

Update on Localisation

Report for Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee: 27th January 2022

Background

Following the dissolution of District Committees, the City Council launched its new approach to locality working in 2018 with 'Localism in Birmingham – a Framework for Future Policy' and in 2019 in a policy paper entitled 'Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods'. Between them these papers set out some core areas of activity

- Setting up Ward Forums
- Each Ward setting out its priorities and actions in a Ward Plan
- Establishing Relationship Managers.
- Maximising resources that can be utilised at the local level
- A new framework for relationships, giving greater clarity on how groups can get more involved in influencing or delivering services
- The ability to draw up neighbourhood charters
- A statement of support to areas wanting to develop neighbourhood/parish councils
- The potential for devo deals with appropriately experienced and constituted groups.

More recently in 2020 an additional report was commissioned entitled 'Birmingham's Collaborative Neighbourhoods'. This was to understand any learning from the community led response to coronavirus and what this could mean for re-setting the civic and community relationship.

All the above has then resulted in a set of actions captured in a Localisation Delivery Plan progress against which is set out in Appendix 1.

Cross Directorate Working on Localisation

1. Localisation Star Chamber

A Localisation Star chamber process has been established to understand the contribution each directorate is making to the localisation agenda and to identify areas where further progress can be made.

The process, which has been led by the Business Improvement and Change Team, has so far involved two rounds of discussions with Directorates – an introductory sessions and then further deep dives into particular areas of work.

2. Local Resources - £2m Celebrating Communities

The £2m Commonwealth Games Celebrating Communities funding stream was launched last year. This used the Ward Priorities and has also utilised a new Ward Participatory Decision-making processes to identify the projects that would be funded. In round one 133 proposals were received and 57 funded and the 374 proposals

received in round two will go through the decision making process in the coming weeks.

3. Local Resources - £2.5m+ Local Community Infrastructure Levy

13 Wards in the city have access to Local Community Infrastructure Levy, a resource that currently totals £2.5m. The process to spend this will be finalised in the coming months and is expected to include small grants, crowdfunding and large commissions of projects all linked to the priorities set out in the ward plan.

4. Local Resources – Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Procurement Services have launched [Match my project](#) an on line portal whereby local community groups can submit projects that need support to complete. Businesses can view and select projects that they want to support as part of their social value offer. Since its launch in July 2021, there are 69 community organisations and 50 businesses registered. There are 18 projects waiting for support, 5 projects currently being delivered and 5 completed projects accounting for 203 voluntary hours of support. Delivery of projects through this portal is a requirement for large contracts awarded by the Council from December '21.

5. Neighbourhood/Parish Councils & Neighbourhood Planning

Officers from policy, elections, planning and NDSU continue to work together on supporting the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Planning agenda.

Cabinet has now approved both the process for establishing a parish/neighbourhood council and the Terms of reference for a Governance Review. The recently established officer working group is continuing to support Balsall Heath, Perry Barr/3Bs and the Jewellery Quarter in their deliberations in this regard. Balsall Heath is the most progressed and held its public launch in November 2021. The formal Corporate Governance Review was approved at Cabinet in December 21 and will start at the end of January 2022.

In October 2021 Perry Barr obtained support for its Neighbourhood Plan following a successful public ballot. In the coming year both the Planning Team and NDSU will be able to offer further support to areas interested in Neighbourhood Plans as the city has been successful in its £50k bid to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to boost engagement and participation in neighbourhood planning.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/areas-selected-for-planning-pilots-for-deprived-communities>

Neighbourhood Development & Support Unit Progress on Localisation

1. Pioneer Places

Ten areas of the city continue as pioneer places and as well as being anchors within their own community are also supporting and challenging the city council on its approach to local working. Work continues with monthly get togethers, information sharing with other examples of good practice, such as Civic Square and Speaking Truth to Power roundtables with Senior Officers and Councillors.

2. Community Capacity Building

Birmingham Community Matters and Locality have been working with NDSU providing support to community groups particularly in regard to the Celebrating Communities Fund. In addition to this further resources have been secured to support community infrastructure and community recovery through the form of small grants.

3. Increased capacity within the NDSU

Recruitment and Selection for additional Community Support and Development Officers took place in the early summer 2021 and 4 new members of staff started in the team in September creating more capacity to focus more proactively on some of the key thematic areas within the Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods Policy document.

Wards Progress on Localisation

Ward Forums & Ward Plans

- Ward Forums are now well established across the city and support is provided to enable four meetings per year plus a further two focussed on the Ward Plan. As of May 2021, the requirement for at least 4 ward forum meetings per municipal year has been added to the Constitution. So far this Municipal year wards have held a total of 110 meetings with twelve wards yet to have held a meeting during this period.
- Ward Plans and Priorities 2018-22 Documents have now been produced by Ward Forums for 59 of the 69 wards. Following further requests for completion by the Cabinet Member for Homes and Communities there are still 10 that are not completed and submitted.

Localisation Delivery Plan

The plan in appendix 1 sets out some of the further activities scheduled over the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year and also provides updates on the activities to date.

Appendix 1 Updated January 2022

Localisation Delivery Plan

'Working Together' : Key actions to progress localisation in 2020/21 and 2021/22

Action Plan resulting from ‘Working Together in Birmingham’s Neighbourhoods’ and ‘Birmingham’s Collaborative Neighbourhoods’

Blue = complete

Green = in progress

Yellow = on track

Red = delayed

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policy	what	Current activity	Next steps	Lead officer	2020/21			2021/22				Status
					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
BCNs	Wider ownership of localisation through cross cutting Board/Programme. /Steering Group To shift BCC role from 'gatekeeper' to 'enabler and facilitator'.	Star chambers seeking to embed this approach across directorates Agreed that Asset Based Community Development Training to be offered internally within the council	Steer to be taken from corporate work on Early Intervention & Prevention and Community Participation	Chris Jordan Karen Cheney								Initial phase complete. Further phases to be considered in line with corporate change programmes
WTiBNs	Pioneer Places	Joint working with the 10 pioneer places commenced. Network of 30 groups within Pioneer Places now supported through Locality. Pioneer places granted £1k to address covid19 issues		Karen Cheney								complete
WTiBNs	Pioneer Places	Key portfolios/services have engaged with Pioneer Places. Director of Inclusive Growth, Chief Executive, Cllr O'Shea, AD for Street Scene, Cllr Thompson and AD for Neighbourhoods have met Pioneer Places in the "Speak Truth to Power" sessions.	Ongoing key people to be invited as identified by the pioneer places	Karen Cheney								
WTiBNs	Pioneer Places	360 review complete Pioneer Places have done short videos of successes and future asks		Karen Cheney								complete
WTiBNs	Pioneer Places		Write report on learning from Pioneer Places - what have they influenced.	Karen Cheney								

policy	what	Current activity	Next steps	Lead officer	2020/21			2021/22				Status
					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
			Decision on whether to add further pioneer places									
WTiBNs BCNs	Capacity building and support for target groups	Further Locality members have been added and enhanced memberships also added.		Karen Cheney								complete
WTiBNs BCNs	Capacity building and support for target groups	Locality have a regular Birmingham and WM meeting attended by Birmingham member organisations- enabling city wide networking and support. Locality's annual conference held in B'ham.		Chris Jordan Karen Cheney								complete
CRRR	Capacity building and support for target groups	BCM and Locality supporting organisations in 30 designated wards on being grant read. Small Grants scheme launched December 2021 focussed on community recovery targeting groups identified in Birmingham's Collaborative Neighbourhoods report (smaller, emerging and Black & Minority Ethnic led groups)		NDSU								complete
WTiBN's	Capacity building and support for target groups	BCM and Locality supporting organisations in 30 designated wards on being grant ready. Anchor organisations have supported connecting communities grants.	Use learning from CWG Connecting Communities assess if grants could be used in future to develop community anchor networks in targeted neighbourhoods – proposals to include support on ward planning	NDSU								
WTiBN's	Capacity building and support for target	Some support for services through community hubs secured through	Community Hubs now being considered as part	Chris Jordan								

policy	what	Current activity	Next steps	Lead officer	2020/21			2021/22				Status
					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	groups	Emergency Assistance Fund.	of the Prevention & Early Intervention workstream.									
Budget	Capacity building and support for target groups	Recruitment of post to ensure improved interaction and support for 12 Business Improvement Districts		Symon Easton								complete
WTiBNs	Ward Plans	All processes for ward plans set out. Templates issued, guidance given etc Requirement to produce a Ward Plan now included in Constitution (May 2021) CWG celebrating Communities fund and Local CIL both require a Ward Plan		NDSU								complete
	Ward Plans	59 of the 69 ward plans have been completed or refreshed. Officer in NDSU providing support for wards to progress their ward plans. Cabinet member wrote to wards giving deadline for completion of 31 October 2021	Monitoring Officer reviewing progress and the requirements of the constitution	Wards								
	Ward Plans	Cabinet Member has agreed a set of priorities for member development/training regarding localisation.		Karen Cheney								Timescale post May 2022
	Ward Plans	£100k available for cabinet to invest in projects from ward plans	Write mechanism to enable spend and approve projects Financial controls placed	Karen Cheney								

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					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		Communities fund. 57 projects funded in Round 1. 374 proposals now being considered as part of Round 2										
WTiBNs	Develop the role of Relationship Managers, adding more services where possible.	Review taken place of Relationship Managers – now re-named service contacts, link with police re-established	Report to CLT	Chris Jordan								
WTiBN's	Devo Deal		Publish Devo Deal prospectus	Tony Smith								Date tbc
WTiBN's	Devo Deal	10 projects/services were identified for review by RSCTC. Projects such as Walmley Memorial, Vesey Gardens, Town Rangers, Allotments are all progressing individually and when all concluded will be wrapped up in a Devo Deal.	Continue to progress other projects with RSCTC	Chris Jordan								
CRRR	Locally focussed procurement	Initial scoping paper considering 5 principles for 'keep it local' has been produced. Workshop took place cross directorate on 17 th March. Re -started conversations between Locality and new Director for procurement	Review and if appropriate adopt the 'Keep it local' campaign. Endorsing the Keep it Local principles at cabinet.	Haydn Brown & NDSU								

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WTiBNs	Local data	A ward data working group has been set up. Officers and ward councillors are represented.	Review data sources for neighbourhoods to support engagement, ward planning and performance monitoring - document went to Cabinet Member and Pioneer places.	Varun Sitaram Naomi Todd NDSU								
Budget	Recognising the positive work of the VCSE sector	NDSU producing monthly information for Corporate Communications to promote locality working by both theme and geography	Annual Localisation Week to be considered in 2022	NDSU communications								