

AREA COMMITTEE: BARNFIELD, ICKNIELD, LIMBURY & SAINTS

DATE: WEDNESDAY 23RD JUNE 2004

SUBJECT: AREA REPORT

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

CONTACT OFFICER: GARY J. ROBERTS 01582 546985

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: BARNFIELD, ICKNIELD, LIMBURY & SAINTS

PURPOSE

1. To bring before the committee an update on the issues that were raised following the last Area Committee held on the 20th January 2004.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. The Barnfield, Icknield, Limbury and Saints Area Committee is recommended to note the report and make recommendations on further action where required.

BACKGROUND

3. This report encapsulates the progress of the area committee since the implementation of the initiative in October 2001. In addition it includes information on projects and activities supported by the committee and by liaison and mediation with both internal and external service areas, pursues the concerns raised by both the local community and Members of the council.

REPORT

4. The issues for this area committee, which has been mentioned in paragraph 3 have been collated and are outlined in the attached plan shown as **Appendix A** of this report.
5. Members of the public who appear on the current database were informed of this meeting by post on the 2nd June 2004 and publicity for this cycle of meetings have appeared in the Luton News, Herald & Post on the 19th & 20th May, 9th & 10th June and the 23rd & 24th June 2004. It has also appeared in the Luton on Sunday on the 23rd May and the 13th & 20th June 2004 respectively.
6. Additionally, posters were also dispatched to every General Practitioner, Dental Practice, Chiropodists, Chiropractors, Educational establishment, Library, Sports Centre, Community & Youth Centre, Day Centre, Places of Worship and Sheltered Housing provision, across the borough. The information gave dates for every Area Committee and was then followed up with specific information about the Area Committee, relevant to that area.
7. The Area Committee web site is regularly updated and can be accessed on www.luton.gov.uk/areacommittees

AREA PROJECTS

8. Members will be aware that on the last occasion that this area committee met there were three applications under the area projects scheme, presented for consideration. These applications are detailed below and were approved in principle, however it was requested by members that the Area Committee Support Officer, gather further information about the group and present it to the next meeting.

Scheme	Ref	Ward	Cost	Contribution granted
Saints Little Treasures Pre-School Playgroup	ST 115	Saints	£2,300	£2,300
Limbury Saturday Morning Arts Club	LI 116	Limbury	£1,000	£1,000
Limbury 50+ Group	LI 117	Limbury	£1,600	£1,600

SAINTS LITTLE TREASURES PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP

9. The group, which operate from the Saints Community Centre, have recently gone through and passed an ofsted inspection. They have employed two assistant workers and during my discussions with them were in the process of making an appointment of Group Leader. The playgroup is properly constituted, has their own bank account and is managed by an independent management committee.

They will be open Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 12 noon and are in the process of introducing 'wrap around care' with a breakfast and lunchtime club till 1.00 pm.

LIMBURY 50+ AND SATURDAY MORNING ARTS CLUB

10. Both of these groups come under the direction of Luton Borough Council's Community Education and Development Division and are facilitated by the staff that operate from the centre. The finances i.e. income and expenditure is also facilitated and monitored by the said Division.
11. Copies of these application have been previously circulated to Members.
12. There are two new applications for Members to consider at this area committee and these are detailed below.

Scheme	Ref	Ward	Cost	Contribution granted
Ambleside Community Hall, 19a. Ambleside, Luton, LU3 2SJ Supply and fit window blinds and carpet to the hall.	LI 121	Limbury	£2,200	£2,200
Pakistan Kashmir Welfare Association. To provide summer activities for children and young people residing in the Saints Ward.	ST 122		£3,500	£2,500

AMBLESIDE COMMUNITY HALL

13. A copy of the Ambleside, audited accounts were requested on the 29th April 2004, but at the time of writing this report had not been received.

PAKISTAN KASHMIR WELFARE ASSOCIATION

14. The applicant has stated that there are no audited accounts for the organisation and they the organisation is not in regular receipt of funding or any other income. The application is being made to engage as many children and young people as possible within the Saints Ward in activities during the course of the summer holiday period, thereby using their time in a constructive manner. These activities will include trips to the Commonwealth Institute, Houses of Parliament, Alton Towers,

Wardown Park & Museum, coastal visit and Whipsnade Zoo.
activities involving games and arts & craft.

There will also be

15. In considering the application Members may wish to take into account grant aid allocated to similar organisations by the Council and through other initiatives and schemes such as ' On Track ' and ' Positive Activities for Young People ' who also provide a town wide resource during the course of the summer holiday period.
16. There has been a practice within the Challney, Leagrave & Lewsey and the Biscot, High Town & Round Green Area Committee in the past, where there has been an allocation of £1,500 per ward as a contribution towards summer activities for young people. Again this may be an initiative that this area committee would wish to mirror. In such cases the activities were organised by the Council or registered youth organisation where staff and volunteers had been vetted in accordance with the Criminal Records Bureau procedures.

MINI WARD FORUMS

17. This committee will be aware that during the course of October, November 2003 and January 2004 two pilot schemes, took place within the Crawley, Stopsley & Wigmore Area Committee and the Challney Leagrave & Lewsey Area Committee, to test out two mechanisms that could possibly replace the community process, that was then in existence across the town.
18. This came about following the number of concerns that had been raised by Councillors, officers and the public about Luton Borough Council operating two area based democratic / consultation mechanisms, that is to say area committees and community forums. In particular, the issues of resources (time, staffing and funding) and overlapping of work objectives have been highlighted, with some local residents taking the opportunity to use both arenas to raise the same concerns and issues. Officers are also aware that there is a desire on the part of Members of the Council to develop area committees by extending their functions and increasing the frequency of meetings. It was clearly understood by all participants in the area committee / community forum process that what was being suggested was not a proposal to reduce the level of community involvement but rather to improve and enhance this involvement in the most effective way.
19. The pilots commenced at the Challney, Leagrave & Lewsey Area Committee on the 21st October 2003 with a Service Surgery. The meeting was attended by 95 people and during the course of the pilot, 36 issues were recorded for action.
20. Those in attendance expressed overwhelming support for the surgeries and said they would like them to continue and be part of the area committee process in the future.
21. The first of the mini ward forum approaches took place at the Crawley, Stopsley & Wigmore Area Committee on the 4th November 2003. Again the meeting was well attended with 52 people present, all of whom actively engaged in the forum process. Having had the benefit of observing the two arenas it was interesting to note that where the service surgery had a more personal touch, the forum setting

was far more cross cutting and engaging, thereby creating a more cohesive approach to community issues at a local level.

22. The above format was reversed for the January 2004 cycle of meetings. The Crawley, Wigmore & Stopsley Area Committee, did not attract as large an audience as one would have liked and equally those who attended were not as attracted to the service surgery as they were to the forum approach on the previous occasion. However, the forum model was well received by the community in the Challney, Leagrave and Lewsey wards and a wide majority expressed a preference for this type of arena in the future, which was a reversal from the previous occasion.
23. The recommendation to adopt the 'Mini Ward Forum' approach was supported by Area Committee Board at their meeting on the 30th March 2004 and subsequently formally agreed by the Council's Executive at their meeting on the 13th April 2004.
24. It is anticipated that this new approach will -
- Use the mini ward forums to inform and shape the agendas for area committees.
 - Inform community plans at an area and ward level.
 - Be a mechanism for capacity building in the community.
 - Proactively address democratic renewal and citizenship.

BUDGET UPDATE

25. Please see **(Appendix B)**

AREA TOURS

26. The area tours for 2004/2005 are set out below.

Barnfield, Icknield, Limbury & Saints		
Ward	Date	Time
Barnfield & Icknield	16th June 2004	09.30 Hrs
Limbury	2nd August 2004	09.30 Hrs
Saints	15th October 2004	09.30 Hrs
Barnfield & Icknield	3rd December 2004	09.30 Hrs
Limbury	4th February 2005	09.30 Hrs
Saints	1st April 2005	09.30 Hrs

PROPOSAL/OPTION

27. It is proposed that Members of the Barnfield Icknield, Limbury & Saints Area Committee note the report.
28. In respect of the application made by the Ambleside Community Hall (Reference LI 121) and the Pakistan Kashmir Welfare Association (Reference ST 122) paragraph 13 to 17 inclusive, Members options are to either, formally approve the

application, consider making a contribution, defer for future consideration or refuse the application.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

29. Much of the work conducted by the Area Committee will have an impact on Council services and will address issues such as accessibility, local participation and the general quality of life within the Borough.

COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

30. A large amount of the work being pursued and undertaken by service areas and other outside agencies will make a major contribution to community safety and need to be considered alongside other schemes which may be under consideration or being implemented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

31. Any contribution made by the Area Committee will be met from existing budgets.

ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

32. The implications of the work being undertaken will address and improve the environment, create safer communities and address the quality of life for local people.

APPENDIX

33. Appendix A – Updates on issues from previous meetings
Appendix B – Budget update.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

None