



Report to: Cabinet

Date: 14th May 2009

Subject: PACTs

Report of: Select Committee 1

Contact officer: Rachel Robinson 01942 827473

Purpose / summary: To report the findings of Select Committee 1 investigations into PACTs and propose a set of recommendations for improvement.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:

Recommendation / decision: That Cabinet support the recommendations.

This report does not involve a key decision. The decision will be made as a result of this report and will be published within 48 hours

Risks / Implications:

Financial:
Staffing:
Policy:
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?
Wards affected:

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes / No ***

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes / No ***

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **Yes / No ***

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x
Discussion leading to a decision	x
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	x
Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
	6 th April 2009	14 th May 2009	

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer Sue Johnson

Date 1st May 2009

Background:

Following the completion of the Select Committee review of the Township programme that was reported to Overview and Scrutiny in June 2008, Select Committee 1 was tasked with completing a review of the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) process.

The review commenced as the PACT process was in the early stages of implementation, therefore the review ultimately sought to assess the initial impact of PACT upon the local community and to facilitate a greater understanding of the PACT process.

Proposals:

There are six core recommendations made within the report.

Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option:**Conclusions:**

Select Committee 1

PACTs

(Partners and Communities Together)

Chair: Councillor J.S. Birch

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last 2 years, Wigan Council and a number of partners, including Greater Manchester Police and Wigan and Leigh Housing, have been piloting and implementing an approach to neighbourhood engagement called the PACT (Partners and Communities Together). PACT is a continuous process for integrating and joining up community engagement and service delivery on the ground, so that partners and communities can work together to identify and respond to the issues that matter most to local people.

The Select Committee was asked to explore this topic, following the completion of the Overview and Scrutiny review of the Township programme, which highlighted the importance of an effective link between the PACT process and Township Forums.

This review commenced as the roll out of the PACT process across the borough was in its early stages and awareness of the approach amongst members of the community and local councillors was in its infancy. The key aims of the review were therefore to assess the initial impact of the PACT on the local community and to facilitate a greater understanding of the PACT process amongst elected members.

Research centred upon interviews with key stakeholders engaged in the process to date, along with a review of the approaches to neighbourhood engagement that have been adopted by other authorities.

The completion of the review highlighted that the PACT process is already having a significant impact upon the quality of life of residents living within the borough, the opportunities that are available to the local community to influence decision making and upon the effectiveness of service delivery.

Whilst the review has uncovered many positive messages, as in any new development areas for improvement will be evident, therefore the following 6 recommendations seek to strengthen and add value to the PACT process:

1. More emphasis needs to be placed upon **publicity and communication with the public**. As the PACT process is rolled out across the borough, it is facilitating a range of success stories and achievements, but these need to be published to facilitate public confidence in local services and an awareness of the opportunities available to local residents to influence decision making.
2. To date there has been limited **evaluation of the impact of the action plans that are developed through the PACT process** and we strongly recommend that this is addressed. In keeping with the ethos of the PACT process, this could be developed utilising community engagement approaches. A closely aligned performance management framework would also strengthen the approach. This is particularly important as the Comprehensive Area Assessment insists that we demonstrate that we have effectively engaged our diverse local communities in every aspect of the work that we do.

3. In line with the Comprehensive Area Assessment, but also drawing upon the experience of those agencies that are already engaged in the PACT process, it is recommended that the **remit of the approach is widened** from the current focus upon the cleaner, safer, greener agenda.
4. The review has indicated that PACT is not presently building community capacity, which is vital for encouraging sustainability. The Select Committee recommends that approaches adopted by other authorities to **facilitate community capacity**, such as Participative Appraisal and resident-led boards, are explored. Consideration also needs to be given to improving the co-ordination of community development activity across the borough.
5. The success of the PACT process is dependent upon service providers being flexible in their response to areas of need. It is proposed that the use of **pooled budgets/ joint commissioning** is investigated, as a mechanism to resource service delivery in localities. A review of long-standing contracts could also assist with enabling services to respond flexibly to changing circumstances.
6. The Select Committee would finally like to reassert a recommendation made through the recent Select Committee review of the Townships. The proposal stated that 'officer and elected member induction should include **awareness of our neighbourhood approach** with guidance on roles, responsibilities and working effectively with communities. Training and development should also be available for our communities in the key role that they have to play'.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 2 years, Wigan Council and a number of partners, including Greater Manchester Police and Wigan and Leigh Housing, have been piloting and implementing an approach to neighbourhood engagement called the PACT (Partners and Communities Together). PACT is a continuous process for integrating and joining up community engagement and service delivery on the ground, so that partners and communities can work together to identify and respond to the issues that matter most to local people.

The Select Committee was asked to explore this topic, following the completion of the Overview and Scrutiny review of the Township programme, which highlighted the importance of an effective link between the PACT process and Township Forums.

As this review commenced, the roll out of the PACT process across the borough was just commencing and awareness of the approach amongst members of the community and local councillors was in its early stages. Members of the Select Committee felt that the terms of reference for the review should therefore both respect and complement this stage of the development.

The overarching purpose of the review was to understand and assess the impact of the PACT process on the local community. However, the review ultimately sought to achieve the following outcomes:

- A greater understanding of the PACT process amongst partner agencies and elected members.
- An improved approach to PACT, which meets the needs of local communities.
- An improved understanding of approaches to building community capacity.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the PACT pilots.
2. To consider the role of scrutiny within the PACT process.
3. To consider how individual PACTs can connect with and inform the work of the Township Forums. This should include identifying how the priority areas for action identified through the PACT process can influence Wigan Council's planning and decision making processes.
4. To examine how best practice identified through the PACT process can be shared.
5. To assess and review the approaches that partner agencies and services within the authority are taking, to enable them to respond flexibly to areas of need identified through the PACT process, identifying the benefits to all.

6. To evaluate and propose approaches to community engagement / consultation that could be adopted as part of the PACT framework.
7. To investigate how capacity within communities is being developed through the PACT process and sustained.

METHODOLOGY

In carrying out the review of the PACT process, the Select Committee was supported by colleagues from a range of agencies and departments within Wigan Council, including Environmental Services, Chief Executive's Services, Children and Young People's Service, Greater Manchester Police, Wigan and Leigh Housing and Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust. The Select Committee are especially grateful to Julie Ridgway, Ian Harrison and members of the Community Engagement Team, for their help with this investigation.

As noted above, the PACT process was in the early stages of implementation when this review commenced, therefore the terms of reference sought to add value to this new approach.

The review itself had 5 key stages:

1. **Awareness Raising** – Providing members of the Select Committee with an opportunity to understand the principles behind and intentions of the PACT process.
2. **Policy Review** – Identifying the key legislation driving the community empowerment agenda.
3. **Interviews with key stakeholders** – Investigating their involvement in the process and experience to date.
4. **Research** – Examining the approaches to community engagement adopted by other authorities.
5. **Analysis** – Using the information and learning gained during the course of the review to develop a set of realistic recommendations.

To support the progress of the review, members of the Select Committee visited Knowsley Council and Lancashire County Council.

A Members Seminar was also convened, to provide all elected members with the opportunity to learn more about the PACT process, their role in its implementation and the impact it is having within communities.

BACKGROUND

In undertaking this review, members of the Select Committee sought to understand the key legislation and policy documentation driving the direction from central government towards community involvement.

In particular they recognised the statutory duty to engage local communities that will come into force in April 2009 (on the back of the *Strong and Prosperous Communities* White Paper in 2006), and some of the key challenges that the new Comprehensive Area Assessment is likely to present, such as the need to demonstrate the involvement of communities and use of community intelligence in the setting of local priorities.

They understood the Government's increasing interest in community empowerment and the reinvigoration of participatory democracy and active citizenship, demonstrated within the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act of 2007 and the *Communities in Control* White Paper published in July 2008.

The group noted the focus upon neighbourhood policing and the requirement for all police forces to have in place dedicated neighbourhood policing teams. Specific reviews were considered, such as the 2008 Casey Review, *Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime*, which included a range of recommendations on neighbourhood policing and a proposal to standardise the Police and Communities Together process.

The group reflected on the importance of community engagement and its vital role in the successful delivery of services at a neighbourhood level, but also the impact that working with communities to resolve local issues has upon community wellbeing and the public's perception of local services.

In addition to national policy direction, members of the Select Committee were also aware of local developments, particularly the review of Democratic Services within Wigan and the appraisal of the organisation of Township Forums. They also noted the development of Routes to Involvement, the new policy framework for community involvement, engagement, participation and consultation.

focus groups, street surgeries, door knocking and open meetings. Elected members and partner agencies are engaged in the process.

Community engagement is delivered in 2 super output areas¹ per ward, per quarter. At least 100 individuals in each ward are consulted every quarter. After one year of full roll out, the community engagement will have been delivered in the majority of the Borough.

Stage 3 – Priority Setting

When the engagement stage is complete, the information gained is drawn together with the ward profile to decide the priorities for action. A local ward action plan is developed and then signed-off by elected members.

Stage 4 – Local Tasking and Co-ordination

The whole approach to partnership delivery at a local level is underpinned by a collective problem solving approach to issues. Delivery of the tasks within the action plan is the responsibility of front line staff working in the area, co-ordinated by the PACT Co-ordinator and overseen by the Area Manager Group.

Stage 5 – Scrutiny

It is important that partners are held to account for the delivery of actions agreed to address community priorities. Elected members are given the opportunity to scrutinise what actions are being delivered by who, where, when, how and why in their ward-by-ward quarterly meetings.

In addition, community safety performance data in line with the Local Area Agreement (LAA) is produced at Ward, Township and Borough level for elected members monthly and for Township Forums quarterly. This will enable robust monitoring the LAA and support the understanding of needs/priorities within each area.

Stage 6 – Feedback

To develop inclusive communities and ensure that all sections of the community feel they have opportunities to influence decision-making, feedback is provided about the action that has been taken in response to the issues raised by them. This has taken the form of a newsletter.

The key aims of the approach are not only to improve the quality of life for local residents, but to improve community confidence and perceptions in relation to crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues and to increase the capacity within communities to deliver some of the solutions to their problems themselves.

¹ Super Output Areas are a set of geographies that were developed after the 2001 Census by the Office for National Statistics. Each part of the country has been broken up into Super Output Areas, which on average contain 1,500 residents.

2. Progress to Date

Roll out

Following the completion of the initial pilot, the PACT process began to be rolled out across the borough from mid-May 2008. The roll out order of PACTs was determined by an analysis of key Community Safety indicators, which provided a rank score for each Ward and Township and a priority order for delivery.

As at the end of February 2009, the PACT process had listened to 3,081 respondents from across Wigan borough and it should be noted that the role out is still continuing.

The table below provides a breakdown of the residents that have been engaged in the process to date (February 2009). Perception indicators are being measured to enable the Community Engagement Team to assess if the PACT process is having an impact upon residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhood and the opportunities provided to them to contribute to local decision making.

Table 1: PACT Respondents

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Male	1304	42.3
Female	1777	57.7
29 and Under	1102	35.8
30-44	788	25.6
45-64	929	30.2
over 65	855	27.8
White British	2856	92.7
Non-White British	218	7.1
Disabled	689	22.4
Unemployed and Available for Work	400	13.0
Satisfied with local area	2500	81.1
Disagree that Police and Council are successfully dealing with Issues	660	21.4
Agree that Police and Council are successfully dealing with Issues	808	26.2

Actions and Impact

The PACT has to date focused upon the cleaner, safer, greener agenda, with the top priorities identified through the community engagement process including teenagers hanging around on the streets, street cleanliness concerns and drug/alcohol misuse.

Partners involved with the delivery of the PACT action plans to tackle these issues include:

- Environmental Services
- Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust
- Wigan and Leigh Housing
- Greater Manchester Police
- Children and Young People’s Service (Youth Offending Team and Youth Service)
- Greater Manchester Probation Service

Engagement with the health sector is currently being developed, with progress including the co-location of health improvement workers with neighbourhood delivery teams. An additional health improvement worker is being provided within the Wigan South Township to tackle alcohol issues.

Issues identified through the PACT process are being tackled and solved in a timely manner. Feedback from elected members, community representatives and local agencies that have been engaged in the process is very positive. Examples of achievements include:

- Police Community Support Officers and Youth Workers are now jointly visiting anti-social behaviour hotspots on a Friday and Saturday night.
- Licensing and the Police are delivering a joint approach to tackle the sale of alcohol to underage youths, including the adults buying alcohol for them.
- Mosquitoes² and surveillance/reporting signage have been installed in problem areas.
- Environmental clear ups have taken place in local ‘grot spots’.
- Communication with local residents has improved. This includes explaining the reporting mechanisms for specific issues and the information that is required to report an issue.
- Work with the community has taken place to deliver ‘Friday night’ activities.
- Environmental activities with local residents (all age groups) have been organised.
- Trading standards enforcement has been brought in at a number of businesses.
- Reparation work with young people that was piloted in Pemberton through the PACT process is now a mainstream service.
- Consultation feedback is now acting as a trigger for the installation of alley gates (this was previously dependent upon crime statistics).
- PACT Co-ordinators are providing Councillors with a direct link into the Council, enabling issues to be resolved in a timely manner.

² The Mosquito is an electronic device, used for solving loitering problems, which emits an annoying sound with a high frequency.

Case Studies

The following case studies detail the impact that the PACT process has had in particular areas of the borough:

Case Study 1: Kipling Park	
Issue	Actions
<p>Large groups of young people converging on Kipling Park every Friday and Saturday night drinking and making noise, particularly around the playground area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional police presence (CBO/PCSO) within the park during weekends. • Additional youth workers were allocated to the area for Friday evenings. • Sports Development and the Parks Activity Officers have implemented activities in the area. • Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust provided keys to the park for a pilot scheme of locking the park. • Young volunteers were successful in applying for funding to provide the Rock Bus to the area during March-April 2008. • Communication was provided to all frontline staff of activities available to young people in Worsley Mesnes. • All off-licences in the surrounding area of the park were visited in response to underage drinking issues raised by the community.

Case Study 2: Closebrook Road, Worsley Hall	
Issue	Actions
<p>Significant levels of anti-social behaviour were reported by residents living on the street, including criminal damage, drunken and disorderly behaviour, and concern at the environmental state of the street.</p>	<p>Multi-agency response to tackle issues, including the issuing of property dispersal orders, involvement of the local children's centre to support families, interventions from the Youth Offending Team, action to tackle animal cruelty and environmental improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of reported incidents is now negligible. • Properties have been secured. • Individuals continue to be monitored and support offered. • A questionnaire completed by local residents a few months after the issues were raised showed that 100% of respondents thought that the street was now a "significantly better" place to live.

Case Study 3: Anti Dog Fouling Campaign, Leigh

Issue	Action
<p>Reduce the perception and experience of dog fouling across the Leigh Township</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information gathered from the Environmental Services Helpline to identify 'hotspot' areas. Specialist surveys completed within 'hotspot' areas to assess the extent of the problem. • Environment Education Team visited schools across Leigh to give a presentation on dog fouling and is ongoing. • Community Development Worker rolled out the Anti-Dog Fouling Campaign in January 2009. • Businesses in the area are assisting with the campaign by displaying a poster informing dog owners that they supply free poop bags. To date over 16,000 poop bags have been distributed through businesses and community groups. • Campaign publicised in varied magazines including Borough Life (Spring Edition) and the CVS newsletter. • Posters displayed in prominent places, such as notice boards, Community Centres and businesses. • Neighbourhood Teams are assisting with the identification of hot spot areas where metal dog fouling signs can be placed on lamp posts and stickers on litter bins. • A dog fouling leaflet is being given to residents when PACT Surveys are carried out. PCSO's are assisting with the distribution of leaflets.

Case Study 4: Church Street, Orrell

Issue	Action
<p>Anti-Social Behaviour / Under-age drinking</p> <p>Group of 100 plus youths congregating around Orrell Water Park, Orrell Station, and Church Street. Many of the trouble makers were coming by train from outside of the borough (West Lancashire). Some parents have been witnessed dropping their children off with alcohol.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional police presence provided within the area during weekends. • Liaison taken place with bordering Council/Police/School Based Police Officers regarding young people known to them. • General Anti-Social Behaviour warning letter sent to all residents in the area, updating them on action taken and providing advice/contact details. • All off-licences in the surrounding area of the park were visited in response to underage drinking issues raised by the community. • Monitoring signs have been put up around the area. • Shop keeper has been advised to update CCTV. • Area is being closely monitored.

Case Study 5: X - Zones

Issue	Action
<p>Anti-Social Behaviour. Groups of young people hanging around McDonald Street/Loch Street drinking alcohol, being verbally abusive to residents, displaying intimidating behaviour, swearing and fighting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint operation undertaken between Greater Manchester Police, Neighbourhood Teams, PACT Co-ordinator, Ward Councillors and Children and Young People's Service (CYPS). • Increased police presence provided (issuing contact cards for young people to be dealt with through the anti-social behaviour / reparation process). • Area cleared of litter. • A number of multi-agency public meetings were arranged by Ward Councillors, which gave residents a chance to speak to officers about the issue of anti-social behaviour. • Youth Workers in the area identified a large number of young people in the area who had nothing to do, but were willing to be engaged. A successful bid was made that lead to the X-Zone project, which is in essence a regular programme of events run on a Friday and Saturday night. Young people engaged in anti-social behaviour are specifically encouraged to participate. • The X-Zone is also being rolled out in Leigh.

Areas for Improvement

Whilst it is clear that the PACT process is having a positive impact, the following areas for improvement have been identified:

- The PACT community engagement process would benefit from more consistent support from partner agencies.
- Publicity with members of the public needs to improve, so that it has an impact upon public perception and experiences.
- Linkage with Routes to Involvement needs to be more robust.
- Community development work across the borough is ad-hoc. A more holistic approach is required, which joins-up resources across agencies.
- Community education could be developed to act as the interface between communities and PACT, for example in relation to environmental issues.
- The PACT process has to date concentrated upon the cleaner, safer, greener agenda, yet there is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that further value would be added if the approach was more holistic, focusing on the needs of the whole family. Such an approach would require engagement from partners, such as Adult Services and mental health service providers, who are yet to embrace PACT.
- Services that are delivered borough-wide and work to an annual, pre-planned cycle (such as street lighting) are currently unable to respond flexibly to areas of need identified through the PACT process. They therefore need to be influenced to hold a percentage of their budget to one side, so that they can initiate unplanned work in response to issues raised through PACTs.

- The capacity of the Community Engagement Team is an issue. It is the intention that each twin Township area (5 in total) will have a Township Manager, PACT Co-ordinator and Community Development Worker. However, there have been delays in the recruitment to the community development posts, due to budget issues stemming from the current economic climate.

3. Connection with the Township Forums

A key objective within this review was to assess the role of scrutiny within the PACT process and to consider how PACTs could connect with and inform the work of the Township Forums.

The completion of this study was taking place at the same time as the Democratic Services Review and is closely linked to the review of the Township Programme. Both of these work streams encompass a reflection on the PACT process and how it supports the Council and its partners to further develop their community leadership role. To this end, the Select Committee received a presentation from the Service Director, Business Transformation on current thinking and progress of the Township Programme review.

The Select Committee welcomed the proposals that have been put forward to date regarding how Township Forums may operate in the future. That Township Forums would have a key role to play in providing leadership and strategic direction for the key issues facing areas, including co-ordination of local plans; the role that Township Forums would have in scrutinising and holding to account partners in the completion of PACT action plans; the function of Townships as a forum to which higher level issues can be raised; and, the recommendation that the 2010/11 service planning and budget setting cycle will draw upon the intelligence gained from the PACT process. However, the group was keen to stress the importance of the development of minimum standards and a balanced membership across each Township Forum.

The group noted that the new Building Stronger Communities Partnership structure was now in place, of which the PACT process is a part, providing another avenue for governance and accountability.

The group however, recognised the internal structures that have already been put in place to support the governance and co-ordination of the PACT process. For example, the creation of multi-agency Area Manager Groups (convened by Township Managers) in each of the 5 localities, into which the PACT Officer Groups feed and the importance of the Ward-by-Ward meetings with elected members that are held on a quarterly basis.

4. Interviews with Agencies Involved in the PACT Process

A key element of the Select Committee review focused upon interviewing agencies who had been involved in the PACT process to date, understanding their involvement, identifying what worked well and unpicking how they felt that the process should progress.

The services invited to take part in these interviews included:

- Greater Manchester Police
- Wigan and Leigh Housing
- Children and Young People's Service (Youth Service)
- Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust
- Environmental Services (Cleaner, Greener Neighbourhoods)

Representatives from each of these services were asked a standard set of questions. An overview of the key messages and common threads is included in Appendix A.

The overwhelming feedback from these interviews illustrates the positive impact that the PACT process is already having upon local communities. Local residents have been given a voice, enabling services to be more responsive to the needs of communities. Young people are being given more opportunities, which are improving their outcomes and enabling a good rapport to be built up between councillors, youth workers and young people.

PACT is facilitating new approaches to partnership working and improving service delivery. Communication lines have improved, enabling issues to be solved quickly through good inter-agency co-operation. As one service noted, "PACT has helped identify our role, others roles and where we all fit in", encouraging services to break out of silo working and providing clear lines of responsibility regarding specific issues that had previously been left unresolved.

There were however, a number of areas for improvement:

- there was strong feeling that communication with the public needs to improve, particularly positive publicity and news stories;
- the short-term nature of the PACT process was a concern, as it can lead to communities feeling abandoned; sustainability is a key issue, particularly as the approach is rolled out across the borough;
- the PACT process has to date not built community capacity. Volunteers need to be the legacy and are the key to sustainability;
- all respondents felt that the cleaner, safer, greener focus needs to be broadened; and,
- the role of commissioning/pooled budgets needs to be explored, to assist borough-wide services to respond flexibly to areas of need.

5. Approaches to community engagement / neighbourhood service delivery adopted by other local authorities

In completing this review, members of the Select Committee were keen to find out about the approaches that other local authorities were taking with regards to neighbourhood engagement, with a view to identifying if there was any learning that could be applied to the PACT process.

The following section summarises the approaches of a number of authorities, with a more detailed overview provided at Appendix A.

Authority	Approach
<p>South Tyneside</p>	<p>In collaboration with Northumbria University, South Tyneside has developed a community-based approach to consultation called Participatory Appraisal. It is an innovative programme of neighbourhood appraisal and action plan development, which prioritises the views and attitudes of local people. The developing approach and 'model' is designed to enable local people to identify solutions to issues facing the community. It provides a mechanism for them to establish positive relationships with key service providers and allows them to remain actively involved in the planning, delivery and monitoring of these solutions.</p> <p>Participatory Appraisal has proved to be a powerful methodology for engaging residents and building community capacity. Residents from the pilot areas are now helping the Council to encourage residents to volunteer in other areas. A Neighbourhood Network has been created to enable residents to share their experiences across communities.</p> <p>A formal evaluation of the approach is currently underway. Initial results show that participatory appraisal can make a significant difference simply by bringing together partners and facilitating an increased understanding of the different needs across localities.</p> <p>The approach demands a high degree of intensive support, which can lead to capacity and resource issues (it takes a full year to implement within a neighbourhood). However, since the roll out of the participatory appraisal approach, the perception of South Tyneside Council has improved (statistics detailed in Appendix A).</p>
<p>Cumbria County Council</p>	<p>Cumbria County Council has also embraced Participatory Appraisal as a mechanism for engaging with neighbourhoods, although the approach has been utilised on a more ad-hoc basis than within South Tyneside. The authority acknowledges that the model is expensive and time consuming, but views it as a useful mechanism to engage with hard to reach parts of the community, develop partnership working and facilitate an increase in community capacity. For example, enabling volunteers to obtain nationally accredited qualifications and gain employment in the community development sector.</p>

Authority	Approach
<p>Barking & Dagenham</p>	<p>Barking and Dagenham has developed a borough-wide neighbourhood management structure, as a means of consultation and engagement between the Council and the community. The entire borough receives some form of neighbourhood management on a Ward by Ward basis. However, a more intensive approach is focused upon the wards of highest need, with a 'lighter touch' approach developed for other areas.</p> <p>The approach incorporates the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an 'influencing' model of neighbourhood management (rather than service devolution), whereby services are influenced to tailor existing services to meet the needs of local services through the identification of local priorities and a joint action plan; • co-location of staff in neighbourhoods where appropriate; • resident engagement through various support methods, including informal neighbourhood partnerships; and, • involvement of Councillors in a central role. <p>Awareness raising with residents, officers and elected members was viewed as a key element of the new approach.</p> <p>Local programmes of community development and capacity building have been developed to ensure activity is co-ordinated and ensure local people have opportunities to find out what work is going on locally, get involved in volunteering and influence decision making.</p>
<p>Lancashire Constabulary</p>	<p>Police and Communities Together (PACT) was introduced to Lancashire in June 2004 by Lancashire Constabulary as a mechanism to formalise community engagement and now forms a key element of the constabulary's approach to neighbourhood policing.</p> <p>Members of the community are invited to attend PACT meetings with their neighbourhood policing team every month. This provides residents with an opportunity to influence how neighbourhoods are policed and monitor performance. Decisions are also informed by neighbourhood-based management information and intelligence gathered during the month through activities such as door knocks, street surgeries, Parish Council meetings and when on patrol. The neighbourhood policing teams report back progress at the next meeting and where necessary work with other agencies to tackle problems through area-based Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) Teams.</p> <p>In the first 13 months of the scheme, over 2,500 PACT meetings took place. A review of the PACT process showed broad support for the approach amongst the police force. However, the review highlighted that much more needed to be done to publicise PACT and improve marketing, as a significant proportion of the local community had never heard of the approach.</p>

Authority	Approach
<p>Knowsley Council</p>	<p>The Knowsley Partnership has developed an approach to locality working that is based upon 6 Area Partnership Boards. Each Area Partnership Board has been engaged in developing Neighbourhood Agreements, which respond to both local need and Local Area Agreement priorities.</p> <p>Central to this approach is the engagement of local communities. 18 Neighbourhood Networks have been established to promote a wider range of consultation. Many are engaged in actively developing their own newsletters and plans. The networks feed directly into partnership engagement teams and the Area Partnership Boards.</p> <p>The resulting Neighbourhood Agreements have a focus that is much broader than the cleaner, safer, greener agenda and encompasses, for example, health and child poverty. Partners have therefore been directly involved in shaping and delivering the plans, and jointly commissioning services where appropriate.</p>
<p>North Tyneside</p>	<p>North Tyneside Council is nationally recognised for its work in community engagement. They are approaching neighbourhood engagement in two distinct ways, via a neighbourhood management pilot and through the development of neighbourhood agreements within each area of the borough.</p> <p>The neighbourhood management pilot incorporates a resident-led Shadow Neighbourhood Management Board that is made up of local people (including young people) and councillors. The group represents the community and has a key role to play in setting spending and operational priorities.</p> <p>The authority is viewing the development of neighbourhood agreements as a partnership between local agencies and the community. They therefore detail not only the standards and actions that agencies will deliver, but also the responsibilities of local communities.</p> <p>The authority is working closely with the voluntary and community sector to utilise their flexibility and expertise in building capacity in those neighbourhoods where community groups are not well established.</p>

The authorities selected for inclusion in this report have been chosen due to the work that they are doing within small neighbourhood groupings. When researching the approaches that other authorities are taking, it is interesting to note that a large number were using Township sized structures to drive forward 'neighbourhood' / locality working.

Key Messages

In reviewing the approaches taken by other local authorities, the following key messages were highlighted:

- strong leadership and commitment, both political and managerial is essential, along with clear lines of accountability;
- strategic top-down and operational bottom-up work should be used to enable progress;
- taking Councillors on the journey is essential;
- build on foundations (for example, existing community groups), this is particularly important for facilitating community capacity;
- one size doesn't fit all!;
- communication and publicity with local residents, elected members and partner agencies is essential;
- a 'whole organisation' approach to change should be taken, with strong emphasis on investing in communications and cultural change;
- change is delivered in stages, rather than everything in one go – be sure to 'bring people with you'; and
- implement 'quick wins' to maintain resident enthusiasm.

Learning

In reviewing the approaches to community engagement taken by other authorities, the Select Committee recommends that further consideration is given to the following areas:

- The Participatory Appraisal methodology employed by South Tyneside and Cumbria is worthy of further exploration. Whilst it is resource intensive, it has been proven to increase community capacity and could perhaps be used as a tool to engage residents in particular areas of the borough.
- The awareness raising techniques utilised by Barking and Dagenham were of interest, particularly the implementation of a learning programme for staff and development workshops for councillors.
- The role of commissioning in the approach to area-based working developed by Knowsley.
- The use of the voluntary and community sector to facilitate community capacity developed by North Tyneside, along with the development of neighbourhood agreements.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the completion of this review and analysis of the findings, the Select Committee is clear that the PACT process is already having a positive impact upon the quality of life of residents living within the borough, the opportunities that are available to influence decision making and upon the effectiveness of service delivery.

The review has highlighted the work that is well embedded to consider how the PACT process connects with and informs the work of the Township Forums. The new arrangements that will be implemented following the completion of the Township Programme review and the structures that are being put in place through the Building Stronger Communities Partnership, will assist with providing both the framework necessary to support governance and scrutiny arrangements, but also the sharing of best practice.

The approaches that partner agencies are taking to enable them to respond flexibly to the areas of need identified through community engagement have been explored, highlighting the progress that has been made by agencies such as the Youth Service, but also the challenges that this presents.

Methods of community engagement adopted by other local authorities have been explored, with areas of best practice highlighted as possible avenues to be adopted by the PACT process.

Research has indicated that the PACT process has yet to make inroads into the development of community capacity, but that there is much potential that can be built upon.

Whilst the review has uncovered many positive messages, as in any new development areas for improvement will be evident, therefore the following 6 recommendations seek to strengthen and add value to the PACT process:

1. More emphasis needs to be placed upon **publicity and communication with the public**. As stated above, as the PACT process is rolled out across the borough, it is facilitating a range of success stories and achievements, but these need to be published to facilitate public confidence in local services and an awareness of the opportunities available to local residents to influence decision making.
2. To date there has been limited **evaluation of the impact of the action plans that are developed through the PACT process** and we strongly recommend that this is addressed. In keeping with the ethos of the PACT process, this could be developed utilising community engagement approaches. A closely aligned performance management framework would also strengthen the approach. This is particularly important as the Comprehensive Area Assessment insists that we demonstrate that we have effectively engaged our diverse local communities in every aspect of the work that we do.
3. In line with the Comprehensive Area Assessment, but also drawing upon the experience of those agencies that are already engaged in the PACT process, it is

4. As noted above, PACT is not presently building community capacity, which is vital for encouraging sustainability. The Select Committee recommends that approaches adopted by other authorities to **facilitate community capacity**, such as Participative Appraisal and resident-led boards are explored. Consideration also needs to be given to improving the co-ordination of community development activity across the borough.
5. The success of the PACT process is dependent upon service providers being flexible in their response to areas of need. It is proposed that the use of **pooled budgets/ joint commissioning** is investigated, as a mechanism to resource service delivery in localities. A review of long-standing contracts could also assist with enabling services to respond flexibly to changing circumstances.
6. The Select Committee would finally like to reassert a recommendation made through the recent Select Committee review of the Townships. The proposal stated that 'officer and elected member induction should include **awareness of our neighbourhood approach** with guidance on roles, responsibilities and working effectively with communities. Training and development should also be available for our communities in the key role that they have to play'.

Appendix A: A Table Summarising the Interviews with Agencies Involved in the PACT Process

Aspects of the PACT process that have worked well	Areas for Improvement / Drawbacks	Has the PACT enabled new approaches to partnership working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication lines across agencies are improving. Good interagency cooperation. • Co-terminous boundaries and co-located teams are assisting joint delivery. • Multi-agency teams / groups are facilitating the sharing of information and problem solving in partnership. Supports effective action planning in relation to specific issues and/or individuals. • PACT enables issues to be solved quickly and for agencies to understand each others goals, targets and approaches. • The process encourages services to break out of silo working and ensure that the right people are around the table. Enables clear lines of responsibility to be agreed regarding specific issues. • PACT ensures that all agencies know what is needed in an area. • Bringing together community groups, locals and young people. Locals felt that they had been consulted. • Enabling a good rapport to be built between councillors, youth workers and young people. • Facilitating a more customer-focused approach to service delivery (eg amongst grounds maintenance staff). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with the public needs to improve. This is vital. • Positive news stories need to be published in the press to facilitate public confidence. • The speed of implementation has been slow, which has possibly led to a loss of impetus. • PACTs are short-term and move on too quickly. Sustainability is a key issue. • The resource allocation is a drawback, so it is difficult to balance priorities. • The Cleaner, Safer, Greener focus needs to be broadened. • The terms of reference / consistency of approach needs to be clearer. • Capacity / resources – can we cope with the scale of PACT as it rolls out across the borough? • The role of commissioning / pooled budgets needs to be explored. • PACT is targeted at responding to low-level issues, rather than high level. A mechanism is therefore needed to escalate such issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACT has enabled priorities to be jointly agreed with communities and agencies. • PACT assists to provide solutions to common problems, along with challenge where it is needed. • There are many specific examples of joint work, such as the Marsh Green Girls' Group; and, the Police and Housing working together to tackle crime in Pemberton. • PACT provides new ways of working and tackling community issues in innovative ways. For example, anti-social behaviour data had never before crossed the radar of grounds maintenance staff. • PACT has 'helped identify our role, others roles and where we all fit in'. • Enabled partners to understand how each service interlinks and highlighted opportunities for joint work / shared priorities.

How is your service responding to areas of need identified through the PACT process?	How should governance and accountability be progressed? Should Townships oversee PACTs?	Has the PACT process built and/or sustained community capacity?	Has the PACT process lead to service improvements and/or added value for money?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services involved in the PACT process are altering their service priorities to respond flexibly to needs identified via the PACT process and are giving more emphasis to neighbourhood delivery. • Whilst agencies are working flexibly in line with PACT action plans, this is creating a tension in some areas, as it goes against business plans and/or requires reconsideration of formal contracts. • It needs to be recognised that in order for some services to respond flexibly to areas of need, resources need to be moved from one area to another. • Some issues are borough-wide and others are local. PACT enables us to address the local issues, so that they don't get lost in the borough-wide concerns. It is challenging, as it is skewing services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "PACTs should be overseen at a local level by local people. Scrutiny should be at the Township level". • Accountability, transparency and influence are crucial for PACTs to be successful. • Accountability to local areas is crucial. Councillors need to be able to ask the difficult questions. • Commissioning is key. • If Townships are to be used in the scrutiny of PACTs, their terms of reference and hierarchy of membership need to change. • Partners need to be committed to deliver, but this will only work if there is no tension between resources and action plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACTs have to date not built community capacity. However, they have given communities a voice. • The PACT 'we did' leaflet, encourages those who don't want to be involved. • There are unrealistic expectations for PACTs as they are not building sustainability. • The Youth Service would have liked to have seen community meetings with young people, councillors and the community sustained, as a rapport had been built up. • Short-term nature of PACT is a real issue, as communities feel abandoned. Volunteers need to be the legacy and are the key to sustainability. • Community development workers may provide an answer to sustainability, but the community needs to understand what sustainability means. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACT is very exciting – it is a lot more efficient and effective, as it looks at issues in a holistic way. • Safer and stronger agenda has improved through greater co-ordination / targeted work. • PACT facilitates preventative work before cases escalate. PACT should have the greatest impact in this area. • However, one of the difficulties that PACT faces is that it is presently tackling both enforcement and prevention, which is expensive. • PACT has given young people more opportunities and has improved their outcomes. • A new approach to commissioning / pooled budgets is required to realise value for money/efficiency savings. • PACT has improved services and added value to resource deployment. We are more responsive to the needs of localities.