

Report to: Cabinet/Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Community Protection Panel

Date: 21 February 2008
3 March 2008
10 March 2008

Subject: Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT)

Report of: Director of Environmental Services

Contact officer: Ian Harrison Telephone: 01942 827915

Purpose/summary: To make revisions to the way we engage and involve communities, to identify joint priorities and respond to them, in particular but not exclusively in relation to Cleaner, Safer, Greener issues.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: To continue with the current methods of engagement and delivery in local neighbourhoods by partners. The PACT process allows a greater degree of involvement by communities and more effective joining up of services and implementation.

Recommendation/decision:

- a) To approve the development and implementation of the PACT process in accordance with the principles of the model described in this report.
- b) To approve the discontinuance of Township Community Safety Groups (TCSG) in areas as and when the PACT process is established in that area.
- c) That the finance currently available to spend against TCSG priorities is made available to support PACT priority actions.

Key Decision: This report involves a key decision within ground 1.

The decision made as a result of this report will

be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 4 March 2008

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks/Implications:

Financial:	The intention is to utilise existing staff to carry out the co-ordination function some of whom are currently funded via NRF. Sustainability will have to be found within existing budgets.
Staffing:	The direct staffing implications relate to the PACT co-ordination role, although it is intended existing staff responsibilities are reshaped to provide this function.
Policy:	
Equal Opportunities - has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Yes
Wards affected:	All

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 full diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

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

A diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	Yes / No *
Has the Director of Finance and IT 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	

Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
		21 February 2008	

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

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 6 February 2008

1. Background

- 1.1 Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) is a continuous process for integrating and joining up our 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.
- 1.2 The Local Government White Paper ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’ outlines the intention to give more power to citizens and communities to have a bigger say in the services they receive and the places where they live. To strengthen the role of local councillors who are at the front line of local delivery and community engagement.
- 1.3 The overarching ambition of the White Paper is to secure better outcomes for citizens in places. It recognises the critical place shaping and leadership role of local government in bringing together and supporting strong partnerships, and the roles of other local commissioners and providers in working in partnership with the local authority and each other to achieve this.
- 1.4 To support this ambition a new joint performance regime, to replace the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and other existing processes, will be introduced. The new regime will be known as the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)
- 1.5 The new arrangements will be focussed on outcomes reflecting the commitment to citizen engagement and community perspectives and experience. Local partnerships will be expected to base their vision strategy and service delivery on robust citizen intelligence and be locally accountable through transparent reporting and information.
- 1.6 The draft statutory guidance supporting the White Paper published in November 2007 contains a clear statement that all councillors have a role in advocating the needs of their communities. This will contribute to community involvement, to the identification of needs and to the monitoring of delivery.
- 1.7 With regard to Community Empowerment will come a new duty, ‘to involve’ from April 2009. Whilst there is recognition that local government has always involved communities in decisions and services, this new duty seeks to ensure people have a greater opportunity to have their say and authorities need to consider information provision, consultation and involvement across all their functions.

2. The Neighbourhood Agenda

- 2.1 Running in parallel with the development of Stronger and Prosperous Communities is the development of the Neighbourhood agenda. The Authority displayed its commitment to delivering improved services to Neighbourhoods through the Environment Review and the subsequent creation of the Neighbourhood Services delivery arm.
- 2.2 On a national basis the commitment to delivering more effective services to Neighbourhoods is encapsulated in the Neighbourhood Policing Programme

which requires all police services to have in place dedicated Neighbourhood policing teams by April 2008.

- 2.3 Whilst these two aspects have the potential to effectively join up the Cleaner, Safer, Greener work streams within the Borough and this report focuses on those issues for practical reasons, the development of the overall Neighbourhood agenda and the emerging legislative requirements are not confined to cleaner, safer, greener issues. In fact seeing these issues in isolation would be detrimental to the overall delivery of what matters to communities.

3. Community Engagement

- 3.1 There have been a number of guidance documents published on the effective delivery of services at a Neighbourhood level and central to all is the issue of Community Engagement. That guidance can be summarised as follows:
- a) Effective community engagement is crucial to the successful delivery of both neighbourhood management and neighbourhood policing and needs to begin at an early stage in the decision making process, to be tailored to local circumstances and continue throughout the delivery cycle.
 - b) Working with communities to identify and resolve problems which have the greatest impact on them brings significant improvements to the sense of community well being and the public's assessment of local services.
 - c) It is important that this kind of community consultation and engagement is co-ordinated between parties at all levels to limit any duplication of effort and resource.

4. Current Arrangements

- 4.1 There are many ways communities are currently consulted, these are a mixture of structured approaches such as the citizens panel and ad hoc arrangements for specific issues. This approach leads to multiple episodes of consultation and engagement with local communities and can lead to consultation fatigue.
- 4.2 With specific regard to the determination of localised or neighbourhood priorities for community safety or crime and disorder priorities there is little in the current arrangements that would provide evidence that services are being delivered on the basis of robust community intelligence.
- 4.3 Township Community Safety Groups (TCSG) comprising elected members and officers established by Cabinet in 2004 are the way such local priorities are determined at the moment. Annually between 3 and 6 priorities are chosen by consensus of the group based on a broad crime and disorder profile of the Township and the views of members of the group.

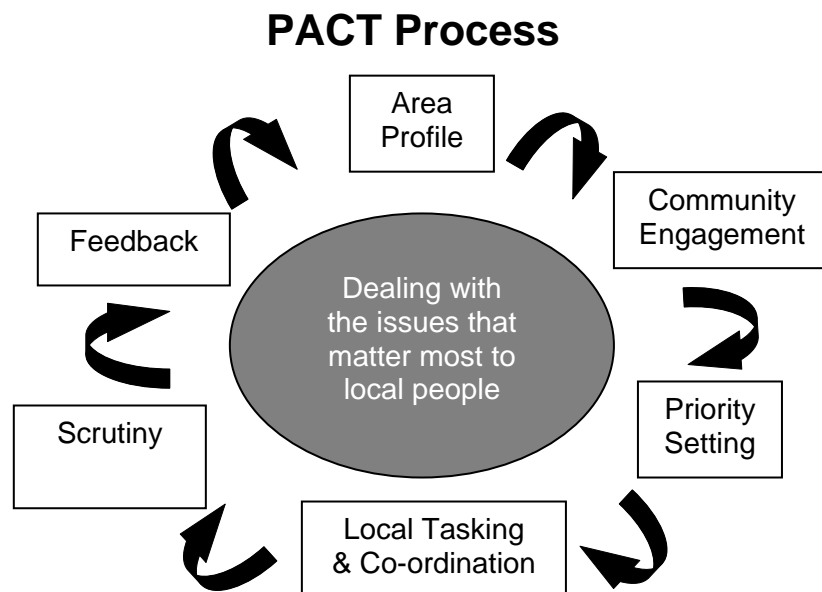
Although without doubt some good results and improvements have taken place as a result of TCSG activity many of the priorities identified are generalised and don't point to specific activity and in some cases priorities remain unchanged over several years which must raise questions about the ability of the process to effectively identify and resolve local problems.

5. PACT Development

- 5.1 A number of partners, including Wigan and Leigh Homes, Greater Manchester Police and the Council have been working together over the past year building on the experience gained in a variety of neighbourhood delivery pathfinder programmes, piloting the PACT process within each of the wards in the Wigan South Township.
- 5.2 We have adopted a model called the 'cycle of participation' to enable us to respond to the priorities identified by local communities and at the same time both balance with professional judgement and be realistic in terms of the capacity of partners to deliver. This has included the following key elements:
- **Information:** to keep people informed about the things that affect them and their community such as decisions, services, local events.
 - **Consultation:** to be clear about what we are asking people's opinion about and why. Being specific about what can and cannot be changed. We offer a number of options and listen to the feedback we get. The decisions made take account of the results of consultation alongside other factors.
 - **Deciding together:** we encourage people to provide some additional ideas and options, and to decide with you the best way forward.
 - **Acting together:** different interests deciding together what is best and also to work as a partnership to carry it out. They are equally responsible for the outcome.
 - **Supporting independent community initiatives:** to help others do what they want - perhaps within a framework of grants, advice and support provided by the resource holder.
- 5.3 During the course of the pathfinders we have tested out various ways of delivering each element with a view to establishing a common basic framework for the PACT process. We have also aimed to achieve a framework that is flexible enough to adapt to local needs throughout the Borough.
- 5.4 Critical to the development and delivery of the process is the involvement of local elected members.

6. PACT PROPOSALS

- 6.1 The following diagram outlines the way we have developed the cycle of participation to form the steps of the PACT process, each element of which is described in more detail below.



- 6.2 **Area Profile** – We have developed an analytical product called the area profile, based on a ward, using a wide range of statistical and other information about the area which is already held by a range of partners. This has helped us to collectively understand much more about who lives and works in the area and what matters to them.

6.2.1 The area profile, which is a written document, identifies both the communities' priorities from previous consultation and partners' priorities from statistics. It can signpost us to specific areas within a ward for example where local residents are repeatedly making complaints to different service providers or where a particular service demand is high. We have termed these areas 'priority action areas' which then become the focus for targeted community engagement

6.2.2 At this point, ward members are consulted on the ward profile and that priority action areas are agreed together before the next stage of the process takes place.

6.2.3 To ensure an overview is maintained of each wider geographic area ward profiles will be completed in Township groupings prior to the engagement and prioritisation stage which will be carried out at a ward level.

- 6.3 **Community Engagement** - Once the priority action areas are identified we then carry out an engagement exercise with members of that community, both residents and businesses to measure the perceptions and experiences of people living and working there.

- 6.3.1 Although we have tested different approaches we have found using a method developed by the Jill Dando Institute known as Key Individual Networks (KIN) has worked well.
 - 6.3.2 The KIN is essentially a structured and targeted approach to engagement through door knocking. It is carried out by a range of front line officers and can also involve and be supported by local elected members.
 - 6.3.3 A significant advantage of the outreach approach to engagement is that we have been able to target groups which can sometimes be socially excluded.
 - 6.3.4 We have also used the KIN to target groups like, complainants, victims and offenders because members of these groups are more likely to know about the issues in the area because they are directly affected by or involved in them.
 - 6.3.5 The menu of engagement techniques we are developing includes an Environmental Visual Audit (EVA) process that partners and communities can use together to inspect and monitor the physical environment. We are also currently working with the local primary schools and the youth service to identify the best way of getting children and young people involved in the visual audits in their area.
- 6.4 **Priority Setting** – When the engagement stage is complete the information gained is drawn together with the information in the ward profile to decide the priorities for action.
- 6.4.1 Our experience from the pilot is that there is merit in obtaining an overview at Township level although actions are more effectively delivered at a ward level.
 - 6.4.2 We have integrated the priority setting cycle with the performance scrutiny role, which is described later, to hold formal review and planning meetings on a quarterly basis. These meetings are between elected members from the Township and the group of middle managers from partners responsible for the planning and delivery of services in that area.
- 6.5 **Local Tasking and Co-ordinating** – The whole approach to partnership delivery at a local level is underpinned by a collective problem solving approach to issues. This will, over time, enable us to make more effective use of resources by reducing the need to repeatedly deal with the same symptoms day after day.
- 6.5.1 Once the engagement cycle has been completed and the priorities set a local delivery plan will be developed to address the range of issues identified by the community. Delivery of the actions will be the responsibility of front line staff working in those areas which will be co-ordinated by a PACT co-ordinator, who will have responsibility for a group of PACTs. Each action on the delivery plan will be assigned a

named owner/lead from the most appropriate agency and a date for completion.

6.5.2 Local tasking at a ward level may take the form of a regular practitioner group managed or organised by the Co-ordinator. It is not intended to be prescriptive either about this part of the process, the paramount issue is that action is delivered.

6.5.3 Clearly the solution to many problems does not lie in the hands of a single agency and the whole concept of PACT is about working together. To date in the pilot areas we have found a fairly consistent pattern of around 18 different issues raised by communities and we are currently mapping the processes which take place in each agency relating to those issues. This will help to create a working manual/guide for PACT co-ordinators so we get a consistency of approach.

6.6 **Scrutiny** - It is important that partners are held to account for the delivery of the actions agreed to address community priorities. It is proposed that on a quarterly basis elected members undertake a scrutiny role in the form a review meeting with the group of middle managers from partners responsible for the planning and delivery of services in that area.

6.6.1 Formal Reviews will take place between elected members and the partnership officer grouping. It is intended that this is carried out on a Township basis and form part of the cycle of performance scrutiny and priority setting utilising the area profile which will be refreshed every 6 months.

6.6.2 This part of the process whilst holding people to account for their actions will no doubt also identify areas where the solution to a particular problem does not lie in the hands of local delivery managers, for example a major resource or policy issue. Where this is the case evidence from the PACT process can be fed upwards into the democratic and organisational planning processes.

6.7 **Feedback** - To develop inclusive communities, where all sections of the community feel they have opportunities to be involved in decision-making and influence public services it is important that people are informed about the action we have taken in response to the issues raised by them.

6.7.1 We have used a newsletter to feedback to community members about the action taken by services to address the issues that matter most to them. As a result of what we have learnt we are developing the newsletter into a 'You said - We did' format which is delivered to every address in the ward concerned. We will continue to explore other feedback techniques, again to suite local need.

7. Resources

7.1 The delivery of responses to issues raised through the PACT process does not require any additional resources to those currently available. The whole concept is about getting those resources from all relevant partners including elected members and the community themselves to join up their existing service provision to deliver more effectively for our communities.

- 7.2 Experience through the Neighbourhood Team pilots and the PACT pilot itself have shown that PACT activity needs to be co-ordinated and there needs to be a focal point which joins up all the agencies, elected members and the community at a local level. Co-ordinating the engagement activity, providing the necessary support to manage community intelligence and ensuring feedback is provided to the whole community.
- 7.3 The aim is that the staff resources currently delivering the community engagement elements of the Township programme will be reshaped to allow them to undertake the PACT co-ordination function. These developments will need to align to any changing requirements of the Townships programme and dependant on related finance.

8. Finance

- 8.1 One of the key principles behind the PACT process is that it is a method of shaping the delivery of local services. In simple terms this means where there is a need to deliver a particular service at a particular time in response to a community priority, partners will need to consider how they can deliver the required outcome within existing resources which might mean bending mainstream services.
- 8.2 From time to time there may be occasions when a small amount of financial resource can assist with some specific activity to solve a problem which has manifested itself in the community priorities. TCSG's currently have access to a total of £81k pa, equally divided, which they apply to problem solving initiatives at a Township level. It is proposed that this resource remains for spend against community priorities either at Ward or Township level at the discretion of elected members.
- 8.3 The critical co-ordination function referred to at 6.5.1 and 7.2 and the planned delivery of the function will depend on securing sustainable finance for a number of posts which are currently supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

9. Future Developments

- 9.1 The EVA and KIN community engagement and involvement has only set priorities in relation to cleaner safer greener issues. This approach will give services the head start they need from which to build and improve their responsiveness to those issues we know are at the top of the community agenda.
- 9.2 One of our aims is to increase capacity within communities to deliver some of the solutions to their problems themselves. In the pilot areas we have tested some of the potential to develop community capacity with some encouraging results. There have been many expressions of a willingness to get involved in a volunteer capacity, for example, we are developing ways to encourage and support local residents who want to get involved in their local area to plan and deliver 'neighbourhood in bloom' projects that will contribute to Wigan in Bloom. This might be through an existing community or voluntary group or by setting up their own local group. Whilst there are also other examples of community

involvement there is more work to be done to make best use of these opportunities.

9.3 It is also hoped this approach will increase partners and communities capacity to set priorities outside of the cleaner safer greener agenda, for example, improving health, getting people back into work, providing activities and places for children, young people and older people..

10. Recommendations

- a) That the development and implementation of the PACT process in accordance with the principles of the model described at paragraph 6 in this report be approved.
- b) That Township Community Safety Groups (TCSGs) be discontinued in areas as and when the PACT process is established in that area.
- c) That the finance currently available for spend against TCSG priorities is made available to support PACT priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section:	Neighbourhood Services
-----------------	------------------------

Policy/Service Area:	Community Safety
-----------------------------	------------------

Person Completing Form:	Ian Harrison	Date: 31-1-08
--------------------------------	--------------	----------------------

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race	X		Disability	X	
Ethnicity	X		Gender		
Age	X		Religion		
Class	X		Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

There is evidence that excluded and minority groups suffer greater victimisation from crime and anti social behaviour including environmental crimes. In addition there is clear evidence that socially deprived areas suffer disproportionately.

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

Analysis to local crime and disorder data and information and consultation with partners.

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

The engagement stage of the process is designed to ensure that consultation takes place with representative groups from local areas across the 7 social identities. Thus giving them a voice in the services to be provided.

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Yes

Timescale	
Responsibility	
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	
Section/Team Plan	
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review