
Report to
Cabinet

Date of meeting
6 September 2005

Report of
Chief Executive

Title
Neighbourhood Management

1 Purpose of the Report

To seek endorsement of progress on the changes to implement Neighbourhood Management proposals

2 Recommendations

The Cabinet are asked:

- 2.1 To agree the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Management structure as described in paragraph 8.2 and illustrated in Appendix one
- 2.2 To agree the timescales, ethos and approach described in paragraphs 4 to 12

3 Background

- 3.1 A proposal to build on Coventry's Area Co-ordination service to create a Neighbourhood Management service was part of the Council's 2004 Policies, Priorities & Resources (PPR) process. The proposals combined the objectives of increasing the emphasis the council put generally on neighbourhood working, with making some budget reductions due to the Council's financial pressures. The City Council meeting held on 22 February 2005 endorsed the proposal to restructure Area Co-ordination into a Neighbourhood Management service and to create three Neighbourhood Management areas rather than the previous six areas of Area Co-ordination. However concern had been expressed during the consultation regarding the proposal to make the new areas coterminous with the police operational command units (OCUs). This concern particularly focused upon the fact that OCU boundaries as constituted at present, split ward boundaries in a number of cases and that priority neighbourhoods were also divided by OCU boundaries. In reaching its decision the Council requested that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Equalities give further consideration to the boundary proposals in order to address this issue.

The aim of the changes being put in place is to increase the impact of neighbourhood working in the city in line with national good practice, in order to improve public services locally and address issues which are known to be important to residents, such as community safety and “liveability” (concern for the quality of the local environment).

4 Definition of Neighbourhood Management

4.1 The 22 February 2005 Council adopted the following policy statement to describe what Neighbourhood Management is all about:

Neighbourhood Management is the way in which the Council works to reflect needs and preferences in local neighbourhoods to improve its services and the quality of life of local people.

4.2 As stated in the original neighbourhood management proposals, the newly restructured Neighbourhood Management service will include the following key tasks:

- **Problem Solving**
- **Leading on community engagement and consultation**
- **Strategically planning neighbourhood working to deliver better services**

4.3 The ethos which Neighbourhood Management will be seeking to work to will be one of:

4.3.1 Being as **inclusive** as possible and balancing the needs and objectives of different local communities - both of geographical and community interests, alongside the needs and objectives of the council and other service providers and, in some instances, the Government;

4.3.2 Ensuring that actions taken to improve quality of life are as far as possible **sustainable** and not merely superficial “elastoplast” measures;

4.3.3 Being **innovative** and challenging both council services and other providers to think flexibly about how services can be provided, while being realistic in terms of the delivery of strategic objectives and the resources available both locally and across the city

4.4 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Neighbourhood Renewal Unit state:

"Neighbourhood management aims to tackle quality of life ("liveability") issues in communities through:

- *Better management of the local environment;*
- *Increased community safety;*
- *Improving housing stock;*
- *Working with young people; and*
- *Encouraging employment opportunities"*

4.5 Coventry's approach to Neighbourhood Management is about targeting the poorest wards, but it is also about striving for service improvements across the whole of the city. Clearly resources will be focused on high priority neighbourhoods where there is still much to do to close the gap between these communities and the more affluent parts of the city. However, attention also has to be paid to those communities that frequently miss out under funding regimes which target the poorest areas but which are at risk of

decline if the council and its partners do not intervene.

5 Strategic Context of Neighbourhood Management

5.1 Neighbourhood Management operates in a complex matrix of:

5.1.1 **Services** – both more generic and more specialist

5.1.2 **Interests** – of community eg communities from different cultures e.g. African Caribbean or with similar characteristics eg physically disabled people,
- Of geography e.g. Radford, Earlsdon, Binley etc

5.1.3 **Governance** – different structures across different organisations e.g. Council, PCT, Whitefriars etc.

5.2 Within this matrix there are some functions which will always need to be operated on a city-wide basis, others which need to focus on communities of interest across the whole city and others which will have significantly greater impact if they can be delivered and targeted on a neighbourhood basis. The discussions currently taking place on Children's Services, across the city encapsulate this. In this context we need to make explicit that no structure will ever meet every requirement of neighbourhoods, which will never fall neatly into the structural requirements of different agencies.

5.3 The key principle is that in considering city-wide or functional delivery of services, consideration must be given to how or whether use of neighbourhood mechanisms or interventions can increase the desired impact of that service on local people. This is particularly important where there are neighbourhoods which historically have suffered challenges of unemployment, poor housing, poor health etc over many years. It is also important that key agencies monitor geographical areas which may be at risk of decline.

5.4 The introduction of Neighbourhood Management is not intended to force all services into one structure. It is particularly intended to address the issues that cannot be dealt with by one department or agency working alone, or where additional support from other services would be beneficial. There is however an expectation that all council staff recognise the need to think about neighbourhood working and be aware of the different impacts on neighbourhoods of decisions they make. Further work needs to be done to ensure there are opportunities for information regarding the strategic decisions made at a city wide level, such as through partnership boards, to be communicated and interpreted by partners at a neighbourhood level.

5.5 Major service delivery issues of which neighbourhood management forms one part are:

- Change for Children/Every Child Matters
- Independence Well-being and Choice (Adults Services)
- Culture and Leisure Strategy
- Liveability
- Housing Strategy
- Community Cohesion
- Regeneration

It is important to identify the nature of the intervention at neighbourhood level which can make a difference to impact and effectiveness. Although there has been significant anecdotal evidence in the past, work is now taking place to try and document some of this

evidence. This work has some links to the work being undertaken in Social Services and Housing on the "redesigning" of social work.

6 The Vision for Neighbourhood Management

6.1 The immediate benefits that Neighbourhood Management is intended to achieve are:

- **More joined up services which offer improved services, a better customer experience and better use of resources**
- **Better Value for Money in council and partner service delivery**
- **Achievement of agencies' service targets and objective**
- **Better involvement and engagement of communities**

The more long term benefits relate to quality of life indicators, which are currently being discussed with Government in negotiations about the Local Area Agreement, Local Public Service Agreement and the Community Plan. These could broadly be summed up by the phrase: "**How people feel about their lives and where they live**" but also need to be reflected in the tangible outcomes for individuals and families in terms of issues like educational attainment, employment and crime reduction.

6.2 The effectiveness of neighbourhood management will be measured by the same indicators as measure all the partner organisations' delivery of their objectives:

- Government set targets encompassed in inspection frameworks
- Agreed objectives in the Local Area Agreements
- Floor Targets
- Locally agreed objectives in the Council's Cabinet Member and operational plans
- Locally agreed objectives in the Community Plan (if not covered by the Local Area Agreement)
- Neighbourhood Renewal objectives.

However it will be a key task of Neighbourhood Management to set up systems to collect information about specific interventions or programmes by Neighbourhood Management which have assisted in the delivery of partner/Government objectives.

6.3 The more qualitative evaluation work being done by the Coventry Partnership in, for example, the household survey is beginning to provide useful information and trends about these issues. The underpinning themes of Neighbourhood Management are strategic, problem solving and community engagement and consultation. In many cases the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Management will depend on its ability to influence rather than control issues.

6.3.1 Problem Solving

Neighbourhood management will provide a focus for problem resolution in local neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Management services will be the front line staff to respond to and deal with liveability problems and local crime, engaging colleagues and services as required. Neighbourhood Management will support the policies of the city's community safety partnership in terms of reducing crime, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

6.3.2 Community engagement and consultation

Neighbourhood management will ensure local people have the opportunity, skills and confidence to influence local services and increase the accountability of councillors and officers to local people. It will be necessary to train many more staff, from a range of professions, outside Neighbourhood Management Services, in how best to work with groups and individuals within the community so that the whole council becomes more neighbourhood orientated. It will be important to demonstrate to communities that their views can influence the environment in specific local areas and that actions they can take, either independently or with some support, can improve quality of life. Neighbourhood management can provide a focus for some people in neighbourhoods for problem resolution, working closely alongside local councillors.

6.3.3 Strategic

Neighbourhood management is intended to:

- Be a local catalyst for improved quality of life for local people, and a driver of a more strategic approach to neighbourhood working within the council and with other partners in line with national good practice. It will operate by collaboratively leading, driving and co-ordinating different parts of the council to respond to neighbourhood sensitivities, and to delivery on parts of neighbourhood plans
- Support the delivery of council departments' and partners' strategic objectives and improvement of services at the local level
- Facilitate cross service neighbourhood planning and improve the use of resources, particularly by clarifying the role of a number of street based services and ensuring effective deployment of the workforce through collaboration and integration
- Ensure the bottom up influence in planning processes and top down implementation of the Council's Corporate Plan and key strategies into neighbourhood priorities.

7 New Ways of Working

7.1 As the above indicates, the move to Neighbourhood working is intended to re-focus the way the whole council works within neighbourhoods, and is not solely the responsibility of those employed within the Neighbourhood Management service. However, Neighbourhood Management and in particular the Area Managers will have an overview and provide the leadership to ensure greater efficiency and more responsiveness to neighbourhood priorities by the Council and its partners. There are key links with other major strategies in the council for example Change for Children and the move to create a Community Services Directorate. All these changes are being considered in line with the objectives of neighbourhood management. Other changes such as looking at more of a neighbourhood focus in the provision of care in people's homes will all contribute to getting a more co-ordinated, integrated approach.

Areas and Neighbourhoods

7.2 Council has agreed to divide the city into three areas for the Neighbourhood Management Service and that these will be as far as possible coterminous with the

West Midlands Police Operational Command Units (OCUs) (see paragraph 8.1). These Areas will be operational management areas over which Council services and other public services can share common data, identify needs and resources available, and plan appropriate service responses. Their boundaries will divide along ward boundaries.

- 7.3 It is recognised that these are large Areas and will include a number of neighbourhoods and communities within them. Residents are not expected to identify specifically with these Neighbourhood Management Areas as indeed in general terms they did not with Area Co-ordination areas. They are intended to create administrative areas that can enable effective and efficient use of resources and focus planning for service improvements. Most services are delivered over smaller sub-divisions of areas, for example school catchment areas, social services teams, GP practices, police beats, neighbourhood warden patrols. However, if we are to bring about service improvements by developing new approaches to service delivery, encouraging the sharing of resources and undertaking joint planning and targeting then it is necessary to create sufficiently large spaces over which senior managers can take strategic decisions regarding the deployment of resources. However, a sensible approach to areas needs to be adopted and it may sometimes be necessary to work across the Neighbourhood Management area boundaries to provide the right service. For example, warden teams may be required to work across areas when there is a particular need to increase numbers in an area or to cover for sickness or holidays.
- 7.4 Work by Neighbourhood Management staff engaging with residents or by other service providers working with their service users, customers or clients will as now, be at a neighbourhood level. The Council is now examining how it can make the most of its resources across the Council to support this community activity. Residents and community members are usually interested in issues of concern within their immediate vicinity, but often solutions which can not be reached by them within their neighbourhood often involve a number of other agencies or council departments. Neighbourhood management structures provide a vehicle through which these issues can be tackled and dealt with quickly and efficiently. Area Managers will be expected to take responsibility for making sure this happens. It is hoped in time that some neighbourhoods of the city will have a neighbourhood manager or champion. These new roles should not be regarded as another layer of bureaucracy but action focused roles as discussed below in Area Teams and AIM.

Area Teams

- 7.5 It is proposed that each Neighbourhood Management Area should have an Area Team consisting of key council and partner agency staff. The core staff group of each Area Team will have the Area Manager, Children's Neighbourhood Manager, Adults Neighbourhood Manager, City Council Director(s) allocated to the area, Chief Superintendent from West Midlands Police, Locality Development Lead from the Primary Care Trust, Station Officer from Fire Service, a representative of local head teachers, Area Services Officers and Community Safety Officers, as well as Ward members and other relevant staff from Council departments such as City Services and City Development. Each team will also include other key partners in each area, for example the North East Area Team would include the Director of the NDC.
- 7.6 The Area Teams will meet regularly on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis to agree Area priorities, which will be incorporated into an Area Plan, and to understand each service's key targets and objectives in order that resources can be shared and targeted to jointly achieve them. In addition to meeting regularly these teams will form a communication network for the Area to liaise on problem solving: this could include a range of issues

raised by Ward members or residents through to dealing with service blockages; ensuring others, particularly the Area Manager, are aware of plans to survey or consult residents, and generally making sure that residents have the benefit of jointly resourced and effective services.

- 7.7 There is also the intention to ensure that each service delivering in an area or neighbourhood does not operate without appropriate reference to other services, to one where services are working across directorates using a range of staff within neighbourhoods to provide services to residents regardless of the lead service or directorate. Once managers are more familiar with the business of other services in an area new or better linkages between services can be made, for example both Neighbourhood Management and Customer Service staff will provide counter services in the first One Stop Shop. Other more innovative approaches should be explored, for example how could Neighbourhood Wardens contribute to making sure children in a neighbourhood are safe.
- 7.8 More work needs to be done on this aspect of joint working, particularly looking at street based services where there are similar roles, for example Neighbourhood wardens, parking wardens, street services staff, and staff working for CV One and Whitefriars. A mapping exercise of such resources has been undertaken as part of the Local Area Agreement, further work needs to be done to reach agreements on deployment of the workforce and protocols for joint work and working on land owned by other agencies. Further discussion also needs to take place between a number of partners and Coventry Direct on the use of technology that can enhance the role of these workers. Some thought has been given to providing 'Airwaves' radios (as used by the police) to warden teams and others, and there is also an intention to provide street based staff with hand held computers in order to log repairs and incidents and get these progressed quicker through the council processes. Firm decisions about utilising this type of technology cannot be reached until it is certain what would work best and how to finance the purchase and running costs.

8 Progress Towards the Neighbourhood Management Service

Boundaries

- 8.1 Since February's Council meeting discussions have since taken place with West Midlands Police with a view to the alignment of OCU boundaries with Council wards. These discussions are now complete and the Council, West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service will be jointly communicating to the public about the changes and their implications. The proposed new OCU boundaries provide a much greater fit than has previously existed between Police OCUs and ward boundaries. Where under the old OCU boundaries only seven wards were not divided by OCU boundaries there are now fourteen coterminous wards. With regard to the remaining four wards which are divided by OCU boundaries strenuous efforts will be made to manage co-ordination in such a way that this will not impair effective partnership working. It is proposed that the Council's Neighbourhood Management boundaries will be a direct fit with ward boundaries. The changes to the boundaries of their own OCUs which the Police are proposing making have required careful examination of resources and they will be extremely helpful to more effective management of partnership working between the Council and the Police. It is understood that the West Midlands Fire Service will also match their local structures against the Council's Neighbourhood Management boundaries which would further add to the coterminosity of the council, police and fire services. Discussions are continuing about how improvements can be made to day to day working practices to maximise the advantage of these boundary changes.

- 8.2 It is proposed that the new areas Neighbourhood Management North East, North West and South (see Appendix one for map).

North East will comprise of the following wards: **Foleshill, Henley, Holbrook, Longford, Radford, and Upper Stoke;**

North West will comprise of the following wards: **Bablake, Sherborne, St Michael's, Whoberley and Woodlands;**

And **South** will comprise of the following wards: **Binley and Willenhall, Cheylesmore, Earlsdon, Lower Stoke, Wainbody, Westwood and Wyken.**

- 8.3 Each of the three areas will have a main office and at least one satellite office. Current plans are to base the main South Area office at the One Stop Shop in Stoke Aldermoor and to continue to have a presence in Canley, in the south west of the city, at the premises previously occupied by Area Co-ordination in Charter Avenue. The North East main office will be in Wood End at the current Area Co-ordination offices, but are likely to move into the new neighbourhood offices being planned under the NDC programme. There will also be a continuing presence in Foleshill although more suitable premises than the current location at Enterprise House will be needed to better provide local services in the community. The North West main office will be based in Hillfields at the current Area Co-ordination office, but again will have to be re-sited at a location convenient to the community at some point in the future when these premises disappear as part of the Swanswell plans. A further base in Tile Hill is being sought and is likely to be based in the new library and One Stop Shop once this has been completed.

Neighbourhood Management Staffing

- 8.4 In order to achieve the budgetary savings required as a result of the PPR process some posts within Area Co-ordination, and within City Development and Community Safety which worked closely with Area Co-ordination, have been deleted. Staff have had to be interviewed for appointment to the remaining or newly created posts in Neighbourhood Management. Appointments of existing staff have been made to nearly all the posts within Neighbourhood Management. These include the Area Managers, Office Managers, Neighbourhood Development Officers and Community Safety Officers. Members have been notified separately of these appointments and discussions are currently taking place about where the staff will be located. The six Area Services Officers are allocated two per Area in the parts of the city in which they were previously located.
- 8.5 Each area staff team will consist of a mix of the different types of staff. Some priority neighbourhoods may also have dedicated staff funded from external funding programmes such as the ERDF programme in Hillfields or Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in Stoke Aldermoor. Other dedicated neighbourhood staff may be recruited as needed and funding opportunities allow. Neighbourhood Management offices will continue, as now, to host other council staff such as the Community Nutritionists and Community Based Economic Development (CBED) workers.
- 8.6 We are now seeking to ensure that we have six well-equipped, properly skilled Neighbourhood Development officers to provide the core of our capacity building support, plus three Community Safety Officers, while increasing the number of employees within the council who can work successfully with groups of local people on issues about which the officers are knowledgeable.

- 8.7 Staff, particularly Neighbourhood Development Officers, have been allocated to the Area that can best use that person's skills and knowledge. However, staff are likely to be required from time to time to work across area boundaries and provide support to colleagues in other areas in order to secure the benefits of people's expertise in all areas. This will also help to build and grow the skills and knowledge base of the Neighbourhood Management workforce. In addition to Neighbourhood Management staff there will be further staff from other council services engaged in neighbourhood working who may be based in local offices or will work closely with Neighbourhood Management staff on local issues.

Neighbourhood Managers or Champions

- 8.7 Further development of Neighbourhood Management may involve appointing Neighbourhood Managers or Champions. These will be people who have a high level of involvement or knowledge of a specific neighbourhood and who could play a leadership role at a neighbourhood level to oversee service improvements and developments within that community. This role would be undertaken alongside the person's current role, but could include an honorarium for the additional responsibility. The individuals concerned may not necessarily be council employees, but could work for partner agencies in the public or voluntary sector.

Wardens

- 8.8 Each area will have a number of neighbourhood warden teams. The initial proposed location of these teams has now been agreed by Cabinet. Those teams which are part of the Corporate Warden scheme are managed by a team leader who is in turn managed by the Warden manager. However, there will be close working relationships between warden team leaders and Area Managers to address area issues and ensure collaboration on priorities within the Area Plan. There will be new warden teams in each of the following neighbourhoods: Jardine Crescent in Tile Hill, Spon End, Caludon, Ball Hill, Riley Square in Wood End, Foleshill, Holbrooks and Radford. Areas currently receiving warden patrols – Canley, Stoke Aldermoor, Willenhall and Willenhall Wood and Longford – will all continue to have a warden presence. The warden schemes in Hillfields, the City Centre and the New Deal for Communities area covering Wood End, Henley Green and Manor Farm are not yet part of the Corporate Warden scheme but work closely with it.
- 8.9 Neighbourhood Wardens' main role in the community is to improve the quality of life for the people living, working and visiting the neighbourhood. Wardens patrol the neighbourhoods communicating with residents and local businesses with the aim of building and maintaining positive links and relationships and addressing issues and concerns that are brought to their attention. They deal with a wide variety of issues both environmental and anti-social. Litter, fly tipping, lighting, abandoned vehicles, maintenance and repairs and anti-social behaviour are some of the most common issues that are dealt with. Wardens work closely with departments of the council, Whitefriars and the Police to combat these problems by reporting, checking and chasing the issue until it has been completed. They also support Tenancy Enforcement and the Police dealing with mediation, anti-social and criminal behaviour and have become a vital source of information due to the positive links created within the communities.
- 8.10 The Warden service contributes considerably to a reduction in crime and disorder - albeit indirectly through interrupting the causal chain of criminal opportunity. Fulfilling an 'eyes and ears' role on the streets increases the risks of detection which people intent on criminal behaviour run. While support for vulnerable groups within communities

enables and encourages those without a voice to re-empower themselves. This is critical in terms of tackling the perceived fear of crime. Neighbourhood wardens are an important part of Neighbourhood Management's contribution to the AIM process detailed below.

Active Intelligence Mapping (AIM)

- 8.11 A key part of the city's Local Area Agreement is the section relating to Safer and Stronger Communities based on The Coventry Partnership's Community Safety Strategy and partners' Liveability Plan. IN order to increase the city's ability to deliver the objectives of the agreement, a new approach to community safety and environmental issues has already started, via an initiative known as Active Intelligence Mapping (AIM).
- 8.12 Active Intelligence Mapping is a co-ordination and action briefing held fortnightly and involves senior police and fire service officers working alongside senior officers from City Services, Area Co-ordination (Neighbourhood Management), Community Safety, and Whitefriars Housing, chaired by the Head of Area Co-ordination. The crime and anti-social behaviour data for the last fortnight is reported and analysed to identify hot spots which can then be targeted by the deployment of street based workforce from all of the partner agencies. This approach is intended to both deter further crime and to provide residents with visible reassurance. The AIM tasking sessions have been taking place since mid-April and whilst it is too early to claim success there is a general consensus from partners that the approach appears to be working. The AIM meetings can also be used to anticipate potential problematic situations such as recent festivals where it has been possible to plan to utilise police community support officers and neighbourhood wardens to supplement other services.
- 8.13 Whilst the regular action planning addresses the immediate problems of crime and anti-social behaviour, Neighbourhood Management supported by the Area Teams will be able to address the medium to longer term causes of these problems at an area and neighbourhood level. What has been learned from the AIM approach is that by bringing all relevant agencies to the table together once a fortnight they have each been able to contribute what they know about a hotspot in addition to the analysis of police and environmental data. This pooling of knowledge has enabled partners to identify the best solution to problems and opportunities to collaborate, and to identify weaknesses in service delivery which may have contributed to the situation. As partners have got used to working together they are more willing to share ideas and concerns and to challenge others where actions have not been followed through.
- 8.14 The AIM model has demonstrated how an action focused partnership can work to bring about changes in service delivery which can be replicated in the Area Teams to tackle a range of issues not just community safety matters.

Data Sharing

- 8.14 There is already considerable work being undertaken between the City Council and partner agencies supported by the Coventry Partnership secretariat collectively to collect and collate data. This will provide a valuable source of information to bench mark and then test the efficacy of new interventions in neighbourhoods and evidence the outcomes the new approaches are intended to achieve. Work is taking place between the Council and the Partnership with the Government Office on how to streamline data collection and use it more effectively. Work needs to be undertaken urgently to consolidate from existing information, profiles for the three new areas, using the resources of the data warehouse administered by

Coventry Direct. This will focus on demographic profiles of Areas and neighbourhoods within them and highlight particular trends or issues for concern. For example identifying neighbourhoods or communities where there is a greater incidence of teenage pregnancy or particular health issues can enable joint targeting of approaches to tackle them.

Premises

- 8.15 Currently the location of Neighbourhood Management teams is as set out above and it does not require major changes in the short term. However another way of improving services and encouraging cross service co-operation is through the sharing of premises. All opportunities to co-locate council and other public services into accessible premises within neighbourhoods will be explored, both to bring about service efficiencies through shared overheads and greater integration of service provision. This will for example be an important part of partners proposals for integrated children's services. Any consideration of new premises or of service integration will be undertaken in close consultation with those working on Coventry Direct to ensure that opportunities to create One Stop Shops or host Coventry Direct services are not missed. It is being proposed to hold a "Property Summit " between all the agencies in the city to see if we can collectively make better use of the buildings and land we have available to meet service needs in the city.

Neighbourhood Plans, the Community Plan and other Strategic Plans

- 8.16 Neighbourhood Management will continue to deliver the activities contained in the current 24 Neighbourhood Plans, but will later this year undertake a review of the neighbourhood planning approach. The Neighbourhood Plans form an important element of the city's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which is integrated into the city's second Community Plan, and have enabled local residents to identify local priorities and see improvements in their neighbourhood as a result. But the plans have not been linked as closely as they should with the council's corporate plan or service operational plans, nor the council's performance management framework, although work on this has begun.
- 8.17 The next generation of neighbourhood plans will need to build on the positive work by area co-ordination and local groups on the existing plans and increase the likelihood of successful outcomes by being discussed alongside other plans and monitoring frameworks and new developments such as the Planning Development Framework. Without pre-empting the outcome of a review of the neighbourhood planning process it is anticipated that future plans could be structured around the themes of the community plan or even clustered into the three key themes of the Local Area Agreement – children and young people, safer and stronger communities and older people and health. Of course the aim will be to ensure that the plans accurately reflect what local communities want and our corporate plans are shaped by those as well as all the other influences upon them but local communities are also realistic enough to understand some of the constraints and limitations within which council services operate. The role of neighbourhood management staff will be to work with communities to identify and articulate their needs and aspirations, but it will also be to advise and educate residents about central government and local political imperatives. Neighbourhood Management staff will need to liaise with council services and partner agencies to ensure neighbourhood priorities are picked up and included in their respective operational and strategic plans. This process has already begun but needs significant improvement.

Community Engagement and Consultation

- 8.18 Neighbourhood Management will play a significant role in working with local councillors to facilitate the involvement of residents and communities in neighbourhood mechanisms and consultation processes. For example it will continue to support Health Action Groups and other themed groups at an area level. It will also support community involvement in large regeneration schemes such as Swanswell, the Ricoh Arena and Canley regeneration. It will also work with other directorates to ensure there is a representative involvement in consultation activities and planning – for example, activity under the Local Development Framework.
- 8.19 Neighbourhood Management staff will also work closely with voluntary and community sector organisations through Coventry Voluntary Service Council and the Community Empowerment Network to ensure contact with a range of diverse views. But it should be recognised that not all community interests are represented by groups and that opportunities for individual resident activity is an important function of Neighbourhood Management.
- 8.20 Many residents raise issues of concern through local councillors. Residents groups and community forums also provide another important medium for residents and community members to raise issues of importance to them. Area Co-ordination staff were able to support many of these groups and Neighbourhood Management will continue to do so, but with fewer staff it may not be feasible to offer previous levels of support and discussions will take place on ways in which arrangements for partner agencies or other council departments to provide support can be sought. This links with the training issues on working with the public and local groups for a wider group of council employees than those located in the council (see paragraph 8.24 below). As the new structures bed down officers will report back to members on this issue.

Neighbourhood Management and Coventry Direct

- 8.21 As Area Co-ordination makes the transition to becoming Neighbourhood Management and whilst Coventry Direct is undergoing considerable development activity they each have different and quite distinct roles in terms of delivering the Council's objectives and serving Coventry residents. There is already a degree of close working between the two initiatives and this is expected to grow over the next year or two as they both develop. It is anticipated that a point will be reached where there may be a case for these two aspects of council service delivery being jointly managed as there will much greater sharing of objectives and staffing than at present.
- 8.22 At present Area Co-ordination, and in the future Neighbourhood Management, deal with a number of enquiries on behalf of elected members or residents directly which will soon be picked up by the Coventry Direct contact centre. However, there will always be residents who prefer to deal with the council in person, in their neighbourhood, and there will always be a need for more detailed case work as now, particularly where problems are complex and involve a number of partner agencies. This will continue to be the role of Neighbourhood Management.

Area Forums

- 8.23 Area Forums currently provide opportunities for residents to receive information regarding council policies and priorities and comment on these and to raise issues of their own with council officers, ward members and cabinet members. Previous reports on neighbourhood management have proposed replacing these forums with ward

forums. Further work needs to take place on possible options for Members to consider. The same applies to the proposal also to have constituency forums. This will of course need further discussion with MPs. This work should take place later this year with a view to reporting back to members and consulting on any proposals in time to implement any changes in the 2006/07 municipal year. It is proposed that the current Area Forum arrangements continue in the interim supported by Neighbourhood Management, committee services and Directors as in the past.

Awareness, Training and Skills Development

- 8.24 Corporate communications are supporting Area Co-ordination management team develop a communications strategy to ensure appropriate and consistent messages are conveyed both internally and externally regarding developments. Work will be undertaken with Workforce Development to include neighbourhood working in the corporate induction programme and the management development programmes. Workforce development will also work with neighbourhood management and with service departments to identify skills and development needs of staff around a greater involvement with neighbourhood working and working with residents and community members. There is likely to be collaboration with the Coventry Partnership on aspects of these learning needs as it is anticipated that they will be ones that other partners also need to address.

Governance and support

- 8.25 A members' advisory panel has been set up to provide support and guidance to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Equalities during the development of the Neighbourhood Management service. This will build on the positive work of the panel on the wardens.

9 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 9.1 The organisational arrangements described above re-structuring Area Co-ordination into the Neighbourhood Management Service, support the Government's objectives of giving citizens more power and resources to influence the services they receive locally, summed up by Lord Rooker, Minister of State in the following statement:

Neighbourhood Management works by enabling local communities and service providers to work together – it is not about distributing large pots of money, but means changing relationships between service providers, improving their responsiveness to local needs and building a sense of shared responsibility and purpose with the local community

- 9.2 The actions which build on Area Co-ordination and increase the exciting potential for the Council and its partners to work differently in Coventry's neighbourhoods are
- The new changes to two uniformed services' boundaries
 - The use of new mechanisms like Active Intelligence Mapping, to share resources more effectively between partners
 - Increased integration between the objectives and data sharing of partners in the city
 - More focus on the links between neighbourhood working and service and outcome improvement

- Increasing emphasis on street, environmental and community safety to try and improve people's sense of security where they live
- New links between neighbourhoods and services for children, learning and young people.

It is acknowledged that the reconfiguration of West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service boundaries will need some initial operational adjustments for partners, but it is a clear indication of partner commitment to the proposed Neighbourhood Management service. The joint Chief Executives of the tPCT are also considering how to ensure that services the tPCT commission are well linked in.

9.3 These proposals retain the strengths of the Area Co-ordination service, build on the best practice from Neighbourhood Management services nationally and place Coventry in a position to provide the best possible neighbourhood services to residents, led by the City Council. Staff have been appointed to new posts within the new service and new Area Teams are under development. The re-structuring has provided an opportunity to better use the skills and knowledge of staff at a neighbourhood level and to involve a wider group of staff in working with Coventry's communities. This opens up exciting potential for the future.

Members are asked to endorse the recommendations listed at paragraph two:

- 9.3.1 **To agree the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Management structure as described in paragraph 8.1 and illustrated in Appendix one**
- 9.3.2 **To agree the timescales, ethos and approach described in paragraphs 4.3 to 8.**

10 Other specific implications

10.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Area Co-ordination	4	
Best Value		4
Children and Young People		4
Comparable Benchmark Data		4
Corporate Parenting		4
Coventry Community Plan	4	
Crime and Disorder	4	
Equal Opportunities		4
Finance	4	
Health and Safety		4
Human Resources	4	
Human Rights Act		4

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Impact on Partner Organisations	4	
Information and Communications Technology		
Legal Implications		4
Property Implications	4	
Race Equality Scheme		4
Risk Management	4	
Sustainable Development		4
Trade Union Consultation	4	
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	4	

10.2 Area Co-ordination

The implementation of the content of this paper will bring about the setting up of the Neighbourhood Management Service as the successor to the Area Co-ordination Service.

10.3 Coventry Community Plan

Neighbourhood management will continue to deliver neighbourhood activities that contribute to the Coventry Community Plan objectives. Neighbourhood Plans will continue to contribute to the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy of the CCP.

10.4 Crime and Disorder

The Neighbourhood Management proposals will ensure close collaboration between City Council and its partners to address issues with respect to Crime and Disorder in particular through the Community Safety Partnership and the Active Intelligence Mapping Process.

10.5 Financial implications

If the proposals within this report are agreed then the budgets will be re-aligned to the new neighbourhood management boundaries. The report agreed by council as part of the PPR process agreed savings of £68,670. The implementation process which has been taking place will deliver these savings alongside the savings contributed by City Development of £155,628 from the deleting of the Area Renewal Officer posts and £77,814 from Community Safety following the reduction of Community Safety Officer posts from six to three. The Neighbourhood Management service and other services elsewhere in the council will continue to seek additional funding to support neighbourhood working where it is sustainable and/or has an exit strategy.

Currently there is no additional expenditure required for premises costs, but costs are likely to be incurred as offices are relocated as referred to above. Some reserves have been identified to support these moves. Naturally this will be kept under review along with any joint proposals with partners in relation to premises.

10.6 Human Resources and Trade Union Consultation

Selection for posts within the new Neighbourhood Management service has been conducted within the Council's HR policies and procedures, and the Trades Unions have been consulted on all new job descriptions and salary gradings. The Council's Security of Employment policy has applied at all times.

10.7 Property Implications

There are likely to be new premises requirements in some areas immediately, and others as current premises are affected by master planning processes. Opportunities to co-locate with other services or partner agencies will be explored and discussions on joint use of property are taking place through the Coventry Partnership.

10.8 Voluntary Sector - The Coventry Compact

Work undertaken by neighbourhood management will be in close liaison with voluntary and community sector partners. Implementation of the work of this paper will be in keeping with the Coventry Compact. In particular work around community consultation will follow the guidance in the Compact document.

11 Monitoring

- 11.1 The work on Neighbourhood Management is being closely monitored by the Cabinet Member. A Neighbourhood Management Advisory Panel has been set up and the Cabinet Member will work collaboratively with that panel.

12 Timescale and expected outcomes

- 12.1 Activity to support the transition from Area Co-ordination to Neighbourhood management has been taking place since earlier this year. It is planned to go live with Neighbourhood Management on 1 September 2005 and hold an official launch in October or November.

	Yes	No
Key Decision	√	
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		

List of background papers

Proper officer: Stella Manzie, Chief Executive

Author: Janice Nichols. Head of Area Co-ordination Telephone 024 7683 1097
(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:

Management Board

Sue Iannantuoni, Human Resources, Chief Executive's Directorate, Ext 3241

Ken Gould, Finance and ICT, Ext 2566

Gill Carter, Legal and Democratic Services Directorate, Ext 3116

Richard Brankowski, Legal and Democratic Services Directorate, Ext 3077

Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Location