progress. A template for the production of the plan will be provided to ensure a level of consistency across the 28 wards.

The Plan will be the evidence base for decisions around the Ward Pot and will also be fed into the Local Area Partnership so issues common across Wards can be taken forward in their planning process.

Each Ward will have access to a Lead Council Officer (total of 14 taken from the Council's Senior Management Team) who can provide advice and support on developing a plan and also act as the first point of contact for Ward Councillors if existing channels of communication with the Council are problematic.

Ward Councillors will also be given an information pack of key contacts within the Council so they know who to raise Ward issues with and to raise questions or concerns.

They will receive regular eBriefs and training to ensure they have access to up-to date information about services and the City which they may find useful in terms of leading their Communities.

Administrative support and resources will be available to enable them to hold up-to four events/meetings a year at which they may wish to engage with their local communities, invite services to discuss delivery issues or undertake walk-about. (This list is in no way exhaustive: Ward members will have other formats which they wish to work with.)

### 3.5 Ward Pot

There will be a budget allocation for each Ward to help the delivery of identified Ward Priorities. This will be a light touch grant programme, but Council Standing Orders will be followed. Beneficiaries could be eligible groups, organisations or public sector services. Ward funds could be used to fund Council activity that would not otherwise be undertaken.

- 3.6 Each Ward would be allocated a minimum amount of £2,000 (equivalent to £56,000 across all 28 wards). A further £244,000 will be distributed according to need across the City.

The needs based element of the allocation to each ward will be decided using the National **Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)**. IMD shows comparative level of multiple deprivations across England at a small area level and links to the findings of the Fairness Commission.

It will also be possible for Members to use the ward budgets to join forces with other wards (i.e. on joint projects) or to match fund other local programmes (e.g. Community First).

This is in line with the first point of the Fairness Framework produced by the city's Fairness Commission's report, namely:

*The first priority is for the city to tackle and ameliorate those inequalities that cause the greatest damage to the life-chance and wellbeing of some Sheffield communities and individual citizens. Those in greatest need should take priority.*

- 3.7 It is proposed that decisions about expenditure of Ward based budgets are delegated to the Director of Community Service, with the proviso that this authority must be exercised in close consultation with all the Ward Members, and with a view to achieving, where possible, consensus over the use of funds.

There will be no additional cost of administering the Ward Pot, which will be done within existing resources.

Outlined below is the proposed allocation for each Ward.

<b>Discretionary Budget:</b>		<b>£300,000</b>	
<b>Apportioned by IMD with minimum allocation</b>			
	<b>Minimum Allocation</b>		<b>£2,000</b>
<b>Ward</b>	<b>Minimum Allocation</b>	<b>IMD Allocation</b>	<b>Total Allocation</b>
Arbourthorne	£2,000	£15,032	<b>£17,032</b>
Beauchief and Greenhill	£2,000	£9,925	<b>£11,925</b>
Beighton	£2,000	£5,901	<b>£7,901</b>
Birley	£2,000	£8,723	<b>£10,723</b>
Broomhill	£2,000	£4,674	<b>£6,674</b>
Burngreave	£2,000	£15,359	<b>£17,359</b>
Central	£2,000	£10,611	<b>£12,611</b>
Crookes	£2,000	£2,499	<b>£4,499</b>
Darnall	£2,000	£12,903	<b>£14,903</b>
Dore and Totley	£2,000	£2,274	<b>£4,274</b>
East Ecclesfield	£2,000	£6,796	<b>£8,796</b>
Ecclesall	£2,000	£1,570	<b>£3,570</b>
Firth Park	£2,000	£17,394	<b>£19,394</b>
Fulwood	£2,000	£1,992	<b>£3,992</b>
Gleadless Valley	£2,000	£12,638	<b>£14,638</b>
Graves Park	£2,000	£4,486	<b>£6,486</b>
Hillsborough	£2,000	£6,494	<b>£8,494</b>
Manor Castle	£2,000	£17,664	<b>£19,664</b>
Mosborough	£2,000	£7,127	<b>£9,127</b>
Nether Edge	£2,000	£4,895	<b>£6,895</b>
Richmond	£2,000	£11,200	<b>£13,200</b>
Shiregreen and Brightside	£2,000	£13,334	<b>£15,334</b>
Southey	£2,000	£15,314	<b>£17,314</b>
Stannington	£2,000	£5,048	<b>£7,048</b>
Stocksbridge and Upper Don	£2,000	£6,094	<b>£8,094</b>
Walkley	£2,000	£8,655	<b>£10,655</b>
West Ecclesfield	£2,000	£6,165	<b>£8,165</b>
Woodhouse	£2,000	£9,234	<b>£11,234</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£56,000</b>	<b>£244,000</b>	<b>£300,000</b>

### 3.8 Local Area Partnerships

Though the proposal is that the focus of the new locality arrangements will be at ward level, there are some advantages in retaining the current seven geographical areas of the city as operational entities. This will be reviewed, but in the first instance it is proposed to retain current boundaries and to call them simply 'Areas'. This will prevent disruption to other agencies who have focused their work around the seven Community Assembly areas, and also ensure there are no unnecessary administrative costs in changing boundaries, '.

The Local Government Boundary Review for Sheffield to be completed by March 2015 will lead to changes to ward boundaries, and wider organisational

boundaries, and therefore the boundaries of the Local Area Partnerships will be reviewed at this point.

- 3.9 Partnership working will remain an integral feature of the new arrangements and it is proposed that good practice from the existing partner panels is continued. This will involve creating seven Local Area Partnerships (one for each area), with active involvement from local and city organisations, businesses and the voluntary sector.

These will be different to the former Partner Panels as they will be led by Councillors and will focus on becoming structures as much owned by partners as the Council. We will be working with the Sheffield Executive Board to develop the approach further.

It is envisaged that these Local Area Partnerships will operate as the key arena in which Councillors, in partnership with the community, can take forward actions to address the area's priorities and also act as the place where local services and issues can be scrutinised. The particular partners who will sit on the Local Area Partnerships will be determined locally, in line with the needs of different parts of the city.

- 3.10 To ensure that the Local Area Partnerships are informed by and respond to the needs of local communities, they will be chaired by an elected member from the area selected by Full Council and will have representation from one elected member (the lead Ward Member) from each of the other three wards in that area. Together they will be responsible for producing an Area Plan that will be informed by the priorities identified within the Ward Plans. They will be supported by Senior Officers from across the Partnership, and an officer from the Local Area Team.

The role profile for the role of Local Area Partnership Chair is attached at Appendix A.

#### **4. The Local Area Team (LAT)**

- 4.1 The proposed staffing arrangements are affordable within the budget agreed by Full Council in March 2013. It is possible to grow or shrink the proposals, dependent upon future affordability.
- 4.2 It is proposed that a team of around 11 FTE officers is created to support as a priority, the Local Area Partnerships and priority issues and activity in the area. It is also envisaged that the team will support ward councillors by helping them arrange their Ward meetings/events. The level of practical support will depend upon the resources available, but in the first instance will focus on basic administrative functions. The team's main priority will be to support ward Councillors in dealing with pressing local issues – e.g. escalating community tensions, friction relating to a development, after-effects of serious incidents, development opportunities etc.
- 4.3 The team will maintain officer links with different geographical localities of the city, although its work will focus primarily on supporting the Local Area

Partnership arrangements. Areas where our strategic and operational intelligence suggests tensions are high, or where there is major change or cause for concern (e.g. when flagged through community tension monitoring for example) will also receive some additional support.

- 4.4 A key feature of the move to a Ward based model will be increased engagement of senior Council officers (to be called the Lead Council Officer) to build strong relationships with influential local partners, and facilitate partnership working as required.
- 4.5 In addition to the Local Area Team, it is proposed that there will be 14 such senior Council Officers . They will not be a new, dedicated resource and, instead will need to manage the role as part of their normal day to day job. The number of wards a Lead Council Officer is linked to will depend on the geography, size and complexity of the issues faced by that part of that city.
- 4.6 The Lead Council Officer's role will firstly be to help local Councillors and communities plan and prioritise for their area, and to assist the Local Area Partnerships in seeking active engagement and leadership from partner agencies locally. Secondly, they will respond to crises in the neighbourhood, galvanising services and agencies to help resolve issues. This role has been built into the new Director/Heads of Service job descriptions created as part of the senior management review. It is expected that this will be for 2 wards on average, but ranging between 1 and 3 wards (depending on the level of challenge in the areas covered). The role of the Lead Council Officer would be to deal with local issues by exception, galvanizing support from other officers.
- 4.7 The detailed working arrangements for the Local Area Partnership and the Lead Council Officer are still under development and it is proposed that they be finalised by the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member.

## **5. Cabinet in the Community:**

- 5.1 In order to maintain a direct link with key decision makers, 'Cabinet in the Community' is proposed to be retained as a regular feature, giving the opportunity for local people and agencies to raise local issues with the Council's Cabinet Team. It is expected that the Local Area Team would take account of the issues being raised through these routes when determining how best to prioritise their activity

## **6. Support to Ward Councillors**

- 6.1 It is recognised that this new way of working will place additional responsibilities and demands on the individual ward Councillors. To support the transitional arrangements, Councillors will be given clear support and guidance on how the new arrangements may operate and encourage innovative approaches to the role.
- 6.2 In addition to the induction programme, all Members will be supported by:

- New guidance on the ward arrangements including organising community events and running meetings; promoting local engagement and communications; the new funding arrangements; and expectations on services in responding to Ward plans.
- Annually updated ward information packs covering profiles of each ward, key issues and strategic developments, and information on key service providers, external partners and Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations and forums operating in each ward.
- Direct engagement in consultation activity on specific service development activity directly impacting on their areas and notification of strategic plans and proposals affecting adjoining wards that Members may wish to discuss locally
- Publication of the schedule of ward events to discuss local issues and agree local priorities, as part of overall approaches designed to get closer and listen to communities, and strengthen the role of Elected Members as community leaders
- Councillors to be supported to use social media effectively to help them in their role as community leaders, and to aid communication and engagement with their communities and stakeholders.

## **7. Escalating Ward Issues:**

- 7.1 It is proposed that the existing Community Assembly Chairs' Group is maintained. This will be chaired by the relevant Cabinet Member. Membership will include the chair of each Local Area Partnership and officers from the Local Area Team. This body will not hold any formal decision making powers. Lead Council Officers will also be invited to attend at the request of the chair.
- 7.2 It is recognised that from time to time there will be a need for ward councillors to escalate issues that require additional resources or a corporate response. In the first instance issues should be raised with the relevant member of the Local Area Team, Lead Council Officer and Local Area Partnership Chair. Ultimately it may be for the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion to decide on the best course of action, but as a guide:
- Issues that are Area (rather than Ward) specific should be raised at the Local Area Partnership via the Lead Ward Councillor.
  - Issues of service delivery should be raised with the relevant Head of Service.
  - Issues of policy should be raised with the relevant Cabinet Member in accordance with the Leader's Scheme of Delegation.
  - Issues that are complex or require a 'whole Council' response should go to the Director of Community Services and the Cabinet Member for

Communities and Inclusion for consideration of how best to proceed, within the Council's governance arrangements.

- 7.3 Arrangements will be developed to ensure that issues of local concern influence the work programme of the Council's scrutiny arrangements.
- 7.4 It is recognised that with reduced resourcing some of the Councillor requests that were historically addressed by staff within Locality Management (particularly around case work, service requests/enquiries, meeting arranging) can no longer be provided at the same level. However, as with any transitional arrangement, expectations will need to be managed and priorities assessed. This will be an on-going process and discussion and will primarily take place through the Local Area Chairs' Group, to ensure consistency across the City.

## **8. Consultation**

8.1 The Council has undertaken a 6 week consultation on these proposals. This has included public meetings in each of the seven areas, full information on the Council's website, an on-line survey, and an all-day summary event held at St Mary's Community Centre. The consultation closed on 3rd June 2013.

8.2 The consultation has told us that there were a range of views about the best way forward. However the largest number of respondents (90) thought the proposals were a reasonable way forward given the budget available (some with a few reservations). 69 responses were undecided or unspecified and 51 did not agree.

The majority of responses (109) were undecided or unspecified about whether the proposals took account of the varying needs of Sheffield's residents. 60 responses did not agree and 40 responses agreed.

A range of ideas and suggestions were received as part of the consultation.

8.3 The full consultation report is attached at Appendix B.

## **9. Financial Implications**

9.1 The proposals are designed to meet the budget agreed by Full Council in March 2013, while providing ward members and communities with the support they need.

9.2 This represents a reduction from £2.6m in 2011/12 to £580k in 2012/13, which forms part of the Council's response to the need to reduce spending by £50m over the year.

9.3 The proposals in this report increase the budget for Local Area Partnership arrangements from £580k to £700k, increasing the number of officers from 6.5 to 9.5. This has been achieved by transferring in extra resources from the Cohesion, Migration and Safety Team. All resources are included in the Council's base budget for 2013/14.

## **10. HR Implications**

10.1 The reduction in staffing will be managed within the Council's HR processes and procedures. Where possible, mitigation against redundancy will be put in place.

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.1 The proposed arrangements set out in this report are designed to comply with the law relating to the delegation of powers to Members and Officers.

11.2 This report proposes that the Director of Community Services be given delegated power to allocate the ward fund. At this stage it is not known exactly how these funds will be applied. Therefore, the legal implications which arise from specific proposals will have to be addressed when specific proposals are formulated, in consultation with officers in Legal Services.

11.3 However, it is likely that in implementing the proposals reliance will be placed on the 'general power of competence' (the 'GPC') conferred on the Council by Section 1(1), Localism Act 2011. Section 1(1) provides that, "A local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do." This is clearly a very broad power. It is not, however, carte blanche for the Council to act in any way it pleases. As one example of this, Section 2(1) provides that, "If exercise of a pre-commencement power of a local authority is subject to restrictions, those restrictions apply also to exercise of the general power so far as it is overlapped by the pre-commencement power."

11.4 The procurement of any goods, works or services must be undertaken in accordance with all relevant provisions of Sheffield City Council's Constitution including the Council's Contracts Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and all applicable procurement rules.

11.5 In exercising their discretion, the Cabinet and Officers exercising delegated powers need to be mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:-

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This includes having due regard to the need to:-

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; and



- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.

Generally speaking Section 158 of the Act permits the Council to take positive action where this is a proportionate means of:-

- (a) enabling or encouraging persons who share a protected characteristic to overcome or minimise a disadvantage connected to that characteristic,
- (b) meeting the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic which are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, or
- (c) enabling or encouraging persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in an activity in which participation by persons sharing that characteristic is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

## **12. Equality Impact**

12.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the Council's budget process. The proposals outlined will have a range of potential equality impacts due to the reduction in funding and support to Communities in Sheffield. However, the EIA and analysis of consultation findings does not suggest that the recommendations in this report should lead to any disproportionate negative or discriminatory impact on particular groups, as long as mitigating actions identified in the EIA are implemented.

12.2 Mitigating actions identified in the initial EIA included:

- on-going monitoring of the fund and priorities will be built into the process and will include equality information;
- each ward will have a profile completed to inform decision making that provides information about the demography and needs within each area;
- the work of Assembly Team members will be assessed during the process of transition to identify functions and roles that can either cease, be transferred to another party and alternative arrangements put in place.

12.2 Numbers of responses in the consultation from different equality groups do not provide any statistical certainty for analysis, however on the basis of responses provided it appears there is no significant difference in responses in terms of protected groups.

12.3 Some issues, concerns, and suggestions were highlighted by individuals and groups which relate to protected groups (for example about the accessibility/inclusivity of future models of engagement with the community and groups) but these do not suggest that the proposals would lead to any disproportionate negative or discriminatory impact on particular groups. Issues

that do arise will be addressed during implementation of the proposed model. Some community cohesion concerns/perceptions were also highlighted, which would need to be considered particularly as part of the communications about the new model.

### **13. Reasons for Recommendations:**

The proposed model is recommended on the basis that it:

- targets support to communities where engagement and involvement is most needed and where capacity for self-support may be limited;
- develops the community leadership role of councillors in working with communities to support their interests;
- makes the ward and neighbourhood the focus of most activity rather than the much larger former Community Assembly area/meetings which few residents identified with, while acknowledging that some partnership working is required at a wider area level;
- would enable the ward pot arrangements to be up and running before the summer to ensure that the small investments that make a big difference can enhance provision during the summer holidays. These proposals would establish the Ward Pot guidance and decision making process as soon as possible;
- has taken into account the consultation and equalities impact assessment;
- is within the budget set by the Council.

### **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to agree the proposals set out in this report and in particular:-

- (a) to agree the creation of a Ward Pot Budget of £300,000 to be allocated between the City's 28 electoral wards as described in paragraph 3.3;
- (b) to note that the appointment of the Lead Ward Member for each ward and their resulting appointments to sit on an appropriate Local Area Partnership, will be matters for the Full Council to determine, and that the Council has now appointed the 7 Local Area Partnership Chairs;
- (c) to recommend to the Council that, in view of the role profile attached to the report now submitted, it confirms that the role of Local Area Partnership Chair be established with a Special Responsibility Allowance included in the new Band C (old Band B2) of Schedule 1 to its Members' Allowances Scheme, and that the payment of this allowance be backdated to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 in recognition that the Chairs have been operating in shadow form since that date, helping to lay the foundations for the new ways of locality working;

- (d) to request the Chief Executive:-
  - (i) to establish a pool of 14 senior officers and allocate them to an area/s to support the work of the elected ward members and the work of each Local Area Partnership;
- (e) to authorise the Director of Community Services:-
  - (i) to determine how the Ward Pot Budget for each ward is spent, subject to the proviso that this authority must be exercised in close consultation with all the elected Members for the ward concerned with a view to wherever possible achieving consensus over the use of funds, and to determine the terms on which such expenditure is incurred including authorising the completion of any related funding agreement or other legal documentation, subject to compliance with Contracts Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
  - (ii) to determine the composition of and settle the terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Local Area Partnerships, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion;
  - (iii) to agree the detailed arrangements for the Local Area Team, subject to Council policies and procedures and due consideration of the outcome of any related consultations, and provided the arrangements are within the maximum available initial budget;
- (f) to request the Chief Executive to make appropriate arrangements, in consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee and the Chair of the LAP Chairs' group [or whatever it's called], to facilitate the consideration of issues of local concern through the Council's scrutiny arrangements.

**Terms used in this report:**

**Local Area Partnership:** The partnership that covers an area of 4 Wards

**Local Area Partnership Chair:** The elected Member selected by Council to Chair this meeting.

**The Lead Ward Councillor:** The elected Member selected to represent the Ward on the Local Area Partnership.

**Lead Council Officer:** One of 14 senior officers of the Council selected to support the Ward Councillors and Local Area Partnerships.

**Ward Pot:** The amount allocated to each Ward from the over allocation of £300,000.

## APPENDIX A

### Role of Local Area Partnership Chair

#### 1. Background:

Within the emerging operating framework there are new roles for a Local Area Partnership Chair and Lead Council Officer. Outlined in this briefing are potential role profiles for the functions.

#### 2. Local Area Partnership Chair: Draft role profile

##### 2.1 Role and responsibilities of the Local Area Partnership Chair (7 in total)

The Lead Area Member will be appointed at Annual Council and have the key roles of:

- Chairing the Local Area Partnership and other meetings supporting the decision making process
- Owning a Local Area Plan on behalf of the Partnership
- Representing the Local Area Partnership
- Supporting the enhanced role of Ward Councillors.

2.2 The Chair will be expected to encourage and support the active participation of Ward Councillors on the Local Area Partnership, local residents and key partners, in all elements of the work of the Elected Members, including:

- Establishment and future development of the Local Area Partnership
- Preparation, agreement, implementation, and monitoring of an Area Plan
- Identifying and implementing approaches to effective Community involvement
- Influencing service delivery at a local level.
- Ensuring the Local Area Partnership operates in a manner that effectively represents the interests of the wider local community
- Liaising with the Local Area Team and Lead Officers to plan and co-ordinate the Local Area Partnership work programme and forward plan.
- Proactively liaising with Council Officers and partners/agencies to achieve the objectives of the Area Plan and ensure that the outcomes are delivered and funding decisions are consistent with any statutory, funding or other requirements, including the Council's Constitution, Financial Framework, Standing Orders and Commissioning and Procurement Guidelines.
- Ensuring that the Local Area Partnership works effectively with service providers to ensure the provision of services that meet local needs.
- Contributing to a combined periodic report on progress, setting out the Local Area Partnership's achievements to the Council and partners as required.
- The Lead Elected Member will have the key role of representing the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Local Area Partnership. This will involve:
- Representing the views of the Local Area Partnership based on decisions made and views expressed at relevant meetings and forums

- Representing the interests of the Local Ward Members and local community through two way communication with the Council and other key decision makers. This includes exercising rights:
  - to put views and recommendations to Cabinet on issues of strategy and policy
  - to draw matters to the attention of a Scrutiny and Policy Board
  - to draw matters to the attention of the Chief Executive or relevant Executive Director
  - representing the Local Area Partnership at events across the area as appropriate, cross area co-ordinating arrangements, city-wide events, and meetings with neighbouring Ward Members and Area Partnerships.

### 2.3 Chairing Local Area Partnership Meetings

The Local Area Partnership Meetings will involve three Lead Ward Members from the other 3 Wards in each Area, representatives from the Local VCF sector and public sector and private sector partners as appropriate . There will be a minimum of three meetings a year based around the requirements of the Area Plan. These meetings can use a structure relevant to the work of the Partnership. Some may be held in public as Q&A sessions or discussion forums, others may be held in private to explore key issues affecting the local area.

At these meetings, the Chair will oversee:

- a) agreeing and checking delivery of the Area Plan including assessing quantitative and qualitative information
- b) directing how local services should be delivered to achieve improvements
- d) considering and expressing views on what services and partners are asking the Local Area Partnership
- e) exploring and informing major council and partner activity such as new developments, regeneration schemes or service redesign
- f) considering issues arising from Ward Members that require direction and action.
- g) elevating issues to the Council for additional resourcing and prioritisation

### 2.4 Support

The Local Area Partnership Chair will be supported by:

- the Local Area Team who will advise on all agreed agenda items
- the Lead Council Officer who will advise on issues concerning Council policy and protocols and governance standards (including standing orders)
- the Local Area Partnership Chairs Group that will meet monthly, chaired by the lead Cabinet Member to discuss the operation of the Local Area Partnerships across the City and explore cross area boundary issues.

## 3. **Lead Council Officer (formerly Lead Director) – Draft Job Profile**

The Lead Council Officers (14 in total) will be selected by the Executive Management Team.

They will be at Director or Head of Service Level (AD level).

They will cover between 1-3 Wards depending upon the comparative priority of each Ward (i.e. Wards that are seen as high priority because of need may have a dedicated Lead Council Officer, Wards with less pressing issues may share a Lead Council Officer with up-to 3 Wards).

They will support the Ward Members in:

- Identifying 3 Priorities for the Ward
- Providing advice and guidance on the workings of the Council and managing case work
- Being the first point of contact for addressing issues and problems that require advice and guidance
- Reporting on progress and issues for resolution
- Managing difficult situations, conflict and problem solving.

They will also:

- Represent the Council on the Local Area Partnerships
- Support the Local Action Partnership Chair on performing their function and role (see Draft Role Profile) for
- Promote joined up action at the Area and Ward level
- Help develop the Area Plans and report on progress
- Advise on appropriate courses of action and options in terms of addressing priorities within the area.
- Problem solve
- Ensure that the Local Area Partnership is fit for purpose and has clear aims, objectives and representation from the key stakeholders, including the Local VCF sector and community advocates.

They will receive administrative officer support from the Local Area Team (named officer) and the Head of Locality Management.

**Vince Roberts – Head of Locality Management**

12.3.2013