

**Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny
Panel**

20 February 2012

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities and Culture)

A Review of the Area Based Working Pilot

Summary

1. This report describes the approach to and lessons learned from the Area Based Working pilot undertaken in six wards to the west of the city from September 2010 to September 2011. The report also provides an update on the Capable Guardian Scheme.

Background

2. The Area Based Working pilot was implemented to test a number of propositions which included:
 - Decisions should be made based on robust data supported by local intelligence and community input.
 - Strategic planning and local delivery must align to inform service redesign
 - Efficiencies are made through robust partnership working reducing duplication of service delivery and wasted resources
 - Best value for money is achieved by working closely with communities to deliver services that meet their needs
 - Health and wellbeing is increased when communities take responsibility for developing and delivering solutions to the challenges they face.
3. Acomb, Dringhouses and Woodthorpe, Holgate, Micklegate, Rural West and Westfield wards were chosen for a number of reasons which included: Geographic location and alignment with the operating areas such as the Police, the diverse nature of their communities and associated issues.

Decisions should be made based on robust data supported by local intelligence and community input

4. In order to address the requirement for robust data the Neighbourhood Management Unit worked closely with the Business Intelligence Hub to develop an initial suite of information drawn from national and local data sources. This work resulted in the first iteration of ward profiles and was tested first with Ward Members and then with partners at the Partnership conference. This enabled us to identify the range of information required and any additional data held by partners.
5. Ward Partnership meetings were held and provided an opportunity for Ward Members and relevant partners to discuss the profile data and share their local knowledge to put the data into context. This resulted in identification of three priorities which were aligned to ward ambitions to enable us to test a model of infrastructure that could develop and deliver services to address the priorities.
6. Capable Guardian meetings were already in existence in some wards. These meetings drew partners around the table to discuss issues relating to Anti Social Behaviour. However in some wards issues being covered ranged beyond anti social behaviour to environmental crime. Some wards had already drawn the Capable Guardian meetings into Ward Team meetings to reduce the demand on partners' time.

Strategic planning and local delivery must align to inform service redesign

7. The priorities across the six wards fell into five themes: Economy, children and young people, environment, older people and community safety. Strategic Tasking Groups were developed based on the five themes. Membership consisted of senior managers from CYC and partner organisations and their remit was to consider 'the fit' between ward priorities and citywide strategic priorities. This forum enabled us to test changes to service delivery to meet local need. For example the roll out of outreach financial and benefits advice in Acomb and Holgate.

Efficiencies are made through robust partnership working reducing duplication of service delivery and wasted resources

8. Using the financial and benefits outreach example above, agreement was reached between Future Prospects, York Citizens Advice bureau and the CYC Benefits team to ensure they did not

overlap outreach areas which resulted in best use of resources and a larger number of residents assisted

9. In tandem, work was undertaken to gather additional information to develop ward audits that could be accessed via the web. This will enable residents, Ward Members and partners to quickly identify what facilities and resources are available in each ward to avoid duplication and establish where to focus resources to fill gaps. This work is ongoing.

Best value for money is achieved by working closely with communities to deliver services that meet their needs

10. The Neighbourhood Management pilot team brief was to spend the majority of their time in the pilot wards linking with community groups and developing an understanding of resident views, issues and expectations. The team identified local bases in each of the wards which included: Foxwood Community Centre, Clements Hall, Acomb Explore, Poppleton Community Hall and others. Ward Members received ward updates on a monthly basis.

Health and wellbeing is increased when communities take responsibility for developing and delivering solutions to the challenges they face

11. A significant element of the pilot has been to work with communities to support them in developing and delivering their own solutions and the team have worked closely with York CVS to develop a robust mechanism for volunteers to link to opportunities that meet their aspirations. This work is ongoing and we are now exploring the potential for expanding the 'Timebanking' approach.

Examples of good practice

12. Examples of good practice during the pilot include:
 - Some of the issues that emerged for older people included isolation/transport. We worked with colleagues in City Strategy to secure a small amount of funding as part of the LSTF grant. We are now working with two Parish Councils to support them to deliver a 'home to' service.
 - We are working with partners including Age UK colleagues to develop a web based directory of services for older people. This will be supplemented with information in libraries and community centres.

- In relation to economy, partners were able to maximise benefits for some residents - an additional total of 17,000 in benefits for those residents helped.
- Front line staff received training to work with communities experiencing local tensions, this was implemented in response to the growing diversity of communities to address some of the issues linked to community safety.
- The *Change Champions* approach has been adopted to establish the needs of children and young people in wards where this theme is a priority. Young people have received training to enable them to facilitate sessions with their peers, Ward Members and service providers. Action plans have been created and services are being delivered against the actions.
- There now 64 trained snow wardens and a recent external funding award will enable us to double this number. In addition snow wardens will receive training from Age UK York to enable them to signpost any residents they have concerns about to the first call 50+ service.

Challenges

13. Throughout the life of the pilot, a number of changes required adjustment of the project including the restructure of the Police Force, a change in national government heralding the introduction of the localism bill/act and the 'Big Society' concept, restructure of the LSP and the PCT, budget savings and CYC departmental restructures including the restructure of the Neighbourhood Management Unit.

Learning

14. Although the challenges mentioned above have impacted on the progress of the pilot, a significant number of lessons have been learned:
 - Ward profiles aid the decision making process providing relevant information to Ward Members and Partners
 - Audit information is critical as a tool to establish what facilities exist, and which organisations are delivering services and where. This information enables Ward Members, partners and residents to determine where there are gaps and focus service delivery to fill them.

- Further work is required to widen the number of partners and voluntary and community sector organisations involved in this approach. Private sector involvement is yet to be addressed.
- Partner meetings at a ward and strategic level are pivotal in providing a forum for organisations to explore joint service delivery and redesign. However, these meetings must be timely and well planned to avoid ‘meeting overload’
- The new duties around Public Health and Wellbeing must be factored in to any future approaches.
- Basing staff in neighbourhoods provides a much clearer understanding of the challenges and gives communities a visible point of contact.
- Further work is required to strengthen the role of Ward Members as central to the development and monitoring of local service delivery.
- Officer/partner meetings must be consolidated/reduced to ensure resources are used effectively to deliver
- The Capable Guardian (problem solving) approach to challenges at a neighbourhood level working should be used as a good practice model and incorporated as part of the work undertaken with a wider range of partners at ward team meetings.
- Including communities in determining and delivering solutions in their own communities provides greater ownership and provides significant opportunity for efficiency savings and added value. This approach needs increasing and improving if we are to meet the future challenges which include shrinking budgets and diminishing resources.
- Further work is required to develop effective mechanisms for aligning strategic priorities with local need.

Next Steps

15. A report will be taken to Cabinet on 7 March recommending a new model of what will now be known as “Neighbourhood Working”. This will draw on learning from the Area Based Working pilot.

Recommendations

16. That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the Area Based Working Pilot and the Capable Guardian Scheme.

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	✓	Date 10-02-12
Wards Affected:	All		✓
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