

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 07/10/03	MEETING NAME Executive
Report title:		Best Value Review of Community Development and Involvement	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Borough-wide	
From:		Director of Regeneration Best Value Manager	

RECOMMENDATION (S)

1. The Executive agree:
 - a) The principles set out in paragraph 8 as underpinning the corporate approach to Community Development and Involvement.
 - b) The overall priority to **Promote Community Involvement and Cohesion** which can be achieved by co-ordinated activities aimed at:
 - Promoting local governance
 - Enabling the delivery of better services
 - Promoting involvement and encouraging communities to thrive and develop.
 - c) The Community Involvement and Development Unit will co-ordinate the development and implementation of strategy across the Council and with partners. This will include the introduction of a rigorous performance management regime across all activities and initiatives. This will involve:
 - Setting performance standards and targets for Community Development and Involvement activities.
 - Monitoring and evaluating performance of these activities.
 - Developing a better understanding of how resources are being used on activities and initiatives, in order to be clear about what is being delivered and whether this provides value for money.
 - Creating more active learning from best practice elsewhere and across the council.
 - d) The details of the actions proposed to achieve b) and c) above as set below in paragraph 12.
 - e) The resource implications of the review will be considered in the 2004/05-budget process. Other departments are asked to review their spending on this area, in the light of this review, in this budget round.
 - f) To receive a report in 6 months with a more robust analysis of how current resources are used, based on the performance management systems that are an outcome of the review, together with an assessment of future resource requirements and the possible sources of these.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The review was centered on two fundamental issues. First, does the Council (and its partners) have a clear sense of what is expected in terms of community

involvement and development activities and are these organised to achieve these expectations. Second, to establish the extent of resources used by the Council on community involvement and development and to assess how cost effectively these resources are used. This report provides a summary of the outcome of the review.

3. The review took into account the Council's Community Strategy. One of the five priorities of the strategy is to improve community involvement and cohesion. This is clearly reflected in the outcome of the review, which is centred on the practical means to achieve this objective.
4. The review also took into account significant changes in the national and local context. In particular the government has launched the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, in which Southwark has a major involvement. In relation to the emerging agenda on health, activities of Southwark's Primary Care Trust will also be a priority. The Trust is introducing a Public Involvement Strategy, giving the community and the Council greater involvement in the scrutiny of its services. The Primary Care Trust has indicated a commitment to building links with Community Councils and other existing mechanisms for community engagement. This will be a major area of collaboration for the future.
5. During the course of the review the council set up Community Councils. As an early output of the review some 40% of the resources of the Community Involvement and Development Unit were directed to support the Community Councils.
6. Running in parallel with this review, Southwark Housing carried out a review of the arrangements for resident involvement and participation as part of their review of the Housing Management service. A draft vision has been produced which covers proposals for the future support for resident involvement and this is currently in the process of being discussed with resident groups. It is anticipated that there will be a report to Executive on the review in January 2004. The key issue arising from the support for resident involvement part of the review is to develop a new approach by the Council to increase Resident Participation. This will include a more proactive and innovative approach by the Council at local level, to support resident involvement and seek out ways to engage communities.
7. In relation to Community Councils, the Council has no plans to extend the remit of Community Councils to include matters relating to housing management. Consideration may be given to general housing issues as part of the review and phase 2 of the implementation of Community Councils. However it is not envisaged that the Council's housing management function will become part of the responsibility of Community Councils. Implementation of the Housing Management Review will include ongoing development of the links between the formal housing participation structure and Community Councils.
8. Apart from the above issues, this review has established that Community Development and Involvement activities make a significant contribution to the Council in delivering the Community Strategy. For example:
 - Equality and diversity. Working to mainstream equalities into our business planning processes. Facilitating access by marginalised groups into Council activities and services.
 - Community involvement and cohesion. Southwark is one of the two London authorities that is a Community Cohesion Pathfinder.
 - Investing in Young People. Working with young people and youth workers on a

- wide range of leisure, educational and community building initiatives. Seeking ways to engage young people in Area Governance.
- Tackling poverty. Through establishing good working links with disadvantaged communities and opening access to the Council.
 - Cutting crime and fear of crime. Through establishing practical working relations between local people, the police and colleagues in the council
 - Improving the health of the borough. Through joint working with Primary Care Trust public involvement officers and local health practitioners.
9. A key problem this review has highlighted is the lack of detailed performance information that we could use to compare our performance with other local authorities over time. To address we have worked with the Community Development Foundation, the Active Community Unit of the Home Office, and the Audit commission to set up a National Benchmarking Forum for Community Development and Involvement. As well as sharing information that was available this initiative pioneered the development of National Performance Indicators for Community Development and Involvement. A number of local authorities across the UK are piloting these indicators during 2003/04.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

10. **Key Principles for Community Development and Involvement.** In order to provide a clear direction for all Community Development and Involvement activities the Executive is asked to agree the following principles.
- Community Development and Involvement work, led by Community Involvement and Development Unit, is a fundamental component in enabling the council to deliver services in line with the values and priorities of the Community Strategy.
 - Community Development and Involvement is about helping people at a local level to make a difference to their lives. This involves listening to what communities tell us, gaining trust, celebrating diversity and supporting communities to improve the quality and circumstances of life.
 - Performance Management, Equalities, and Customer Focus will be central to how the Council manages and deliver Community Development and Involvement programme.
11. **Review Findings.** The review process involved a fundamental challenge of current practice and thinking, extensive consultation with practitioners and members of the community, and comparison with other local authorities. A summary of the main findings is below:
- a) Challenge Issues**
- Community development and involvement activities have developed in an ad hoc manner.
 - Community development is seen as a specialist function, it is not generally integrated into the work of departments. There is no corporate approach, co-ordination or common standards for community involvement.
 - Southwark does not adequately engage its minority and ethnic communities.
 - There is insufficient learning from best practice, either in the council or from other organisations.
 - There is no consistent approach to monitoring and evaluating activities.
 - There is no co-ordination and integration of funding regimes between the Council and other agencies to enhance services and avoid duplication.

b) Consultation

This element of our work has shown that:

- Approximately one third of people in Southwark feel involved in the community.
- Just under a quarter are involved in a range of community/voluntary organisations and/or activities.
- The involvement of young people is an area that requires more attention.
- There is a strong desire from residents to widen the opportunities for involvement in decision-making in Southwark.
- Most Community development workers believe a flexible approach is required to respond to current community interests.
- Reasons suggested by community development workers for the lack of involvement are:
 - A sense that residents will not be taken seriously; a lack of trust in the council.
 - Dissatisfaction with the Council's poor performance in the delivery of some services leads to scepticism about other issues such as community development.
 - Past experience of involvement has led them to feel let down by the Council.
 - More information about the Council may encourage people to become involved.

c) Compare

The comparative findings here suggest that:

- There are approximately 50 staff working in this area across the Council. The expenditure in 2002/03 was £4.6m.
- Of this approximately £2.2M is awarded as grant aid to community groups, tenant associations, community centres, black and minority ethnic organisations, community safety projects etc.
- About £1M is ring-fenced to specific regeneration projects.
- The table below provides a breakdown of expenditure as at March 2002.

Department	Business Unit	Budget (Salary + expenses)	Grant aid	Other funding (e.g. NRF)	Total expenditure
Housing	Housing Community Development Team	£480,000	£342,000	£0.00	£822,000
Strategic Services	Community Support and Grant Aid	£77,931	£1,444,042	£0.00	£1,521,973
	Community Development and Involvement Unit*	£684,318	£0.00	£266,000	£950,318
Environment and Leisure	Community Support	£65,100	£247,000	£0.00	£312,100
Regeneration	SRB Projects	£761,450	£220,000	£0.00	£981,450
Education	Governor Support and Regeneration	£85,000	£0.00	£0.00	£85,000
Social Services		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTAL		£2,153,799	£2,253,042	£266,000	£4,672,841

* Based in Regeneration Directorate since April 2002.

d) Some conclusions from the comparative findings are:

- Comprehensive and comparable cost information is difficult to obtain since only a small number of authorities have attempted to identify the full cost of Community Development and Involvement.
- The pattern of funding is usually characterised by short-term projects such as those funded through Single Regeneration Budget, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund or New Deal for Communities.
- The figures available, which need to be treated with some caution because of problems of comparability, Southwark's housing stock and neighbourhood renewal commitments are significantly larger than the other authorities, show we do commit significantly more resources to this area than other authorities. For example Newham has 22 staff and Waltham Forest 31 staff working on a similar range of activities. Only Aberdeen, seen as a national leader on community development, compares with 40 staff, but a smaller population. The lack of performance information makes it difficult to judge how effectively we use these extra resources. For this reason the introduction of robust performance management systems is a priority. It is also why we are proposing to return to Members in a year's time with a more robust analysis of how current resources are used and an assessment of future resource requirements and the possible sources of this.
- We could find no evidence of sustained monitoring of outputs and outcomes in any local authorities or other organisations. Thus performance comparison is very difficult.
- There is no agreement on what is or how to measure a 'well-developed' community (a commonly agreed outcome for community development work).
- Some good practice exists in Southwark, e.g. the Consort and Friary Community Development Project, which provides a statistical before and after evaluation of targeted Community Development activities.
- Many authorities are experimenting with a range of mechanisms for involving local people in decision-making through consultative forums, ward committees and area-based management committees for example. However, there are no common measures of performance.

12. Positive features of current good practice in Southwark. The review found many positive features of current practice in the Council. These include:

- Work taking place locally with residents and community groups to tackle local issues of concern such as drug abuse in Camberwell, teenage pregnancy in Aylesbury and youth involvement in West Bermondsey and Nunhead.
- The successful delivery of community engagement and involvement aspect of the Neighbourhood Renewal action plans.
- Work with young people to enable them to participate in developing neighbourhood renewal strategy.
- Successful facilitation of the initial set up and the effective operation of the Community Councils.
- Successful development of a range of Area Based and Community of Interest initiatives funded by the Council and Neighbourhood Renewal Funds e.g. Nunhead Forum, West Bermondsey Community Forum, Southwark Refugees Communities Forum, and Multi-Faith Forum etc.

- Successful facilitation of area based consultation that ensured effective community participation over issues such as planning and licensing at Community Councils.
- Development support to International Women's Week, Black History Month, Disabilities, Anti-Homophobic Violence and Abuse, and Pensioners Forums and supporting Refugee and Traveller communities on their path to autonomy and improved services.

13. Strategic issues informing future service delivery

Based on the review findings we have identified four strategic issues around which community development and involvement will develop in the future. These are:

1. The need to develop a forward strategy to give a clear focus to community development and involvement activities. We propose the strategy will be to **Promote Community Involvement and Cohesion** based on three priorities:
 - Promoting local governance
 - Enabling the delivery of better services
 - Promoting involvement and encouraging communities to thrive and develop.
2. The need to build on current good practice around the above and develop a set of specific programmes to enhance continuous improvement in these areas. In particular there is a need to involve those from hard to reach groups such as people with disabilities and ethnic minority communities, to increase our work with young people, and development new partnerships with agencies such as the Primary Care Trust.
3. The need for a central unit to support community development and involvement. However there is a need to improve the co-ordination of strategy and implementation. To do this the Community Involvement and Development Unit will need to reinforce its strategy setting and co-ordination roles.
4. The need for a rigorous performance management regime across all activities and initiatives. This includes setting performance standards and targets and monitoring and evaluating performance. A proper understanding is required of what resources are utilised on activities and initiatives, what they deliver and whether they provide value for money. We also need to be more active in learning from best practice elsewhere and across the council. The Community Involvement and Development Unit need to be active in developing and promoting this regime.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

14. The actions proposed to achieve the three priority outcomes of the review are set out below. This programme if agreed, will commence in 2004/05. In the tables we show current initiatives that will be carried forward as well as new initiatives. Any resource implications involved in delivering these actions will be dealt with through the Council's budget process.

The 3 priority areas	Issues	Proposed Actions
<p>Promoting Local Governance</p>	<p>A key issue confirmed by this review is that the Council does not adequately engage its community. This is especially the case with ethnic minority groups and young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local people in each Community Council area during the year to encourage their involvement and ensure members are aware of local issues and concerns. • Facilitate workshops at no less than 40 Community Council meetings and ensure local people attend and influence decision-making. • Deliver at least 40 community involvement sessions at Community Councils. • Improve co-ordination between departments and partner organisations around community issues. This will involve a co-ordinated approach to involving residents in producing work plans and measuring performance, and linking these to the work of Community Councils. • Build community capacity through training and development, and in particular enable local people to develop their roles as community champions (Growth bid 04/05). • Explore different mechanisms for practically engaging local people in Area Governance, particularly those who do not attend Community Councils, via the use of local networks, media, and community organisations. • Support local structures that can inform the council of the views of the community, e.g., local forums, T&RA's, RSLs, neighbourhood wardens, etc. • Explore, with a range of agencies, how to improve involvement of young people in area governance. • Work with the leaders of marginalized communities to identify the best ways to involve their communities. Explore different mechanisms to build trust within these communities in the council and other statutory agencies • Explore different mechanisms for supporting councillors at the local level, including, community engagement events and walkabouts. • Explore different ways to engage senior managers with marginalized communities and build trust. Examples include community familiarisation tours, invites to local events, participation in local initiatives such as BHM, IWW, etc, speaking at local joint working parties etc. • Support Chief Officer Team in promoting community involvement at Community Councils.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with the local voluntary sector on involving local people in Area Governance.
<p>Enabling the Delivery of Better Services</p>	<p>The review has confirmed the need to improve community participation in service planning and development processes. We need to target currently under represented groups in this process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise regular programme of outreach and information workshops for at least 100 residents (from hard to reach communities) that will feed into local service development. • Assist at least 70 residents to better understand Council delivery procedures. • Organise and attend meetings of client interest groups and act as a broker between the Council and the groups concerned. Such groups include the Disabilities Forum, Pensioners Forum, Anti Homophobic Network, Refugees Forum and the Travellers Project. • Provide regular information, advice and support to council services on local needs and assist on interaction with targeted communities. • Act as a local conduit between communities, Community Councils, Council departments and other agencies. • Create links between the council and marginalized communities so that they are involved in the development and delivery of services.
<p>Promoting Involvement and Encouraging Communities to Thrive and Develop</p>	<p>The review has established the need for the Council to promote long-term community autonomy and cohesion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme on behalf of Southwark Alliance. • Target 1500 local residents in priority neighbourhoods to get involved in the local Neighbourhood Delivery Partnerships. • Provide training for at least 50 residents in action research skills. • Arrange bi-monthly meetings with partner agencies (i.e. Southwark Alliance, SAVO, Police, PCT) to discuss, integrate and promote issues affecting communities of interest. • Host the Multi-Faith Worker Forum. Support the Forum to develop a map of faith communities in addition to launching a Multi-faith Forum Internet website. • Continue to support forums of Pensioners, Disabled People, Refugees, and other communities of interest to become autonomous. • Build on the successes in achieving NRF funding for Southwark Traveller community. Work with SCEN to build capacity in the Traveller community. Support local agencies to improve their engagement with Travellers. Support the development of Council policy on Travellers. • Through a partnership approach develop Community Forums in priority neighbourhoods. • Produce a 'service map' of the current situation with the Bangladeshi community and use this to develop more appropriate services where necessary.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the Refugee Network and SRCF. Support the development of Council policy on Asylum Seekers and Refugees. • Seek to develop shared understanding between these groups of issues faced by each and commonalities. • Develop areas of common concern between the groups CIDU supports e.g., Disabilities, Pensioners, Refugees, Anti-Homophobic Violence and Abuse Forum, Multi-Faith Forum, International Women’s Week, and BHM. • Set up and support Youth Practitioners Group in Bermondsey. • Develop ‘Tools for Dealing with Racism’ via Pathfinder pilot.
<p>The Role of the Community Involvement and Development Unit</p>	<p>The review has confirmed the need for a central unit to support community development and involvement. The unit will ensure improvements in the co-ordination of strategy and implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a corporate framework for Community Development and Involvement ensuring reflective practice is developed and encouraged across the borough. • Assess the cost effectiveness of the current programme of activities. Report the outcome to the Executive in 12 months. • Introduce the long-term strategy to develop community involvement through the Active Citizenship Programme. • Research best practice and new approaches in other local authorities and communicate this through regular bulletins. • Ensure cross-department and cross-organisation initiatives are properly co-ordinated. Report as required to the Executive and Chief Officer Team on the progress of these initiatives. • Co-ordinate a corporate programme of staff and community training and development. • Work with the Housing Department to feed housing issues into the development of borough wide initiatives. • Provide regular written updates on successful methods for encouraging the involvement of disadvantaged communities.
<p>Performance Management</p>	<p>The review has confirmed the absence of a rigorous performance management regime across all Community Development and Involvement activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce performance standards and measures for all initiatives. Establish the links with the business planning process. • Introduce guidelines for performance monitoring all community development activities ensuring clear objectives and performance targets are included. • Continue to lead and participate on the National Benchmarking Forum and use the platform to share information on best practice in the Council and other organisations. • Pilot and report the outcomes of the Audit Commission’s Local Performance Indicators on Community Development and Involvement.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15. During the course of the review some 40% of the financial resources available to CIDU have been directed to support the introduction and on-going work of the Community Councils.
16. The review has shown that although Southwark undertakes a large community development programme it does employ above average levels of resources. There are no robust performance management systems currently in place to show how cost-effectively these resources are used. Because of this it is proposed officers report back after one year of implementation with an assessment of how cost-effectively resources are used, and any long-term resource implications of the community development programme and the options available to members.
17. The review has identified a number of initiatives that will commence next year. The resource implications of this will be dealt with through the 2004/05 budget process. This in turn will obviously be influenced by member's views of the work priorities for the CIDU. The review has shown significant spending on Community Development and Involvement across Council departments. In the light of this we propose departments should review spending on this area in the next and subsequent budget rounds.

CONSULTATION

18. During this review, we consulted with a range of stakeholders including representatives of voluntary and community organisations, tenants and leaseholders, Council staff, trade union and a representative sample of residents.
19. An earlier draft of this report was also presented to Community Support and Safety Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee on 22 April. The committee's recommendations have been taken into account in writing this report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor & Secretary

Chief Finance Officer

Other Officers

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Best Value Review Files	19 Spa Road	Patrick Enemoh ext 53244

APPENDIX A

Audit Trail

32. This section must be included in all reports.

Lead Officer	Russell Profitt	
Report Author	Mike Carroll, Nuala Conlan and Patrick Enenmoh	
Version	<i>Draft 06</i>	
Dated	<i>10-09-03</i>	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	Yes	No
Chief Finance Officer	Yes	No
<i>List other Officers here</i>		
Executive Member	Yes	Yes/No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services		29-09-03

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND OUTCOMES

Areas of proposed actions	Performance Measures/ Key Outcomes
Promoting Local Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% attendance at Community Councils from BME communities. • Increase in awareness of local people and communities' of what the Council is doing or planning to do. • Local people express confidence in Community Councils. • Local people in targeted neighbourhoods have infrastructure for ongoing involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal. • Improved co-ordination on CDI strategies and methodologies • Increase in satisfaction of local people and communities' of the Council.
Enabling the Delivery of Better Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 30 local residents in each Community Council area participating in developing local services and priorities. • Integrated networks of local people and service providers- better understanding by local people of constraints facing the council • Increased number of community champions and others aware of how services get developed and delivered • Established independent sustainable mechanisms – including forums- for specific communities of interest and geographical communities – e.g., LGBT, Pensioners, and Priority Neighbourhood groups. • Maintenance of an awareness of the communities in Southwark, their issues, aspirations, and needs – finding mechanisms to feed this knowledge into the Corporate Council agenda.
Promoting Involvement and encouraging Communities to Thrive and Develop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>% of adults who feel that can influence decisions affecting their local area.</i> • Changing the council and other authorities views of the work of Faith communities and improving ways for them to interact with each other. • Local communities in priority neighbourhoods have infrastructure for ongoing involvement. • Greater understanding, shared vision and confidence in what is good practice on social cohesion. • Evidence that community cohesion toolkit is being used. • Evidence that learning programmes have increased the confidence of practitioners. • Evidence of practical targeted activities to promote cohesion. • <i>% of local people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.</i>
The Role of the Community Involvement and Development Unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreed outline strategy and guidance for Community Development and Involvement. • A databank of good practice developed and available to Members, COT, departments and other agencies.
Performance Management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report the result of piloting the Audit Commission's Local Performance Indicators.