



## AGENDA ITEM NO: 9

### Avonmouth & Kingsweston Neighbourhood Partnership 24th September 2014

**Report of:** Hayley Ash - Area Neighbourhood Manager  
**Title:** Neighbourhood Partnership Review update

**Officer presenting report:** Keith Houghton, Neighbourhood Partnership Co-ordinator

#### Recommendation:

- a) To **note** the progress of the unringfencing of devolved budgets
- b) To **agree** to consolidate and update your Neighbourhood Partnership Plan
- c) To **note** the changes to the Well Being Process
- d) To **decide** how to allocate Green Capital Funding
- e) To **nominate** one or two reps to be part of the Citywide Event Planning Group, and feed the NPs ideas for the day
- f) To **decide** when your NP equalities training will take place and to **nominate** equalities champions for your NP.

#### 1. Devolved budgets

- 1.1 The recommendation to create a single, consolidated neighbourhood budget from the local traffic scheme, wellbeing and clean and green budgets was presented at Cabinet on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014.
- 1.2 This was agreed, and NPs will now be able to allocate this neighbourhood budget to any local priority. This will also make it easier for the neighbourhood budget to be spent alongside CIL.

1.3 S106 funding will still need to be spent as in the original agreements with the planners.

## 2. Neighbourhood Partnership Plan

2.1 Each Neighbourhood Partnership currently has a number of different local action plans and priority lists. At the August NP review update meetings (citywide) the group supported the proposal to bring all of the local plans and priorities together into one, updated NP plan for each NP, and for this plan to cover a minimum of 3 years.

2.2 The aim is for this plan to be beneficial for both the NP and the council.

Benefits to the NP would be:

- Having all of the neighbourhood's priorities in one document
- Show what the evidence base is for the neighbourhood priorities
- Being able to use the plan to allocate devolved funding and other resources to ensure that it is achievable
- Inform residents what the Neighbourhood Partnerships are doing over the next 3 years, via a simplified version of the NP Plan (a nice leaflet with pictures)
- Being able to look at where the gaps are and identify what can and can't be done with current resource levels - to enable NPs to identify and apply for other sources of funding/resource.

Benefits shared with the council are:

- Being able to identify where NP priorities contribute towards Mayoral and Cooperate priorities
- Being able to easily see where common priorities occur across the city and use this to have conversations with service providers
- Provide a means to measure success of the NPs

2.3 Step 1 (complete) : The new/updated NP Plan would replace the many current local plans and strategies (eg the Green Space investment Plan, the Safer Bristol Plan, the Neighbourhood Working Priorities and the Well Being Priorities). All of the outstanding work from these old plans and strategies has been consolidated into a common template and NP Members should have received a copy of this to comment on.

- 2.4 Step 2: The next step will then be to build on the existing priorities to reflect any new local developments/issues.
- 2.5 Step 3: The NP will then need to look at the resources available to the NP and prioritise what it will deliver over the next 3 years with those resources. NPs will also be able to agree some aspirational projects so that if additional resource become available the NP could take advantage of them.
- 2.6 The NP is requested to agree how they would like to update their Neighbourhood Partnership Plans. Some NPs may want to set up a working group, others may want to hold an informal NP meeting, others may want to have a community event to do this.
- 2.7 The NP is also requested to consider how it will consult residents once the priorities have been drafted.
- 2.8 Proposed timescales
- Sept/October onwards : developing and consulting on draft plans
  - March 2015 NP Meeting: final plans agreed (or December/January if plans are ready).
- The Neighbourhood Partnership Plan will be refreshed each year to reflect what has been achieved over the previous year, opportunities that have arisen, and work that still needs doing.
- 2.9 **The NP is requested to:**
- a) Agree to update/develop a new NP Plan**
  - b) Decide how the draft version of the Neighbourhood Partnership Plan will be developed**
  - c) Decide how the NP will prioritise the plan and allocate available resource**
  - d) Decide how the NP will consult with the wider community**
3. **Well Being Fund**
- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Management Service has recently undergone a restructure, as part of the £90million cuts required by the Council. This has resulted in fewer people and resources being available to service the Neighbourhood Partnerships. To ensure that an effective service is still available to all Neighbourhood Partnerships several administrative processes are being put in

place at a City Wide level. The first of which is the way that we administrate the Well Being Fund.

3.2 To ensure that all NPs get the same level of support the following changes have been made.

- All completed applications will be sent to a central address [neighbourhood.partnerships@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.partnerships@bristol.gov.uk)
- All application forms now contain the same questions, as do all monitoring and other Well Being paperwork. NPs will still decide on their priorities and maximum grant levels.
- Applications will be sent out via email to the appraisal panels/Wellbeing Subgroups at an agreed time before the group convenes. If appraisal panel members do not have access to a computer then hard copies will be sent, however this will be the exception and not the rule.
- Panel members are requested to read the applications before the panel meeting and make notes of any comments and/or issues they have with the project and bring them to the meeting.
- The Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator will supply no more than 2 copies of each application at the appraisal panel meeting, however they will also supply a table with a short summary of each project on the night.
- The discussion and assessment process will take place in the same way that each NP usually does this, the two paper copies will be used to clarify any details.
- Following decisions made at the NP meeting by the Neighbourhood Committee, all Offers of Grant funding will be sent out by the admin team, who will be the link for ongoing communication.
- Monitoring forms will be sent to projects every 6 months for projects to complete.

#### **4. Green Capital Fund**

4.1 As discussed at the June NP meeting, each Neighbourhood Partnership has been allocated £10,000 of Green Capital Funding. This is to fund projects from January to December 2015.

4.2 Projects will contribute to the following priorities.

- Increasing people's access to affordable, healthy, sustainable food

- Enabling more people to access affordable energy
- Inspiring and educating people about nature and how to care for it
- Providing activities and initiatives that help people re-use, repair, and share materials
- Helping people discover more sustainable transport (eg walking, cycling or public transport)

#### **4.3 The NP is requested to consider how to allocate this funding from the following options (if you have not already done so):**

a) To allocate funding through a process that mirrors the Well Being Fund. This process would take place alongside and at the same time as the Well Being Process. If this option is your preferred option then you will need to agree a maximum amount of grant. (NB, the NP makes the final decision on Green Capital Funding)

b) To allocate a proportion of the funding to projects that your NP or Environment Group has already worked up. If you choose this option an application form will still need to be submitted to the NP to form part of the paper trail. Monitoring information would also still be required after the project has been delivered. The rest would then be used as per the grant process above

### **5. City Wide Event**

5.1 The fifty Resident NP members and Councillors who attended the two Review meetings in August agreed that they would like one big City Wide NP Conference per year. The request was that resident reps and Councillors lead the planning of the event, which should include opportunities for networking, showcasing good practice as well as key training activities, and that the Neighbourhood Management service supports the organisation and development of the event.

5.2 To get things moving the first NP citywide event planning group meeting will take place at City Hall 15<sup>th</sup> October (NPs that are planned after this date will be notified via email before their meetings).

**5.3 The NP is requested to nominate one or two reps to be part of the Citywide Event Planning Group, and feed in your NP's ideas for the day.**

## **6. Equalities**

6.1 As part of the review of Neighbourhood Partnerships we looked at NPs' equalities practice – how we make sure NPs welcome everyone and make the best decisions possible when allocating resources.

6.2 Addressing inequality only happens when we take proactive and positive steps to tackle it. This is why the Equality Act 2010 exists. This places a duty on all public authorities to have 'due regard' for:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

As NPs make devolved decisions on behalf of the council, this means that this legal duty applies to Neighbourhood Partnerships.

6.3 As the equality duty is a legal duty, there is a requirement for all NPs to have equalities training. The training lasts 1.5 hours and NPs are asked to decide when they would like to do this training. You might want to extend an NP meeting to incorporate the training, or have a separate session. Please could you try to fit in this training by March 2015. We can run follow up training for new NP members if your membership changes in future.

6.4 Currently there is a system of equality representatives – volunteers from the citywide equalities forums who are willing to represent equality communities and issues of concern at the NP. This system has worked for some NPs but has been inconsistent across the city.

6.5 It is proposed that instead of equality representatives, each NP nominates two or more 'equality champions' from within the NP membership. The role of the equality champions would be to ensure that the whole NP is genuinely engaged in considering equalities issues when making decisions. Equality champions are not experts, nor do they have to be people from an equalities group, but are people within the NP who are committed to addressing equality issues.

**6.6 The NP is asked to decide when their training will take place, and to nominate two or more equality champions for their NP.**

## **7. Neighbourhood Partnerships Toolkit**

7.1 Each NP is different, and it is not within the remit of the NP Review to change how NPs are managed locally. If your NP would like to look at local governance arrangements such as NP membership, size, number of subgroups etc., we will be putting together a tool kit which you could work through with your NP Coordinator to explore different models.