

North Walsall

Engagement Plan

March 2015 onwards

Introduction: Community Hubs – Shaping a Fairer Future

- The purpose of community hubs is to provide locally-based focal points for the delivery of services.
- They will encourage greater community involvement in decisions about what services should be provided and how they are designed.
- The outcome we want to see is better access to all services and more localised delivery.
- This does not just cover council services and is not just physical access to buildings.

The Area Picture: What is the Area Partnership?

Walsall Partnership, the umbrella organisation which includes Walsall Council, West Midlands Police, Walsall Housing Group, NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and a host of community organisations from across Walsall have made a commitment to give people living, working or accessing local services in Walsall a greater say in making decisions that affect them in their local area.

There are six Area Partnerships in Walsall, which are supported by an Area Manager:

North Walsall Area Manager: Vanessa Croft

vanessa.croft@walsall.gov.uk

01922 65 3714

Area Partnerships recognises that local residents and community groups know best what they want, when it needs to be done and how. Area Partnerships provide a mechanism where local people are actively encouraged to participate in helping the council and its partners to tackle the major issues that concern residents.

Area Partnership works across-directorates, with local councillors and the wider communities to assist with the delivery of the Walsall Plan's strategic priorities of:

- Supporting business to thrive and supporting local people into work.
- Improving Health including well being and independence for older people
- Creating Safe, Sustainable and Inclusive Communities – Reducing levels of crime and providing the right environment for people to live in.
- Improving Safeguarding, Learning and the Life Chances for Children and Young People

How are people engaged currently?

Within North Walsall there are a wealth of local voluntary and community groups, alongside statutory agencies who work within the community.

WMBC, whg, West Midlands Police, Fire Service, Bloxwich Town Centre Partnership, libraries, faith and religious groups, schools, Youth Support Services, community associations and residents' groups all have a role in engaging with the wider local communities.

Area Partnerships co-ordinates Network Meetings and Partnership Meetings in the local area, which brings together different services and organisations to enable better co-ordination of work activities for the local community.

Area Partnership regularly disseminates information to the local communities, using social media.

There are many events coordinated on a borough wide level where information can be disseminated.

Area Panels are a WMBC constituted group, comprising of local Ward Councillors. The meetings occur in the local community and residents are invited to attend the meetings.

Area Partnership approaches to consultation and engagement

Consultation is the dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups based on a genuine exchange of views, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action. (The Consultation Institute)

The terms consultation, involvement and engagement which improve understanding and contribute to community action and positive change are often misunderstood or used interchangeably. All are about listening to the views of local people in order to shape services, develop policy or take action.

For the purposes of this document these terms are defined as follows:

Consultation is the overall process of asking for and listening to the views of local people or groups with the aim of influencing decisions, policies or actions.

Involvement is a process in which people actively participate, during which the information is exchanged and views sought, with the aim of influencing decisions.

Engagement involves an on-going two-way partnership between the partner organisations and stakeholders. Decision-making may be shared between the parties.

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As part of the hubs/networking initiatives Area Partnerships will be engaging using the following networks/groups as part of the on-going discussions.

Groups			
Audience	Activity	Delivery Organisation	By When
Non Confidential Partners Meeting	Discussion	Area Partnerships	4 August 2015
Non Confidential Partners Meeting	Discussion	Area Partnerships	6 October 2015
Non Confidential Partners meeting	Discussion	Area Partnerships	8 December 2015
Area Panel Meeting	Feedback and discussion	Democratic Services	17 September 2015
Area Panel Meeting	Feedback and discussion	Democratic Services	17 November 2015
Area Panel Meeting	Feedback and discussion	Democratic services	2 February 2016
Area Panel Meeting	Feedback and discussion	Democratic services	7 April 2016
North Walsall networking meeting	Discussion	Area Partnerships	tbc
Youth Support Services	Discussion	Youth Support Services	October 2015
Community Groups			
Ward workshops?			
Your ideas?			