Neighbourhood Governance Model of Engagement Framework and Programme – Summary and Overview:

1. Benefits

Stakeholder evaluation of the NG pilot to date indicates that the proposed NG framework and programme offers the following opportunities for the Council and its partners to establish a whole systems approach to devolved governance for public services.

From a Councillor perspective, the neighbourhood governance framework builds on the existing community ward forum and area committee base to provide:

- a demonstrable focus for community leadership in the ward through strong, ongoing dialogue with a wide range of local people

- a transparent, direct and evidence-based way of identifying and championing the views and priorities of the communities that make up their wards

- a means of maintaining an overview of the ward /area work programmes of public services across the Council and local partnership

From a citizen perspective, the proposed NG offer also builds on the existing ward forum and area committee base to provide:

- a transparent and direct way of being listened to, influencing decisions and contributing to setting priorities for local neighbourhoods

- opportunities for, and choice over, levels of involvement across a range of options for active citizenship

- a clear means of holding public services to account at ward and area levels
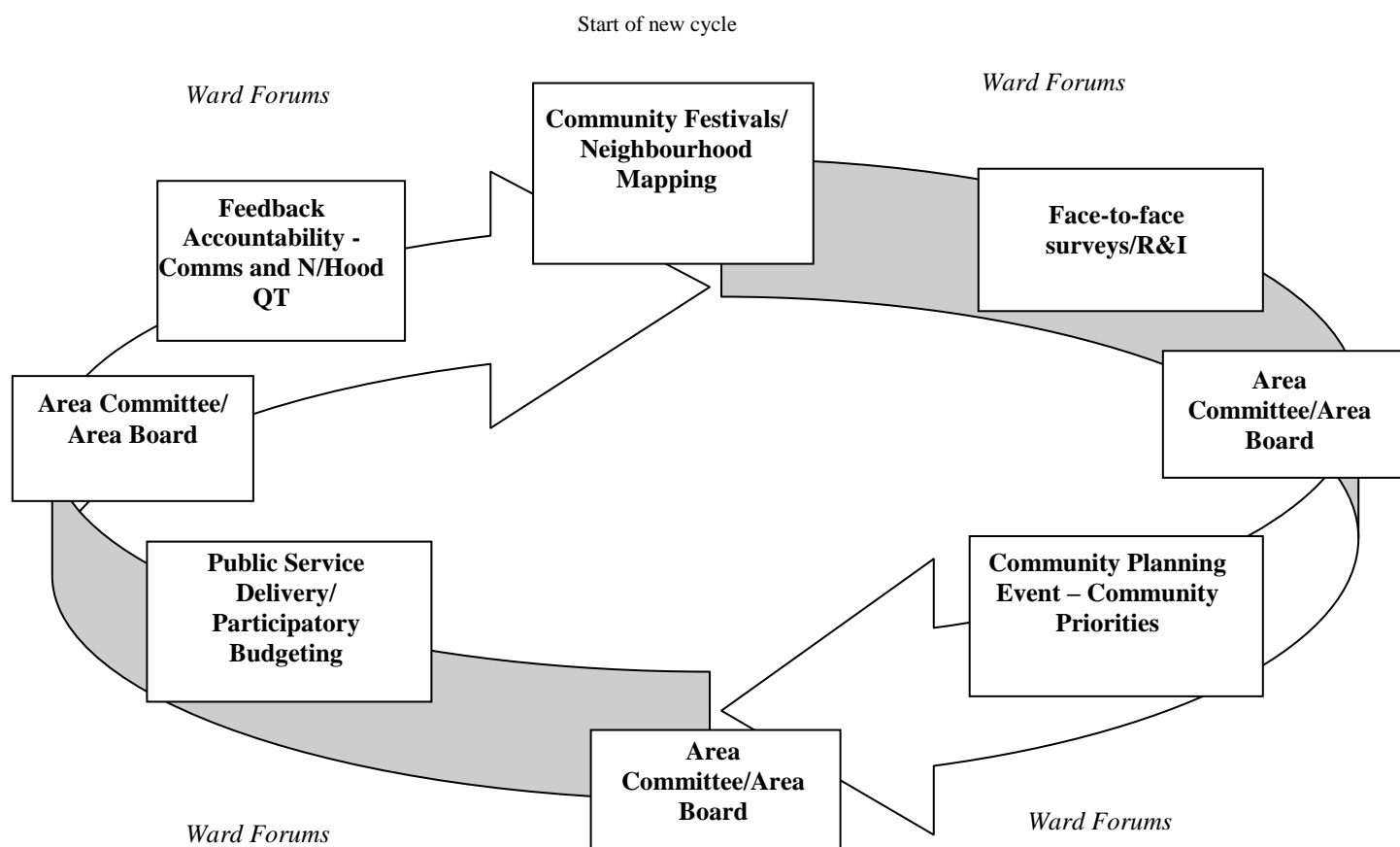
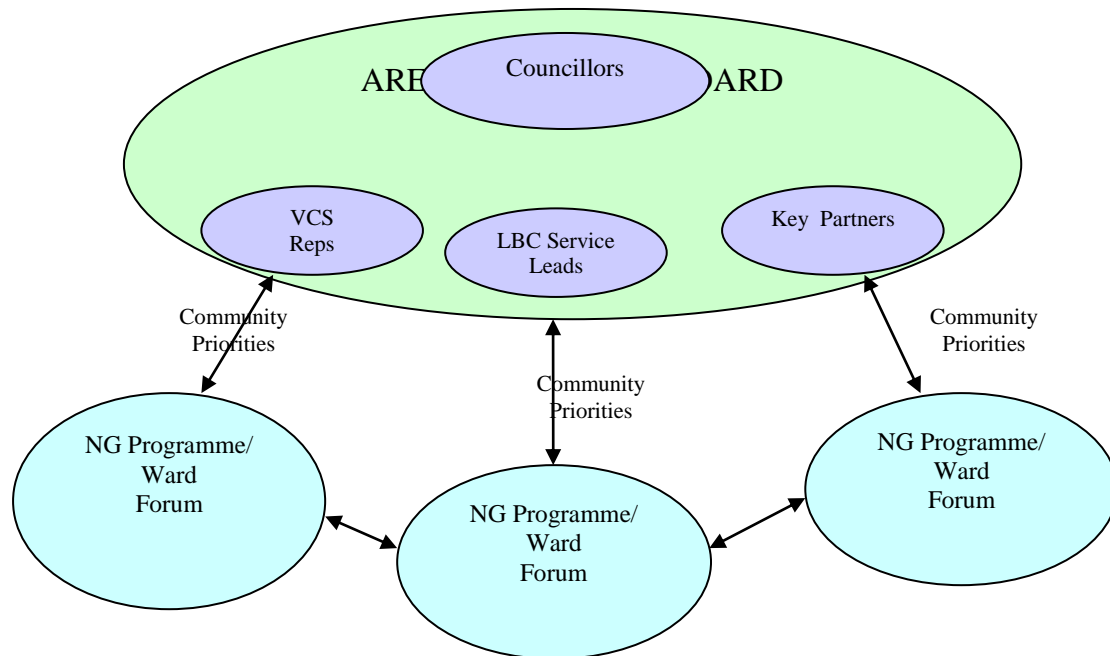From a service provider perspective, the proposed NG offer can provide:

- a means to join up local public engagement and delivery arrangements with other service areas and partners to reduce duplication and improve efficiency

- a more localised governance and delivery framework for enabling stronger partnership collaboration for supporting community involvement and delivering neighbourhood services

- clear and demonstrable linkages to evidenced and democratically legitimate local citizens' priorities for strategic planning and commissioning across key themes

2. NG Framework and Programme:

The NG framework and programme developed through the pilot comprises a number of interdependent elements based on the existing ward and area arrangements, and drawing on existing service delivery and improvements. These are designed to provide a whole systems approach that can deliver transparent governance, enable representative involvement, establish a sound evidence base, and enable delivery of agreed community priorities:

Luton NG Programme Cycle Model

Start of new cycle

Ward Forums   *Ward Forums*

Community Festivals/ Neighbourhood Mapping

Feedback Accountability - Comms and N/Hood QT

Face-to-face surveys/R&I

Area Committee/ Area Board

Area Committee/Area Board

Public Service Delivery/ Participatory Budgeting

Community Planning Event – Community Priorities

Area Committee/Area Board

Ward Forums   *Ward Forums*

NG Framework Model:

3. **Key Elements of the NG Programme:**

A) **Network Development, Community Building, and Promoting Cohesion:**

1. **Community Network/Single Ward Database:**

   - comprising all existing contacts held by partners in the ward for active and interested citizens, civil society organisations, and other local stakeholders and partners
   - actively checked and promoted to ensure inclusion through front-line working, continually refreshed, built at the ward level
   - ensuring opportunities for citizens to access community decision making events locally with a representative range of local people
   - offering a single database of active citizens and stakeholders for partners to engage with on local issues

2. **Community Festivals/Events:**

- held at least annually in each ward to celebrate the strengths, harmony and diversity of the whole community together
- key opportunities for service providers to engage with local people directly and promote their work
- comprising a central feature for neighbourhood mapping and consultation to identify the key local issues people have in common and to underpin the local evidence base

3. **Community Learning Opportunities:**

- for active citizens, focussing on making involvement more effective
- developing the skills needed to help enable real change and resilience for their communities and support the delivery of the NG programme,
- helping to mediate and build consensus across different groups
- sessions are being developed linking in with skills development for front-line staff and Councillors

B) **Establishing the Local Evidence Base:**

1. **Neighbourhood Mapping:**

- Identifying key local issues from a wide range of local people not usually engaged in consultation and priority setting through community events/settings

2. **Research and Intelligence:**

- compiled from across the full range of relevant data at ward and output area levels available to partners
- reviewed annually to indentify key comparator indicators and local trends
- published to make it easily available to the public
- interpreted by R&I officers to provide headline issues for councillors, citizens and other decision makers

3. **Face to Face Surveys:**

- undertaken annually with a representative range of local people, randomly selected
- designed as a ward level local "place survey"
- enabling partners to get feedback on key issues from those who are generally not yet directly involved in active NG opportunities
- including targeted work with young people, schools' councils and Area Youth Forums to support them in identifying issues to feed into neighbourhood mapping and consultation

C) Community Based Decision Making:

1. Ward Forums/Area Committees:

- currently held quarterly
- led by ward Councillors, supported by front line officers
- opportunity for Council and partners to inform and consult with the public on local issues and decisions
- opportunity for residents to raise issues of concern relating to their local neighbourhoods and services, and monitor progress on local priorities
- forums can be themed where required e.g. according to priorities identified through the NG framework

2. Community Planning Decision Day Events:

- held annually or once every 2 years locally in key hubs for wards, widely promoted, and open to all
- opportunity for citizens influence local agendas through constructive and realistic dialogue with service providers on identifying local interventions that reflect strategic priorities and the evidence base,
- involving direct community vote on local priorities and interventions for improving their neighbourhoods linked to strategic (e.g. SCS) themes
- can be linked to ward forums, may be adapted to respond to strategic and local requirements, and provide an opportunity to review progress with priorities at the ward level.

3. Participatory Budgeting (PB) Decision Day Events:

- held annually to allocate community grants from a partnership fund built to commission smaller neighbourhood groups and VCS organisations to contribute to local priorities
- residents and local community groups can propose community projects to address local priorities
- opportunity for local citizens in the ward to consider each project and vote on which should be funded, and for projects to promote themselves and improve their networks
- extension of PB to other areas of resource allocation across the partnership could include agreeing priorities for local service delivery options, and consultation over key budget decisions

D) Governance and Delivery

1. Area Board:

- governed by the Council constitution through the Area Committee framework
- meeting quarterly, led by all ward Councillors, charged with steering and monitoring partnership action planning to address the community priorities agreed through the NG programme and co-ordinate partnership responses
- service managers with area responsibilities from across the partnership attending as required
- monitoring an officer working group to execute its decisions through a co-ordinated and prioritised work programme shared across Council and partners front-line services and teams
- providing a devolved governance framework to ensure ward councillors can maintain an area overview of local development and for officers to co-ordinate frontline initiatives across the partnership.

E) Feedback and Accountability:

1. Communications:

- publication of annual Councillor and Partnership Reports, based on the "You Said, We Did" principle,
- delivered to all households in each ward, supported by ongoing local bulletins, regular town-wide publicity, and web-based publication
- question time opportunities as part of Area Committee/Ward Forum programme focussing on delivery of local priorities identified through the NG programme