

## **Cabinet – 23 March 2005**

### **Resources for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships**

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Zahid Ali
<b>Service Area:</b>	Community Engagement and Organisational Development
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	No

#### **Summary of report**

This report details the council's plans for allocating £250,000 to support projects that have been identified in local neighbourhood partnership plans. It also outlines arrangements that will assist LNPs to attract external funding and ensure that they can influence the use of mainstream resources.

#### **Recommendations**

- 1) Cabinet approve the arrangements for the allocation and use of £250,000 to support projects identified in local neighbourhood partnership plans, as outlined in Section 4 and **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 2) Cabinet welcome the arrangements for supporting LNPs and partners in seeking external funding.
- 3) Cabinet encourage the members of WBSP to ensure that there is a mechanism for links to be made between their mainstream service and financial planning processes and LNPs.

#### **Resource and Legal Considerations**

Council on the 19 April 2004 approved the report setting out the constitutional framework and terms of reference within which LNPs will operate. Budgetary provision has been made in the current year for set up costs of the new LNPs.

Financial resources are being set aside to assist the LNPs in implementing their local neighbourhood plans. It will be important to ensure that these resources are linked to the local priorities which will be set out in the plans and this report outlines how this will work.

## **Citizen Impact**

LNPs provide a key mechanism for the authority to consult with its citizens, establishing a vehicle both for the council and partners, to focus service delivery within localities and specific neighbourhoods. They also provide an opportunity for local residents to become more involved in their neighbourhoods. All local citizens and members of the public are entitled to attend partnership meetings and raise issues and ask questions. LNPs offer citizens the opportunity to affect local concerns, to identify local priorities and issues aimed at producing a local neighbourhood plan for the area and to become involved in delivering local objectives.

## **Community Safety**

The LNPs provide the Council with the opportunity to consult with local people on issues relating to crime and disorder. This local perspective can then be used to inform the content of the borough wide Crime and Disorder Strategy and reduce crime and fear of crime in Walsall.

## **Environment Impact**

One of the key objectives for LNPs is to increase local residents' involvement in the area and to involve local people in improving the environment where they live and work. An example of this in action is the planned clean-up days within each partnership area. Further environmental improvements are included within the local neighbourhood plans which will contribute to the council's vision priority to "ensure a clean and green borough".

## **Performance Management and Risk Management Issues**

Following the completion of the consultation exercise with local residents, partner organisations and businesses, each LNP has produced a local neighbourhood plan for their area. Each plan will be managed and monitored, with a progress report published annually, and consistent with the council's performance management arrangements.

## **Equality Implications**

An important underpinning value of LNPs is the commitment to engage all sections of the community and to ensure that all contributions are valued. Discussions are currently underway with the Community Empowerment Network and Walsall Voluntary Action, to ensure that local communities, voluntary and community groups can continue to effectively engage with LNPs. Young people are also part of the active listening and consultation processes.

## **Consultation**

There has been considerable and widespread consultation on all issues relating to LNPs and at all implementation stages, since their inception in January 2004. For example, over 100 organisations were involved in the initial proposals and regular meetings were held with council officers, members and partners throughout the initial

project implementation phase. Now that each LNP has become 'live', a partnership forum meeting is also now in existence, allowing good practice to be shared amongst support teams. All groups meet regularly to review progress and to comment on proposals and developments.

Consultation on a wider scale is also now underway within each individual LNP, as part of the ongoing development of the local neighbourhood plan. The specific proposals in this report for the allocation of resources were shared with the LNP chairs forum on 21 February 2005 and were broadly welcomed.

## **Vision 2008**

The establishment of local neighbourhood partnerships is a specific pledge to support the Vision of the Council to "listen to what local people want".

Furthermore, LNPs will have a central role in delivering the Vision for 2008, as the local neighbourhood plans developed by each of the nine LNPs are based on the Visions identified themes.

## **Background Papers:**

- Report to Cabinet – 14 September 2003, Consultation on Local Governance Arrangements in Walsall
- Report to Council – 12 January 2004, Leader of the Council's Proposals for the Establishment of Nine Local Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Report to council – 19 April 2004, Local Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Report to Cabinet – 12 May 2004, Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs) – Progress Update
- Report to Cabinet – 14 July 2004, Local Neighbourhood Partnerships: Guidelines on Selection Processes for Locally Appointed Partners (LAPs)
- Report to Cabinet – 19 January 2005, Implementing Local Neighbourhood Partnerships

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**Signed:**



**Signed:**



**Executive Director: Jamie Morris**

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor Zahid Ali**

**Date: 14 March 2005**

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## **1 Progress to date**

At its meeting of 19 January 2005, Cabinet confirmed the 'one-off' allocation of £250,000 to support the implementation of LNPs and the delivery of local partnership plans.

It will be fundamentally important for the credibility of each of the nine LNPs, that any resources that they are able to access are demonstrably and explicitly linked to the local priorities that will be agreed as part of the local neighbourhood plans and that these address the council's vision and objectives for the future.

This report outlines the proposed arrangements for the allocation and use of this £250,000. It also highlights the need for LNPs to be able to influence the mainstream service and financial plans of the council and its partners. It also describes the support and assistance that the council plans offer to assist LNPs to attract external funding.

## **2 Influencing mainstream service and financial plans**

The local neighbourhood plans, currently being developed by each LNP, will feed into the council's own service plans for next year and will therefore be able to influence mainstream spend during 2005/6 and future years.

More work is needed with our partner organisations and the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership will be encouraged to ensure that there are explicit and transparent links between their service and financial planning processes and that of the council's to ensure that LNP priorities can be considered alongside other priorities.

Work is underway to seek to understand and synchronise the financial and service planning timetables of the council and our partner organisations.

## **3 Attracting external funding**

The council will offer pro-active support in encouraging and assisting the council and locally appointed partners to apply for additional funding from other sources that LNPs, as committees of the council, are precluded from (e.g. Big Lottery Fund, Young People's fund etc) in support of local partnership plan priorities.

It is anticipated that the council's newly enhanced external funding team will provide the following support for LNPs

- Weekly 'hot news' funding opportunity newsletter to nominated contact(s) within each LNP (who may wish to appoint a local 'funding champion')
- Funding toolkit for LNPs in the form of a hard copy booklet and available on the internet
- Funding workshops to be held at the 'big event' for LNPs, planned for 23 June 2005
- Named contact person within external funding team focussed on support for LNPs
- A series of funding surgeries to be held locally within each LNP area over the next 18 months

- Knowledge and expertise from successful partnerships elsewhere.

#### **4 Initial allocation of £250,000 of ‘one-off’ resources**

Cabinet on 19 January 2005 confirmed the allocation of £250,000 as a one-off sum to support the implementation of LNPs and delivery of local plans.

The details of how this allocation might best be used have been considered in detail by the LNP officer project steering group and were shared with the LNP Chairs Forum on 21 February, where they were broadly welcomed.

The overall aim of the approach is to seek a simple and transparent system with a minimum level of bureaucracy, that also demonstrates accountability and stewardship for public funds and a proper audit trail. The proposal is as follows:

In order to reflect the fact that not all LNPs are of the same size, it is proposed that the two Ward LNPs receive £22,000 each and that the three Ward LNPs receive £33,000 each. The balance of £30,000 will be reserved for schemes or projects that require joint working across more than one LNP.

##### **Proposed allocation of one-off resources**

Aldridge South and Streetly	£22,000
Blakenall and Bloxwich	£33,000
Brownhills Aldridge North	£22,000
Darlaston	£22,000
Palfrey and Pleck	£22,000
Pelsall and Rushall Shelfield	£22,000
Pheasey and Paddock	£22,000
St. Matthew's and Birchills Leamore	£22,000
Willenhall	£33,000
Cross and Joint LNP working	£30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£250,000</b>

It will be for each LNP to decide how this allocation will be used to enable each LNP to implement their local plan.

To help to decide which projects and schemes will receive financial support from these allocations the checklist attached as **Appendix 1** has been produced. A positive answer to most questions should help each LNP to justify and prioritise the need to spend limited resources as well as demonstrate appropriate accountability. The key questions included in the checklist cover the following:

- Resources must be for ‘one-off’ items that will have visible local impact and local support
- Must be a demonstrable link to priorities identified in LNP local plan
- Must be a demonstrable link to Council Vision 2008 priorities

- Must not be contrary to council policy
- What is the impact of the proposed spending – e.g. who will benefit, how will they benefit, numbers of people who will benefit?
- Does the spending provide Value for Money?
- Will the proposed spending lever in any ‘match funding’ from other partners or other agencies?
- Any resources allocated will need a named officer responsible for spending the money in accordance with the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules/Contract Procedure Rules.

For most LNPs, the task groups that have been established in order to produce the local partnership plans are likely to be best placed to complete the checklist in the first instance. Options will then need to be prioritised and approved by the LNP before spending commences.

The LNPs officers project group will maintain an overview of these financial plans across the nine LNPs in order to ensure that there is consistency of practice where appropriate. Once approved, the responsibility for ‘ordering’ the work, spending the money and reporting back on it’s impact will be that of the relevant service manager within the council. This should enable these LNP resources to be used most effectively alongside existing mainstream budgets.

**PROPOSAL FOR USE OF 'ONE-OFF' RESOURCES IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL PLAN**

**NAME OF LNP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRO-FORMA COMPLETED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Brief Description of the project</b>
Details of spending proposed, how much is it for?
<b>How does the proposal link to LNP local plans?</b>
Explicit cross referenced link to local plan
<b>How does proposal link to Council Vision 2008?</b>
Explicit cross reference to each of the 10 priorities it relates to and how
<b>Assurance that the proposal is not contrary to Council policy</b>
Explicit statement that the planned spending is not contrary to existing any Council policy
<b>Impact of the proposal?</b>
Who will benefit from this spending, how will they benefit, numbers of people who will benefit, how long will these benefits last

<b>Value for money?</b>
Are the identified benefits worth the costs to be incurred
<b>Match funding:</b>
Does this proposal attract any match funding (in cash or kind) from council partners or other organisations?
<b>Responsible officer:</b>
If approved, this officer (usually a Service Manager) who will be responsible for ordering the work, spending the money in compliance with the Council's contract and financial procedure rules
<b>Reporting back:</b>
When will money be spent, work be done, impact be felt and reported back to LNP
Also need 'audit trail' to evidence this

**This proposal agreed by the LNP on**\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by the LNP Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE:**  
**Reference number, expenditure code etc....**