

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	Corporate Director Place and Assistant Chief Executive
Date of Decision:	6 March 2018
SUBJECT:	DRAFT POLICY FRAMEWORK ON WORKING WITH NEIGHBOURHOODS
Key Decision:	Relevant Forward Plan Ref:
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant O&S Chair:	COUNCILLOR IAN WARD, LEADER
Wards affected:	COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED AIKHLAQ
	NONE

1. Purpose of report:

- 1.1 This report presents a draft policy framework on “Working with Neighbourhoods” for approval. The framework summarises the direction of travel proposed following the report of the Corporate Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee on working with parishes, presented to the City Council in December 2017. The framework broadens out the focus to other sorts of neighbourhood governance and clarifies the contribution that each can make to the city.
- 1.2 At this point, Cabinet are asked to confirm a small number of policy statements within the paper (as recommended by the O&S report) and to agree that a process of consultation and engagement will then take place over the summer months on a range of other issues, with a final paper in September. This report forms part of the overall strategic approach to localism set out in another paper to this meeting of the Cabinet.

2. Decision(s) recommended:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree that the attached policy statement should be the subject of a wide ranging consultation and engagement during the summer months and the Cabinet should receive a final version in September.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agree the following key policy positions within the draft policy statement:
- How the council understands the role of different sorts of local community organisation (paragraphs 16-17)
 - How the framework fits within the City Council’s broad strategic approach to localism in the city (paragraphs 18-19)
 - The basic principles for how the city council will work with neighbourhood organisations (paragraph 27)
 - The City Council’s approach to the issue of creating further parish, town or neighbourhood councils and the outline process for this (paragraph 37-38 and 42)

- The City Council's offer of "Local Devolution Deals" with parish, town or neighbourhood councils and the outline process for agreeing them (paragraph 48-50).

Lead Contact Officer(s):

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3. Consultation:

3.1 Internal

- 3.1.1 The Policy Statement progresses the report of the Corporate Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Partnership Working: BCC and Parish/Town Councils. As part of their work Overview and Scrutiny consulted with New Frankley in Birmingham Parish Council and Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council.

3.2 External

- 3.2.1 None as yet, planned for Summer 2018.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

- 4.1.1 Yes, fits with 'The Importance of Neighbourhoods' cross cutting measure in the Council Vision and Priorities.

4.2 Financial Implications
(Will decisions be carried out within existing finances and Resources?)

- 4.2.1 Potentially, further assessment on this will be carried out following the Summer consultation.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Legal and constitutional implications will be identified as the policy is further developed.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty (see separate guidance note)

- 4.4.1 No adverse effects have been identified at this stage, further assessment to be made as work develops.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 Parish, town or neighbourhood councils provide one important option for local areas to strengthen their governance and deliver local services. At present, Birmingham has just two parish councils, Frankley in Birmingham Parish Council and Sutton Coldfield Town Council. The establishment of the town council in Sutton Coldfield means that Birmingham now has one of the largest parish councils in the country within its boundaries and this has led to a widespread interest in the possibility of further councils across the city, as well as a desire to see the council take on more responsibilities.
- 5.2 The Corporate Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported to Council in December 2017 on the City Council's relationship with its two parish councils and how that model of governance could be extended in the future. It made several recommendations about improving the relationship with the existing councils and creating more councils in the future.
- 5.3 This report implements the first steps in the process that report recommended, setting out some initial policy positions and committing the council to further consultation in the new municipal year, including engagement in every new ward to find out the level of interest in creating new governance arrangements in every area.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 There are of course a range of different models in relation to working with neighbourhoods . Historically a number of models have been used in Birmingham over the years. Arrangements with regards to localisation in other authorities have been researched, findings have helped to shape the policy statement.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

- 7.1 The report is seeking to follow through the recommendations of Scrutiny in December 2017 and open up the possibility of local democratic activity which the City Council can support and will improve the quality of life on the ground. .

Signatures

Date

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader

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Jonathan Tew,
Assistant Chief Executive

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Jacqui Kennedy,
Corporate Director, Place

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List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

Partnership Working: BCC and Parish/Town Councils, a report from Overview and Scrutiny

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

1. Draft Policy Statement (Green Paper) Working with Birmingham's Neighbourhoods
2. Public Sector Equality Duty Statement

Report Version

Dated 23/02/2018

Equality Act 2010

The Executive must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when considering Council reports for decision.

The public sector equality duty is as follows:

- 1 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
 - (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 4 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
 - (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
- 5 The relevant protected characteristics are:
 - (a) Marriage & civil partnership
 - (b) Age
 - (c) Disability
 - (d) Gender reassignment
 - (e) Pregnancy and maternity
 - (f) Race
 - (g) Religion or belief
 - (h) Sex
 - (i) Sexual orientation