

Report of the Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods

## **Listening to Residents: Ward Committees**

### **Summary**

1. The attached report will be considered by the Executive on 30 July. It sets out a new approach to community engagement through working with local neighbourhoods and the establishment of revised ward committees.

### **Background & Context**

2. A key priority of the new council leadership is to ensure there is greater cross-party involvement in the decision making process and that decisions are taken in a more open and transparent way. To support this, the new leadership want policy and scrutiny committees to have the opportunity to debate and make recommendations on matters requiring an executive decision, before a final decision is taken.
3. On 30 July 2015 the Executive will be considering a report proposing options to be consulted on for implementing this new system. The proposals will allow Policy and Scrutiny Committees to see reports prior to executive decisions being made. Whilst it has always been possible for a Scrutiny Committee to identify issues which in due course will require an Executive decision, and for the Committee to review those issues, what these new proposals seek to achieve is to give Scrutiny and Policy Committees the opportunity to see a report in its final (or close to final) form and to debate recommendations on the report prior to the final decision being made.
4. In light of the proposals outlined above, the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement has requested that this Scrutiny Committee give its views on the proposals outlined in the attached report, prior to consideration of the report at the Executive on 30 July 2015.

### **Recommendations**

5. The scrutiny committee is particularly asked to comment on:

- The new approach to community engagement
- The allocation of increased funding to these ward committees
- The production of ward fact sheets in order to support ward councillors and explain the process to residents
- The production of a range of local service choices giving options for how the ward committee funding pot can support local communities
- The options set out in paragraph 8 of the attached report for the constitution of ward committees

Reason: In order to support the Council's commitment to working with local communities and devolving power and budgets to residents.

### Contact Details

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<b>Report Approved</b> ✓	<b>Date:</b> 16 July, 2015	
<b>Specialist Implications Officer:</b> N/A		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>	✓

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** None

**Annexes:**

**Annex A** *Listening to Residents: Ward Committees:* Report to the Executive  
30 July, 2015