

COMMITTEE: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT BOARD

DATE: THURSDAY 12TH JULY 21012

SUBJECT: AREA BOARD ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT BY: MICHAEL MCMAHON (HEAD OF COMMUNITY LIVING)

**CONTACT OFFICER: MAREK LUBELSKI (NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNANCE
MANAGER)**

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE

To consider progress with the integration and development of Area and Neighbourhood Governance Arrangements

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

CIB is requested to consider progress to date and ongoing proposals for improvement in Area and Neighbourhood Governance.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following recommendations from the last meetings of the Area Committee Board and decision at the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 27th March 2012, officers have been progressing the integration of Area Board and Ward Forum arrangements with the Neighbourhood Governance (NG) programme in line with the new constitution (See Appendix A).

3.2 This has involved closer joint working between the Area Board Support Officer, Community Development NG team and Democratic Services.

3.3 Arrangements for the new Area Board agenda, co-option of key partners from Beds Police and NHS Luton, and support for co-ordination from Community Development Service (CDS) of the NG programme for Area Boards and Ward Forums has been discussed with Members through a briefing meeting with Area Board Chairs held on 25th May 2012 and trialled during the latest cycle of Area Boards.

4. Proposals for Development:

4.1 Involvement of Area Board Chairs in CIB:

4.1.1 The Chair of the Community Involvement Board (CIB) has proposed that Chairs of Area Boards should be involved more closely in the work of CIB to help steer developments.

4.1.2 This could initially involve evaluation meetings following the completion of each cycle of Area Boards, and ensuring Area Board Chairs are sent papers for all CIB business.

4.2 Area Board Agendas:

4.2.1 In line with the fact that Area Board meetings are attended by members of the public and they aim to actively involve them, so that they can run as efficiently as possible, it is proposed that for the next cycle the agenda for Board meetings continues to follow the new revised and simplified version trialled during this cycle (See Appendix B).

4.2.2 This has general business items, report backs from Ward Forums, Petitions, Public Question Time, and any Presentations. By way of simplifying the agenda further, it is proposed that all Area reports should be delivered by officers under one item (these are currently NG, CDS, Prevention and Early Intervention, Area Grants and Area Report).

4.3 Further Involvement of Chairs and Members:

4.3.1 Further proposals set out below for closer consultation between officers and the Area Board Chairs, as well as the closer involvement of and dialogue between Members and officers in monitoring and agreeing action plans in advance of Area Board meetings, should help to enable improved agenda planning and more productive meetings.

4.3.2 Given the public nature of the Area Board meetings, there is a clear need to stick to the protocol of exceptional reporting through a brief summary of key points for Members' consideration of the NG work programme presented from the NG action plan progress report. Officers should be requested to simplify all written reports in line with the nature of the meetings.

- 4.3.3** Members may wish to prepare for discussions at the Board on items of particular interest and concern with regard to community priorities through the opportunities proposed below.
- 4.3.4** CDS officers currently co-ordinate an officer and partner working group made up of officers with responsibility for leading on delivery of work designed to address community priorities agreed and set out in the NG action plans. These meet between the Area Board meetings to progress, identify opportunities for collaboration, and agree joint actions.
- 4.3.5** It is proposed that one Member from each ward in the Area be invited to attend these meetings, or else provide input to the CDS NG co-ordinator for the Area.
- 4.3.6** This would provide a means for more informal and productive dialogue between Members and officers regarding addressing community priorities to complement and inform the business of the Area Boards.
- 4.3.7** This is an element of the NG pilot work which was found to be useful by both Members and officers, and which has been largely lost in the integration of Area Committees with the pilot Boards.
- 4.3.8** The onus would be on Members for each ward to co-ordinate their input to and requirements from these meetings, and to feedback to their colleagues if required.
- 4.3.9** In addition, it is also proposed that briefing meetings be arranged for each Area Board Chair by the CDS NG co-ordinator for the Area and the Area Board Support Officer between the publication of the NG action plan progress reports and the Area Board meetings.
- 4.3.10** These meetings would also be open to all Members of the Board, and would focus on the meeting and issues to be addressed in the management of the agenda and reporting to ensure members have the opportunity to discuss these in advance of the meeting and raise any questions for which they require answers.

APPENDIX

Appendix A – New Constitution for Area Boards

Appendix B – Revised Agenda Format for Area Boards

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D