

LOCALITY MANAGEMENT IN BRAINTREE DISTRICT

Agenda Item 5(a)..

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Background Papers:- *Working better, together* the Braintree District/Essex County Councils protocol
Financial Implications:- All budgetary implications will be met from existing resources
Equalities Implications:- The pilot will explore ways of improving of community engagement with all sectors of the community including the hard to reach and those at risk of social exclusion
Legal Implications:- New governance arrangements will require amendments to the Council's constitution
Options: Detailed in the report
Risks: At this stage no significant risks have been identified.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Braintree District Council and Essex County Council are jointly sponsoring a Locality Management pilot to develop a model of integrated and coordinated local delivery of excellent public services which reflects the views and choices of local people.

A new role and governance structure for the Area Committees is proposed which establishes them as the key drivers of the locality management pilot.

DECISION

Members are requested to decide on the appropriate way of progressing the pilot and determine the timetable for implementation.

LOCALITY MANAGEMENT IN BRAINTREE DISTRICT

1. Vision of locality management

In September 2006, Braintree District Council and Essex County Council published *Working together, better* – a protocol agreed by both Councils on closer joint working. As well as setting out the overarching vision for both Councils on joint working to improve services, the protocol determined particular actions to take these aspirations forward. One of these was the establishment of a Braintree Locality Management pilot with the specific aims of

- Significantly improving consultation with local people about services
- Developing models of commissioning and delivering services in a way that is more closely tailored to what people want
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness by sharing more services

2. Aims of locality management

Locality Management is a tool to help improve and accelerate the delivery of both Councils' key Corporate Plan priorities, including the achievement of national targets. The pilot will aim to

- Enhance the role of local Councillors as community champions
- Increase the involvement of residents in determining local priorities
- Improve the flexibility of services to respond to local preferences
- Increase the capacity of community organisations and individuals to improve the local quality of life
- Improve the integration of services to have greater impact on local issues
- Raise the overall profile of Council services and increase customer satisfaction
- Promote closer working between the tiers of local government

By:

- Improving access to information
- Consulting with the community to fully understand local needs
- Developing local commissioning arrangements
- Co-ordinating council services
- Participating in local partnerships
- Developing the contribution of community groups

3. Objectives of the pilot –

The Locality Management pilot will develop a model of locality management that:

- Creates a community governance model that recognises and reflects the roles of partners and residents
- Enables the creation and delivery of Locality Plans for Braintree, Witham and Halstead areas which
 - Have clear links to both Councils' Corporate Plans
 - Impacts on the achievement of national/local targets
 - Reflects local needs and views
 - Is evidence based
 - Is sustainable
- Links 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' service drivers
 - Facilitates sustainable co-ordinated/integrated approaches and services
 - Have the commitment of all major local public and voluntary/community sector service providers
 - Encourages community participation and local confidence

5. Outcomes:

Each Locality Plan will determine appropriate targets for their communities. These could include

- Significant increase in public satisfaction with ECC services
- Significant increase in public satisfaction with BDC services
- Significant increase in the public's perception of their ability to influence decisions affecting their local area
- Significant increase in public satisfaction with Council services in general

A key outcome for all Locality Plans will be the realisation of efficiencies in service delivery to increase value for money through

- The Joint Office strategy
- Creation of one-stop shops based on libraries

6. Scope

All services delivered by both Councils within the whole of Braintree District Council's geographical boundaries are in scope.

7. Locality Management structure

Under the terms of the Protocol a joint post of Braintree Locality Manager has been created with the postholder seconded from the County Council for a period of up to two years from February 2007. Although the pilot was originally agreed for the Braintree Area, both Councils now feel that it is appropriate to model different approaches to locality management across Braintree District.

It is therefore proposed that three Localities are established which will be co-terminous with the boundaries of the Area Committees for Braintree, Halstead and Witham.

To support these, a Localities Team will be established within the District Council. The Braintree Locality Manager is the key driver of locality management and will coordinate activity across the three Areas, leading and managing the Locality team. She is responsible for ensuring that improvements to the quality of life for local people are delivered at a local level through better coordination of both Councils' services and that service providers are not only cognisant of the needs of local people but actively

responsive. She will be accountable for the development and delivery of the three Locality Plans.

9. Issues

Locality Management needs to explore existing delivery structures and identify opportunities for greater co-ordination/integration to improve delivery. Part of the role of locality management is to challenge, rationalise and streamline existing structures where appropriate and add co-ordination/coherence where this is needed.

Governance models need to be addressed if locality management is to become a reality. A decision-making framework which, at the very least, is both responsive and accountable to local people and, at best, devolves power and budgets down to an appropriate level should be developed.

To build and retain the confidence of all Members, partners and service providers, appropriate quick wins need to be identified as well as activities that will have longer-term impacts.

The pilot has to accommodate a high degree of flexibility not only to reflect the different local needs and priorities of the three Localities but also in response to the learning from the project.

Funding for the pilot project and the Locality Manager's post is time-limited until February 2009. The ongoing sustainability of any models determined through the pilot is a key consideration.

Timescales:

May 07 –December 07 Work programme led by the respective Area Committees (District & County Members) to explore/develop multi-agency/community based governance framework (*working title* Locality Forums)

May 07 – December 07 Community engagement/consultation
Qualitative work on particular issues for each locality
Survey on topics identified as priorities for each locality

January 08 – March 08 Development of Locality Plans

April 08 Locality Forums established

April 08 – March 09 – Delivery of Year one of Locality Plans