

Report requested on Haringey Council's Neighbourhood Management involvement in the Local Area Partnerships established under the Community Economic Development (CED) Programme.

In Haringey the following neighbourhoods are included in the CED:

- Northumberland Park Area,
- the Seven Sisters Area,
- Noel Park Area and
- Broad Water Farm

These neighbourhoods have particularly high indices of deprivation.

Northumberland Park Area, the Seven Sisters Area, Noel Park Area and Broad Water Farm are now taking steps to more directly provide support to the embryonic Local Area Partnerships in those areas. This report sets out the present situation at the beginning of the 07-08 Financial Year and the perspectives for activity.

Context

The Northumberland Park Local Area Partnership has been established for some time and has met twice in the last year. The Neighbourhood Manager has requested past papers and reports in order to familiarise herself with progress to date and has suggested to the voluntary organisation that has taken the lead so far that a meeting of the Local Area Partnership should now be convened in the very near future, in order to review progress and set priorities for the coming year. The Neighbourhood Manager is sensitive to the fact that the work carried out to date has been led by the voluntary sector and therefore does not wish to take charge or give the impression of taking over the Partnership. However, if it is to be effective, it will be important that meetings are held regularly, with minutes kept and reports compiled to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of the initiatives taken.

In Seven Sisters area any support in the establishment of a Local Area Partnership has to date been carried out by the officer with the economic development brief in New Deal for Communities (NDC) team. The Neighbourhood Manager has been advised that the Partnership last met in December 2006 and a further meeting will be held in the near future. The Neighbourhood Manager for this area has requested papers from the last and any previous meetings in order to assess the likely level of support required and has also offered to assist in convening the next meeting. The objective is to endeavour to hold a Local Area Partnership meeting early May.

In Noel Park a Local Area Partnership does not exist at present, although during the first Community Economic Development round there were regular reports to the Noel Park Residents' Steering Group. The Neighbourhood Manager for Wood Green Neighbourhood has met with Urban Futures to ascertain the level of work required in setting up a Local Area Partnership and she will now start the process of setting up a Partnership in Noel Park, covering the area from Turnpike Lane to Wood Green Station. The Partnership will be made up of: local resident groups, community organisations, business enterprises, Ward Councillors etc and will initially be supported and monitored by the Wood Green Neighbourhood office. The main function of the Group would be:

- To identify key areas of need and local issues
- To have a say in determining strategic solutions, using invaluable on the ground knowledge to inform the Partnership of any changes and their impact, in order to develop real solutions
- To develop local strategy with regards to building economically sustainable communities
- To have a say in the current CED initiative
- To agree project activities to address the above needs and visions
- Contribute a local perspective to the Upper Lee Valley Local Economic Partnership (LEP).

Broad Water Farm has a long established Local Economic Partnership for the area. This is lead by voluntary sector groups and the intention is that the Community Centre participates in the expositing structures reporting on the Community Economic Development work now underway at the Community Centre.

Future Development

Neighbourhood Management consider that whilst the Local Area Partnership's primary purpose is to look at the on-going progress of the initiatives currently funded; this in itself is perhaps too narrow. By actively seeking input from community organisations not currently engaged with the Partnership, it should be possible to identify and develop further areas for future investment. For instance, in the Tottenham & Seven Sisters Neighbourhood staff have been working on issues identified around Industrial estates owned both by the Council and by the private sector. In addition there is a small block of new managed work space business units currently under construction with funding that Neighbourhood Management secured from the European Regional Development Fund and the London Development Authority. By using the relationship that the Neighbourhood Manager has developed with the Chamber of Commerce there may be the potential for identifying new start-ups in the area and assessing what assistance could be provided to match them with work space.

Neighbourhood Managers in the priority Neighbourhoods continue to build excellent contacts with Haringey's new communities. These developing working relations also offer real potential. The leading figures of the Somali community in particular, concerned that their young people are drifting into criminality, are now actively promoting the benefits of education and training. A Local Area Partnership offers a real chance to develop the existing dialogue with this and other new communities in order to join up training programmes and potential beneficiaries.

The Local Area Partnerships could provide an ideal vehicle for assisting recently arrived migrant workers in a neighbourhood to gain access to advice on citizen's rights and to ensure that the new arrivals are able to access any training places not being filled in the area. Although the recent arrival of economic migrants from the EU accession countries in eastern Europe do not figure in unemployment statistics yet, and will not until they have worked in the UK for over one year, there is reasonable evidence that if many Polish people continue to drift into the grey economy and unregulated work, this may have the effect of dragging down wages and standards in legitimate work. Local and voluntary sector initiatives are now starting engage migrant workers to ensure that eastern European migrants are aware of their rights, realise the relative simplicity of registering with the National Insurance system and understand the benefits of only accepting work where they are protected by minimum wage and health & safety legislation.

Looking Ahead

Neighbourhood Management is currently reviewing how it may best work with its voluntary sector partners to co-ordinate effort and to draw on best practice of the various Local Area forums in Haringey. A further function of this review is to ensure that CED funding for employment support work is delivered in a consistent manner through our Neighbourhood teams in the eligible areas. This work is new and obviously time-limited by the funding. Essentially, the projects in all the areas provide a level of one-to-one support and advice with job search, access to the internet and other media where jobs and training are advertised, help with writing CVs and regular 'jobs fairs' usually focused on particular industries or occupations. However, the importance of this work is to ensure a consistent approach both in terms of delivery and in relation to governance and community engagement for the Local Area Partnerships.

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