

Appendix E

Role description for Area Liaison Officers (ALO)

Introduction

Each of the seven areas has a designated chief officer to assist the Area Assembly Chair and the Ward Members in carrying out their responsibilities. The role is to add value to, rather than cut across, routine Member/officer relationships and has four key responsibilities:

- Assisting with Area Assemblies
- Being the budget holder for Making the Difference
- Being a signpost for strategic partners
- Being an escalation point in turning feedback into action.

Area Assemblies

Area Assemblies are key, public facing meetings of the Council. The role of the ALO is to provide advice to the Area Assembly Chair to assist in:

- Agenda planning
- Management of the meeting
- Answering questions about the Council and its activities
- Follow through on issues.

This will require a meeting with the chair of the assembly, the Neighbourhood Manager and the area liaison officer prior to each Assembly meeting.

As formal meetings of the Council, the Council's rules and procedures need to be followed. The ALO will advise Members on these. On rare occasions the ALO may need to step in to assist with or intervene in the management of the meeting.

Budget holder for Making the Difference

The arrangements for the administration of the Making the Difference programme was agreed by the Executive on 16 April 2004, where it was agreed that:

"Budgets are held at officer level by 'Area Champions' designated from the Chief Executive's Management Board, to be spent with the concurrence of the relevant Area Assembly Chair, based upon the advice of the relevant assembly."

Clear guidance is available and a standard process has been set up. The role of the ALO is to support members through the process and to authorise the final programme.

Signposting

Partners and agencies can find their way into the Council confusing. The role of the ALO is to assist in the right connections being made.

Escalation point and turning feedback into action

The purpose of Area Assemblies and community involvement is to generate constructive and useful feedback on Council services. The feedback and issues so generated are normally dealt with using line management arrangements but occasionally the assistance of the ALO, which could be at the request of either the Neighbourhood Manager or the Area Assembly chair, may help to unblock an issue or generate a different way of thinking about the problem.

