



AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

Greater Bedminster Community Partnership 11th June 2014

Title: Neighbourhood Partnership Update

Report of: Area Coordinator – Nick Christo – 07585 909030

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the Neighbourhood Management Service Update
2. To note the Parks approach to grounds maintenance
3. To note the proposed community asset transfer of Ashton Vale Community Centre
4. To note the next steps of Green Capital 2015

1. Neighbourhood Management Service update

A briefing note was sent to Neighbourhood Partnerships in early May to update you on our staffing changes. As promised, more details about this are provided here.

Across the council, services are working to a three area model based on the neighbourhood working areas (north, east central, south). This is to enable better delivery of services within neighbourhoods. Some partners such as the police are also working to the same three area model.

A number of staff within the Neighbourhood Management service have elected to take voluntary severance, and this has resulted in some changes in personnel within the teams that work with Neighbourhood Partnerships. Our new structure, with details of the jobs and the people who will now be doing them, is detailed below:

Your area south will be managed by an Area Neighbourhood Manager Penny Germon. The responsibilities of the area manager are as follows:

- Bringing together shared agendas and improving shared services across the neighbourhood area

- Manage staff in the neighbourhood area and a cross city team [business support/street scene enforcement/community development].
- Lead on one of three cross cutting citywide themes for the team:
 - Governance (including the neighbourhood partnership review)
 - Improving service delivery
 - Community development and active citizenship

The lead officer for your Neighbourhood Partnership is Nick Christo, the Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator. Each NP Coordinator will manage two neighbouring NPs.

The community engagement and neighbourhood priority delivery in your area will be carried out by Neighbourhood Officers. These officers will support the forums and other community engagement for the NP, and will also undertake community engagement, problem solving and priority delivery for your neighbourhood priorities. Some interviews still need to happen for these posts, currently the officers allocated to your area are Dan Judges, Julian Cox & Lloyd Allen.

The Community Development team has been designed as a citywide team, and will retain a clear connection with neighbourhood partnerships to deliver community development which supports NP aspirations, as well as broader community development work across the city. The work programme for this team is currently being designed, and we will share the plans for this team when they are ready.

The Street Scene Enforcement team has joined the neighbourhood management service and will deliver against neighbourhood priorities as well as undertaking hotspot work based on analysis of cleanliness and crime data.

Neighbourhood Partnership Review Update

At your March meeting you received an update on the NP review which included a summary of the first steps which we were proposing:

- Unringfencing the devolved budget.
- Implementing a neighbourhood services charter
- Identify and implement efficiencies for improved delivery
- Implementing a programme of citywide events

Update:

- The removal of the ring fence for the devolved budgets (Local Traffic, Clean and Green, Wellbeing) is a Mayoral decision and a paper is being submitted to the Mayor in June. Confirmation of the decision will be provided for you verbally at your meeting or via your NP Coordinator

if the decision hasn't yet been made by the date of your meeting. Removing the ring fence doesn't mean that your NP has to change the way that you currently allocate your money. However, if you would like to spend money on some different things, you may want to start talking about what you would like to change. Your NP Coordinator has some guidance available to help with this.

- We would like to invite representatives of your neighbourhood partnership to the first citywide event on Saturday 9th August 2014 in order to work with us to progress some of the above. We would be grateful if you could identify some reps from you NP to attend. Ideas of things to cover are:
 - Neighbourhood partnership plans - what is the best type of plan and how will they be used to allocate the neighbourhood (unringfenced) budget?
 - Neighbourhood services charter – which services would you like to work with first?
 - Improved and reduced paperwork and reporting
 - Improving communications
 - How do we show that NPs are effective and good value for money?
 - Developing a 3 year programme for citywide events

2. Parks approach to Grounds Maintenance Service – proposal for NPs

Last year as part of the Neighbourhood Partnership review questionnaire we asked what should be decided or influenced locally in the future. 3250 responses to the survey were received. Parks and green / open spaces was the third most frequent response to this question. Additionally, in the consultation focus groups, you told us that you wanted to be able to influence the design of the services and contracts that are provided by the council.

Proposal from BCC's Parks department

The council's parks department would like to adapt the council's grounds maintenance service to respond to the priorities of the Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Definition of Grounds maintenance service: Grounds maintenance, grass cutting, litter picking, shrubs, maintenance of assets within green spaces

Parks would like to work with NPs to influence and prioritise what is important in relation to grounds maintenance in their area.

There will be a clear budget to pay for grounds maintenance services and we

will use that as a guide to assist you in sharing your views with us on priorities.

We will reshape the service according to your priorities in each of the 14 NP areas. From this we will be looking at what are the services that we will deliver the same across the city and what may be more tailored to each NP according to priorities.

Whilst we are working with you in the next year/18 months on this, we will also be considering how we can deliver a longer term service which delivers to your needs for the next 5-10 years. This will include considering who the best provider of the service will be.

What we are asking from NPs

1. Each NP to tell us whether they want to be involved and to give their initial thoughts and comments
2. NPs to decide how they want to progress this within their NP area (e.g. through an environment subgroup, special meeting, themed forum...)

Budget context

Parks has been impacted by the £500k saving it has to make from 2015/16, and also from the staff reductions as a result of the council-wide restructure. We are taking this opportunity to bring services together (e.g. caretaking, estates, parks) to achieve greater flexibility and speed of response, as well as economies of scale.

3. Proposed Community Asset Transfer of Ashton Vale Community Centre

We are seeking the views of The Greater Bedminster Community Partnership on the proposed lease to Ashton vale Community Centre.

In accordance with the council's Community Asset Transfer ('CAT') Policy, Neighbourhood Partnerships will be consulted on proposals to let a council-owned property in their area at less than the full market rent to a voluntary/community organ.

The council proposes to grant a new 5 year Lease to Ashton Vale Community Association.

The tenant will be responsible for all outgoings associated with the property and for repairing and insuring the property.

- The Lease will be subject to a Service Agreement, which will set out a range of services that Ashton Vale Community Association will need to deliver each year from the premises.
- The rent will be abated to a peppercorn for as long as the Service Agreement is complied with.

Background:

This existing community centre is a single storey building consisting of a hall with kitchen area, meeting room, toilets, external garden area and off road parking.

The premises have been in use as a community centre since 1962 and the most recent Lease was granted to AVCA in 2002 for 10 years. AVCA has maintained the interior of the building satisfactorily and the Association is largely self-sustaining, without any Community Development grant/funding. Lettings generate the majority of its income. This pays for all running costs, including repairs, maintenance, insurance, utility bills, etc.

The Service Agreement ensures that Ashton Vale Community Association will prioritise availability to the local community, by making the premises available more widely, so that it can be hired by other organisations and individuals for community activities and private functions. The service agreement also ensures that AVCA will improve engagement with the local community and to this end they have been attending recent GBCP events, will be setting up user groups to consult on local need, and will welcome new locally based members onto their committee to work towards a future beyond the 5yr term of the lease.

Process:

1) The Greater Bedminster Community Partnership is asked to make any comments on the proposed CAT, either in support or against, and to briefly set out the grounds for its views.

2) The final decision will then be taken by the council's Service Director Strategic Property and the Lease will then be completed.

4. Green Capital 2015

More information to follow at the meeting.