Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee

Scrutiny Inquiry: Citizen Engagement

Full Evidence Pack

Contents

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL ON 16 OCTOBER 2012

B   Councillors Deirdre Alden and Bruce Lines had given notice of the following motion:-

"This Council notes that the consultation into Tenant Engagement has been extended until October 24th and welcomes the addition (albeit late) of a question on the potential retention of Housing Liaison Boards and the City Housing Liaison Board.

However, this Council believes that the matter of whether or not HLBs and the City Board should be abolished should not even be up for discussion. They should be retained. Their undoubted successes should be built upon but they should not be downgraded in any way.

In particular, this Council does not support the idea of HLB discretionary funding becoming Ward Housing Funding to be considered alongside the allocation of Community Chest, with tenants and others unable to make decisions but reduced instead to having to put in bids for the money.

Instead, this Council believes that Birmingham's tenants are well able to allocate this money themselves, as they have in the past, and that they should be allowed to continue to do so in the future."

In moving the Motion Councillor Deirdre Alden stated that the residents who volunteered their services to Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs), because they cared about the estates in which they lived and wanted to make them better places for all residents, had been shocked by the Council's decision to terminate the Boards. The original consultation, which took place during August when the HLBs traditionally did not meet, provided only alternative options with no option for retention. In addition, the document stated that HLBs would cease to be supported after 1 November even though the final decision was not supposed to be taken until after that date.

Councillor James Hutchings had cut short his holiday in order to attend a consultation meeting and one HLB member had signed himself out of a hospice to attend, such was the concern at the proposals. Councillor Alden asked that the Chamber recognise the dedication of this particular resident who sadly had passed away shortly after the meeting.

Following these meetings, the consultation document had been altered to include the option of retaining the Boards. However, there was still much concern at the suggestion that tenants should no longer manage the discretionary HLB funding, instead having to submit bids for determination by Ward Committee in the same way as Community Chest funding.

Councillor Alden concluded by stating that, should this be the first steps towards housing stock transfer proposals, the Council would face immense opposition from residents across the city.

In seconding the Motion Councillor Bruce Lines stated that Birmingham currently had the largest and most successful tenant engagement structure in the UK. The success of housing in the city was as a result of partnerships with the HLBs and tenants. Reducing 34 HLBs to just 10 co-opted members of District Committees with no voting rights and all funding decisions being taken by Ward Committees would seriously affect these relationships. Councillor Lines reiterated concerns at any suggestion of housing stock transfer.

In accordance with Council Standing Orders, Councillors Penny Holbrook and Barbara Dring gave notice of an Amendment to the Motion:-

"Delete all after first paragraph and insert:

"Mindful of the period of consultation to 24 October 2012, the Council will not pre-empt the outcome of the consultation. Moreover, following on from the consultation with tenants, the responses from tenants should be conveyed to the Districts and Public Engagement Overview & Scrutiny Committee who have set up a working group to look at housing devolution and the management of the city's housing stock, and tenant engagement is a specific work stream which will feed into the recommendations arising from the tenant consultation process.

Only after consideration of matters by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should the Cabinet bring forward final executive decisions."

In moving the Amendment Councillor Penny Holbrook expressed doubt that housing stock transfer was on the mind of anyone in the current Administration. Councillor Holbrook stated that it would be wrong to pre-empt the outcome of the consultation, advising that robust and productive consultation had taken place in Erdington. The proposals had been considered at each of the 4 Ward Committees and a formal response had been submitted which highlighted concerns about the possible loss of crucial skills and co-operation should HLBs be discontinued.

However, whilst HLBs were an integral part of the consultation and their future format was key to the continued success of housing in the city, it was crucial that tenants of social housing were not set apart from the rest of their neighbourhoods and that all residents worked together to improve the environments in which they lived.

Councillor Barbara Dring formally seconded the Motion.

Councillor Sir Albert Bore pointed out that during previous consultations, City Council tenants had stressed that they did not want to feel stigmatised or separated from the rest of the community. The current devolution proposal would empower people at a local level. Putting discretionary monies available to HLBs alongside Community Chest would compliment funding to neighbourhoods as a

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whole. The proposal was aimed at bringing together the devolved organisations of the city to work together for the benefit of all residents in local neighbourhoods.

In reply Councillor Deirdre Alden reiterated the concern and anger of HLB members and many local residents about the proposals and expressed the hope that the views expressed during the consultation would be taken on board.

The Amendment to the Motion, having been moved and seconded, was put to the vote and by a show of hands, was declared to be carried.

Therefore the Motion as amended, having been moved and seconded, was put to the vote and, by a show of hands, was declared to be carried.

It was therefore

18077   **RESOLVED:-**

This Council notes that the consultation into Tenant Engagement has been extended until October 24th and welcomes the addition (albeit late) of a question on the potential retention of Housing Liaison Boards and the City Housing Liaison Board.

Mindful of the period of consultation to 24 October 2012, the Council will not pre-empt the outcome of the consultation. Moreover, following on from the consultation with tenants, the responses from tenants should be conveyed to the Districts and Public Engagement Overview & Scrutiny Committee who have set up a working group to look at housing devolution and the management of the city's housing stock, and tenant engagement is a specific work stream which will feed into the recommendations arising from the tenant consultation process.

Only after consideration of matters by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should the Cabinet bring forward final executive decisions.

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Birmingham City Council

Consultation Findings on Proposals for a New Tenant Engagement Structure

Produced by Housing Intelligence & Partnerships Team - November 2012

Localisation and Tenant Engagement; Consultation on Proposals for a New Tenant Engagement Structure

Birmingham City Council (the Council) recently consulted on proposals for a new tenant engagement structure. This was carried out by the Tenant Involvement Team in the Local Services Directorate. The analysis of the findings of the consultation was carried out by the Housing Strategy and Partnerships Team, in Adults and Communities Directorate, who also produced this report.

An independent assessment of the report and the consultation findings was carried out by Birmingham based, Vector Research ltd.

Introduction

The consultation process is intended to give tenants greater influence in shaping the services they receive from the Council as their landlord. Devolution and localisation is at the heart of this process. In particular, it is intended that any new arrangements will enable tenants to:

- Have a real say on their local housing services; in shaping new provision of homes, repairs and improvements of homes and allocations and management of homes;
- Make positive improvements to the quality of their local neighbourhood; and
- Influence and improve access to a wider range of local services.

Background

The Council has been involving and consulting with tenants and leaseholders for many years. However, the council now proposes to go further and create new opportunities that give tenants and leaseholders an increasing influence over the design, delivery and assessment of services in response to:

- The new regulatory standards for social housing providers in England that were introduced in April 2012, which place a strong emphasis on reducing the responsibility of the regulator for measuring the council's performance, in favour of the council becoming more directly accountable to its tenants.
- The Leader's Policy statement in June 2012 which devolved responsibility for the Council's housing landlord services to a district level and made provision for up to two dedicated places for council tenant co-optees on each of the Council's 10 new District Committees, providing new opportunities for tenants to be involved in shaping service delivery locally through tenant participation in public life.

Options Presented

The consultation set out proposals to stop formal support for the current Housing Liaison Boards (HLB)[1] and Constituency Tenant Groups (CTG). It is proposed instead to offer places on one of 10 new District Housing Panels and an enhanced range of opportunities for tenants to get their voices heard in their neighbourhood. The proposed structure aims to provide a flexible range of opportunities for community engagement across diverse communities, and to develop a representative and inclusive tenant engagement structure that contributes to tackling inequality and promotes social inclusion.

Developments since September 2012

In September 2012 the following happened;

- Consultation on a new tenant engagement structure started on 19 July 2012. By September 2012 it had become clear there was a significant body of opinion from HLB members around maintaining and building on the Housing Liaison Board structure. In response to this feedback the opportunity was given to tenants and others to set out their views on the potential retention of the HLB structure alongside the other options in the consultation paper at the district and neighbourhood level;
- As such, on 21 September the Council wrote to all tenant organisations and those who had responded to the consultation at that point, inviting views on retention of the HLB structure and extending the consultation period by 2 weeks until 24 October 2012. All views on this extra point have been recorded as part of the consultation responses;
- It also became clear that there was a significant degree of distrust of the Council by a significant body of HLB members who thought the proposals in the consultation document would be implemented no matter what tenants said. In response to these concerns the Council:
  - o Invited the Chair of City Housing Liaison Board, Joan Goodwin, to set up a Tenants' Steering Group to oversee the final stages of the consultation and advise on the use of the consultation results to inform recommendations to Cabinet; and
  - o Committed to seeking an independent view on the consultation methodology and how the responses are recorded and analysed to inform the recommendations to Cabinet.

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[1] HLBs are independent organisations with their own constitutions and the Council does not have the option of dissolving them.

Framework for Evaluation

At a meeting of 10 October 2012 the Steering Group agreed a framework to evaluate consultation responses and to translate this into policy recommendations. The group agreed on broad principles that will underpin the consultation process and determine the most effective structure for tenant involvement:

- A fit for purpose tenant engagement structure that supports the Council's localisation approach – particularly around supporting District Committees to fulfil their executive responsibilities, for example their accountability for local housing management services;
- A fit for purpose tenant engagement structure that meets the regulatory requirements for social housing providers – particularly the requirement for co-regulation: where councillors, tenants, officers and the regulator work together to set, monitor and ensure standards are met; and the requirements of the tenant involvement and empowerment standard;
- A representative and inclusive tenant engagement structure that contributes to tackling inequality and promotes social inclusion – particularly increasing the number and diversity of involved tenants to provide a wide and representative set of views; providing a voice for specific interest groups; and driving improvements in tenant satisfaction overall and the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality;
- Retaining the considerable commitment and skills of tenants currently engaged and respecting the HLB constitution that provides for independent, self-organised tenant groups
- Meeting the intentions of the Leader's Policy Statement of 12 June 2012 – particularly the intention to set up new District Housing Panels and provision for these to have direct representation on District Committees through co-opted places; and
- Flexibility to apply principles established in different ways in different areas, to reflect local circumstances.

The current and proposed tenant engagement structures at five levels of engagement, neighbourhood to city level, are summarised in table one.

Table one

Level	Area	Current	Proposed
1	Neighbourhood	None	**A range of new opportunities for tenants** to get involved with residents across all tenures to make neighbourhoods safer and greener places to live, and to access neighbourhood teams, partners and resources to get things done. **Residents' Neighbourhood Panels** where tenants can work with residents across all tenures to achieve neighbourhood improvements.
2	Ward	Housing Liaison Boards	Ward Committees hold regular public meetings. District Housing Liaison Panels will advise District Committee on funding priorities for **Ward Housing Fund** and submit project proposals to Ward Committees for decision.
3	District	Constituency Tenant Groups	**District Housing Liaison Panels** will advise District Committees via up to two co-opted tenants on District Committee. **Youth District Liaison Panels** represent young tenants.
4	Quadrant (2 or 3 Districts)	None	No direct tenant engagement proposal. Administratively, integrated local services teams, including housing management teams, will be co-located in Quadrant Hub offices.
5	City	City Housing Liaison Board	**A Tenants' Champion.** An annual **Birmingham Tenants' Convention.** Short life, ad hoc **Tenants' Task and Finish Groups** e.g. Equalities, Commissioning and Procurement.

Methodology

- *Consultation*

The consultation used a set of questions where respondents could answer yes or no and provide additional commentary if they wished to do so. The questions can be seen at Appendix A.

The consultation included a range of methods including special and regular meetings, the internet and telephone surveys. It engaged with tenants and leaseholders including; all Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs), Constituency Tenants Groups (CTGs) and Residents Associations. Two special meetings were held for all Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) and Mystery Shoppers. Non involved tenants and leaseholders were engaged in the following ways:

- Telephone survey of some new tenants;
- Telephone survey of tenants with no history on tenant involvement ;
- Telephone survey of people who have responded to previous surveys;
- Concierge officers signposting residents; and
- Local officers holding surgeries or telephone surveys.

It should be noted that involved tenants are those engaged in the Council's existing tenant engagement structure such as the City Housing Liaison Board and non involved tenants those who are currently not involved in the engagement structure.

Residents who are not Council tenants and stakeholders were engaged using the following methods:

- Presentation at Birmingham Social Housing Partnership to all Housing Associations;
- Presentation to all repairs contractors;
- Letter and follow up meeting for Neighbourhood Forums; and
- Letter to all elected members and attendance at some ward committees.

The consultation was promoted by use of the following methods:

- Council website with option to complete a questionnaire;
- Council facebook and twitter pages;
- Message on contact centre number;
- Posters in council buildings; and
- Press release.

Details of the consultation can be seen at Appendix B.

The consultation commenced on 19th July 2012 for a twelve week period. For the reasons outlined earlier, the consultation closing date was extended to 24 October 2012. An additional question (no. 10) was introduced to the questionnaire to provide tenants and others with the opportunity to set out their views on the potential retention of these two existing engagement structures.

> "Please set out your views on the potential retention of our existing engagement structure of Housing Liaison Boards and City Housing Liaison Boards alongside other options in the consultation paper at the District and Neighborhood level".

Because early respondents did not have the opportunity to respond to this question every effort was subsequently made to contact this group. It should be noted therefore that the responses to this question do not represent a full sample size as not all responses had contact details.

- *Analysis*

All responses were entered into an Excel database by the Resident Involvement Team and hard copies of the responses retained. Some forms did not include the respondent stating if they were currently involved with the housing service. However, this was added by officers from local databases, for example if they were involved as an HLB member, to enable the data to be more fully representative. All comments recorded on the forms were entered onto the data base, and a full record kept where comments were very detailed and hence too long to fully record. The Resident Involvement team carried out a quality assurance audit on the data input.

For analysis purposes a new Excel spread sheet was developed to include only the relevant data required for analysis. To ensure data protection regulations were adhered to any names or contact details were removed.

The quantitative responses (yes/no) were analysed using Microsoft Excel pivot tables. The responses were recorded for each question and also whether they were provided by involved or non involved tenants. This enabled comparison between the average responses for all respondents and for involved and non involved tenants. The findings are presented in tables and graphs with accompanying text later in the report.

The qualitative responses were analysed in two different ways:

- All comments were considered overall and any emerging themes/common issues were highlighted overall. The comments for each question were then considered and again common themes/issues highlighted.
- The comments were also coded (codes can be seen in Appendix C) in the Excel database using a range of themes and analysed again. This approach enabled each question to be evaluated individually and the number of comments under each theme to be counted.

Therefore, it could be established how many comments supported each proposal or how many were against the ideas. In addition the comments were analysed for all respondents and for tenants who are already involved in engaging with the Council and those who are currently not. This enabled two different perspectives to be considered.

Findings

Quantitative Analysis

392 consultation responses have been received. In addition there were two petitions, two letters addressed to the leader and a range of comments recorded at group consultations. These have all been considered in this report.

Headline findings are as follows:

Table two illustrates that 50% of respondents were non involved tenants and 44% those currently involved in the tenant engagement structure. It should be noted that currently around 0.5% of our tenants are involved in tenant engagement and, therefore, the 50% of non involved tenants is perhaps more representative of this much larger group.

Table two

Involved/non involved	Number	%
Involved tenant	173	44.1%
Non involved tenant	196	50.0%
Councillor	3	0.8%
Housing Association	3	0.8%
Lib Dem Office	1	0.2%
Don't know	18	4.1%
Total	**392**	**100%**

For each question respondents had the opportunity to answer 'yes' or 'no'; 'yes' meaning they agree with the proposals and 'no' that they did not. On average across all of the questions the rate of 'yes' and 'no' responses is **38% 'yes'** and **62% 'no'**. Out of the all questions the lowest rate of 'no' responses was for question 2 which involved supporting increasing the range of opportunities to get involved in the neighbourhood. Figure one illustrates the split across 'yes' and 'no' answers.
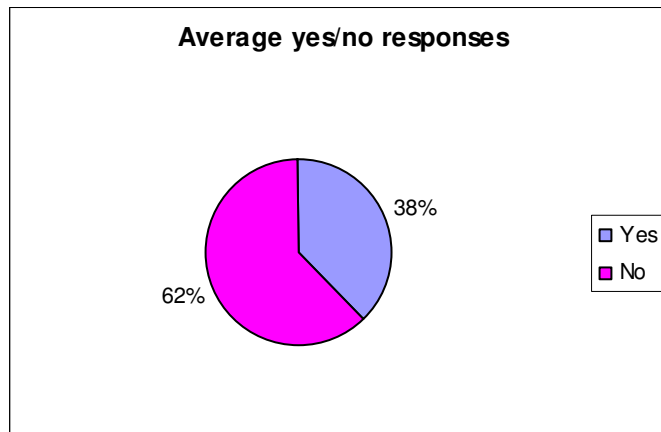
Figure one

Average yes/no responses

Table three illustrates the level of 'yes' and 'no' responses to each question and whether they were from involved or non involved tenants. It should be noted that question 10 was an open question and, therefore, respondents provided comments rather than saying 'yes' or 'no'.

Table three

Response	Q1 %	Q2 %	Q3 %	Q4 %	Q5 %	Q6 %	Q7 %	Q8 %	Q9 %
Involved:									
Yes	11.6%	13.9%	8.1%	11.6%	11.0%	11.6%	12.7%	10.4%	9.2%
No	78.0%	71.7%	76.9%	74.6%	72.8%	74.6%	71.7%	74.0%	75.1%
Don't know	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Blank	10.4%	13.9%	15.0%	0.0%	16.2%	13.9%	15.0%	15.0%	15.0%
Miscellaneous	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Not involved:									
Yes	61.2%	62.2%	52.6%	54.1%	53.1%	51.0%	55.1%	49.0%	45.4%
No	29.1%	28.0%	35.2%	31.6%	34.7%	36.7%	33.7%	30.6%	33.2%
Don't know	2.0%	0.0%	2.6%	4.6%	3.6%	1.0%	2.0%	4.1%	3.1%
Blank	7.1%	8.8%	9.2%	9.2%	8.2%	8.7%	8.7%	13.8%	17.3%
Miscellaneous	0.5%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	2.6%	0.5%	2.6%	1.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

On average across all of the questions for respondents involved in the current tenant engagement structure the rate of 'yes' and 'no' responses is **13% 'yes'** and **87% 'no'**. This is a clear difference to the average scores from all respondents. Although 'no' responses for all questions were over 70% the lowest was for questions 2 and 7. Question 2 which involved supporting establishing Resident Neighbourhood Panels, whilst question 7 was around establishing Citywide Task and Finish Groups for specific topics.

On average across all of the questions for respondents not currently involved in the tenant engagement structure the rate of 'yes' and 'no' responses is **62% 'yes'** and **38% 'no'.** The non involved tenants were most opposed to question 3 which was in respect of HLB discretionary funding being decided by Ward Councillors, whilst most were in favour of question 1, supporting

re-establishing the two strands of tenant engagement into District Liaison Panels and Neighbourhood activity.

It is clear there are variances between 'yes' and 'no' responses from respondents currently involved in the current tenant engagement structure and those who are not. Those respondents involved are very clear in their message that they want the structure to remain as it is, **87%**, whilst those not involved are more supportive of the proposed changes, **62%**. The following table shows these recorded responses.

Figure two illustrates the above.

Figure two

'Yes' and 'No' responses
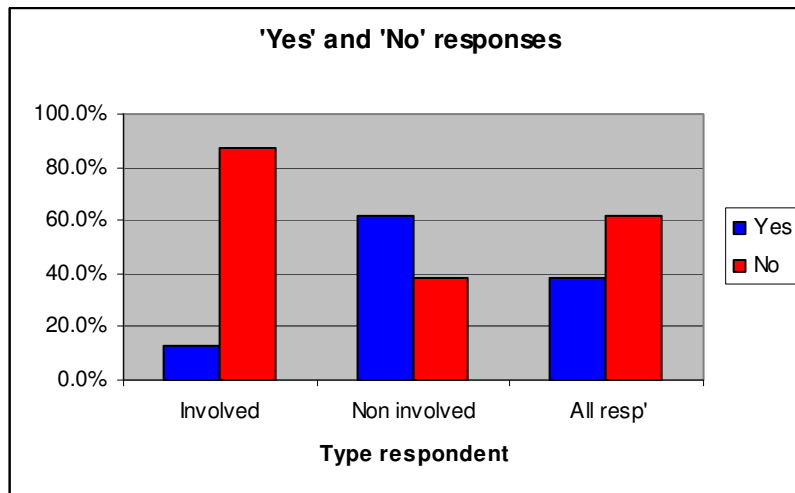
Qualitative Analysis

In addition to replying 'yes' and 'no', respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals in general and for each question. Around a third of respondents chose to offer additional comments, ideas and suggestions regarding how tenant engagement could look going forwards. Of these comments 51% were made by involved tenants and 49% by non involved.

There was a wide range of comments and this section presents two methods of analysis. First the comments were considered overall alongside emerging themes for each question. Then the comments were coded into more specific themes/responses such as good idea or unclear about proposals. The codes can be seen in Appendix C.

Some of the main themes emerging from the comments made for each question is:

- **Question 1** - provoked a largely mixed response in which many spoke in favour of proposed changes and were critical of HLBs. A similar number defended HLB record dating back 20 years. Many felt the new proposal would get more people involved though some expressed doubts about how likely this was. There were several

favourable comments about bringing decision making down to a local level;

- **Question 2** - several comments affirmed the desire to have as many tenants as possible involved, though some questioned how likely this was given the historical difficulty in engaging people. Several respondents were in favour of a neighbourhood rather than a district approach. Many respondents were keen for the groups to be open to all residents, including owner occupiers, so it would be more representative of the local community;

- **Question 3** - respondents were keen on transparency and being kept informed on how funding is spent. There was concern that if proposal was put into action HLBs would lose out on funding and that tenants would lose decision making responsibility to Ward Councillors;

- **Question 4** - as for question two, which refers to the detail of how District Housing Liaison Panels could operate, many respondents mentioned the need for groups to be cross tenure and to get more people involved. Some respondents found this question difficult to understand resulting in the lowest response rate;

- **Question 5** - respondents seemed to be in support of a Tenants Convention though some pointed out that there is already a Tenants Annual Conference. There appeared to be more support for the convention rather than the Tenants Champion. Some respondents did not support the new proposals and thought things should remain as they are;

- **Question 6** - respondents in general seemed supportive of electing a Tenants Champion with the Chair of HLB taking on the role initially. Those seeking to preserve HLB structure as it currently exists were opposed to the proposal in general;

- **Question 7** - some respondents felt there were already groups carrying out the role of the proposed Task and Finish Groups, or that local HLBs could take on the role. Equality issues were raised by several respondents as a focus that needs to be maintained. Many respondents felt that the performance of any such groups should be closely monitored;

- **Question 8** - many respondents felt it a good idea to be able to hold landlords to account and the new structure would enable this to improve. Respondents felt it would be more effective at a district level;

- **Question 9** – many comments underlined the desire for involvement at a local level. There was concern that the proposals would not increase engagement as there are always people who do not wish to be involved. Hence, they would not increase inclusiveness. Many comments were about the proposals not being explained clearly and that the consultation was confusing: and

- **Question 10** – some comments were in favour of a dual system featuring both HLBs and District Panels. Other respondents wanted the HLBs to remain as they advocate they have been successful for many years. As with previous questions some respondents stressed the need to promote cross tenure engagement.

Below are some typical examples of the range of comments received. The full range of comments has been retained in a consultation source data base.

"HLB has worked well for 20 years on a monthly basis which will be taken away from us".

"It's a good idea and I support changing the structure and getting more people involved".

"If it's not broke why fix it".

"I support this proposal but think all residents both tenants, owner occs leaseholders etc should have involvement to allow for a good community existence".

"There is no evidence that this increases engagement at any level".

"It would, more tenants would get involved and a smaller community/neighbourhood level".

"People on HLBs don't communicate so ward committees much better way of allocating funding".

"Certainly not. I believe tenants are quite capable of managing this budget and it should remain in the control of the HLB. Putting bids to councillors is not the same thing at all, as managing yourself".

Qualitative Analysis - Coded by Theme

Figure three illustrates the percentage of respondents who provided comments for each question. Question four had the lowest number of comments and this may be due to the fact that some people felt it was difficult to understand. Question ten is slightly lower than other questions, but this reflects a partial sample response.

% comments made each question
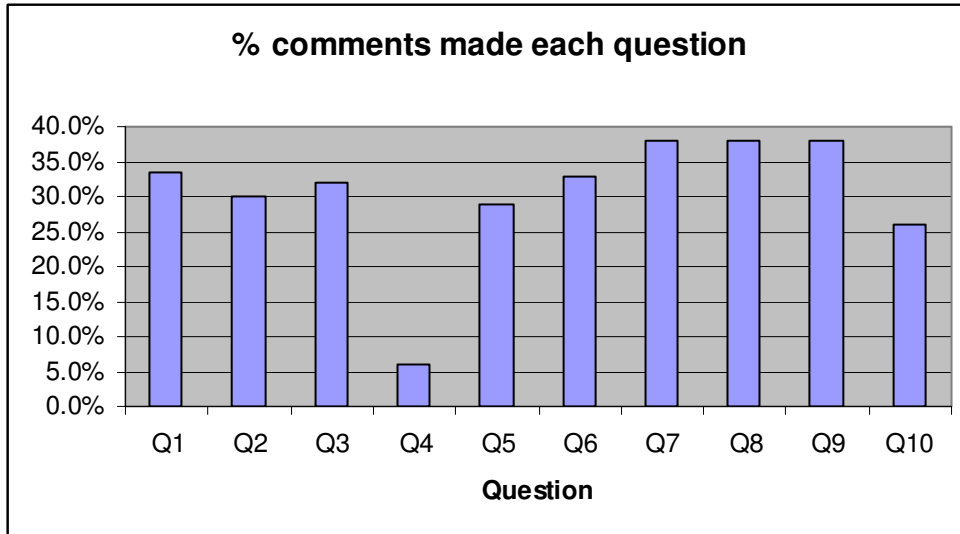
The most comments were made in respect of the following codes:

- A – good idea;
- B – good idea but people need to be involved and have a say;
- C – not a good idea; and
- P – Current system works. CHLB and HLBs work so don't change.

It is these codes that form the basis of the coded qualitative analysis. Table four shows the number of people who made comments relating to these themes for each question.

Table four

Response	Qualitative coding				Qualitative coding			
	A	B	C	P	A	B	C	P
Question 1					**Question 6**			
Involved	3	2	15	14	11	0	10	8
Non involved	55	9	2	3	35	1	6	1
Other	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Total	**59**	**11**	**17**	**18**	**48**	**1**	**16**	**9**
Question 2					**Question 7**			
Involved	7	4	5	15	8	2	11	3
Non involved	44	6	3	2	48	1	7	1
Other	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
Total	**52**	**10**	**8**	**18**	**57**	**4**	**18**	**5**
Question 3					**Question 8**			
Involved	10	1	14	8	8	0	16	1
Non involved	45	0	10	5	50	2	4	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	**56**	**1**	**24**	**13**	**58**	**2**	**20**	**2**
Question 4					**Question 9**			
Involved	3	1	4	1	3	1	22	1
Non involved	10	0	1	0	34	9	8	0
Other	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	**14**	**1**	**5**	**1**	**38**	**10**	**30**	**2**
Question 5					**Question 10**			
Involved	10	0	17	5	7	1	0	40
Non involved	37	1	6	1	4	0	0	12
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Total	**48**	**1**	**23**	**6**	**11**	**1**	**0**	**64**

Overall the comments appear to support the proposals and think they are a good idea. But, it should be remembered that only a third of tenants chose to provide comments. More involved tenants commented that the proposals were not a good idea and felt most strongly about questions three, five and nine. On average 103 respondents provided comments for each question, 26% of all respondents. Many people commented that the system should stay the way it is, especially when asked question ten which focused on the potential retention of our existing engagement structure of Housing Liaison Boards and City Housing Liaison Boards alongside other options in the consultation paper at the District and Neighborhood level. A few respondents suggested a dual system combing HLBs alongside District Housing Panels.

Many respondents who commented that the proposals were a good idea also added that it would be important to get people involved and to allow them to have their say. There were further responses highlighting that the proposals were a good idea, in particular in support of a neighbourhood level approach.

Further comments

In addition to the comments made in direct response to the questions, two petitions were received alongside letters addressed to the Leader of Birmingham City Council and general comments recorded at group

consultations. There were also a range of questions that arose throughout the consultation that were answered in a separate document.

One of the letters was from a leaseholder who wanted to meet to discuss the proposals further, this has taken place, and the other from an involved tenant providing suggestions for an alternative structure and ensuring that legal issues are considered. Importantly it pointed out that all tenants need to be fully aware of and understand any proposed changes.

Many of the additional feedback included:

- What is wrong with the original structure?
- What are the rights for owner occupiers?
- Concern about current performance groups;
- TMOs not mentioned in the proposals;
- LLB should be retained;
- SHLB not mentioned in the proposals; and
- Concern about proposed abolition of HLBs and consolidation of funding.

All of these comments are consistent with the above analysis and have been taken into consideration.

The petitions were against any abolition of Housing Liaison Boards and any merger of the HLB budget for local improvement. There were 26 signatures, of which three were Councillors.

Overall 38% of respondents agreed with the proposals and 62% did not. Involved tenants were more firmly against the proposal, 87%, compared to the 62% of non involved tenants who supported the proposals. Only 0.5% of tenants are currently involved in the tenant engagement structure. Hence, 62% of non involved tenants are representative of a much larger group.

Over a third of respondents chose to provide comments on the proposals and in general they were positive and supported them. But there were a high number who felt that the system should remain as it is. Respondents' were supportive of a neighbourhood level system, funds being allocated at a local level, getting more people involved and having cross tenure representation.

Appendix A

Summary of questions

Question 1

Do you support re-establishing the two strands of tenant engagement into District Housing Liaison Panels and Neighbourhood activity?

Question 2

At neighbourhood level do you support establishing Residents Neighbourhood Panels and introducing a range of new ways for involvement in neighbourhoods?

Question 3

Do you support HLB discretionary funding becoming Ward Housing Funding to be considered alongside the allocation of Community Chesty?

Question 4

Do you support the proposed guidance for District Housing Liaison Panels as a basis for developing model terms of reference that will support local neighbourhood structures and integrated services?

Question 5

Do you support establishing a Tenants Champion and an annual Tenants Convention?

Question 6

Do you support the proposal that the current Chair of City Housing Liaison Board undertakes the role of Tenants Champion during a transition period and tenants elect a tenants champion after?

Question 7

Do you support the proposal that city wide Task and Finish Groups be established for single issue topics.

Examples could be Equalities, commissioning and procurement or serious performance concerns.

Question 8

Do the overall proposals provide the opportunities you would expect to have to hold your landlord to account and drive service improvement?

Question 9

Do you think that the proposals provide for inclusive tenant engagement?

Additional question 10

Please set out your views on the potential retention of our existing engagement structure of Housing Liaison Boards and City Housing Liaison Boards alongside other options in the consultation paper at the District and Neighborhood level.

Appendix B

Stakeholder	Format	Aim	Date
City Housing Liaison Board	Regular Meeting	Introduce the consultation and scope	19 July 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Press Release	Advertise the consultations	20 July 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	BCC Facebook and Twitter pages	Advertise the consultations	20 July 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Newsletter through Forward	Advertise the consultations	Mid Oct 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Website and BeHeard Database	Advertise the consultations	20 July 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Contact Centre Recorded Message	Advertise the consultations	7 Sep – 24 Oct 2012
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Poster displayed in Housing sites	Advertise the consultations	N/A
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Poster display in community buildings	Advertise the consultations	N/A
All Tenants, Leaseholders and other Residents	Rents Team to publicise consultation through regular interaction	Advertise the consultations	N/A
Elected Members – District Committee Chairs	Executive Members of Local Services Meeting	Introduce the consultation and scope	26 July 2012
Elected Members – All	Letter	Introduce the consultation and scope	27 July 2012
Chair of City HLB	Special Meetings	Update on the consultation	31 July 2012
Housing Integrated Service Leads (GR7s)	Email	Update on principles of the consultation and intended changes	27 July 2012
All Landlord Services Staff – South	District Away Days	Update on principles of the consultation and intended changes	25 July 2012
All Landlord Services Staff – North	District Away Days	Update on principles of the consultation and intended changes	8 Aug 2012
All Landlord Services Staff - West	District Away Days	Update on principles of the consultation and intended changes	24 & 26 July 2012
All Landlord Services Staff - East	District Away Days	Update on principles of the consultation and intended changes	15 Aug 2012
Area Housing SSMs	Special Meeting	Introduce the consultation and scope; go through presentation to use in consultation	25 July 2012
Area Housing TPOs & RI Team	RI Project Board Meeting	Introduce the consultation and scope; go through presentation to use in consultation	31 July 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Ladywood	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	27 July 2012

Stakeholder	Format	Aim	Date
HLB & CTG Members – Selly Oak & Hall Green	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	30 July 2012
HLB & CTG Members - Yardley	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	31 July 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Hodge Hill	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	31 July 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Edgbaston & Northfield	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	7 Aug 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Perry Barr	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	9 Aug 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Sutton	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	15 Aug 2012
HLB & CTG Members – Erdington	Special Meeting and Follow up through further special meetings or regular HLB meetings for feedback	Consult on the proposals	15 Aug 2012
Resident Associations – Sutton & Erdington	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	29 Aug 2012
Resident Associations – Ladywood	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	4/5 Sep 2012
Resident Associations – Hodge Hill	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	w/c 8 Oct 2012
Resident Associations - Yardley	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	27 Sep/ 4 Oct/ 5 Oct 2012
Resident Associations – Selly Oak & Hall Green	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	24 Sep 2012
Resident Associations - Northfield	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	5, 26 & 28 Sept 2012
Service Improvement Groups (FYI – all HLB members) - Performance	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	24 Sep 2012

Stakeholder	Format	Aim	Date
Service Improvement Groups (FYI – all HLB members) - RI	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	10 Sept 2012
Service Improvement Groups (FYI – all HLB members) – Equalities	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	28 Sept 2012
Service Improvement Groups (FYI – all HLB members) – Strategy	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	6 Sept 2012
TMOs	TMO Liaison Committee	Consult on the proposals	13 Sept 2012
Mystery Shoppers	Mystery Shopping Meeting	Consult on the proposals	19 Sept 2012
Sheltered Housing Liaison Board	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	21 Aug 2012
Leaseholders Liaison Board	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	12 Sept 2012
Pending Involvement Tenants / Tenants who have completed menu of involvement	Telephone Survey	Consult on the proposals	6 Aug – 24 Oct 2012
Not involved tenants (different sources – letterbox competitions; RI surveys; new tenants)	Telephone Survey	Consult on the proposals	6 Aug – 24 Oct 2012
Not involved tenants	Face to face discussions by estate based officers	Consult on the proposals	7 Sep – 24 Oct 2012
Not involved tenants	Face to face discussions by TPOs at local community sites	Consult on the proposals	N/A
Repairs Contractors	Repairs Communication Task & Finish Group	Consult on the proposals	11 Oct 2012
Community Organisations	Letter	Consult on the proposals	29 Aug 2012
Community Organisations	Special city wide meeting in follow up to letter	Consult on the proposals	23 Oct 2012
Birmingham Social Housing Partnership	Regular Meeting	Consult on the proposals	21 Sep 2012
Birmingham Social Housing Partnership	Email across network	Consult on the proposals	7 Aug 2012
Birmingham Public Health	Special Meeting	Consult on the proposals	27 Sep 2012
Birmingham Voluntary Services Centre	Email across network	Consult on the proposals	17 Sep 2012
All local authorities & housing providers	Press Release	Advertise the consultations	27 July 2012

Appendix C

Code	Theme
A	Good idea.
B	Good idea, but people need to be involved and have a say.
C	Not a good idea.
D	Good idea, but not enough information to make a decision.
E	Not a good idea, travel issues including disabilities.
F	Good idea, but only if money stays in the area.
G	Don't know.
H	Not a good idea, already have tenants' conference.
I	Support tenants' conference, but not champion.
J	Good idea, but want more than one tenant champion at a local level.
K	Good idea, but would it work?
L	Maybe.
M	Miscellaneous.
N	Unclear about proposal.
O	Why do you need this?
P	Current system works. CHLB and HLBs work so don't change.
Q	Not enough information to comment.
R	Conflicted views.
S	Want dual system i.e. new proposals alongside HLBs.

Codes for involved/non involved tenants (Column C)

Code	Response
NInv	Non involved tenant
Inv	Involved tenant
Cllr	Councillor
ANInv	Assumed non involved tenant
AInv	Assumed involved tenant
DK	Don't know

Agreement with questions

The codes used were:

- B = Blank
- DK = Don't know
- M = Miscellaneous = unsure etc.
- N = No
- Y = Yes.

The involved and assumed non involved were added together as were the non involved. The don't knows were categorised as don't know and any other responses recorded were coded as other. The decision taken was due to the

relatively small sample size and hence small numbers in the categories within the other code.

Birmingham City Council

Localisation and tenant engagement: proposals for a new tenant engagement structure

Consultation

Birmingham City Council
July 2012

26

Contents

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Foreword by the Leader of the Council

Devolution and localisation is at the heart of the Council's vision for Birmingham and these proposals set out how we will provide a stronger voice for council tenants from the start. This means:

- Having a real say on their local housing service; in shaping new provision of homes, repair and improvements of homes, allocations and management of homes;
- Making positive improvements to the quality of their local neighbourhood;
- Influencing and improving access to a wider range of local services.

Housing landlord services will be delivered in tandem with other services such as local libraries, leisure centres, community development and play and advice services. All of these services provide the building blocks to developing a better quality of life and shaping flourishing neighbourhoods. But we also need to work differently if we are to capitalise on these new opportunities by organising our frontline teams so they are highly visible, responsive to community needs and organised in integrated local services teams.

We have made provision for tenant engagement to be rooted in the devolved political decision-making structure and have devolved considerable decision-making and budget responsibilities for housing landlord services, alongside other local services, to ten new District Committees. In my Policy Statement on 12 June 2012, I set out my intention to set up new District Housing Panels and I have made provision for these to have direct representation on District Committees through co-opted places. This is about the devolution of power and a drive to improve social cohesion of this city, not a restructuring of service delivery for the sake of it. Our long term business plan sets out a programme of investment in our housing stock, replacing obsolete stock, building new homes to meet housing needs and driving up the quality of housing services. Tenants will, through the structure described in this document, help to shape and drive this progressive agenda.

This consultation document gives you details of my proposals for a new tenant engagement structure to enable tenants to play a full role in the Council's approach to devolution and localisation by ensuring that tenant engagement is inclusive, links with the new integrated management teams in the Local Services Directorate and with decision-making by District Committees.

The document explains the background to the new tenant engagement proposals and gives you information about these proposals. It also tells you who you can contact for more information. Our ambition is to place tenants centre stage of devolved power in this city and to build on the strong foundation of commitment and experience that we already have to create the largest, most successful and engaged tenant structure in the UK.

I urge you to read the document.

I am keen to hear your views and look forward to receiving your comments on these proposals.

Councillor Sir Albert Bore, Leader of the Council

The consultation process and how to respond

Scope of the consultation

This consultation is about tenant engagement with the Council. It sets out the Council's proposals to change the ways tenants can both hold them to account and also influence delivery of public services as part of its vision for devolution and localisation.

This consultation is aimed primarily at tenants of Birmingham City Council. Council staff aim to talk to and call as many tenants as possible during the next few weeks.

Views are also sought from Birmingham residents across all housing tenures (the wider community), staff of Birmingham City Council and their unions and partners of Birmingham City Council including registered social housing providers operating in Birmingham.

The Council will work to consult with often excluded groups across all stakeholders.

The consultation will run for **12 weeks** from **19 July to 5pm on 11 October 2012**. The consultation period has been set at twelve weeks to provide the greatest possible opportunities for comment.

How to contact us

For enquiries please contact:
General enquiries: Talbinder Kaur
residentinvolvement@birmingham.gov.uk 0121 303 5160
North (Sutton Coldfield and Erdington Districts): Carol Dawson
carol.dawson@birmingham.gov.uk 0121303 1984
East (Hodge Hill, Yardley and Hall Green Districts): Ihjaz Afsar
ihjaz.afsar@birmingham.gov.uk 0121 303 1489
South (Northfield, Edgbaston and Selly Oak Districts): Guy Chaundy
guy.chaundy@birmingham.gov.uk 0121 303 5942
West and Central (Ladywood and Perry Barr Districts): Brenda Gallagher
brenda.gallagher@birmingham.gov.uk 0121 303 5942

Please send your response:
By web to: www.birmingham.gov.uk/engage
By email to: residentinvolvement@birmingham.gov.uk
Or by freepost to: Birmingham City Council, Resident Involvement, FREEPOST MID 18453, Louisa Ryland House, 2nd Floor, 44 Newhall St, Birmingham, B3 3BR

Other ways to get involved:
All tenants who are currently involved through existing tenant engagement structures will be engaged directly during the consultation process.

Executive summary

Background

On 12 June 2012 the Council adopted the 'Leader's Policy Statement' which put in place a new strategy for devolution and localisation. The policy objectives include devolving responsibility for a considerable range of executive responsibilities and budgets, including housing management functions, to ten District Committees and creating a new Local Services Directorate to deliver housing landlord services to tenants on a neighbourhood basis. This is alongside a range of other local services including youth services, community and play services, community libraries, community safety, neighbourhood offices, sport and leisure, refuse, highways and environmental wardens.

New national regulatory standards for social housing providers were introduced on 1 April 2012. The Council must comply with the Regulator's standards which include the requirement for co-regulation: where landlords, the regulator and tenants work together to set, monitor and ensure that standards are met.

These local and national changes provide the backdrop to the vision to strengthen the Council's accountability to its tenants; improve opportunities for tenants to formulate and make decisions about housing related policies and plans; facilitate effective tenant scrutiny and develop wider cross-tenure dialogue in which services to council tenants are considered alongside a range of local services. For the purpose of the consultation document the terms 'tenants' is defined as tenants and leaseholders of the Council.

Birmingham has a strong history of tenant involvement. Tenants who are currently engaged bring very considerable commitment and skills that drive service improvement. They are also active in the continuing process of getting new tenants involved in an increasingly diverse range of ways.

The current tenant involvement structure is made up of 34 Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs) at a level approximating to wards. HLBs are longstanding and have open access with appointed positions. At a citywide-level the City Housing Liaison Board (CHLB) and its sub-groups are longstanding, made up of members elected from HLBs and have member engagement from three political groups. At a District-level ten Constituency Tenant Groups were set up in 2006, with the aim of aligning with the former Constituency Committees. Members were recruited through open access to all tenants, targeted towards young tenants and tenants from black and minority ethnic communities, in order to increase the level of engagement with these previously under-represented groups. However these structures were not supported to develop along their original vision.

Summary of proposals

Current engagement structures need to change in order to realise the new Labour Council's vision for a stronger tenant engagement structure that is rooted in the newly devolved model of service delivery. The current and proposed tenant engagement structures at five levels of engagement, neighbourhood to city-level, are summarised below and then explained in detail in the following sections:

Level	Area	Current	Proposed
1	Neighbour-hood	None	A **range of new opportunities for tenants** to get involved with residents across all tenures to make neighbourhoods safer and greener places to live, and to access neighbourhood teams, partners and resources to get things done **Residents' Neighbourhood Panels** where tenants can to work with residents across all tenures to achieve neighbourhood improvements
2	Ward	Housing Liaison Boards	Ward Committees hold regular public meetings. District Housing Liaison Panels will advise District Committee on funding priorities for **Ward Housing Fund**, and submit project proposals to Ward Committees for decision
3	District	Constituency Tenant Groups	**District Housing Liaison Panels** will advise District Committees via up to two co-opted tenant places on District Committee **Youth District Housing Liaison Panels** represent young tenants
4	Quadrant (2 or 3 Districts)	None	No direct tenant engagement proposal. Administratively, integrated local services teams, including housing management teams, will be co-located in Quadrant Hub offices
5	City	City Housing Liaison Board	A **Tenants' Champion** An annual **Birmingham Tenants' Convention** Shortlife, ad hoc **Tenants' Task and Finish Groups** e.g. Equalities, Commissioning and Procurement.

Level 1 - Neighbourhood-level activity

Tenant activity at a neighbourhood-level will provide the **bedrock of tenant engagement** where tenants can work alongside residents of all housing tenures to take action as an individual or as part of a community group.

- Each neighbourhood will have a **Neighbourhood Champion**, injecting pride in Neighbourhoods. Champions will go through accredited training and then get ongoing support to lead a community **Planning for Real** process to identify local issues for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. Where ever the community think that local issues could be tackled by having a self-organised **Residents' Neighbourhood Panel** to help make things happen, they will be able to form one. Communities may want a Panel to concentrate on a single issue, such as making the neighbourhood greener, or to deal with a range of issues.

- Opportunities will increase for residents to get involved to make neighbourhoods **safer places** to live and work. Residents will develop mutually agreed behaviours, **Neighbourhood Agreements** and, where there is interest, residents will be able to undertake accredited training to become **Mediators** and be supported to link with local Justice Panels to mediate in neighbourhood disputes.

- Opportunities will increase for residents to get involved to make neighbourhoods **cleaner and greener places** to live and work. **Street Champions** will be recruited, undertake accredited training and be supported to act individually or as part of the group to take action such as litter picks or to report issues and track progress to achieve improvements on the ground.

- Everyone who gets involved in their neighbourhood will have easy access to the Council's integrated neighbourhood teams to get things done. All services will work to an agreed Neighbourhood Plan.

- It will be vital that HRA resources remain ringfenced to Council Housing stock. There will be opportunities for tenants to draw on Neighbourhood Caretakers and Trainees to carry out work and for tenants to have greater influence on HRA capital programme and environmental funding for **Neighbourhood Improvements**.

Level 2 – Ward-level activity

Ward Committees have been designated as the Council decision-making bodies with the responsibility for maintaining contact with local residents and community groups through the holding of regular public meetings. Tenant and resident groups described in this consultation paper will, therefore, be able to play a part in these meetings.

It is proposed that HLB discretionary finding is remodelled to **Ward Housing Funding**. District Committees, advised by District Housing Liaison Panels, would set priorities for Ward Housing Funding. Tenants would work with the Local Housing Manager in their neighbourhood to identify projects and Ward Committees would agree the project proposals within the framework of agreed priorities for the fund and alongside Community Chest funded projects.

Level 3 – District-level activity

Tenant activity at a district-level will provide the **means for tenants to hold devolved housing services to account** by monitoring performance, influencing local decisions and scrutinising services.

- Ten new District Committees now hold responsibility for the housing management functions in their locality, including tenant participation and engagement. Lack of support to Constituency Tenant Groups has resulted in a gap in tenant engagement at district level. To respond to the new focus on local performance monitoring and local decision-making the Council's ambition set out in the Leader's Policy Statement is to set up **new District Housing Panels.** The new District Housing Panels have been given the **working title of District Housing Liaison Panels** for the purpose of this consultation. They will have direct involvement in the formal structure of the Council though co-opted places on District Committee, providing a clearly defined role in shaping priorities for the devolved housing service and in supporting the challenge and overview of devolved housing services. Thus the new District Housing Liaison Panels will be the central building blocks of tenant governance, linking into the formal Council structure and fulfilling the regulatory role of tenant scrutiny. District Housing Liaison Panels will also shape their own work plan to scrutinise landlord services in line with the regulatory framework for social housing providers.

- The District Housing Liaison Panels will ensure strategic use of Ward Housing Fund by advising the District Committee on priorities for the Fund.

Level 4 – Quadrant-level activity

There are no direct tenant engagement proposals at quadrant-level.

The quadrant level is primarily administrative. All decision making bodies are either at a Ward (level 2), District (level 3) or City level (level 5). The management, administration and accommodation serving levels 2 and 3 will be provided from a quadrant "hub" office as part of the new Local Services Directorate. This will provide an efficient model for local management and will bring some currently centrally located teams into the locality. The integrated neighbourhood teams will operate through neighbourhood "spoke" offices, as well as being more visible out in the patch undertaking home visits and estate and neighbourhood walkabouts.

Local Delivery Groups also operate at this level coordinating strategic community safety work in the same geographical area as the Local Policing Units.
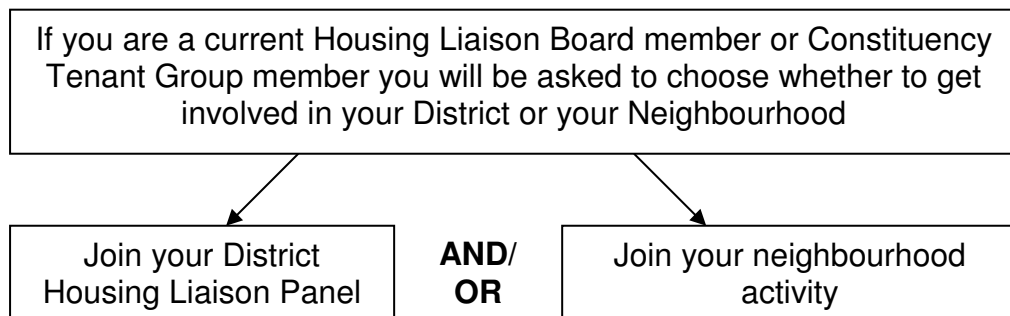
Level 5 – City-level activity

At a citywide-level, the Council has deleted all functional Cabinet Member portfolios and introduced theme based Cabinet Member portfolios to support localised and integrated service delivery. This has resulted in a mismatch with the current tenant engagement structure made up of City Housing Liaison Board and its sub-groups. District Housing Liaison Panels will be the new focus for decision-making and performance monitoring. However, there will remain a need to share best practice at a citywide level and it is therefore proposed to:

- Introduce and new role of **Tenants' Champion,** hold an **Annual Tenants' Convention** and set up and support short-life ad hoc **Citywide Tenant Task and Finish Groups** as necessary.

Support for tenants across the new tenant engagement structure

An infrastructure support and enabling programme for tenants will be put in place to **enable tenants to play a full role at whichever level of involvement their preference lies** in the new tenant engagement structure.

- **Adequate resources** and staff capacity building will be put in place to ensure that the expectations of tenants raised in the initial stages of the new proposals are not compromised by lack of support or resources. As part of the creation of a new Local Services Directorate the Council will reorganise its staff structure to help develop a staff culture and behaviour set shaped around the principles of localisation, community and customer focus to support tenants at all levels of engagement. The Council's localisation cultural change programme for staff will further strengthen the competency of staff to work with tenants and members in their locality.

- The very considerable **commitment and skills of tenants currently engaged** will not be lost in the proposed new approach. Currently involved tenants will be given a place of their choice, be that at a district or neighbourhood level. The council will work to build trust and support tenants to take on new roles, ensuring that tenant engagement is inclusive.

If you are a current Housing Liaison Board member or Constituency Tenant Group member you will be asked to choose whether to get involved in your District or your Neighbourhood

Join your District Housing Liaison Panel	**AND/ OR**	Join your neighbourhood activity

- The ambition of the new tenant engagement structure is to facilitate tenants' contribution to tackling inequality and promoting social inclusion by placing tenants at the heart of devolved, localised services. By monitoring and driving improvement in the services the ambition is for tenant engagement to **make a measurable local impact on outcomes that make a difference**, be that performance on rent arrears, voids, or repairs, to drive improvement in overall tenant satisfaction overall and improvement in the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality.

Question 1: Do you support establishing the two strands of tenant engagement into District Housing Liaison Panels and Neighbourhood activity?

Section 1:
The proposed role of tenants in their neighbourhoods

The Council is developing a new strategy for neighbourhoods, to be owned by the community. This will be one of the most ambitious programmes for social cohesion and regeneration at a neighbourhood level in the country. We want to ensure that tenants are fully engaged in this programme and get involved in wider cross-tenure engagement in neighbourhoods.

These proposals for neighbourhoods build on:
- Experience from the two path finder Community Based Housing Organisations (CBHOs) in Northfield and Hodge Hill in 2004, and the resident-led neighbourhood approach currently operating in Yardley and Hodge Hill;
- Experience in delivering the priority neighbourhood programme between 2009 and 2011.

Tenant activity at a neighbourhood-level will provide the **bedrock of tenant engagement** where tenants can take action alongside residents of all housing tenures as an individual or as part of a community group. There will be flexibility for you to get involved in your neighbourhood in different ways, depending on the issues that are important to you, and how you want to get involved. You will be able to get involved, as an individual or as part of group; by carrying out work such as community clear ups, or by reporting issues; through community networks or formal meetings.

The boundaries for each neighbourhood will be defined with residents and a **Neighbourhood Champion** will be recruited, gain accredited training and then get ongoing support to lead a community **Planning for Real** process to identify local issues, for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan where relevant.

Wherever residents think that local issues would benefit from a self-organised **Residents' Neighbourhood Panel** to help make things happen, they will be able to form one. Communities may want a Panel to concentrate on a single issue, such as making the neighbourhood greener, or to deal with a range of issues. Neighbourhood Panels could over time form into stand alone organisations such as a Neighbourhood Trust to access funding that is not available to the Council, or to set up a social enterprise.

Model terms of reference and options for Residents' Neighbourhood Panels will be developed by residents. Draft guidance on membership, composition, roles and responsibilities and procedures to populate the Panels is set out below for consultation purposes. As neighbourhoods vary in size and priorities across the city, each neighbourhood will have local flexibility to consider the model terms of reference and tailor them in accordance with their local circumstances. Accountable services will include housing landlord services, libraries, youth services, community libraries, community safety services, arts and leisure opportunities in their neighbourhood, highways, refuse collection, street cleaning.

Proposal	Neighbourhood-level draft guidance on terms of reference
Tenant group name / working title	The boundaries and number of **Residents' Neighbourhood Panels** will be defined with local communities.
Council housing stock covered	Each panel will cover very different numbers of council owned homes, alongside homes of all other tenures, boundaries will be defined with the local community.
Staff support	Each panel will be self-organised and managed by residents, with advice and guidance available from senior officers in the new Local Services Directorate
Primary purpose	The primary purpose of a Panel will be set by residents but could include one or more issues around safety, green and clean, or social investment. Whatever the primary purpose the Panel will: • Identify and tackle neighbourhood issues to deliver neighbourhood improvements and improve day to day practice and procedure across all local services; • Tackle issues of inequality, promote cohesion.
Main activities	• Identify issues for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan for the future ; • Receive information on and challenge day to day practice and procedure; • Represent other individual residents who identify issues or experience a poor service
Relationship within overall governance	Direct relationship with all neighbourhood based services with "patch responsibility"
Membership composition and selection	For guidance membership could be: • Open to all residents, including tenants and leaseholders; • Up to about 20 members in total, appropriate to local circumstances; • Open meetings

Opportunities will increase for residents to get involved to make neighbourhoods **safer places** to live and work by taking ownership of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in their street or neighbourhood. The Council operates a 'zero level tolerance' towards anti-social behaviour and ensures that tenants are held responsible for meeting the requirements of tenancy contracts, including requirements around behaviour. To support this the Council is introducing the opportunity for neighbourhoods to develop **Neighbourhood Agreements** in which all residents across all tenures develop mutually agreed behaviours. These agreements will be enforced by localised neighbourhood management teams. But residents can help too in a very practical way by training to be a **Mediator** to link with local justice panels and mediate in neighbourhood disputes. Any neighbourhood that wishes to tackle safety issues will be integrated into the broader crime and anti-social behaviour work carried out by the Police thereby effectively linking residents with the developing network of Neighbourhood Tasking Groups, Neighbourhood Wardens and Street Wardens.

Opportunities will increase for residents to get involved to make neighbourhoods **cleaner and greener places** to live and work. Residents will be able to take ownership of raising the quality of the environment on their street or in their neighbourhood in a very practical way through the **relaunched Street Champions** scheme, a proven scheme which the vast majority (78%) of volunteers involved so far felt helped to keep their locality cleaner. As an individual or as part of a group, tenants will be able to choose to get involved and accumulate volunteer hours by:
- auditing the quality of their environment for cleanliness including paying greater attention to the condition of the gardens of elderly or disabled tenants
- finding out about the local services available and how to get things done so they can pass that information on to neighbours and friends
- getting issues resolved themselves by reporting and tracking progress of issues such as flytipping, graffiti, litter or overgrown gardens through a dedicated free phone or website. Neighbourhood Trainees are a dedicated resource to respond to Street Champion's requests, alongside neighbourhood tasking requests. But if Street Champions' requests can't be dealt with by the Neighbourhood trainees the request will be dealt with by a service provider be that Fleet and Waste Management, Parks, Housing, Police or Fire.
- getting funding and equipment to organise community events such as litter picks, graffiti removal, or planting bulbs or hanging baskets
- Accessing training to gain practical skills such as graffiti removal or to improve their knowledge such as identifying dangerous waste and who to contact
- recruiting and mentoring new Street Champions
- using the Street Champions website to take part in a virtual communication network and by contributing issues and solutions for better services from the Council and other locally based organisations, that could become actions in Neighbourhood Plans

Through this proven scheme, Street Champions have already been the catalysts for services to take local action including dedicating additional local resources for street cleaning, stepping up enforcement action on illegal dumping, talking to local schools about recycling and arranging for an artist to work with volunteers to replace inappropriate graffiti with their artwork on skate park ramps. The Council will work with Street Champions to find solutions to whatever problems are evident.

Everyone who gets involved in their neighbourhood will have easy access to the Council's integrated neighbourhood teams and relevant partners who will be responsive to make things happen. All services will work to the agreed Neighbourhood Plan.

HRA resources will remain ringfenced to Council housing stock and there will be more opportunities for tenants to direct the use of HRA resources in their neighbourhood. There will be opportunity for tenants to draw on Neighbourhood Caretakers and Trainees to carry out work. There will be opportunity for tenants to have greater influence on HRA capital programme and environmental funding for **Neighbourhood Improvements.** HRA funded projects will be planned alongside joint / complementary schemes delivered through with non-HRA funding to ensure the greatest possible impact on neighbourhood improvements.

> Question 2: At neighbourhood-level do you support establishing Residents' Neighbourhood Panels and introducing a range of new ways for involvement in neighbourhoods?

Section 2: The proposed role of tenants in their Ward

The ward level of engagement for tenants is through Ward Committees.

Ward Committees have been designated as the Council decision-making bodies with the responsibility for maintaining contact with local residents and community groups through the holding of regular public meetings. Whilst there are no proposals for direct tenant engagement at ward-level, tenants will be able to play a part in Ward Committee meetings.

Ward Committees play a part in approving Community Chest schemes and agreeing support for Neighbourhood Forums in line with agreed priorities established via District Committees.

There is an opportunity to increase the impact of the current HLB discretionary funding HRA resource by planning projects alongside complementary schemes for neighbourhood improvements funded through Community Chest. It is therefore proposed that the current HLB discretionary funding from HRA resources be remodelled into a new **Ward Housing Fund** allocated to wards on the basis of relative size and level of deprivation. Tenants would identify neighbourhood aspirations and work with their Local Housing Manager to develop proposals for projects that are in line with agreed priorities established via District Committees. Proposals would be submitted to Ward Committees for decision alongside the allocation of Community Chest.

Question 3: Do you support HLB discretionary funding becoming Ward Housing Funding to be considered alongside the allocation of Community Chest?

Section 3:
The proposed role of tenants in their District

The new District Housing Liaison Panels will be the **central building blocks of tenant governance**, linking into the formal political decision-making structure and fulfilling the regulatory role of tenant scrutiny.

Provision for District Housing Liaison Panels to be part of the formal governance structure of the Council has been provided for in the protocol for the new District Committees. Building on this provision, model terms of reference for District Housing Liaison Panels will be developed with tenants, drawing on national best practice guidance for effective tenant scrutiny to be:

- Clearly defined with real power – for tenant scrutiny to be effective it must integrate with strategic and performance management frameworks;
- Tenant led and independent – independent from the landlord's governance; accountable, open and transparent;
- Clear roles and responsibilities with capacity to deliver;
- Decisions based on freely available and commissioned information – access to a range of information form different sources and ability to influence how and why the Council collects and analyses key data;
- Embedding scrutiny in performance management arrangements – part of the formal structure of the Council;
- Encourage equality and promote diversity – scrutinising access and fairness of service delivery, raising the profile of scrutiny amongst tenants, what it is and how to get involved;

Draft guidance on membership, composition, roles and responsibilities and procedures to populate the panels is set out overleaf for consultation purposes. The guidance has been drawn up against the regulatory standards for tenant empowerment and engagement and these standards will be used as the basis for internal challenge as the guidance is developed into model terms of reference with tenants. Once agreed, the model terms of reference will be tested through external assessment against the joint Tenant Participation Advisory Service, Housemark and Charter Institute of Housing accreditation scheme for tenant scrutiny, with the view of achieving this quality assurance award.

As districts vary in size and circumstance across the city, each district will have local flexibility to consider the model terms of reference and tailor them in accordance with their local circumstances.

Proposal	District-level draft guidance on terms of reference
Tenant group name / **working title**	Ten **District Housing Liaison Panels** each covering one of Birmingham's ten parliamentary constituencies.
Council Housing stock covered	Variable in the number of council owned homes from around 1,900 to 11,000 averaging about 6,500
Staff support	Panels will be serviced by the relevant Senior Service Manager for Area Housing All service providers affecting local housing and environmental conditions will be accountable to the Panel through staff with the right culture, capacity and approach for effective co-regulation.
Primary purpose	Setting local priorities. Driving local standards of performance in all aspects of housing landlord services (management, maintenance and investment) ensuring high levels of service for tenants. Negotiating environmental standards and adequate policing. Challenging local services including housing, environmental services, health, police and schools services to work better together. Influencing housing and housing-related neighbourhood renewal and regeneration activities. Accredited to fulfil the regulatory role of tenant scrutiny. **Youth Panels** providing Young People's perspective. This panel will be developed with the support of youth engagement specialists in the Youth Service.
Main activities	• Receive information on the needs of the district and influence future strategy and policy through identifying priorities for inclusion in the **District Plan** and future procurement and commissioning. • Focus on local performance. Set the key performance questions for housing and the environment in the district. Receive key performance indicators that answer those questions, with insight to generate discussions. Recommend standards and targets for service delivery and monitor service delivery.

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Proposal	District-level draft guidance on terms of reference
	• Plan and implement housing and housing-related neighbourhood renewal and regeneration activities. • Choose scrutiny projects and scrutinise services to provide an independent view to District Committee on performance against the consumer regulatory standards. Make clear, evidence based recommendations to District Committee to shape future strategy, policy and plans. • Ensure strategic use of Ward Housing Funding by setting district priorities against which projects will be assessed and decisions made by Ward Committees.
Relationship within overall governance	Representation on District Committees via up to two District Housing Liaison Panel members as co-opted, non-voting members
Membership composition and selection	Open to all tenants and leaseholders within the district Each District Housing Liaison Panel will be made up of between 9 and 15 members in total, appropriate to local circumstances, with between 2 and 3 places set aside for young people and remaining places allocated to provide proportional representation for each ward. Current HLB and CTG members will be offered a place on the District Housing Liaison Panel where they indicate that is their preference, and will be supported to fulfil their new role. If places are oversubscribed local solutions will be sought. If places are remaining or arise, all potential new members will be supported before they take on the new role. Open meetings

Question 4: Do you support the proposed guidance as a basis for developing model terms of reference for District Housing Liaison Panels that will support local neighbourhood structures and integrated services?

Section 4:
The proposed role of tenants in their Quadrant

The quadrant level of engagement for tenant engagement is primarily administrative. There are no direct tenant engagement proposals at quadrant-level. All decision making bodies are either at a Ward (level 2), District (level 3) or City level (level 5). The management, administration and accommodation serving levels 2 and 3 will be provided from a quadrant "hub" as part of the new Local Services Directorate. This will provide an efficient model for local management and bring some city located teams into the locality.

The integrated neighbourhood teams will operate through neighbourhood "spoke" offices as well as being more visible out in the patch undertaking home visits and estate and neighbourhood walkabouts.

Local Delivery Groups also operate at this level coordinating strategic community safety work in the same geographical area as the Local Policing Units.

Section 5: The proposed role of tenants citywide

The principle decisions and accountabilities relating to housing landlord services are now undertaken at district level. District Housing Liaison Panel members will influence District Committees and District Committee Chairs have direct representation at a citywide-level though attendance and participation in the Council's Cabinet meetings. There will no longer be a role for City Housing Liaison Board and its standing sub-groups.

However there will be a need for issues to be considered across the 65,000 Council owned homes citywide, on an ad hoc basis. To bring together best practice and common issues from across the districts a **Tenants' Champion** will be established and an **Annual Tenants' Convention** will be held.

It is proposed that the current chair of City Housing Liaison Board becomes the first Tenants' Champion, during the transition period, to undertake duties including planning and chairing the annual Tenants' Convention and championing the devolved tenant engagement structure. Thereafter it is proposed that the Tenants' Champion be elected for a period to be determined with tenants.

It is proposed that the first Annual Tenants' Convention be open to all tenants and includes increasing understanding amongst tenants of different ways to get involved by inviting prospective new participants to come along and find out how to get involved, sharing best practice, celebrating achievements from involvement during the past year and planning ways to develop involvement for the coming year.

Whilst there will no longer be a role for standing citywide groups, short-life **Citywide Task and Finish groups** will be supported as appropriate for single issue topics that could include scrutinising serious detrimental performance escalated from District Housing Liaison Panels, procuring and commissioning citywide frameworks for services that will be managed through districts, or influencing specific topic issues as necessary, such as universal credit or tenancy policy.

> Question 5: Do you support establishing a Tenants' Champion and an Annual Tenants' Convention?

> Question 6: Do you support the proposal that the current Chair of City Housing Liaison Board undertakes the role of Tenants' Champion during a transition period and tenants elect a Tenants' Champion thereafter?

> Question 7: Do you support the proposal that city-wide Task and Finish Groups be established for single issue topics?
>
> Examples could be Equalities, commissioning and procurement or serious performance concerns.

Summary of Consultation Questions

Summary of questions:

Question 1: Do you support re-establishing the two strands of tenant engagement into District Housing Liaison Panels and Neighbourhood activity?

Question 2: At neighbourhood-level do you support establishing Residents' Neighbourhood Panels and introducing a range of new ways for involvement in neighbourhoods?

Question 3: Do you support HLB discretionary funding becoming Ward Housing Funding to be considered alongside the allocation of Community Chest?

Question 4: Do you support the proposed guidance for District Housing Liaison Panels as a basis for developing model terms of reference that will support local neighbourhood structures and integrated services?

Question 5: Do you support establishing a Tenants' Champion and an Annual Tenants' Convention?

Question 6: Do you support the proposal that the current Chair of City Housing Liaison Board undertakes the role of Tenants' Champion during a transition period and tenants elect a Tenants' Champion thereafter?

Question 7: Do you support the proposal that city-wide Task and Finish Groups be established for single issue topics?

Examples could be Equalities, commissioning and procurement or serious performance concerns.

Additional questions:

Question 8: Do the overall proposals provide the opportunities you would expect to have to hold your landlord to account and drive service improvement?

Question 9: Do you think that the proposals provide for inclusive tenant engagement?

Next steps

After the consultation

A summary of the responses to consultation will be published on the Council's website shortly after the end of the consultation period. The Council will consider the views expressed through the consultation at their meeting in November 2012. This will help to inform the Council's final decision.

After the decision

Existing structures would continue to be supported to operate as normal until 1 November 2012 and have an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the success of existing involved tenants. Current tenant volunteers who have shown commitment in past years will be supported to move into a new group of their choice, at neighbourhood or district level, wherever individuals indicate their preference lies.

In the new proposed tenant engagement structure it is our aspiration to retain currently involved tenants within a strategy of engaging as many tenants and other housing stakeholders as possible; including finding, welcoming, supporting and, if necessary building the capacity of new participants. This would be open to all tenants but targeted to those who are young, from a BME background, not in education, training or work and other groups to ensure the considerable resources invested in tenant engagement will contribute to wider socio-economic outcomes. All tenants will be supported by staff with expertise and experience in engagement from across the local services directorate and the Council, including specialist workers such as Youth Workers.

New consultative events and training opportunities will be in place from day one. To support all those who come forward to get involved in the new structure we will provide resources from the start to build the capacity of residents, staff and politicians together as needed, in areas such as scrutiny skills and co-regulation.

Report

P1645 Tenant Engagement Structure – consultation review

For *Birmingham City Council*

Birmingham City Council

www.vector-research.net

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Prepared by	Checked by	Date	Version
Paul Baker	Clare Rapkins	16.11.12	2

Note: Paul Baker the author of the report has been a full member of the Market Research Society since 1991; and Vector Research Limited is an MRS Company Partner. Both accreditations stipulate the need to deliver independent and impartial information to clients in a clear and unbiased manner.

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1. background

1.1. policy background

The following is taken verbatim from the consultation report:

The Council has been involving and consulting with tenants and leaseholders for many years. However, the council now proposes to go further and create new opportunities that give tenants and leaseholders an increasing influenceover the design, delivery and assessment of services in response to:

- *The new regulatory standards for social housing providers in England that were introduced in April 2012, which place a strong emphasis on reducing the responsibility of the regulator for measuring the council's performance, in favour of the council becoming more directly accountable to its tenants.*
- *The Leader's Policy statement in June 2012 which devolved responsibility for the Council's housing landlord services to a district level and made provision for up to two dedicated places for council tenant co-optees on each of the Council's 10 new District Committees, providing new opportunities for tenants to be involved in shaping service delivery locally through tenant participation in public life.*

Thus in July 2012 the Council produced the consultation document L*ocalisation and tenant engagement: Proposals for a tenant engagement structure.*

This set out the proposed new structure as shown in Appendix 1 – with discussion of clear proposals for tenant engagement at the five geographic levels of service delivery i.e.
- Neighbourhood
- Ward
- District
- Quadrant
- City-wide.

The proposals involve significant changes to the existing situation which has been based on a core engagement structure of

- 34 Housing Liaison Boards
- 10 constituency tenant groups.

The key proposals are to provide a new structure essentially based around

- Neighbourhood level activity (based on neighbourhood panels)
- District level Liaison Panels
- A Tenants' *champion* and an annual convention.

1.2. the consultation

1.2.1 The brief

A briefing note (of 20/21 June 2012) to Homes and Neighbourhood Directorate EMT set out details of the tenant engagement structure (building on an earlier EMT report of 28 May 2012). The report also included details of the proposed consultation as follows:

9.1   If agreed, the proposals would be drafted into a consultation document on the new tenant engagement strategy, for consultation during a 12 week period between June and September 2012.

9.2   A detailed consultation plan will be developed by a consultation project team, with the help of specialist communication officers from the corporate communication team. Consultation with Local Services Executive Members and currently involved tenants who would be immediately and directly affected by the proposals would be carried out early in the process as a priority. The broader base of tenants and other stakeholders from citywide groups to individuals in their neighbourhoods would also be carried out. The consultation would be in the form of a 'roadshow' on the principles of:

- presenting information to all groups in a transparent way including an article in Forward
- Priority consultation with tenants currently engaged with us and who would be affected immediately by the proposals, through CHLB, HLBs and CTGs.
- responding to all reasonable requests for further information from stakeholders
- face to face consultation as the best means of dialogue
- linking closely to other Council consultation programmes, to avoid repetition of work and confusion of messages
- recognising diversity to ensure all stakeholders can be involved including all public meetings in venues with suitable access for people with disabilities at times sensitive to cultural and religious events and support as appropriate such as language translations, interpreters, singers available

9.3   The consultation plan would explore the best mechanisms for consulting with stakeholders to gather the views of:

- Councillors and MPs including via District Committee and Ward Committees
- Staff as appropriate across the Council
- Unions
- Partners, such as repairs contractors
- Engaged Council tenants, including City Housing Liaison Board, Housing Liaison Boards, Constituency Tenant Groups, Tenant Management Organisations, Resident Associations, tenants engaged in other activities such as mystery shopping
- The wider body of Council tenants
- The wider community, including Boards, Forums, other registered providers
- Often excluded groups across all stakeholders including work with community leaders.

2. the consultation

2.1   fieldwork

The actual consultation programme was set out in a plan formulated in July 2012. The consultation itself commenced on 19th July 2012 for a twelve week period. However during the exercise, the consultation closing date was extended to 24 October 2012 since by September 2012 it had become clear there was a significant body of opinion from HLB members around maintaining and building on the Housing Liaison Board structure. In response to this feedback the opportunity was given to tenants and others to set out their views on the potential retention of the HLB structure alongside the other options in the consultation paper at the district and neighbourhood level. An additional question was introduced to provide tenants and others with the opportunity to set out their views on the potential retention of these two existing engagement structures.

The consultation included a range of methods including special and regular meetings, the internet and telephone surveys. It engaged with tenants and leaseholders including; all Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs), Constituency Tenants Groups (CTGs) and Residents Associations. Two special meetings were held for all Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) and Mystery Shoppers. Non involved tenants and leaseholders were engaged in the following ways:

- Telephone survey of some new tenants;
- Telephone survey of tenants with no history on tenant involvement ;
- Telephone survey of people who have responded to previous surveys;
- Concierge officers signposting residents; and
- Local officers holding surgeries or telephone surveys.

It should be noted that involved tenants are those engaged in the Council's existing tenant engagement structure such as the City Housing Liaison Board and non involved tenants those who are currently not involved in the engagement structure.

Residents who are not Council tenants and stakeholders were engaged using the following methods:

- Presentation at Birmingham Social Housing Partnership to all Housing Associations;
- Presentation to all repairs contractors;
- Letter and follow up meeting for Neighbourhood Forums; and
- Letter to all elected members and attendance at some ward committees.

The consultation was promoted by use of the following methods:

- Council website with option to complete a questionnaire;
- Council facebook and twitter pages;
- Message on contact centre number;
- Posters in council buildings; and
- Press release.

2.2   consultation response

Total response was 392, which breaks down as follows:

Table 1	Response by target group	
Involved/non involved	*Number*	*%*
Involved tenant	173	44.1%
Non involved tenant	196	50.0%
Councillor	3	0.8%
Housing Association	3	0.8%
Lib Dem Office	1	0.2%
Don't know	18	4.1%
Total	**392**	**100%**

In terms of response by medium, table 2 shows the yield from each:

Table 2	Response by medium
Medium	*Number*
Postal response (essentially involved)	123
Face to face (non involved)	73
Telephone	66
Meetings (involved)	58
Hand delivered	25
Door to door	8
Electronic/internet	12
Email	5
Others	7
Don't know/blank	14
Total	**392**

In addition there were two petitions, two letters addressed to the leader and a range of comments recorded at group consultations. These have all been considered in the report.

2.3 consultation analysis and reporting

The following is taken verbatim from the consultation report dated November 2012:

All responses were entered into an Excel database by the Resident Involvement Team and hard copies of the responses retained. Some forms did not include the respondent stating if they were currently involved with the housing service. However, this was added by officers from local databases, for example if they were involved as an HLB member, to enable the data to be more fully representative. All comments recorded on the forms were entered onto the data base, and a full record kept where comments were very detailed and hence too long to fully record. The Resident Involvement team carried out a quality assurance audit on the data input.

For analysis purposes a new Excel spread sheet was developed to include only the relevant data required for analysis. To ensure data protection regulations were adhered to any names or contact details were removed.

The quantitative responses (yes/no) were analysed using Microsoft Excel pivot tables. The responses were recorded for each question and also whether they were provided by involved or non involved tenants. This enabled comparison between the average responses for all respondents and for involved and non involved tenants. The findings are presented in tables and graphs with accompanying text later in the report.

The qualitative responses were analysed in two different ways:

- *All comments were considered overall and any emerging themes/common issues were highlighted overall. The comments for each question were then considered and again common themes/issues highlighted.*
- *The comments were also coded (codes can be seen in Appendix C) in the Excel database using a range of themes and analysed again. This approach enabled each question to be evaluated individually and the number of comments under each theme to be counted. Therefore, it could be established how many comments supported each proposal or how many were against the ideas. In addition the comments were analysed for all respondents and for tenants who are already involved in engaging with the Council and those who are currently not. This enabled two different perspectives to be considered.*

2.4 consultation findings

The findings are presented in the consultation report. The analysis essentially splits the responses between

(a) *involved* tenants and *not involved* tenants
(b) the core YES/NO responses to the 10 questions posed to respondents – and the open responses in relation to each theme.

It is not the purpose of this study to comment on the findings in themselves or how they are to be used in decision making.

3. the consultation review brief

The brief provided by Birmingham City Council stated the following:

The independent agent is required to review the consultation methodology and the way in which responses have been recorded, analysed and reported and provide a formal report on your methodology, findings and conclusion giving your view on whether, in your opinion:
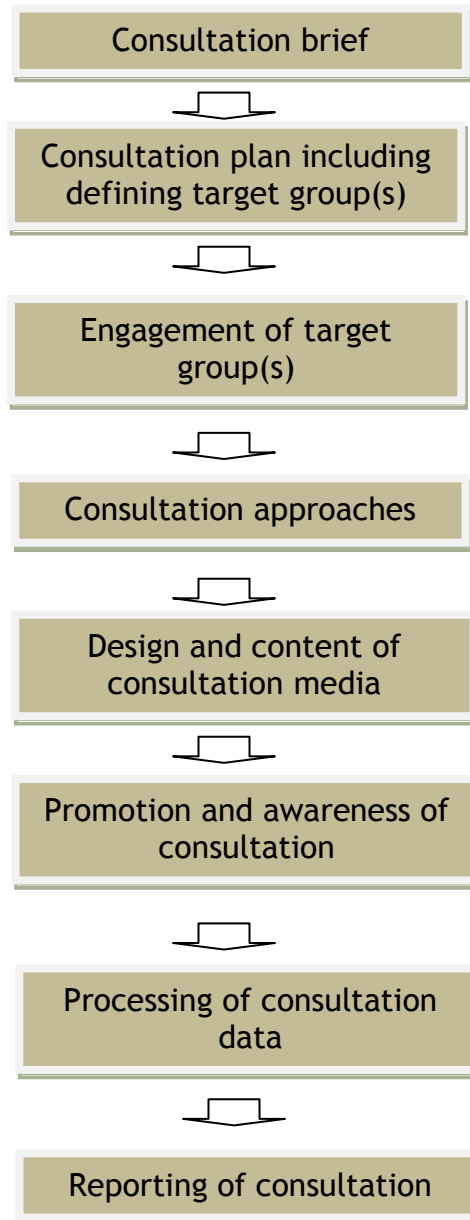
1. *The consultation methodology was fair and transparent?*
2. *The consultation responses received were recorded, analysed and reported in a true and proper manner?*

4. review

4.1   review structure

Vector's response to the brief listed eight sequential stages as shown in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 — Sequential stages of consultation

Consultation brief

⬇

Consultation plan including defining target group(s)

⬇

Engagement of target group(s)

⬇

Consultation approaches

⬇

Design and content of consultation media

⬇

Promotion and awareness of consultation

⬇

Processing of consultation data

⬇

Reporting of consultation

Each stage is appraised in order to address the two thematic aims outlined in the brief (Section 3 on previous page).

Thus the study has involved a detailed scrutiny of each stage in the process – which in turn has involved an appraisal of the strategic aims of the review i.e. in relation to fairness and transparency and also the *propriety* of the consultation and analysis process.

Each stage involved an appraisal of the issues listed in Table 3 below which were related to each of the eight sequential themes listed in Figure 1. These were explored via interviews/dialogue with City Council officers responsible for the consultation process; a small number of telephone interviews with participants; and a full review of all materials involved in the consultation including briefs, questionnaires/pro-formas and communications.

Table 3	study outline
Stage	*Issues to be addressed*
1. Consultation brief	Clarity of objectives; definition of target groups; attainability
2. Consultation plan	Targetting/sampling; Attainability of targets; Robustness of approach; Appropriateness of consultation media
3. Engagement of target groups	Methods used to communicate; review of response rates and assessment of non-response bias;
4. Consultation approaches	Effectiveness of each medium used; appraisal of delivery of each
5. Design and content of media	Clarity of language; understanding by respondents; layout and style
6. Promotion and awareness	Appraisal of communication and branding issues – were all target groups aware of options for participation and the aims of the exercise
7. Processing of consultation data	Quality controls; refinement and analysis of open responses
8. Reporting	Clarity of analysis; clear statement of objective and subjective analysis; statement of representative nature and robustness of report and biases which may be implicit.

Section 4.2 to 4.9 set out the appraisals of each of the eight criteria and Section 5 provides an overview appraisal of the consultation as a whole. Each subsection includes discussion and also uses a simple *traffic lights* assessment system based on:
- Green: Exceeds Acceptable minimum standard
- Amber: Acceptable minimum standard
- Red: Does not reach acceptable minimum standard – actions needed.

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3.2   Consultation brief

The consultation brief was essentially set out in the Briefing note to EMT of 20/21 June 2012.

Table 4		Appraisal: Consultation brief	
1	Clarity of objectives	Clearly and unambiguously set out in Sections 5 to 8 which set out the proposed new structure; schematic representations in Appendices A to C (of existing and proposed structures; Section 9.4 which summaries the question areas relating to the change in structure.	⚪⚪🟢
2	Definition of target groups	Section 9.2 specifies the generic targets; section 9.3 covers the specific target groups (notably the currently engaged tenants and the wider body of tenants) and stakeholders.	⚪⚪🟢
3	Specification	The specification set out in 9.2 identifies a *road-show* as the optimal approach since it met a series of needs, in particular: *Transparency of presentation; Face to face as the best mechanism; Recognising diversity.* Subsequent clarification reveals that the road-show was essentially defined internally as face to face survey-type delivery rather than any interactive exhibition or forum. In fact the brief fails to mention the fact that a consultation of this nature should provide opportunity for <u>deliberation</u> since there is a complexity of information to get across. Immediate response media (phone or face to face surveys) are not ideal although it is clear from verbatim responses that a high proportion of respondents WERE well informed.	⚪🟠⚪
4	Attainability	Certainly an attainable approach given the provision of resources and expertise In terms of time a 12 week consultation period was set, so the length of the period was sufficient. However the absence of absolute targets for response and in particular harder to reach groups poses a question about representativeness.	⚪🟠⚪

Critical assessment:
The objectives of the project were clear as were the target audiences. The ambiguity of the *road-show* specification is a slight concern in that the road-show concept – if used effectively – can be a proactive engaging process in which complexity can be presented in a broken-down and understandable way for those with limited understanding of professional language and/or for those who have limited motivations/interest in the subject matter. By adopting (for non-engaged tenants) a survey approach which demands an immediacy of response the opportunity for deliberation is restricted.

3.3   Consultation plan

The consultation plan was first worked up in July and is summarised in Appendix B of the Council's report on the consultation findings.

Table 5		Appraisal: consultation plan	
1	Targeting/sampling	The Plan sets out in detail the approach for each identified audience – with mechanism/ format, aim, success measures and outcomes. The plan is substantial and comprehensive in terms of inclusion of all target groups in the brief; however there are no objectives/success measures in terms of size of response and the profile of that response. The absence of specific targets for minority groups is offset only in part by the dissemination via neighbourhood forums and use of hearing loops and other support at local meetings.	○ ● ○
2	Attainability of targets	No targets set for participation – which is disappointing given that sufficient evidence would have been available within the city council of likely response. However actions were taken to maximise response via proactive survey activity.	○ ● ○
3	Robustness of approach	The structure of the *approach* was robust in terms of (a) offering a series of response media ensuring that the vast majority in all target groups *could* participate (b) identifying a range of key stakeholders and including both currently engaged tenants and those not engaged The two key *media* of delivery for non-engaged tenants (face to face/phone) did ensure a reasonably satisfactory "par" response.	○ ● ○
4	Appropriateness of consultation media	The project was essentially delivered via the distribution of hardcopy questionnaires to existing engaged tenants and stakeholders backed by • online option via survey monkey • telephone survey top-up by tenant participation officers • face to face exercises at various sites to boost response Whilst such a mix IS comprehensive – it is essentially a *reactive* and fairly patchy approach since some of the responsibility for response rates was devolved to the efforts of staff in outlying offices/sites. Thus several sub-groups are likely to be under-represented. In addition the use of telephone and face to face approaches reduced the opportunity for deliberation.	○ ● ○

Assessment: A sufficiently detailed brief – and what initially appears to be a fairly acceptable mix of democratic consultation and proactive engagement via telephone and face to face top-up. However the telephone and face to face survey approaches are not the most appropriate media for a consultation exercise which requires the presentation of complex information, subsequent deliberation around that information, and a final informed response.

3.4   Engagement of target groups

The response from each target group is summarised in Table 1 in Section 2.2.

Table 6		Appraisal: engagement of target groups	
1	Methods used to communicate with target audiences	The consultation was promoted to the wider tenant population via range of media i.e. • BCC Website • Newsletter through Forward • Press release • Facebook and Twitter • Press release • Posters located at housing sites • Staff briefings In other words a comprehensive multi-media communication schedule was drawn up. However it must be noted that the above summary - whilst essentially democratic in that it is open to all - may no be regarded as particularly effective since relatively few will be motivated to participate and for that reason may well not pick up visual cues. Indeed generally the tenant participants spoken to as part of the review exercise claimed that the consultation was **not** well publicised. In other words there may not have been an appropriate *buzz* created via high visibility events or creative publicity – which is needed to ensure awareness and subsequent participation in "less exciting" consultation. However such high-visibility communication can be costly and time-consuming. Tenants who were already engaged with the Council (typically via Housing Liaison Boards and Constituency Tenant Groups) were contacted directly and were naturally a fairly motivated group.	⚪ 🟠 ⚪
2	Response and non-response bias	The total responses are shown in Section 2.2. Thus the overall response from tenants yielded a reasonably robust 173 *involved* tenants out of approximately 600 in total, and 196 out of over 65,000 in terms of the latter. These totals represent a minimum acceptable level in both cases. The former is accurate to +/-6.3% at 95% confidence but this is not critical in that findings are generally quite strong with around three-quarters disagreeing with each question. The sample for non-engaged tenants is accurate to +/-7.0% at 95% confidence. In other words we can be fairly confident that the findings displayed in Table 3 of the consultation report for Questions 1 and 2 DO reflect a majority opinion – but less sure about other questions (e.g. question 7 where the proportion in agreement was 55.1%).	🔴 ⚪ ⚪

Of greater significance is the fact that no profile questions were gathered **weakens the exercise somewhat** in that it is not possible to compare the respondent group with the tenant population – and also excludes any analysis of minority groups.

Finally several of the stakeholder groups did not respond. This does not weaken the exercise greatly in that they WERE formally invited to participate via direct communication and will have been aware of the exercise.

Assessment: A *conventional* communications mix – which may be sufficient to generate awareness and or interest in "hot" issues such as - say – proposed changes in rents or allocations policy. However a consultation on tenant participation will not engender great levels of interest amongst the majority of tenants. The absence of profile data IS a significant weakness in terms of assessing the fairness of the consultation, but in mitigation efforts were made to communicate to as wide a population of tenants as possible via all key media and via existing channels of tenant or neighbourhood engagement.

However a <u>red</u> rating is inevitable since monitoring of engagement – and assessment of fairness – is dependent on recording of minority group participation.

Nonetheless we do not view this individual rating as <u>critical</u> to the overall fairness and transparency of the consultation process in that

(a) A series of measures WERE clearly taken to ensure the broadest possible tenant *population* were aware of the exercise;
(b) Tenant consultation on subject matter which will not excite the target group is notoriously difficult and the officers involved DID ultimately deliver sufficiently robust *overall* results;
(c) The main thrust of the consultation was with existing engaged tenants – and a healthy response from this sub-group WAS achieved;
(d) There will be opportunities for ensuring the engagement of minority groups as subsequent proposals for tenant participation are worked up.

3.5   Consultation delivery

Table 2 in Section 2.2 shows the responses from each medium of delivery

Table 7	Appraisal: consultation delivery	
1	Effectiveness of each medium – generating response	The hardcopy consultation was sent/distributed to engaged tenants and a reasonable response of 173 provides a good barometer of views – which were generally opposed to each of the proposals The electronic media attracted only a handful of tenants and thus a proactive effort to garner responses via • Face to face • Telephone achieved significant returns (147 combined). Despite best efforts returns are piecemeal in that there was no uniform specification for face to face data collection so the attained sample is not exactly a random representation. Nonetheless this is a minimum acceptable level of *overall* response.
2	Flexibility	The adoption of a review during the consultation as a result of representations by existing engaged tenants and the addition and circulation of an additional question reflects positively in terms of flexibility and open-ness.

Assessment: By adopting a mix of delivery mechanisms a small but acceptable response was achieved. A slight concern remains over the *patchiness* of response due to the role of individual outlying council officers in terms of consultation delivery. The flexibility and adoption of the additional question meets the needs of transparency and fairness.

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3.6   Design and content of media

Table 8		Appraisal: design and content	
1	Clarity of language	The core element of the consultation was a single hard-copy sheet with a series of nine YES/NO questions relating to whether the respondent supported each element of the proposals. Along with the accompanying document it does provide a clear description from the perspective of professional staff and/or interest parties (such as currently engaged tenants). However this documentation is much less accessible for other groups and there was no evidence of a de-constructed attempt to simplify the exercise for the non-engaged tenants.	○ ● ○
2	Understanding by target audiences	With almost 400 responses it is clear that a core of tenants and other stakeholders understood the principles of the consultation. Verbatim responses further showed a good level of comprehension. However five tenants were contacted as part of this review of whom the majority suggested there were difficulties in comprehension during the telephone survey. Indeed at least one member of staff delivering the exercise expressed concerns about this difficulty. The verbal descriptions of each element were undoubtedly long and complex for both the telephone medium and for the face to face surveys which demanded immediate response with minimal deliberation	○ ● ○
3	Layout and style	The layout of the consultation response form is very simple in that it is focused around nine questions each with a yes/no option. The accompanying consultation document is a 22 page summary of the proposals. This is clearly written and covers each geographic tier of tenant participation from neighbourhood through to city level. However there was no attempt to provide an appropriate consultation tool to support the form via a simplified de-constructed version. Indeed there was also no branding other than via BCC *formal document* style which is not optimal in public or tenant communication.	○ ● ○

Assessment:
There was an absence of simplified deconstructed information in order to encourage wider participation and assist in deliberation around each issue. The core document and questions were suitable for professionals and those currently engaged – but difficult for some respondents. At the same time a fairly significant core response DID appear to comprehend what was asked and has generated an acceptable level of response.
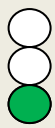
3.7 Promotion and awareness

Table 9	Appraisal: promotion and awareness		
1	Appraisal of communication and branding issues	There was a fairly comprehensive communications plan as discussed in 3.3 – which ensured that the majority of tenants *should* have had at least one chance to see the consultation advertised. However the style is not eye-catching or branded other than in the BCC *formal document* style which does not necessarily encourage understanding and precipitate the participation of large numbers of non-engaged tenants.	○ ● ○
2	Awareness	Naturally all the participants were aware of the exercise, but the non-active tenants generally claimed that there was not any memorable communication or promotion. Clearly only a small proportion actually took time to participate, but given the subject matter this is hardly unusual. Awareness may have been low but almost certainly the issue of passivity towards any council consultation will have influenced this. Once again the attainment of almost 400 responses – and attempts to engage via a range of media – offsets some of this criticism.	○ ● ○

Assessment:
Effective promotion and awareness raising of consultation of this type is difficult and can be quite exhaustive/expensive. The communication and branding of the exercise was conventional, reasonable but not hugely impactful in engaging with non-active tenants.

65

3.8 Processing of consultation data

Table 10		Appraisal: promotion and awareness	
1	Quality controls	The processing of consultation data was very thorough. All responses (including full verbatim) were entered into an Excel database by the Resident Involvement Team and hard copies of the responses retained. Some forms did not include the respondent stating if they were currently involved with the housing service. However, this was added by officers from local data-bases. Officers carried out random quality checks; all coding of open responses was transparent with ALL verbatim responses listed on the database. Vector's random data checks verified the above. An Excel worksheet containing the raw data has been provided along with a coded version. The coded version contained a selection of pivot tables - each of the totals were cross-checked to ensure they added up to the overall total figure. Any found errors were rectified. This amounts to a comprehensive and transparent quality control process.	○ ○ ●
2	Refinement and analysis of open responses	The process for open verbatim responses is described in the consultation report and involves full storage of hard-copy responses; data entry of full verbatim responses; categorisation into "for" and "against" comments; then subjective discussion of the key themes in the qualitative section of the report. Once again this is transparent and easy to follow.	○ ○ ●

Assessment: Highly professional processing of data backed by quality checking. All hardcopy and electronic data are stored and all open comments have been processed and analysed and available for auditing and tracking.

3.9 Reporting

The report on the consultation was produced in early November 2012.

Table 11		Appraisal: promotion and awareness	
1	Clarity of analysis	Essentially (and vitally) analysed by *involved tenants* v *not involved*. The two samples have to be viewed discretely and results presented separately since they represent two separate audiences for the consultation who may well have conflicting views (indeed this was the case!). The analysis of open responses – and indeed the processing of all comments – has added value and understanding in terms of why respondents chose the YES or NO option.	⚪⚪🟢
2	Clear statement of objective and subjective analysis	In fact the consultation interaction is very basic (and objective) in terms of simple YES/NO responses – backed by open responses from respondents which have been coded prior to summary analysis. Hence all analysis is objective with no subjective assessments.	⚪⚪🟢
3	Statement of representative nature and biases	There is no analysis of bias and representation since no data was gathered on respondent profile. This is the significant weakness of the consultation – and whilst efforts were made to offer inclusive options for participation with no data on the actual levels of participation the impacts cannot be assessed. There is some mitigation given the reasonable number of total responses and proactive attempts to communicate and engage via a series of channels.	⚪🟠⚪

Assessment: The reporting of findings offers a clear summary of the aggregate outputs from the consultation exercise – and presents them clearly and unambiguously.

4. summary of review

4.1 Fairness and transparency

Seven of the eight criteria meet a fairness and transparency threshold. The consultation HAS produced a reasonable number of responses and useful data which CAN satisfactorily inform decision making.

However in terms of *engagement of target groups* there is a shortfall in that no attempts have been made to *record* the profile of participants. As a result this can cast doubt on the process as a whole despite a number of efforts to engage with BME groups, people with disabilities and other minorities. Any analysis of response is not possible so an array of biases could be implicit in the sample of non-engaged tenants. Nonetheless we do not view this individual rating as critical to the overall fairness and transparency of the consultation as discussed in Section 3.4 given that

(e) A series of measures WERE clearly taken to ensure the broadest possible tenant *population* were aware of the exercise;
(f) Tenant consultation on subject matter which will not excite the target group is notoriously difficult and the officers involved DID ultimately deliver sufficiently robust *overall* results;
(g) The main thrust of the consultation was with existing engaged tenants – and a healthy response from this sub-group WAS achieved;
(h) There will be opportunities for ensuring the engagement of minority groups as subsequent proposals for tenant participation are worked up.

In addition we would recommend consideration of the following for future consultation exercises:

(a) The need to consider more optimal methods of gathering deliberative information (relating to quite complex changes) rather than survey methods such as telephone or face to face surveys demanding immediacy of response
(b) The design of a consultation based on a sequence of exercises using language and images which are accessible and lead in stages to a full understanding of the proposals under consideration – as opposed to a lengthy document followed by YES/NO options.

4.2 Processing of gathered information

This has been undertaken professionally, methodically and to a high standard and – equally importantly - is fully transparent.

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Appendix 1. summary of proposed structure

Table one

Level	Area	Current	Proposed
1	Neighbourhood	None	**A range of new opportunities for tenants** to get involved with residents across all tenures to make neighbourhoods safer and greener places to live, and to access neighbourhood teams, partners and resources to get things done. **Residents' Neighbourhood Panels** where tenants can work with residents across all tenures to achieve neighbourhood improvements.
2	Ward	Housing Liaison Boards	Ward Committees hold regular public meetings. District Housing Liaison Panels will advise District Committee on funding priorities for **Ward Housing Fund** and submit project proposals to Ward Committees for decision.
3	District	Constituency Tenant Groups	**District Housing Liaison Panels** will advise District Committees via up to two co-opted tenants on District Committee. **Youth District Liaison Panels** represent young tenants.
4	Quadrant (2 or 3 Districts)	None	No direct tenant engagement proposal. Administratively, integrated local services teams, including housing management teams, will be co-located in Quadrant Hub offices.
5	City	City Housing Liaison Board	**A Tenants' Champion.** An annual **Birmingham Tenants' Convention.** Short life, ad hoc **Tenants' Task and Finish Groups** e.g. Equalities, Commissioning and Procurement.

www.vector-research.net [22]

Tenant engagement - consultation findings and emerging recommendations

Districts and Public Engagement
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
11 December 2012

70

Background

- National Regulatory Standards for Social Housing – April 2012

- Localisation of Housing Management and extension of powers and responsibilities of District Committees – May 2012

- Proposals for how the current tenant consultation structure fit with above

- Consultation started on 19 July for a 12 week period to 11 October 2012 (see also full consultation document)

71

Options presented for consultation

- The consultation set out proposals to <u>stop formal support</u> for the current **Housing Liaison Boards** (HLB) and **Constituency Tenant Groups** (CTG) and <u>instead offer a place on one of 10 new District Housing Panels</u> and through enhanced range of opportunities for tenants to get their voices heard in their neighbourhood

- The proposed structure aimed to provide:

  - a tenant engagement structure that can better interact with the devolved housing service, meet the requirements placed on social landlords for co-regulation and support wider housing and neighbourhood based improvements

  - a flexible range of opportunities for community engagement across diverse communities to develop a representative and inclusive tenant engagement structure that contributes to tackling inequality and promotes social inclusion.

72

Strengthening tenants' trust in the consultation process

- In September 2012 during the consultation period it became clear there was a significant body of opinion from HLB members and other stakeholders around maintaining HLBs and expressing concern with the consultation process.

- As a result a question was added inviting views on retaining HLBs and the consultation period was extended by 2 weeks

- A Tenant Steering Group chaired by the chair of CHLB was set up to oversee the final stages of consultation and establish ongoing dialogue

- An independent review was commissioned which would look at the consultation methodology and how the results are recorded and analysed

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O&S involvement

- Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee took evidence in October through its 1 1 1 working group on housing as part of the Making it Real review of localisation - this included a session on tenant engagement

- On 16 October 2012 - City Council agreed a motion that:

  "the responses from tenants should be conveyed to the Districts and Public Engagement Scrutiny Committee who have set up a working group to look at housing devolution and the management of the city's housing stock, and tenant engagement is a specific work stream which will feed into the recommendations arising from the tenant consultation process. Only after consideration of matters by Overview and Scrutiny Committee should Cabinet bring forward final executive decisions"

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Timetable from the end of the consultation period

- Consultation closed on 24 October 2012

- Responses were analysed and a findings report was produced by the Housing Intelligence and Partnership team on 8 November 2012 (see also full findings report)

75

Findings **– number of responses**

Involved/non involved	Number	%
Involved tenant	173	44.1%
Non involved tenant	196	50.0%
Councillor	3	0.8%
Housing Association	3	0.8%
Lib Dem Office	1	0.2%
Don't know	18	4.1%
Total	**392**	**100%**

76

Findings – Overall

'Yes' and 'No' responses
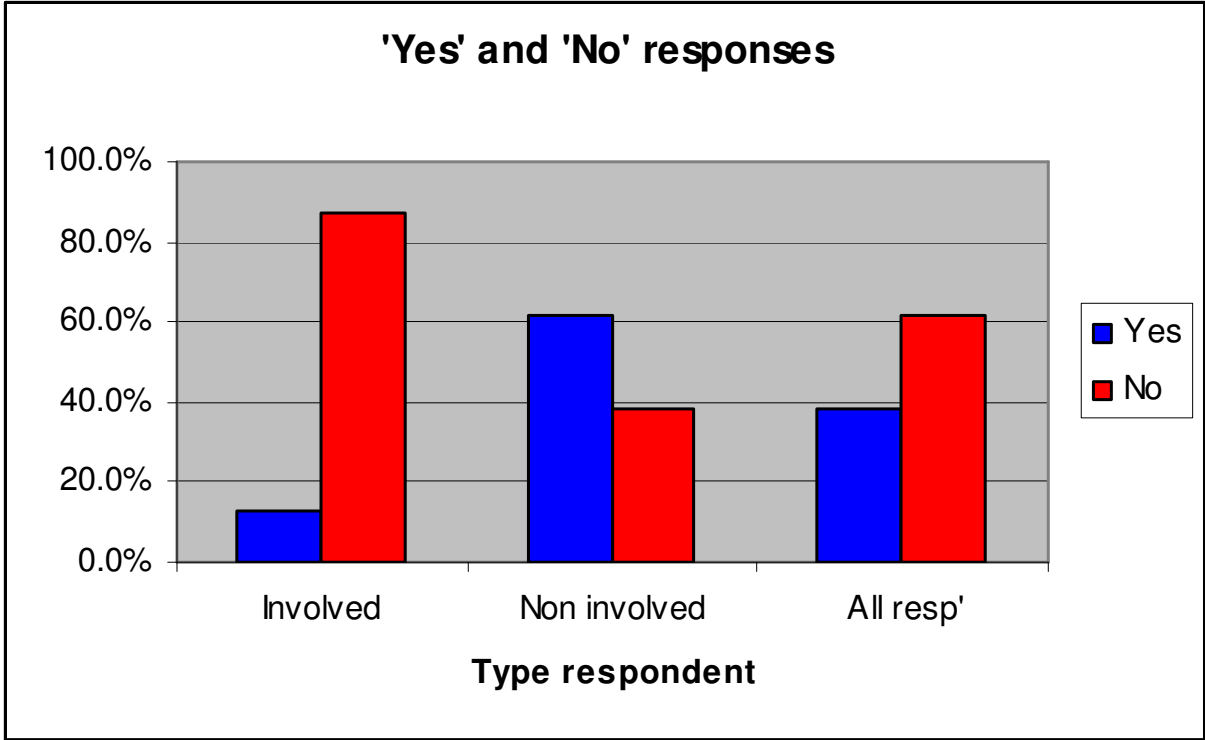
Findings – qualitative comments

A third of respondents chose to offer additional comments, ideas and suggestions on how tenant engagement could look. Of these comments 51% were made by involved tenants and 49% by non-involved tenants.

- Mixed response
- Support for HLB, good track record
- Support for change
- Desire for groups to be cross tenure
- Strong desire for involvement at a neighbourhood level
- Keen for as many tenants to be involved as possible
- Identifying need to improve representativeness of groups
- Reservations whether it is possible to get more people involved
- Need for tenant groups to retain focus on equality issues
- Comments in favour of dual systems – DHPs and HLBs
- Desire for transparency on how discretionary funding is spent
- Concern proposals mean tenants loose control over discretionary funding if decisions made by Councillors not tenants

Findings –
summary

- Averaged across all 10 questions 38% of respondents agreed with proposals to and 62% did not

- 87% of involved tenants were against the proposals

- 62% of non involved tenants were in favour

- Out of all the questions the highest rate of yes responses was for question 2, increasing the ways in which tenants can get involved in their neighbourhood, supported by 13.9% of involved tenants and 62.2% of non-involved tenants

- Third of respondents provided additional comments shows opportunity for deliberation and informed response

79

Verification

- Vector Research were commissioned to review the consultation process

- Vector Research reported on 16 November 2012 (see also full verification report)

- "The consultation HAS produced a reasonable number of responses and useful data which CAN satisfactorily inform decision making"

- "Processing of gathered information has been undertaken professionally, methodically and to a high standard – and equally importantly – is fully transparent"

80

Draft Policy Framework for Evaluation of Consultation

The following principles be presented in the Cabinet Report as the policy framework for evaluating the consultation results and agreeing a structure. The Tenants Working Group have been consulted and engaged on these.

- Support the Council's **localisation approach** – particularly around supporting District Committees to fulfil their executive responsibilities, for example their accountability for local housing management services

- Meet the **regulatory requirements for social housing providers** – particularly the requirement for co-regulation: where councillors, tenants, officers and the regulator work together to set, monitor and ensure standards are met; and the requirements of the tenant involvement and empowerment standard

81

Draft Policy Framework for Evaluation of Consultation cont…

- Enable a **representative and inclusive** tenant engagement structure that contributes to tackling inequality and promotes social inclusion

- **Retain the considerable commitment and experience of tenants currently engaged** and respecting the HLB constitution that provides for independent, self-organised tenant groups

- Fit with the **Leader's Policy Statement** of 12 June 2012 – including setting up **District Housing Panels** and enabling direct representation and input into District Committees through co-opted places

- Local **flexibility** to reflect local circumstances.

82

Overarching Conclusions

- The results demonstrate that there is an overall understanding for the need to change and an appreciation of the drivers underpinning this;

- But change should be an evolutionary process built on consent, ongoing engagement and a respect for the traditions of tenant engagement in the city

- There is an awareness that inclusivity and the ongoing sustainability of the tenant engagement structure is key for future success

- There is support for widening tenant involvement at all levels whether City, District, Ward and Neighbourhood land for tailoring the structure to reflect local demands

- There is a need to retain and integrate structures that have supported particular and specific interests such as Sheltered Housing and Leaseholders

83

Overarching Conclusions

- There is a need for a co regulatory process (what the government has defined) and partnership approach (what Birmingham defines itself) at all levels that builds incrementally to produce an outcome around service excellence and maximising the outcomes that housing has on the prosperity of the city :

  - Neighbourhood: working together to improve clean, green and safe and quality of life
  - Ward: working together to improve clean, green and safe and quality of life and ensuring that standards of management are what they should be
  - District: working together to improve clean, green and safe and quality of life and ensuring that standards of management are what they should be together across all housing management responsibilities devolved to District Committees as well as a role in improving wider housing conditions across tenures in the District
  - City: working together to improve clean, green and safe and quality of life and ensuring that standards of management are what they should be together across all housing service responsibilities

84

Developing Recommendations

On 21 November 2012 the Tenants' Steering Group:

- Commented on the full findings and verification reports

- Looked at the consultation results against the framework for evaluation

- Engaged in a discussion on emerging recommendations as presented

85

Emerging Recommendations for Neighbourhoods

1. Abandon the idea for new tenant-led Neighbourhood Panels and instead work with existing cross tenure neighbourhood groups

2. Proceed with ideas to bring about cleaner, greener and well-maintained neighbourhoods through greater tenant influence over the HRA capital programme for environmental works and the work undertaken by neighbourhood caretakers and trainees

3. Explore the role of volunteering including for example Street/Neighbourhood/Resident Champions

86

Emerging Recommendations for Wards

- <u>Retain HLBs</u>, and improve their effectiveness by:

  - Continuing support to HLBs recognising that to retain HLBs is not a Council decision, that they are self-organising bodies and that respecting the tradition and work they have undertaken is key in any future approach

  - Develop a fit for purpose standards building on the *Know How Guide* produced for Neighbourhood Forums to enable the ongoing development of sustainable HLBs and other resident groups

  - Reviewing gaps in coverage for HLBs and resident groupings at the Ward level

  - Reviewing membership of and recruitment to HLBs e.g. Some HLBs are oversubscribed in some streets / areas. Provide new guidance that matches with the Chamberlain Forum's 'Know-How guide' and other examples of best practice.

  - Reviewing the induction and training support for HLB members so that they can meet the proposed standards

87

Emerging Recommendations for Wards

- Focus HLB roles / accountabilities:

  - Working with neighbourhood groups in their area to inform Ward priorities (i.e. establishing priorities based on intelligence from the grassroots)

  - Focusing on local queries and questions arising from estate walkabouts and repair queries

- Retain the current allocation process for HLB discretionary funding whilst making it more transparent and accountable linking with priorities established for local investment through District Committees and through the work of HLBs on the ground

- Moving formal performance reporting to new District Housing Panels

- Develop an incremental approach to change and development for HLBs working in partnership and recognising their tradition, self-organisation and independent constitutions

88

Emerging Recommendations for Districts

- Formally fold the residual Constituency Tenant Groups and work with the remaining members to find a place in the new structure that meet their wishes

- Set up District Housing Panels (DHPs) but refine the model that was put forward for consultation so that District Committees establish an appropriate structure for the pattern of tenure, including Owner Occupation, Private Renting, Registered Providers and TMOs in their area, balancing the factors of:

  - Meeting the Executive's devolved / regulatory responsibilities for council housing management (the mutual accountabilities that Councillors and organised tenants share for co-regulating council housing landlord services)

  - Managing a work plan based on the above responsibilities where there is a diverse range of stakeholders around the table and consequently minimal interest in the above concerns (and have a broader cross-tenure interest of improving the quality of life for all residents)

  And/Or

  - A standard District Housing Panel structure that delivers on both the devolved / regulatory responsibilities for council housing management and wider housing agenda, such as the 2004/5 CBHO model

89

Emerging Recommendations for Districts

- DHPs nominate co-optees to District Committees with co-optees coming from different tenures depending on the make of the District

- Review the arrangements for co-option to District Committees in the first year. Co-option will be to non-voting membership as only Councillors can vote on any executive body of the Council

Emerging Recommendations for City

- Retain City Housing Liaison Board (CHLB) to receive information about strategic / citywide issues.

- Membership to have clear link into DHPs and HLBs, with further consultation on developing this to be undertaken

- Retain leaseholder and sheltered housing special interest groups

- Retain performance and equality groups, but move to an ad hoc task and finish arrangement

- Performance sub group, reporting through CHLB, to provide a city wide co regulatory function on the housing services not in the delegations of District Committees

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Timetable

- Districts and Public Engagement – Today

- 13 December 2012 – Tenant Steering Group report to CHLB

- 11 February 2013 – Cabinet

92

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee

11 December 2012

Meeting to Discuss Tenant Engagement Consultation

Background information

1   Introduction

1.1   To complement the reports from the Directorate this paper provides information on two areas which are part of the drivers of change for tenant engagement:

- The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England

- The Audit Commission inspection report from 2011 – see Appendix 3.

2   Regulation

2.1   The foundations for a regulatory system that formally incorporates tenants' views and concerns were set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Act applied equally to local authorities and housing associations. The Act gave the then Tenant Services Authority (TSA) statutory objectives to empower tenants and to ensure they had the opportunity to shape services and standards.

2.2   A regulatory system was created which worked on a 'co-regulatory' basis where landlords, the regulator, and the tenants would work together to set, monitor, and enforce standards. Co-regulation aims to move the focus of decision-making and performance management for housing services away from the regulator, and a one-size-fits-all approach, towards one focussed on service users and locally defined needs and priorities. This is the essence of Localism.

2.3   The Localism Act 2011 and the new regulatory standards both anticipate an enhanced role for tenants in relation to scrutiny.

3   The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing In England – Homes and Communities Agency

3.1   The statutory framework introduced in April this year has two key strands – economic standards and customer standards. The former do not apply to local authority landlords. The 17 customer standards include issues relating to:

- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and Community.

4   The principles of co-regulation

4.1   The key approach is known as co-regulation.

4.2   The framework makes it clear that Councillors are responsible and accountable for delivering their organisation's social housing objectives. Responsibility for achieving the aims for the city's social housing also lie with councillors. They are accountable to stakeholders which include, but are not restricted to tenants, for the services delivered and dealing with potential or actual problems.

4.3   The framework states that:

> *"governance arrangements should be fit for purpose, and reflect the complexity and risk-profile of the organisation."*

Councillors need to need to set clear objectives, and develop a strategy to both make the most of opportunities and mitigate risk.

4.4   Other principles of co-regulation are:

- Providers must meet the regulatory standards

- Transparency and accountability is central to co-regulation

- Tenants should have opportunities to shape service delivery and to hold councillors to account.

  > *Providers are expected to engage meaningfully with their tenants and offer them opportunities to shape the tailoring of services to reflect local priorities. Tenants should have the ability to scrutinise their provider's performance, identify areas for improvement and influence future delivery. Providers will also need to continue to support tenants in developing their skills and capacity so that engagement and scrutiny are effective.*

- Providers should demonstrate that they understand the particular needs of their tenants

- Value for money goes to the heart of how providers ensure current and future delivery of their objectives.

5   The Standards

Appendix 1 shows the standards relating to tenant engagement.

Appendix 2 shows the standards relating to neighbourhoods.

6   The HCA's Role

6.1   The regulator (the HCA) will have a backstop role for consumer standards and may only consider intervention where it judges that there is serious harm, or a risk of serious harm to tenants.

6.2   The serious detriment test is when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that:

- The failure has resulted in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants (or potential tenants), or

- There is a significant risk that, if no action is taken by the regulator, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants (or potential tenants)

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benita.wishart@birmingham.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1: HCA REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

EXTRACT - TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

Required outcomes

1   Customer service, choice and complaints

Registered providers shall:

- provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards; and

- have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

2   Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:

- the formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and strategic priorities;

- the making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards;

- the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved;

- the management of their homes, where applicable;

- the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made; and

- agreeing local offers for service delivery.

3   Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Registered providers shall:

- treat all tenants with fairness and respect; and

- demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

APPENDIX 2: HCA REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

EXTRACT - NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD EXPECTATIONS

1   Neighbourhood management

Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes.

2   Local area co-operation

Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:

- identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties; and

- co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives.

APPENDIX 3: AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION LANDLORD SERVICES, PUBLISHED AUGUST 2011

EXTRACT FROM REPORT

Resident involvement

126   In this area we found a balance of strengths and weaknesses. The Council has a strong commitment to involving customers and offers them a wide range of options for involvement. Customers have been able to influence a number of areas, but this is undermined by some less effective arrangements. Customer satisfaction with involvement is not strong and the Council cannot demonstrate that those involved represent the wider community. It also lacks an effective approach to resolving conflict.

127   The Council demonstrates a strong commitment to increasing resident involvement. It is investing significant policy and front-line staff time and a tenant empowerment budget of £209,000, plus additional training budgets, to developing involvement opportunities on both a city-wide and local basis. Constituency tenant involvement agreements and action plans have been developed for each area in liaison with residents. A wide-ranging training programme is in place for all involved residents and locally officers are encouraged to develop new local initiatives which reflect resident interests in their area. This provides a strong platform on which to develop resident involvement initiatives.

128   Residents are offered a wide range of ways to get involved. A menu of involvement offers both tenants and leaseholders different options based on the level of involvement they prefer. These include formal groups such as tenant management organisations, housing liaison boards (HLBs) and constituency tenant groups (CTGs) through to theme-based focus groups, block champions, tenant inspector 'mystery shoppers' and customer information panels. Consultation also takes place online, through the city-wide 'be heard' websitei and through telephone conferencing. Customer information gives a good indication of likely time commitment and includes a survey for interested customers, which helps them find the options that best meet their preferences. The arrangements more closely reflect the emerging national approach to tenant-led regulation of services and this has helped to increase the level of active residents on the involvement database to over 1,000 across a range of activities.

129   Customers have been able to influence a number of areas. For example, customers have helped to develop service standards and the tenant quality promise, they have influenced the choices offered in the decent homes programme and rent statement design. They have also had involvement in procurement decisions, such as repairs and grounds maintenance contracts and use of the environmental improvement budget. There was good consultation on the development of the new customer service centre in Newtown and statutory consultation on new conditions of tenancy was supplemented by wider consultation which led to changes to what was proposed. HLBs also receive regular performance information and a number of them produce local newsletters to help keep tenants informed. This demonstrates customers are able to exert some influence across the services inspected.

130   However, there are a number of weaknesses in how customers are involved which undermine the approach. In a number of areas some key decisions affecting all tenants have been made after discussion with only a handful of tenants or with only one of the ten CTGs. In some areas, customers who have recently used the service have not been involved, such as no new tenants being part of the review of the empty property service standard. Customers have not been able to influence the long term vision for the service or the strategic approach to asset management as these are not in place and they are not given comparative data on other organisations on which they can base decisions or challenge performance. The Council has also held targeted recruitment exercises for CTG groups which have led to the perception, by some residents, that it has selected less challenging members. This reduces tenants' confidence in and the effectiveness of involvement opportunities.

131   Satisfaction with involvement opportunities is not strong compared with other Metropolitan councils. The 2010 STATUS survey shows only 56 per cent of tenants are satisfied their views are taken into account. Although this is an increase of 5 per cent from the previous year it is set against a target of only 55 per cent which is not challenging. Further, 80 per cent of tenants have not heard of tenant involvement agreements, only 1 per cent lower than before. This compares poorly to other organisations and means around half the services' customers show satisfaction with the arrangements leading to their views influencing service delivery.

132   The Council cannot demonstrate involvement is representative of the wider community. Some monitoring is taking place but meaningful data is only available on three strands of gender, age and ethnicity. While gender information is fairly representative, only 20 per cent of 'involved' tenants are aged 45 or under and around 58 per cent of tenants are from white backgrounds, compared to 50 per cent of the wider tenant population. Following the analysis a targeted recruitment campaign was undertaken in December 2009 for the CTG groups with some positive outcomes: 50 per cent of CTG members are now from BME groups and 60 per cent are aged 55 or under. However, CTG members represent less than 10 per cent of all active tenants. The Council therefore has some way to go to ensure equal representation across all six key diversity strands.

133   Some conflict in key resident involvement issues has not been resolved proactively. In developing the CTG arrangements, which are very new compared to well established HLB groups, trust has broken down with a number of HLB members who feel decisions have been imposed and debate has been suppressed. The disagreement has become unnecessarily protracted, in large part because the Council has ignored requests for mediation, which may have helped resolve the issues more quickly. The approach has acted as a barrier to reaching speedy resolutions in areas where the Council and residents can't agree.

134   The Council does not consistently measure the impact of resident involvement activities. Involved tenants who attend training courses are asked to complete pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires and, for activities funded by the tenant empowerment budget, an impact assessment is completed. However, this does not include all activities in the 'menu of involvement'. The Council cannot therefore fully understand which are the most successful in terms of positive outcomes for residents and in involving residents from traditionally hard-to-reach groups. It cannot be sure it is targeting its resources effectively.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

> **DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
> **11 DECEMBER 2012**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2012 AT 1530 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

PRESENT: - Councillor Lisa Trickett in the Chair;

Councillors Mick Brown, Jerry Evans, Robert Pocock , Sybil Spence and Margaret Waddington.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Councillor Deirdre Alden (as an observer)
Gill Crowe, Adults and Communities Directorate
Fiona Hughes, Local Services Directorate
Ifor Jones, Local Services Directorate
Ruth Mugabe, Committee Services
Tracey Radford, Local Services Directorate
Abigail Robson, Local Services Directorate
Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer
Matt Wilkinson, Local Services Directorate
Benita Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

27   A resolution of the City Council appointing Councillor Margaret Waddington to serve on the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year in place of Councillor Bruce Lines was noted.

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APOLOGIES

28   Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Ziaul Islam and David Pears.

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MINUTES

29   The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 and 26 September 2012, having been circulated to Members, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

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MATTERS ARISING

Devolution Inquiry – Refuse Collection Service

30   Councillor Jerry Evans voiced some dissatisfaction that the Devolution Inquiry
       had been conducted at the request of the Executive and yet the Committee had
       not been involved in considering the proposals presented to Cabinet on 10
       December 2012 regarding the Weekly Collection Support Scheme, in particular
       obtaining private sector bids for waste collection services and moving to a
       fortnightly collection if the bid to the Department for Communities and Local
       Government (DCLG) had been unsuccessful.

       The Chair said that she had raised the issue with officers and the Cabinet
       Member and acknowledged that there was a tension in relation to the work of
       the Committee since it was usual for the focus to be on scrutiny of past events
       whereas for the Devolution Inquiry the Committee was working in parallel to the
       Executive on policy developments. She commented that the decision of
       Cabinet could be an issue which the Committee might want to consider in the
       context of universal services. She would be meeting the Leader and would be
       discussing this issue. She had sought clarification regarding the proposed
       market testing of waste services and understood that it had been required as
       part of the DCLG bid.

       Councillor Jerry Evans pointed out that the previous administration had also
       carried out scrutiny reviews to inform executive decision making. He raised
       some questions about privatisation of services and following some further
       comments, the Chair suggested that the Committee might wish to jointly
       scrutinise the procurement process with the Partnership, Contract Performance
       and Third Sector O&S Committee in January 2013. She noted that the report to
       Cabinet had identified three Scrutiny Committee Chairs and stated that she
       would speak to the other Chairs on this and report back to the Committee on
       the way forward. That was agreed.

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TENANT ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION

       The Chair noted that Councillor Deirdre Alden and tenant representatives were
       in attendance for this item as observers.

       The following documents were submitted:-

          • Resolution No. 18077 of the City Council
          • Consultation findings on proposals for a New Tenant Engagement
             Structure
          • Localisation and tenant engagement : proposals for a new tenant
             engagement structure - Consultation
          • Independent Review of consultation by Vector Research Ltd

       (See document No. 1)

       In addition the following background information paper prepared by the
       Overview and Scrutiny Manager was tabled:-

       (See document No. 2)

The Chair explained the background to the involvement of the Committee in relation to the consultation on tenant engagement referring to evidence received at the Committee's working group meeting on 12 October 2012 and to the motion agreed at City Council on 16 October 2012 requesting the Committee to consider the consultation findings. She noted that a Tenant Steering Group had been set up to oversee the consultation and to shape developments and she invited Ifor Jones, Director of Constituency Services, to present the context for the proposed structure, the findings of the consultation and the emerging recommendations.

The Director gave a PowerPoint presentation which focused on the following (for the presentation slides the document No. 3):-
  • Background on the drivers for change
  • Options presented for consultation
  • Strengthening tenants' trust in the consultation process
  • O&S involvement
  • Timetable from the end of the consultation period
  • Findings – number of responses, overall responses, qualitative comments
      and summary
  • Verification of the consultation methodology
  • Draft Policy Framework for evaluation or consultation
  • Overarching conclusions
  • Developing recommendations
  • Emerging recommendations for Neighbourhoods, Wards, Districts and the
      City
  • Timetable

In response to questions about the methodology used to consult involved and non-involved tenants, the channels used for engagement were explained.

The Chair thanked the tenants and officers for their work in developing recommendations. She commented that the consultation process demonstrated that the Council was an organisation prepared to reflect and revisit its proposals. From the presentation, she noted the conclusions reached on the importance of respecting the tradition of the tenant movement in the City while at the same time recognising that the profile of the City was changing and ensuring that the requirements for co-regulation were met. There were differing patterns of tenure in Districts and an understanding of the importance of developing a representative and inclusive structure which was sustainable, cross tenure, addressed neighbourhood issues but which was not prescriptive.

With regard to accountability on the process for allocation of Housing Liaison Board (HLB) discretionary funding, it was explained that District Committees would consider how the funding had been spent and the improvements made locally. Councillor Rob Pocock commented that there needed to be clarity on that process.

Councillor Sybil Spence indicated her support for the conclusions being reached and highlighted the need to move forward on the structure, recognising that 'one size would not fit all' and therefore adjustments were required to meet the differing needs of areas. It was important to have core standards.

Councillor Jerry Evans commented that there were areas where HLBs had not been established and he sought assurance that steps would be taken to encourage their formation. He was concerned about how decisions would be taken in those areas on spend of the discretionary fund. He questioned the composition of the District Housing Panels and queried how the responsibility to monitor performance of the housing management service could be exercised by District Committees given the frequency of those meetings. He wondered whether the District Housing Panel or some other mechanism (i.e. Sub-Committee) would be introduced to undertake that function.

The Director advised that the principles for the policy framework had been developed but further work was needed on the District Housing Panel model.

The Chair was concerned to ensure the structure allowed tenants to contribute to debate of wider issues e.g. development on housing land.

Councillor Rob Pocock commended the work undertaken to take forward the tenant engagement issues. He commented that a robust scrutiny function was needed to hold District Committees to account and he questioned whether the District Housing Panels would fulfil that role. There was also a role for tenants as part of the District Committees' executive responsibilities and there needed to be clarity about the scrutiny/executive functions. He acknowledged the importance of the City HLB in a strategic context.

The Chair acknowledged the challenges of respecting that HLBs were self organising bodies and unevenly spread across the city whilst seeking to ensure a representative structure which retained the commitment and experience of engaged tenants and was fit for purpose.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Deirdre Alden about support for HLBs (e.g. officer support, room hire, etc.), the Committee was informed that the current level of support would continue and there would be consultation should any changes be proposed. HLBs had accepted the need for ongoing development.

Councillor Jerry Evans indicated that he was content with the proposals being put forward but felt that there needed to be clarity about how district Committees scrutinise the performance of housing services. He emphasised the importance of Members of those Committees having access to performance information in order to fulfil their collective responsibilities. The Director undertook to circulate to Members the list of performance reports available.

In supporting the proposals, Councillor Rob Pocock commented on the need for clarity about the remit of HLBs and Neighbourhood Forums. The Chair commented that better ways for groups to work together needed to be fostered and she considered that that was for local Councillors to facilitate.

The Director said that for the next phase of the process there would be a session with tenants and consideration would be given to arranging a session for elected Members. It could be beneficial for there to be an understanding of the shape of the structure before reporting to Cabinet.

The Chair drew Members' attention to paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the background paper circulated to highlight the responsibilities of Councillors for

setting and delivering social housing objectives. In summarising discussion, she believed that Members had a general understanding of the drivers for change to the tenant engagement structure and the need to take account of advice from the District Auditor while respecting the tradition of the tenant movement and self organisation of HLBs. She concluded that the emerging recommendations for neighbourhoods, Wards, Districts and the City, as now presented, were generally supported subject to clarification of the issues raised by Members during discussion. There was recognition that the developments were ongoing and therefore that there should be continuing involvement of tenants and the Scrutiny Committee in the consultation process. The Chair thanked officers for the work undertaken on the consultation.

There were Members of the City HLB in attendance who made the following points:-

- There was local performance monitoring of the housing service as well as at City level
- The HLB was kept informed of any planning developments.
- HLBs achieved good value for money.
- The formation of new HLBs was promoted.
- HLBs worked in partnership with other groups (neighbourhood forums, police, etc.) for the benefit of all residents.
- While there were some younger members of HLBs, it was recognised that they needed to be more representative and that better ways to recruit new Members should be explored.
- Where standards were set under the regulatory framework, HLBs would be expected to follow them.
- The level of tenant involvement across the City had declined and needed to be addressed.

In concluding discussion, the Chair said that the Council was working towards a structure that was flexible and fit for purpose.

31   **RESOLVED:-**

That the presentation on the Tenant Engagement consultation, the findings and emerging recommendations, together with associated documents, be noted and the overarching conclusions and emerging recommendations now presented be generally supported subject to clarification of the issues raised including on accountability and spend of the discretionary fund, performance monitoring of the housing management service and the scrutiny/executive functions of District Committees.

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WORK PROGRAMME/DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Proposed dates for future meetings had been set out on the agenda and were agreed. As to the start time of meetings, it was agreed that three of the four meetings would commence at 1400 hours and, to accommodate Councillor David Pears' preference, one of the meetings would start at 1600 hours. The Committee Manager undertook to consult Councillor David Pears about which meeting should start at 1600 hours and to advise Members.

32   **RESOLVED:-**

That future meetings of the Committee take place on the following
Tuesdays and Members be advised as to the start time of meetings
following consultation with Councillor David Pears:-

29 January 2013
12 February 2013
5 March 2013
23 April 2013

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**REQUEST FOR 'CALL IN'/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS IF
ANY)**

33   There were no requests received.

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AUTHORITY TO ACT BETWEEN MEETINGS

34   **RESOLVED:-**

That the Chair is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the
Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-
Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby
authorised to act in consultation with the Chair and that the Director of
Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to affix the Corporate
Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said
officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them;
further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted
to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority
was used.

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OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Devolution Inquiry : Making it Real

35   The Overview and Scrutiny Manager reminded Members that an informal
meeting had been arranged for Friday 14 December at 1700 hours to finalise
the Inquiry report prior to publication. The meeting was open to all Members to
attend.

The Chair thanked officers for their support for the Devolution Inquiry and in
closing the meeting wished all present a Merry Christmas.

The meeting ended at 1706 hours.

                                                                ….....…………………………….
                                                                CHAIR

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee
Be Heard Briefing for Members – 5 Mar 2013

Be Heard – The Past

- Be Heard is the council's consultation database and can be found at www.birminghambeheard.org. All consultation activity undertaken by the council should be listed on Be Heard.
- The website went public in 2009 and was originally developed in-house by the Local Strategic Partnership and BCC, funded by the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF), and designed and supported by Service Birmingham.
- It is a tool to help local people find out about what consultation activity is happening in Birmingham.
- Be Heard helps residents to influence important decisions that are shaping their city.
- Staff users are prompted to report back on consultation outcomes, so the public can see what influence they have had on decision making. The top three findings are published.
- The site helps us ensure we meet Cabinet Office Principles that consultation should be 'digital by default' and meets the Duty to Consult.
- The council currently consults on a wide range of topics. In 2011/12 seventy seven consultations took place. These ranged from closures of care homes and the experiences of carers, to consultations with young people about new play equipment and a skate park.
- It is likely that in the future, reflecting changes in the council, there will be a greater need for effective consultation focussing on big issues like service reviews and budgets.
- During difficult and changing times it is imperative that residents are given the opportunity to have their say on big decisions that affect us all. This is a simple, relatively cheap and effective way to enable us to do this.

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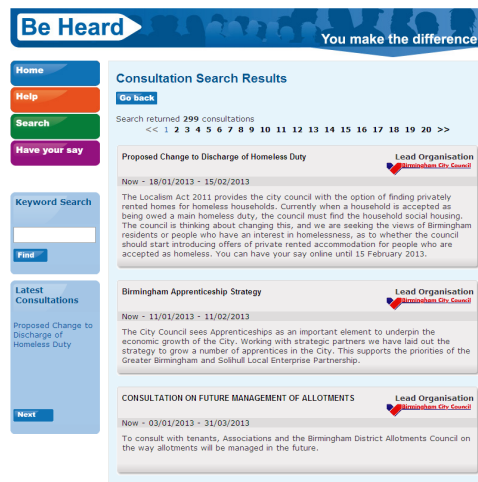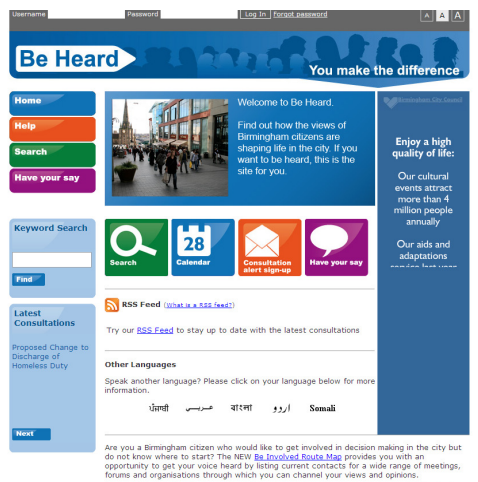
Be Heard – The Future

- Due to the end of WNF and feedback from users and internal audit, Be Heard is currently being refreshed, future proofed and readied to adapt to new challenges.

- Although the current site provides a really useful service an external provider can offer a better tool, continually upgraded and meeting best practice standards at a significantly lower cost.

- The site is a partnership between BCC, the NHS, BVSC, WMFS with whom we share costs thereby generating better value for money.

- To help with service recognition we are keeping the brand name and web-site, although updating the brand and changing service provider.

- Following our procurement process, the new consultation database tool will be provided by www.citizenspace.com

- This was built for government, and co creators in central and local government continue to help shape it.

- Citizenspace has been adopted by more than 50 public sector organisations including the Ministry of Justice, Transport for London, the Department of Health, BBC Trust, the Scottish Government and the Department for Energy and Climate Change.

- The new site will still allow residents to access information about local consultation and engagement activity, and respond to consultations online with a We asked, You Said, We Did function.

- The improved site will be easier for the public to use, with enhanced features such as the ability to embed rich media, such as videos, maps or slides.

- It will enable us to consult with more residents more effectively.

- It has high standards of accessibility to make it user friendly for people of all abilities and disabilities.

- It is trusted by state and national government, and has been independently penetration tested to ensure the highest standards of security.

- The site allows partner organisations to access information about other consultations happening in the city, helping to share resources and avoid consultation fatigue.

- The site will be promoted internally to encourage staff register their consultations online and use the new features to engage with a wider audience. We will be using internal communication methods such as Inner Voice, Inline, Weekly News, Manager Briefings, Council House Screens, Posters, Councillor Newsletters, Councillor Marketplace and presentations.

- The site will be promoted externally to help connect with residents and encourage them to use the site. This will be using our external communication networks such as Forward Newspaper, Birmingham Bulletin, Libraries and leisure centres, Neighbourhood forums Birmingham.gov, partner communications (inc NHS screens), and events.

- As the site is an online tool, we will be engaging the online community and using online and social media to promote its use. This will include engaging with local bloggers and twitter users, yammer, e-newletters and hyperlocal sites.

How Can You Help?

- Keep the public informed about the site, and encourage them to get involved in their city by taking part in consultations.

- Promote the site via meetings, twitter, blog (we can provide copy) link on website etc

- Remind officers that consultation activity should always be put on the system.

- Ask the right questions of officers regarding online consultations

- Telling fellow councillors/colleagues/friends about the site and helping to spread the word.

- Check what has already been consulted on to avoid unnecessary repeat or overlapping consultations. Is it always necessary to consult?

Any Questions?

Item 2b

Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee Public Engagement Discussion Paper

1   Introduction

1.1   The Committee has agreed to undertake an Inquiry into public engagement. As this is a very broad area it has been agreed to undertake exploratory discussions in order to be able to agree on clearly defined aims and parameters of the Inquiry. This report is intended to provide some background and propose some options.

1.2   Between 2009 and 2011 the City Council had a statutory duty to Inform, Consult and Involve (under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007). The new Best Value guidance replacing it instead refers to consultation with local taxpayers and service users, specifically regarding commissioning and decommissioning of services.

1.3   The Council, Directorates and Districts all have existing approaches to engagement, some of which have recently been refreshed, for example:

- The Council developed an engagement and consultation strategy in 2006 with the explicit aim of improving the quality and consistency of council engagement and consultation;

- Adults and Communities Directorate proposed a new approach to citizen involvement in October 2012;

- The changes to tenant engagement have previously been considered by this committee.

1.4   In addition, new methods of engagement have been implemented recently, such as district conventions.

1.5   It is timely to undertake this work as the Leader's Statement of May 2012 sets out a priority to "**involve** local people and communities in the future of their local area and their public services - a city with local services for local people." With particular reference to giving citizens the opportunity to influence services at the local level.

1.6   Involve suggests that:

> "Citizen perspectives enrich local decision making by providing experience, insight and expertise, and contributing solutions to complex challenges."[1]

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[1] Involve response on the Future of Local Government , 2011

1.7   The current financial context, arguably strengthens the need to be effective in this:

> "Good public engagement can be part of a way of working that helps councils to take tough decisions, find efficiency savings, and innovate through the economic down turn." [2]

1.8   The Constitution revised in May 2012 sets down some duties relating to engagement. A key role of all Councillors includes to:

> "contribute to the good governance of Birmingham and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making."

1.9   The role of Ward Committees is "to encourage and facilitate dialogue, between the Council and local people within their Ward with a view to:

- ensuring that the needs of the Ward and key issues affecting local people are identified and assessed;

- ensuring that such needs and issues are clearly expressed to, and considered by, the relevant Cabinet Member/Committees/Departments of the Council (or, where relevant, other public agencies); and

- generally, maximising the influence of local people over the way in which the functions of the Council (or other public agencies) are discharged within the Ward."

2   Definitions

2.1   A myriad of terms are used, often interchangeably when discussing the public having a say on pubic services – participation, engagement, consultation, empowerment, involvement. Existing City Council definitions include:

> "**Consultation** is the process by which the council (or other agencies) seeks advice, information and opinions about planned changes, strategies, policies, plans and services in order to inform its decisions."

> " **Involvement** covers both consultation and active participation which, for example, includes, providing opportunities for local people to:
> - influence or directly participate in decision making, for example being part of a board or committee
> - work with the council (and/or other agencies) to design policies, plans and services

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[2] LGIU / Involve (2009) Citizen Power in Recession? The case for public engagement in local government

  - co-produce or carry out some aspects of services for themselves, for example housing cooperatives
  - help the council monitor and assess its services." [3]

2.2   Elsewhere **engagement** is said to encompass:

  - Acting together: working in partnership and sharing responsibility

  - Involvement: stakeholders contributing to decisions affecting them.

  - Community empowerment: giving stakeholders/local people a way to influence what is done and take action themselves.

  - Consultation: listening and offering choices to those consulted, taking views into account and

  - Information: obtaining information through market research to inform services and planning.

2.3   These two definitions of public engagement cover similar ground:

> "**Public engagement** is the process by which organisations invite citizens to get involved in deliberation, dialogue and action on issues that they care about. In short, at its core, public engagement is about citizens having a voice in the public decisions that impact their lives."[4]

> "**Public engagement** is the active participation of members of the public in the decisions that affect their lives. These decisions can be specifically related to improvement, delivery and evaluation of services. They can also relate to the public having a role in strengthening the assets of their community and building sustainable and empowered groups and individuals. Public engagement is about engaging in meaningful dialogue with the public to build strong and ongoing partnerships with stakeholders and service providers."[5]

2.4   An alternative view is that:

> "**Public engagement** uses structured communications or dialogue between government, the public and other interested parties to inform specific policy development; or specific service implementation.
> Public engagement is not to be confused with ongoing stakeholder communication which is part of everyday business for government departments.

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[3] BCC Twenty Steps to Consultation Good Practice
[4] Wales Audit Office (2012) Public Engagement in Local Government
[5] Involve /LG Improvement and Development (2010) Not Another Consultation

Public engagement is more specific, and is used when there is a policy or service development that will benefit from further insight from key audience.""[6]

2.5   Whilst this definition can help set "public engagement" apart from some of the other consultative terms discussed it is suggested that that is too narrow a brief in relation's to the Committee's overall remit.

2.6   Alongside these definitions lies the concept of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), This is an approach which recognises "capacity, skills, knowledge and connections" in communities and service users, rather than labelling areas and focussing on problems or assuming some groups are just "hard to reach." A glass half full approach rather than a glass half empty approach is how this can be described (Appendix 1 includes further information from a publication of that name).

2.7   A working definition for the Committee could be:

Public engagement is the active participation of citizens in the decisions that affect their lives. It includes

- *ongoing stakeholder communication;*
- *consultation and dialogue relating to specifc policy development and service reconfiguration;*
- *performance monitoring; and*
- *co-production.*

It should form a cornerstone of an ABCD approach.

3   Current perceptions

3.1   The quarterly Birmingham Residents Tracker Survey provides evidence about residents' current perceptions. Appendix 3 includes data bundle of indicators from Quarter 3 2012/13 relating to communications and engagement. They have been annotated for the purpose of this report, including, for example, ticks to demonstrate the best performing districts and warning signs indicating the worst. The data indicate big disparities across the city, for example:

- Agreement that the respondent is involved in local decision-making varies from 31% (Selly Oak) to 6% (Ladywood)

- Satisfaction with the range of ways to get involved in local decision-making varies from 82% (Edgbaston) to 37% (Hodge Hill)

- The extent to which Birmingham City Council provides opportunities for local residents to play an active part in the community varies from 89% (Edgbaston) to 52% (Hodge Hill).

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[6] COI (2009) Effective Public Engagement

3.2   Whilst there is much variation in these figures Edgbaston is in the top quartile for the majority of the indicators in Appendix 3 (excluding satisfaction with the way the Council is run) and Hodge Hill is worst performing quartile.

3.3   Further investigation of the figures might prove useful as there appear to be some ambiguities. For example, whilst 53% of respondents say they know how to influence local decision-making just 30% agree they can influence local decision-making.

4   Dimensions of Engagement

4.1   Public engagement is multi-faceted and encompasses a range of issues, some of which are referred to below.

Purpose

4.2   Engagement may relate to shaping specific areas of policy development or be more about day to day service provision. It can relate to services in general, or at this time of increasing personalisation, about individual needs. It is argued that one principle is that "participants should join those organising the process in setting terms of reference for the whole exercise, and framing the questions that they will discuss."[7]

4.3   Co-production is an aim of the proposed Adults and Communities Directorate. This relates to "delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are coproduced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change."

Method

4.4   Traditionally engagement has been undertaken through face to face methods (such as drop in days, co-options to committees, and public meetings) and the written medium (such as formal consultation questionnaires). Increasingly, it now involves technology such as email, the birminghamgov.uk web site and other quasi city council sites, and social media including facebook and twitter.

Structures

4.5   The Council supports a variety of formal structures across the city and it also engages with self organising groups too.

Levels

4.6   Arnstein's ladder (figure 1) is one way of considering the different levels of engagement involved, although it is not a perfect model. Appendix 4 indicates how this might be revised and applied to Birmingham, although where the examples sit will no doubt be contested.

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[7] http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/what/further-reading

Figure 1
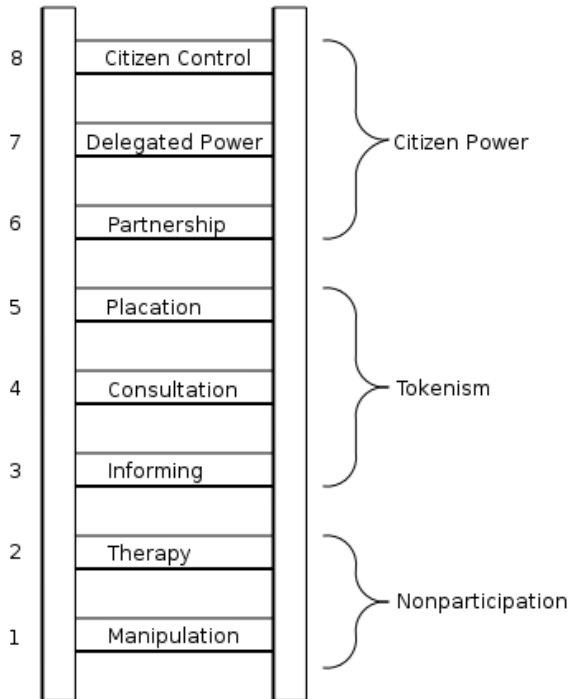
Sherry Arnstein 1969

Phase

4.7   Engagement may sometimes be a one-off, but generally it will be an ongoing process and entail a series of phases. Citizens, of course, may have a long term view of council engagement, in possible contrast to an officer perception of stand alone consultation activities.

Foundations

4.8   Strong foundations are required for effective engagement. A clear strategy needs to be in place for an organisation such as the city council. There needs to be resources and officer capacity to undertake this work. Training can be required within the council and by citizens. Capacity building and support to active citizens involved in local organisations can help create a strong base for engagement.

4.9   Equalities needs to be embedded by ensuring all communities / groups defined under the Equality Act 2010 have appropriate ways to have a voice and receive feedback.

4.10   Engagement needs to be evaluated and lessons actually learnt from this.

5   Challenges

5.1   There are many challenges which include making it worthwhile – ensuring effective use of citizens' views. Linked is the need for ongoing and effective feedback aimed at appropriate audiences so those who did engage can see how it had an impact and those who did not can see a benefit.

5.2   The City Council is not the only organisation engaging with the public. The NHS, West Midlands Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, housing associations and the higher education facilities to name just a few, all carry out consultations and support structures or organise events to enable citizens to have a say. One challenge for the city is to assess if there are any opportunities for greater collaboration.

6   Options for an Inquiry

6.1   It is clear that a topic of "engagement for the city council" could be another broad brush approach. It is noted that, given the remit of the committee, engagement will be an ongoing topic on the work programme. It is therefore recommended that Members consider the suggestions below and make further suggestions. Appendix 2 is a framework which can be used in prioritising topic areas.

6.2   It should be noted that other work is being undertaken by both the Executive and Scrutiny relating to engagement and that further discussion will be required prior to a topic being finalised.

6.3   Any of the topics below should consider resource implications and identify the areas where, in the current financial situation, the Council needs to ensure it has a steer from the community. Whilst some of the engagement activities outlined can be built into day to day service provision, in many cases to undertake engagement effectively it can not simply be an add on to the duties of existing posts. If more of this activity is undertaken less of something else will need to be done or it will have to be paid for in some way.

6.4   Areas of focus could include one of the following:

- The strategic approach taken by the City Council;
- The strategic approach taken by one Directorate or team;
- Budget consultation – strengthening it for future years;
- Good practice in engagement regarding shaping /commissioning /decommissioning of services;
- Good practice in engagement at district and ward levels;
- Assessment and opportunity to share good practice relating district conventions;
- Gaining an understanding of differential perceptions of communication and engagement within districts;
- Drawing lessons and sharing good practice regarding Member engagement;

- Undertake scrutiny of a sample of formal consultations across the Council to draw out good practice and assess effectiveness;

- Examine the use and effectiveness of social media as an engagement tool for the council;

- Determine opportunities to develop new or little used approaches such as developing a "citizen challenge" engaging with residents about what they want to have a say in; participatory budgeting; and other deliberative engagement approaches; and

- Investigation of any further opportunities to make better use of resources by improving joined up working with partners.

- Examine the ability of the Council and its partners to support community organisations, undertake community development and build local capacity; or

- Gaining a better understanding and identifying policy responses to some of the tensions resulting from engagement, such as raising expectations, trying to resolve conflicts with different people wanting different things and how to keep those whose views did not win over engaged.

7   Next steps

7.1   It is suggested that the April 2013 meeting includes further exploratory discussion of priority areas. In addition, it may be beneficial to ask Members not part of the Committee to attend and share good practice regarding member engagement and consultation.

7.2   The Committee needs to review other work being undertaken or recently completed.

7.3   Following that the Scrutiny Office will draw up a draft terms of reference for discussion.

8   Recommendation

8.1   That Members note the report

8.2   That Members agree on the priority areas for further investigation and possible future inquiry

8.3   That reference to this report is made on the scrutiny web page and twitter for feedback on members of the public's priority areas and concerns.

Contact:

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Appendix 1 Asset Based Community Development
Extract from "The Glass Half Full"

The asset approach values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community. It doesn't only see the problems that need fixing and the gaps that need filling. In an asset approach, the glass is half-full rather than half empty. The more familiar 'deficit' approach focuses on the problems, needs and deficiencies in a community such as deprivation, illness and health-damaging behaviours. It designs services to fill the gaps and fix the problems. As a result, a community can feel disempowered and dependent; people can become passive recipients of services rather than active agents in their own and their families' lives.

The asset approach values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community. In an asset approach, the glass is half-full rather than half-empty.

The more familiar 'deficit' approach focuses on the problems, needs and deficiencies in a community. It designs services to fill the gaps and fix the problems. As a result, a community can feel disempowered and dependent; people can become passive recipients of expensive services rather than active agents in their own and their families' lives. Fundamentally, the shift from using a deficit-based approach to an asset-based one requires a change in attitudes and values.

Professional staff and councillors have to be willing to share power; instead of doing things for people, they have to help a community to do things for itself.

Working in this way is community-led, long-term and open-ended. A mobilised and empowered community will not necessarily choose to act on the same issues that health services or councils see as the priorities.

Place-based partnership working takes on added importance with the asset approach. Silos and agency boundaries get in the way of people-centred outcomes and community building.

The asset approach does not replace investment in improving services or tackling the structural causes of health inequality. The aim is to achieve a better balance between service delivery and community building. One of the key challenges for places and organisations that are using an asset approach is to develop a basis for commissioning that supports community development and community building – not just how activities are commissioned but what activities are commissioned.

The values and principles of asset working are clearly replicable. Leadership and knowledge transfer are key to embedding these ideas in the mainstream of public services. Specific local solutions that come out of this approach may not be transferable without change. They rely on community knowledge, engagement and commitment which are rooted in very specific local circumstances.

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Work Plan Selection & Prioritisation Discussion Aid[8]

General Reasons
- Does the topic have potential impact for one or more sections of the
- population of Birmingham?
- Has the topic been identified by Members?
- Is there a clear objective for including this topic on the work plan?
- To what extent will the topic impact upon the Councils ability to achieve its
- key priorities?
- Is the topic being/been/due to be dealt with elsewhere in the Authority?
- Is the scrutiny activity timely?

Risk
- Is the topic a high risk area?

Performance
- Has the Authority demonstrated poor performance in this area (evidence from
- Performance Indicators, etc)?
- Will the scrutiny activity 'add value' to or improve the Council's, and/or its
- partners overall performance?

Community Engagement
- Has the issue been identified as a key issue for the public (through Member Ward Surgeries and other contact with constituents?
- Is the issue of concern to the Council's partners and stakeholders?
- How does the subject impact on the Council's community leadership role?

External Factors
- Has the matter been the subject of external/internal review or inspection?
- Has the issue been identified by the external Audit Management
- letter/external audit reports?
- Is there any recent/forthcoming legislation that will affect the Council's
- approach to this topic?
- Is the topic a local or central government priority area?

Criteria for Rejecting a Topic for Scrutiny
- The issue is already being addressed
- The issue is being examined by an Officer group and change is imminent
- Scrutiny involvement is unlikely to lead to service improvements
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial to the Council's interest
- The topic is more appropriately addressed by a body other than scrutiny
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next
- year
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone
- substantial change

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[8] Newport Council

Appendix 3

Birmingham Residents Tracker Survey
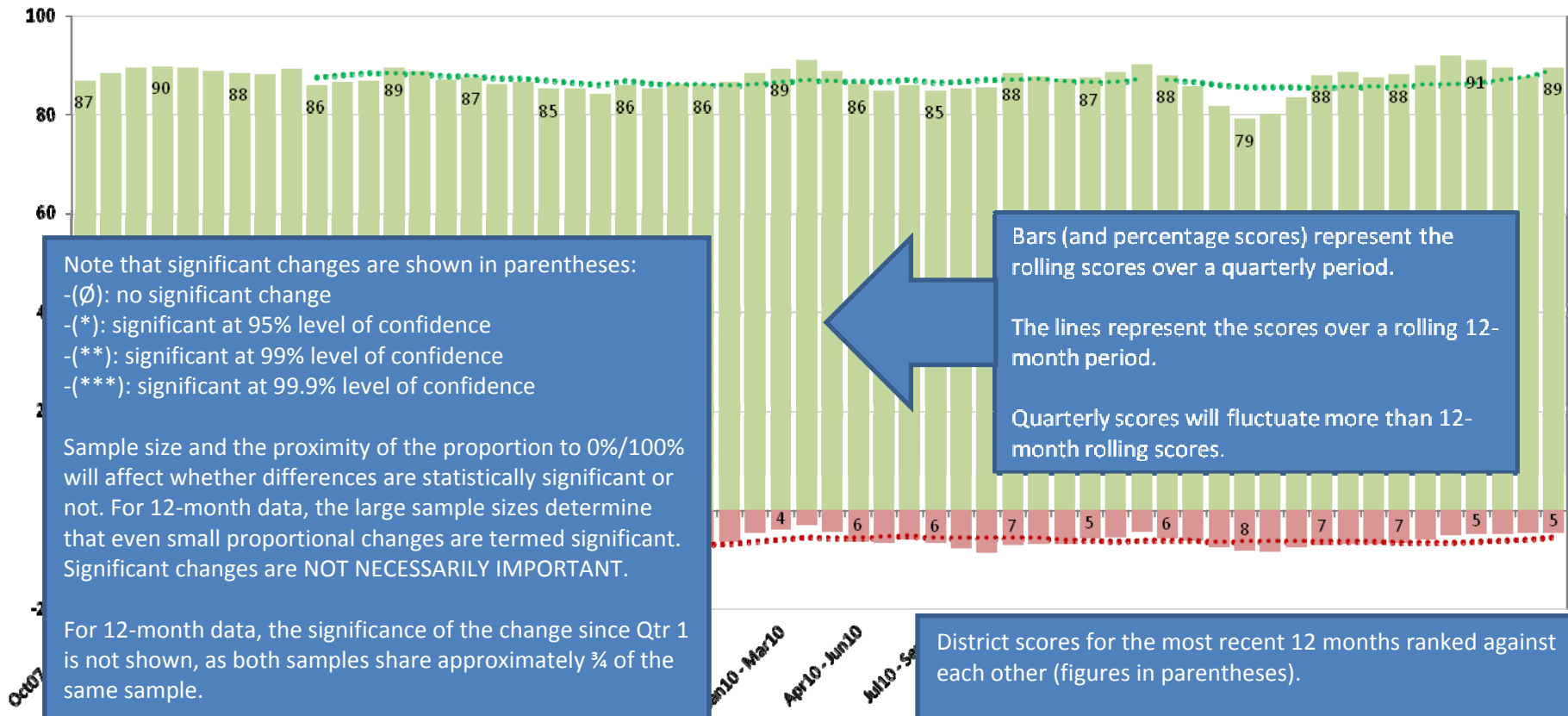# Summary overview

Quarter 3 2012/13

Communication and Participation

Annotated by BCC Scrutiny Office

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Note that significant changes are shown in parentheses:
- (Ø): no significant change
- (*): significant at 95% level of confidence
- (**): significant at 99% level of confidence
- (***): significant at 99.9% level of confidence

Sample size and the proximity of the proportion to 0%/100% will affect whether differences are statistically significant or not. For 12-month data, the large sample sizes determine that even small proportional changes are termed significant. Significant changes are NOT NECESSARILY IMPORTANT.

For 12-month data, the significance of the change since Qtr 1 is not shown, as both samples share approximately ¾ of the same sample.

Bars (and percentage scores) represent the rolling scores over a quarterly period.

The lines represent the scores over a rolling 12-month period.

Quarterly scores will fluctuate more than 12-month rolling scores.

District scores for the most recent 12 months ranked against each other (figures in parentheses).

Satisfied (quarter)   Dissatisfied (quarter)   ⋯⋯ Satisfied (12-month)   ⋯⋯ Dissatisfied

Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	89.4	89.0
Change on last quarter	-1.4 (Ø)	+2.7 (NA)
Change on Q3 11/12	+10.5 (***)	+3.4 (***)
Lowest score to date	79.0	85.4
Highest score to date	91.9	89.0

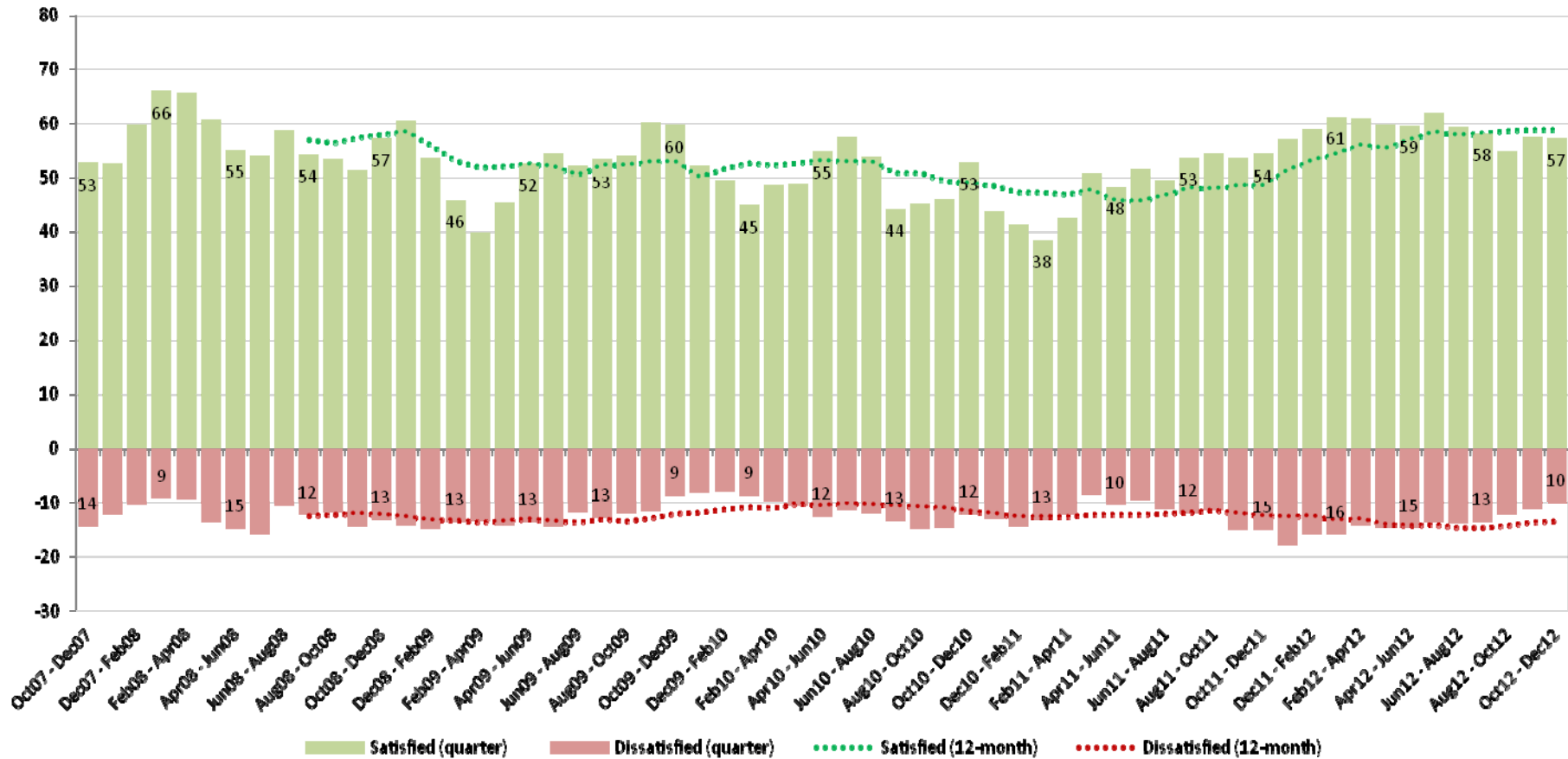| Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (2)	94.8%	Northfield (5)	91.5%
Erdington (9)	84.5%	Perry Barr (3)	93.8%
Hall Green (6)	86.5%	Selly Oak (4)	93.7%
Hodge Hill (10)	76.1%	Sutton Coldfield (1)	97.3%
Ladywood (8)	85.6%	Yardley (7)	86.0%

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Rating summary

p value denotes significance of change (less than 0.001 is significant at 99.9% level of confidence, <0.01 at 99% level of confidence, <0.05 at 95% level of confidence)	Current quarter	Change from last quarter	p	Change on Q3 11/12	p	Current 12-month period
BCC is accessible and responds to individual's needs	76.70%	9.69%	0.000	11.88%	0.000	71.19%
Agrees that is involved in local decision-making	21.97%	7.85%	0.000	-1.13%	0.598	17.14%
BCC acts on the concerns of local residents	73.14%	7.60%	0.001	8.95%	0.000	68.56%
BCC provides opportunities for people to play an active part in the community	71.57%	2.66%	0.257	6.85%	0.004	68.76%
Agrees that can influence decisions affecting the local area	30.70%	2.63%	0.260	-12.37%	0.000	29.74%
Users satisfied with the council website	86.03%	2.92%	0.486	4.05%	0.032	84.85%
Readers satisfied BCC e-mail newsletters	67.39%	0.71%	0.938	-9.50%	0.000	66.94%
Agrees that is satisfied with the amount of control they have over decisions that affect their lives	83.60%	-0.10%	0.958	0.04%	0.981	82.20%
Users satisfied with Birminghamnewsroom.gov	60.08%	-6.62%	0.743	-39.92%	0.000	71.95%
Satisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by local public services	57.03%	-0.99%	0.697	2.82%	0.270	58.81%
Satisfied with the range of different ways that you can get involved with influencing local decision-making	56.95%	-1.19%	0.639	5.69%	0.027	57.92%
Agrees that knows how to influence decisions affecting the local area	52.95%	-1.60%	0.532	-5.48%	0.032	54.27%
Readers satisfied with Forward	84.90%	-3.45%	0.219	-0.99%	0.586	85.15%
Agrees that by working together people can influence decisions that affect the local area	87.83%	-2.16%	0.180	1.68%	0.333	87.40%
Feels well informed about the Council and its activities	43.91%	-4.96%	0.053	-13.50%	0.000	50.47%

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Challenge	%
Helping people to find jobs	35%
Dealing with crime	18%
Providing more affordable housing	18%
Making Birmingham more prosperous	17%
Providing high-quality public services	17%
Improving the condition of existing housing	17%
Providing public services that are relevant to as much of the population as possible	15%
Meeting the needs of the city's aging population	13%
Making people feel safer	12%
Improving the local environment	10%
Decline of manufacturing sector	9%
Supporting families	8%
Improving relations between various communities	7%
Improving public transport	7%
Redeveloping brownfields sites	6%
Developing further residential space in central Birmingham	5%
Improving the highways infrastructure	5%
Improving the way public service providers work together	4%
Emergency planning for extreme weather conditions	3%
Stopping better off people moving out of the city	3%

Note: data = Oct 2012 – Dec 2012

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Satisfaction with the opportunities provided by local public services to participate in decision-making

Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	57.0	58.8
Change on last quarter	-1.0 (Ø)	–
Change on Q1 11/12	+2.8 (Ø)	+10.3 (***)
Lowest score to date	38.4	45.6
Highest score to date	65.9	58.8

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	83.3%	Northfield (4)	63.7%
Erdington (8)	47.5%	Perry Barr (2)	70.5%
Hall Green (7)	54.0%	Selly Oak (3)	67.1%
Hodge Hill (10)	35.9%	Sutton Coldfield (5)	63.6%
Ladywood (6)	61.8%	Yardley (9)	40.9%

123

Agreement that the respondent can influence local decision making
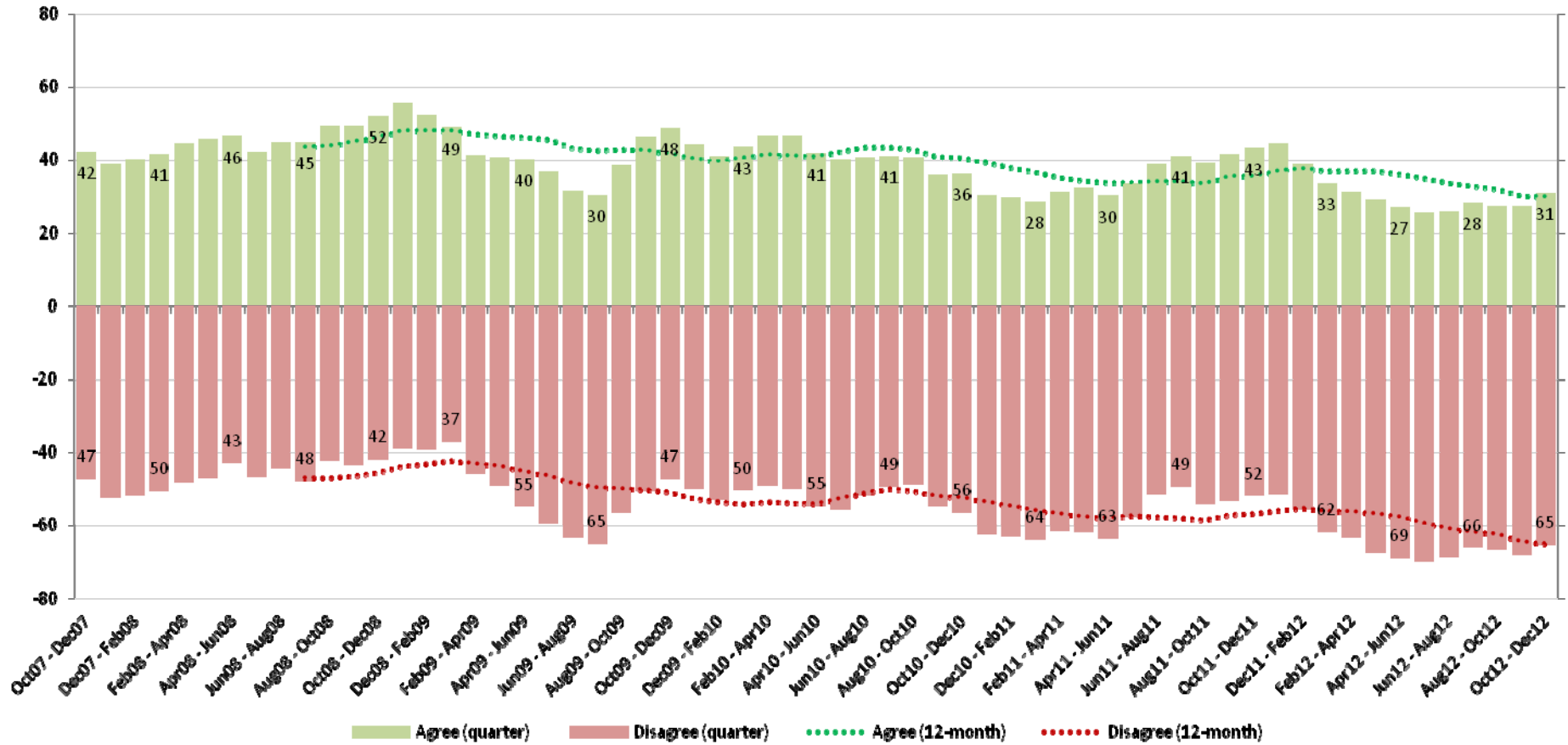
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	30.7	29.7
Change on last quarter	+2.6 (Ø)	–
Change on Q3 11/12	-12.4 (***)	-5.8 (***)
Lowest score to date	25.3	29.7
Highest score to date	55.2	47.9

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (8)	25.7%	Northfield (6)	28.7%
Erdington (3)	34.1%	Perry Barr (9)	25.4%
Hall Green (2)	35.2%	Selly Oak (7)	27.2%
Hodge Hill (5)	29.3%	Sutton Coldfield (4)	33.9%
Ladywood (10) ⚠	22.3%	Yardley (1) ✓	35.5%

124
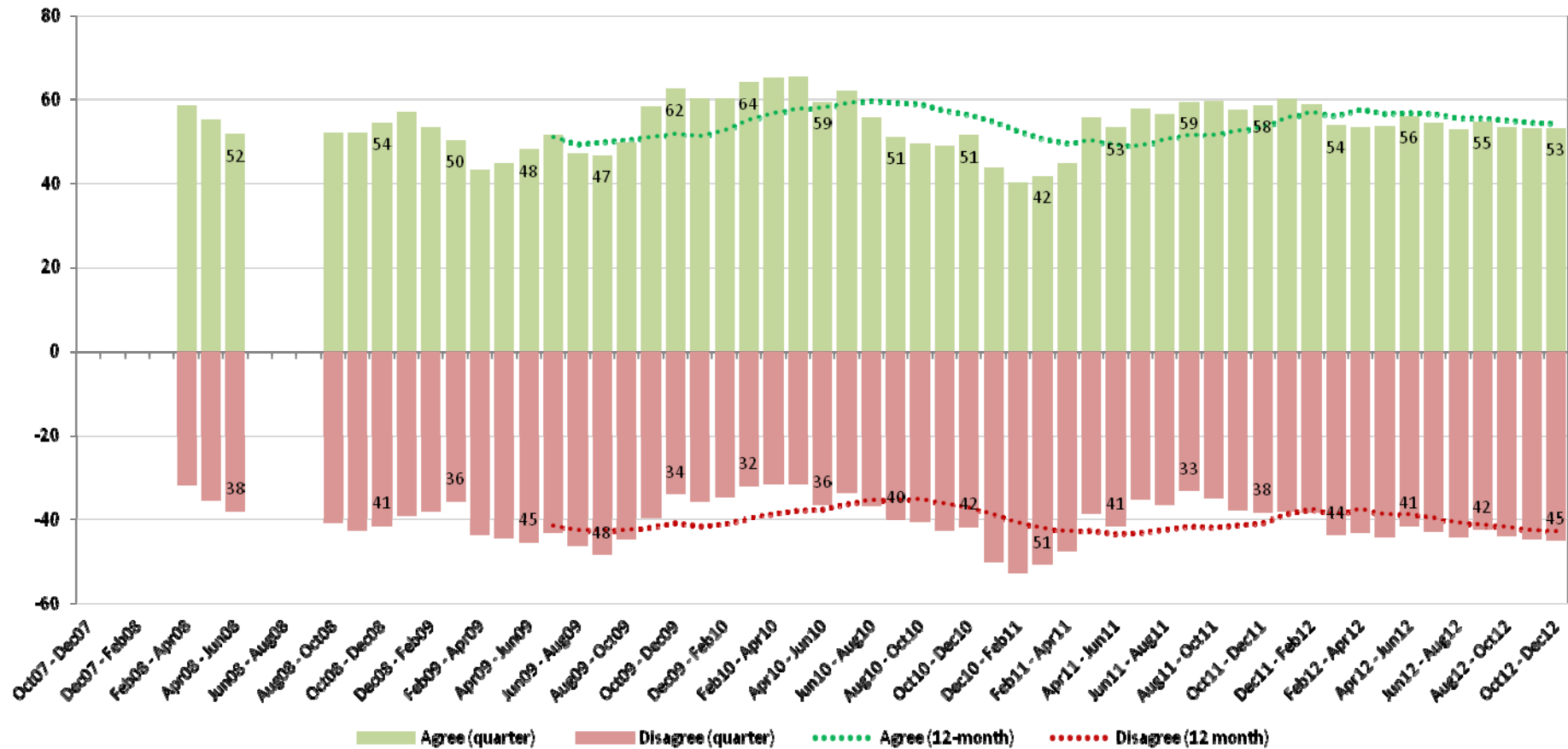
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	52.9	54.3
Change on last quarter	-1.6 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	-5.5 (*)	+1.2 (Ø)
Lowest score to date	40.3	48.8
Highest score to date	65.1	59.7

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (2)	64.1%	Northfield (1)	64.7%
Erdington (3)	63.7%	Perry Barr (5)	58.6%
Hall Green (7)	50.3%	Selly Oak (6)	53.1%
Hodge Hill (10)	40.2%	Sutton Coldfield (4)	61.4%
Ladywood (9)	42.1%	Yardley (8)	44.9%

125

Agreement that by working together, people can influence decisions in the local area

Legend: Agree (quarter) · Disagree (quarter) · Agree (12-month) · Disagree (12 month)
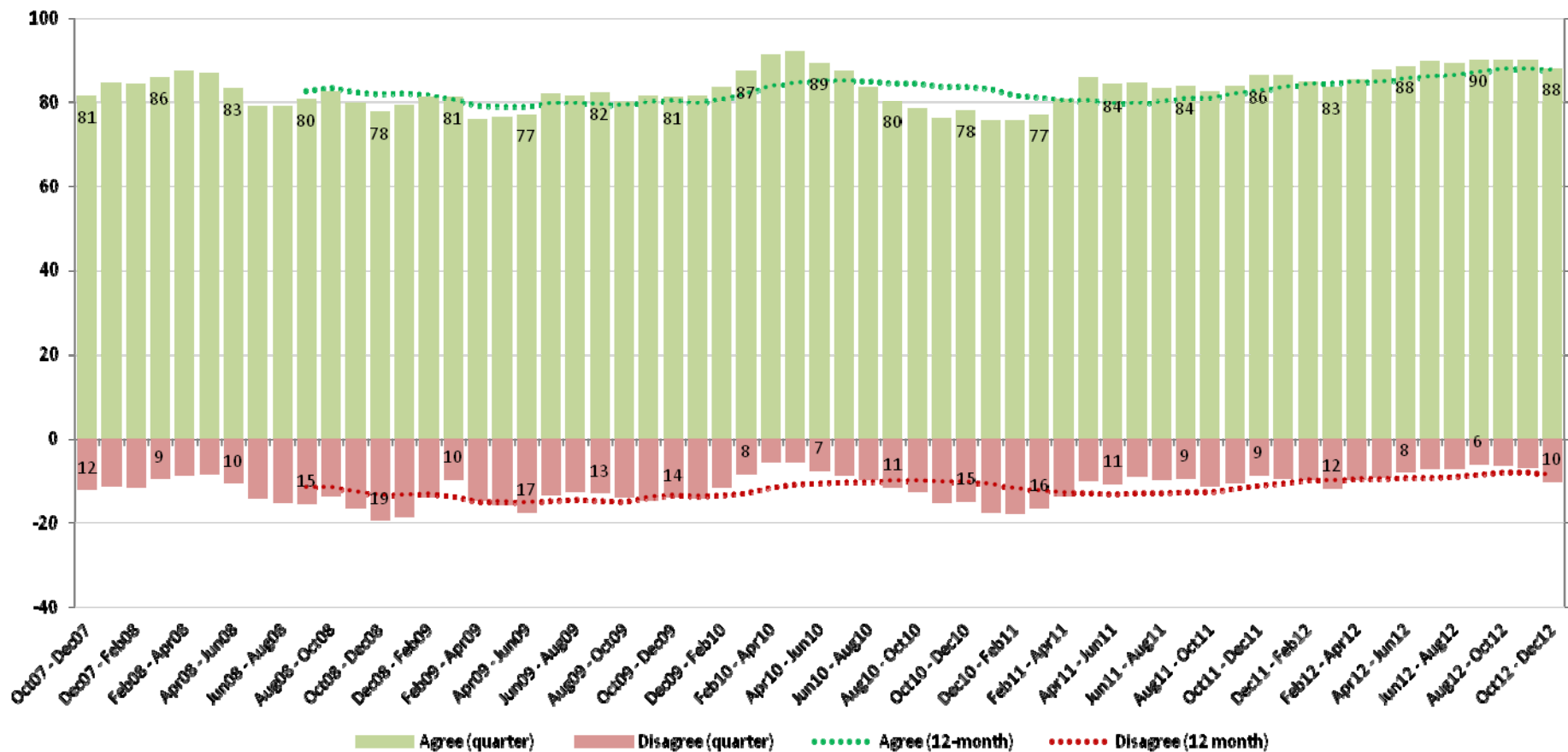
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	87.8	87.4
Change on last quarter	-2.2 (Ø)	–
Change on Q3 11/12	+1.7 (Ø)	+4.7 (***)
Lowest score to date	75.5	79.0
Highest score to date	91.8	87.8

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1) ✓	95.8%	Northfield (3)	90.4%
Erdington (8)	83.8%	Perry Barr (4)	88.3%
Hall Green (5)	86.4%	Selly Oak (6)	86.2%
Hodge Hill (10) ⚠	82.6%	Sutton Coldfield (9)	83.8%
Ladywood (2)	90.9%	Yardley (7)	86.0%

126

Agreement that the respondent is involved in local decision-making
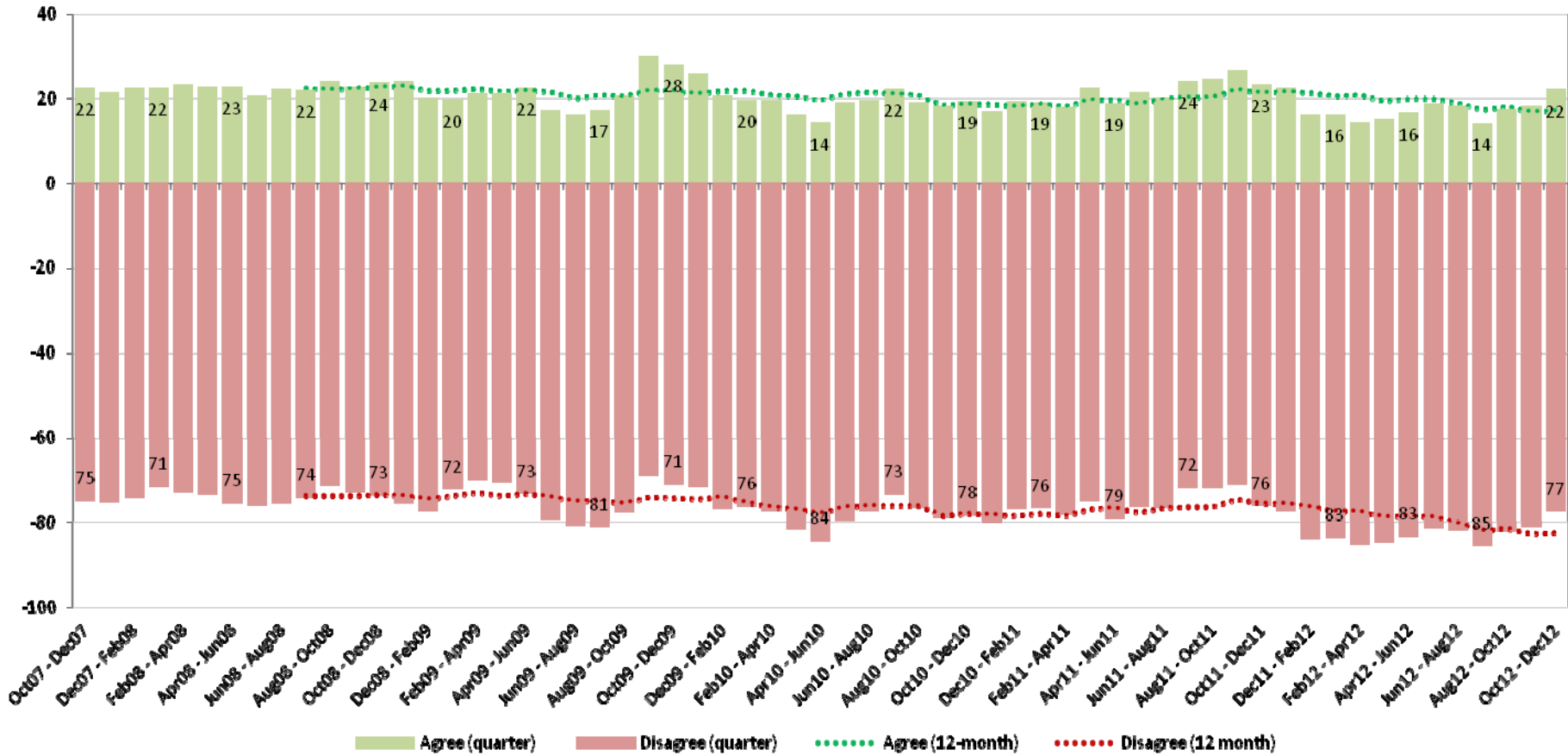
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	22.0	17.1
Change on last quarter	+7.9 (***)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	-1.1 (∅)	-4.1 (***)
Lowest score to date	14.1	16.9
Highest score to date	29.8	22.8

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (9)	6.9%	Northfield (7)	14.5%
Erdington (6)	16.3%	Perry Barr (8)	9.2%
Hall Green (2)	30.3%	Selly Oak (1)	31.4%
Hodge Hill (4)	18.2%	Sutton Coldfield (5)	18.1%
Ladywood (10)	6.3%	Yardley (3)	20.6%

127

Agreement that is satisfied with the amount of control over decisions that affect their lives
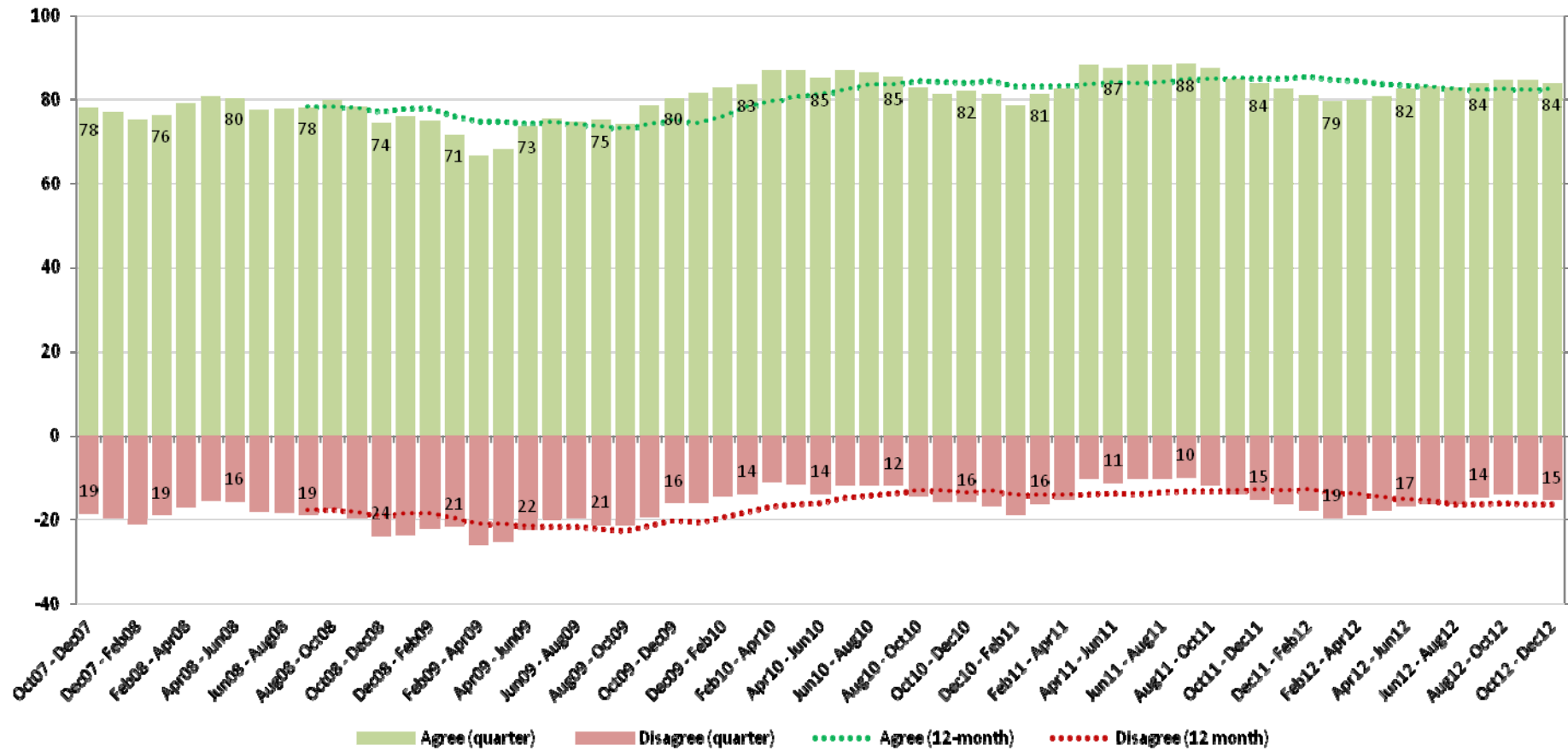
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	83.6	82.2
Change on last quarter	-0.1 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	±0.0 (Ø)	-2.8 (**)
Lowest score to date	66.5	73.0
Highest score to date	88.2	85.4

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (2)	87.7%	Northfield (10)	68.3%
Erdington (6)	83.6%	Perry Barr (1)	93.4%
Hall Green (7)	79.8%	Selly Oak (4)	86.0%
Hodge Hill (9)	74.5%	Sutton Coldfield (5)	84.1%
Ladywood (3)	87.4%	Yardley (8)	76.6%

128

Satisfaction with the range of different ways to get involved with local decision-making
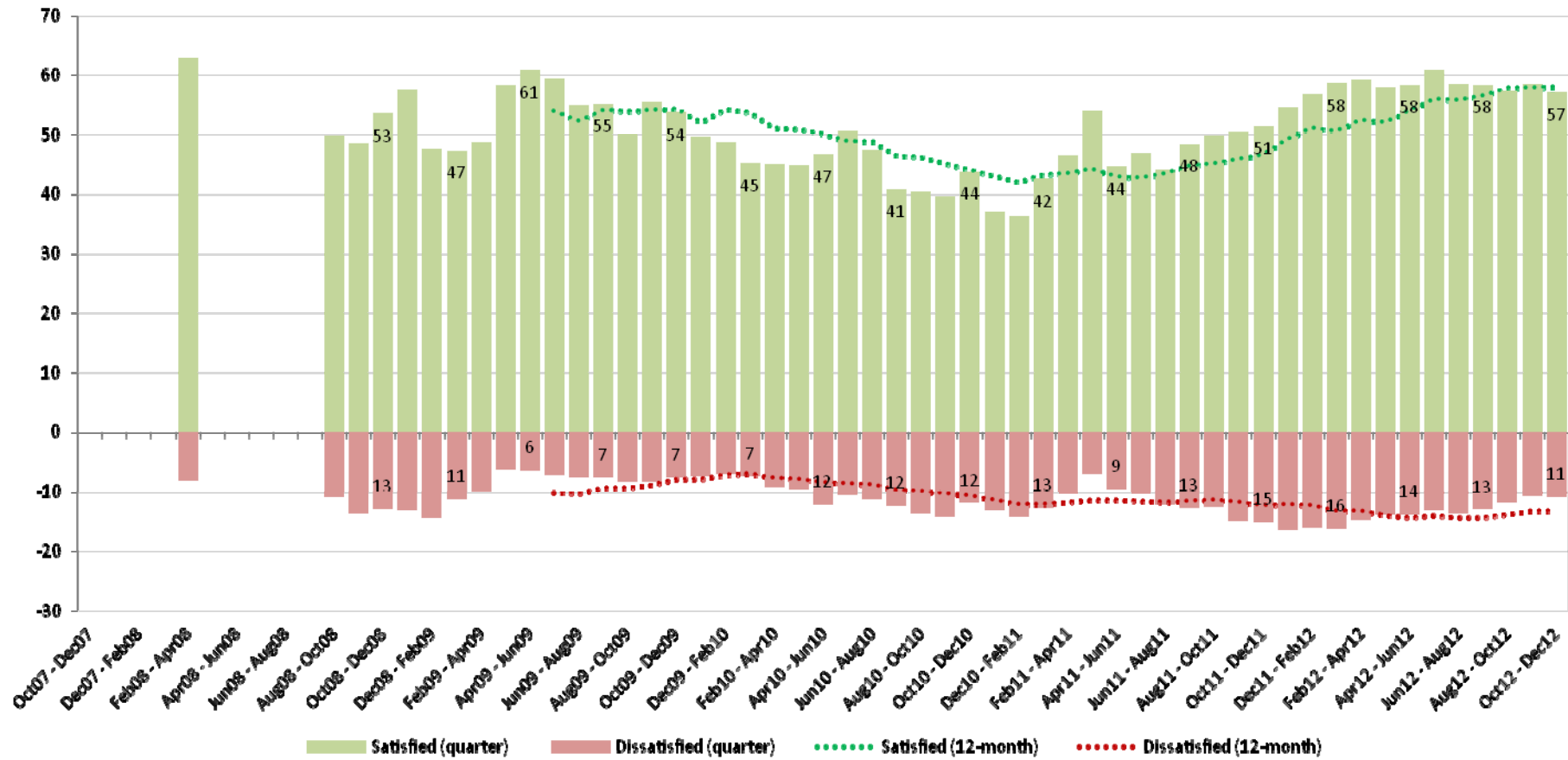
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	56.9	57.9
Change on last quarter	-1.2 (Ø)	–
Change on Q1 11/12	+5.7 (*)	+11.4 (***)
Lowest score to date	36.2	41.9
Highest score to date	66.7	57.9

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	82.0%	Northfield (4)	64.8%
Erdington (8)	45.8%	Perry Barr (2)	70.2%
Hall Green (7)	55.4%	Selly Oak (3)	65.8%
Hodge Hill (10)	36.8%	Sutton Coldfield (5)	60.3%
Ladywood (6)	60.0%	Yardley (9)	38.4%

129

Agreement that the police and other local public services seek people's views about crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the local area
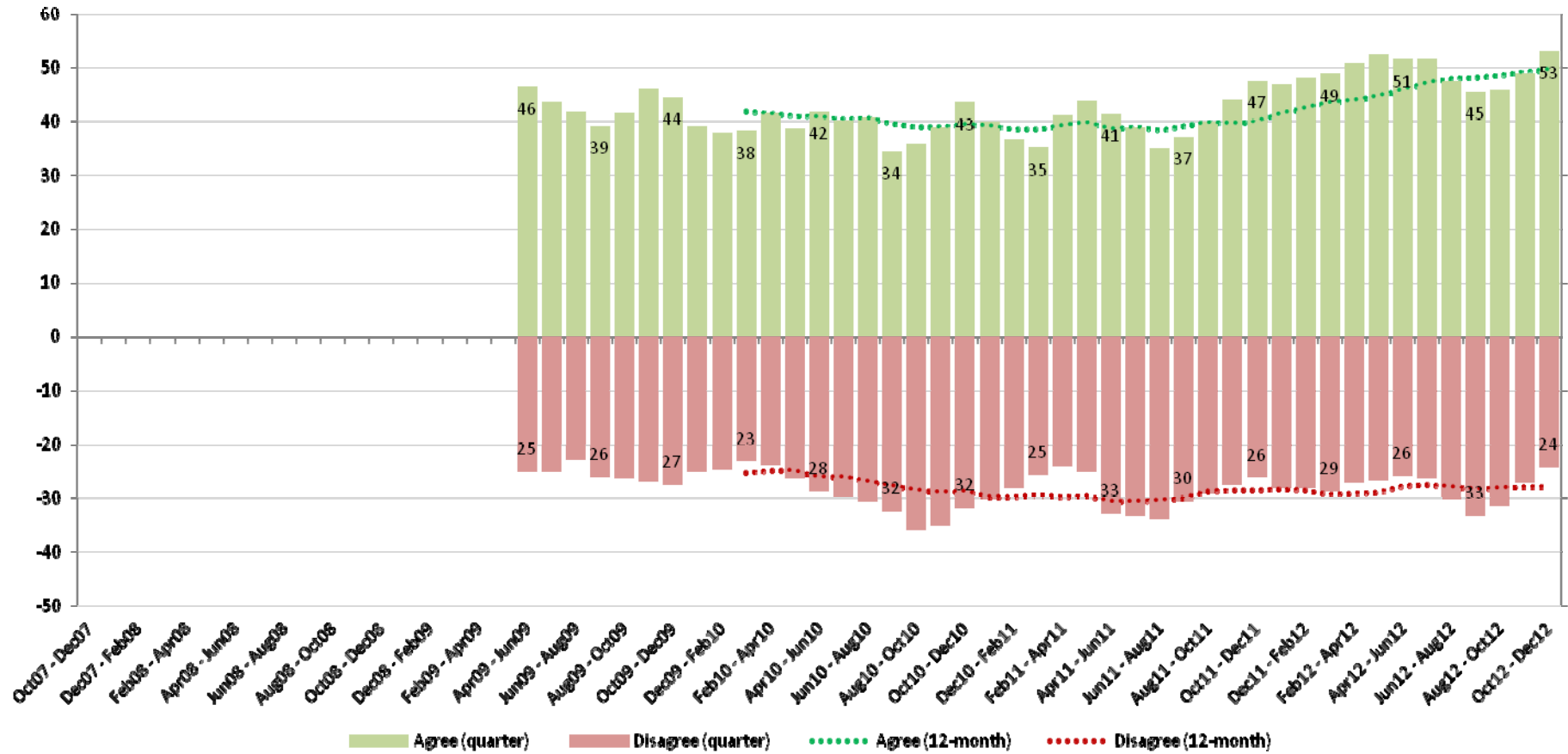
Agree	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	52.9	49.5
Change on last quarter	+7.5 (**)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	+5.5 (*)	+9.5 (***)
Lowest score to date	34.2	38.4
Highest score to date	52.9	49.5

Agree	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	82.7%	Northfield (5)	46.3%
Erdington (8)	39.6%	Perry Barr (3)	59.3%
Hall Green (7)	42.3%	Selly Oak (2)	59.5%
Hodge Hill (10)	34.5%	Sutton Coldfield (6)	44.8%
Ladywood (4)	50.8%	Yardley (9)	35.6%

130

Extent to which BCC acts on the concerns of local residents
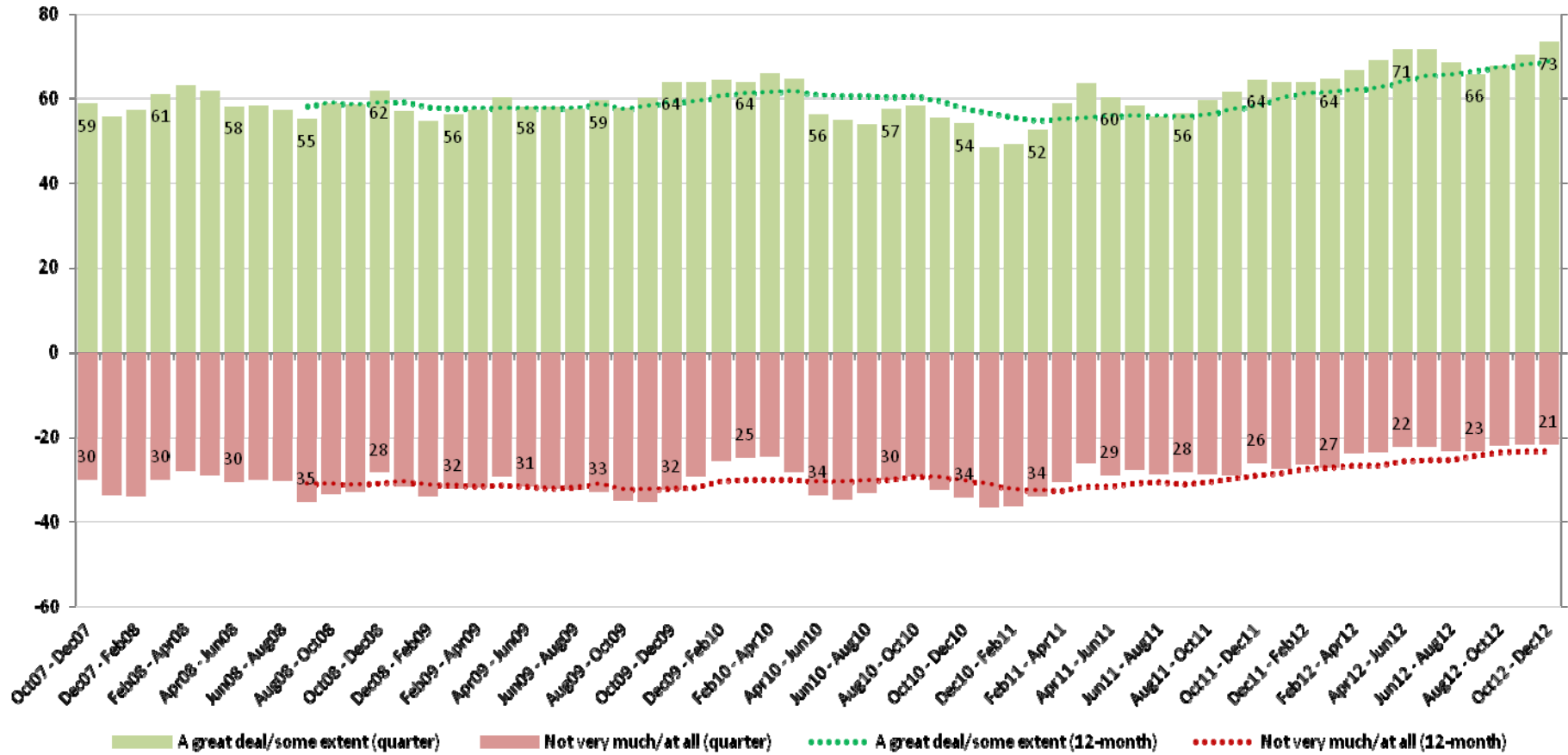
A great deal/some extent	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	73.1	68.6
Change on last quarter	+7.6 (**)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	+9.0 (***)	+10.4 (***)
Lowest score to date	48.2	54.9
Highest score to date	73.1	68.6

A great deal/some extent	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	81.8%	Northfield (2)	80.5%
Erdington (5)	70.7%	Perry Barr (6)	69.7%
Hall Green (7)	63.4%	Selly Oak (3)	73.3%
Hodge Hill (10)	53.0%	Sutton Coldfield (4)	70.8%
Ladywood (9)	60.8%	Yardley (8)	62.2%

131
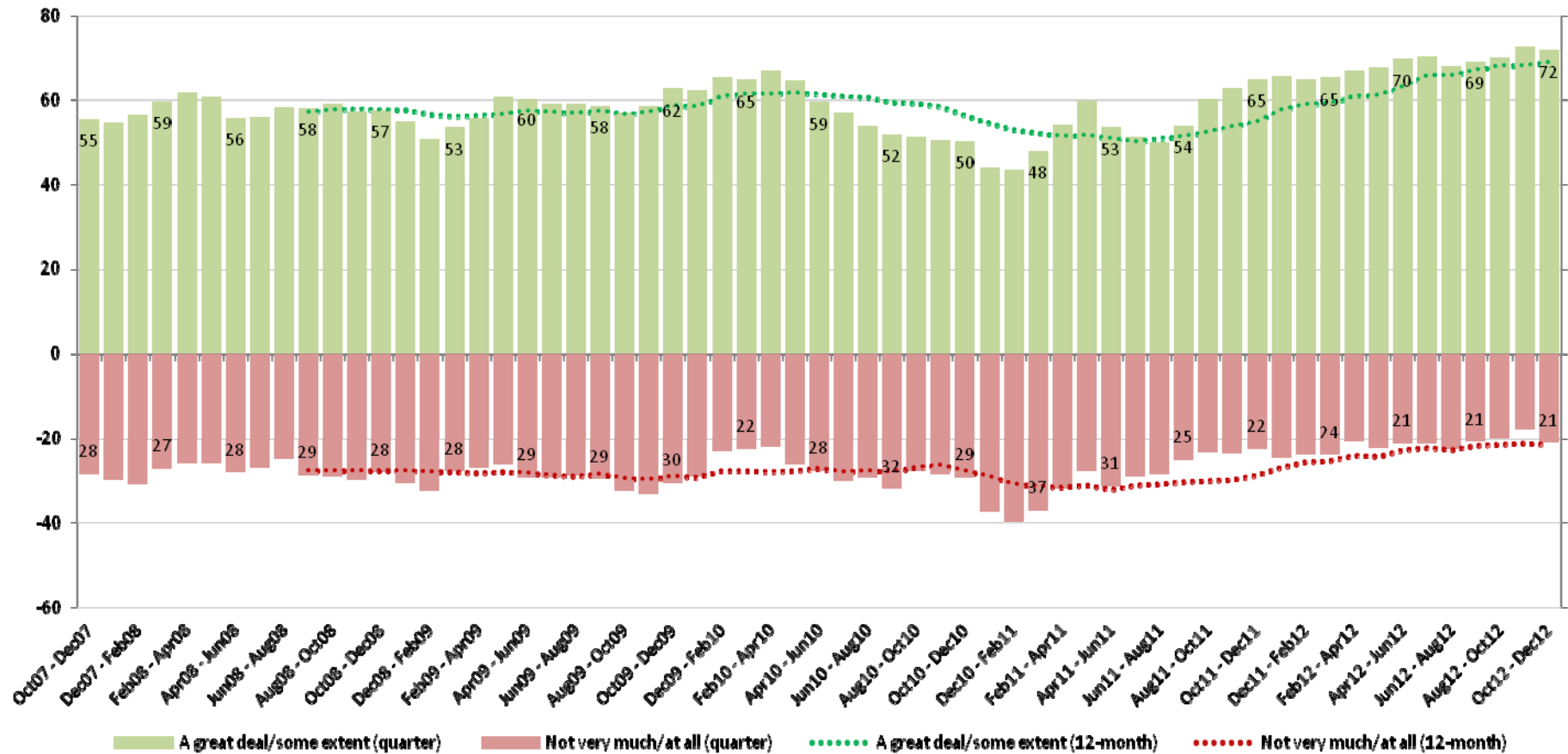
A great deal/some extent	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	71.6	68.8
Change on last quarter	+2.7 (Ø)	–
Change on Q3 11/12	+6.9 (**)	+13.9 (***)
Lowest score to date	43.3	50.1
Highest score to date	72.4	68.8

A great deal/some extent	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	89.2%	Northfield (2)	79.0%
Erdington (7)	64.5%	Perry Barr (4)	75.7%
Hall Green (8)	61.5%	Selly Oak (3)	76.0%
Hodge Hill (10)	51.9%	Sutton Coldfield (6)	67.9%
Ladywood (5)	69.2%	Yardley (9)	53.1%

132
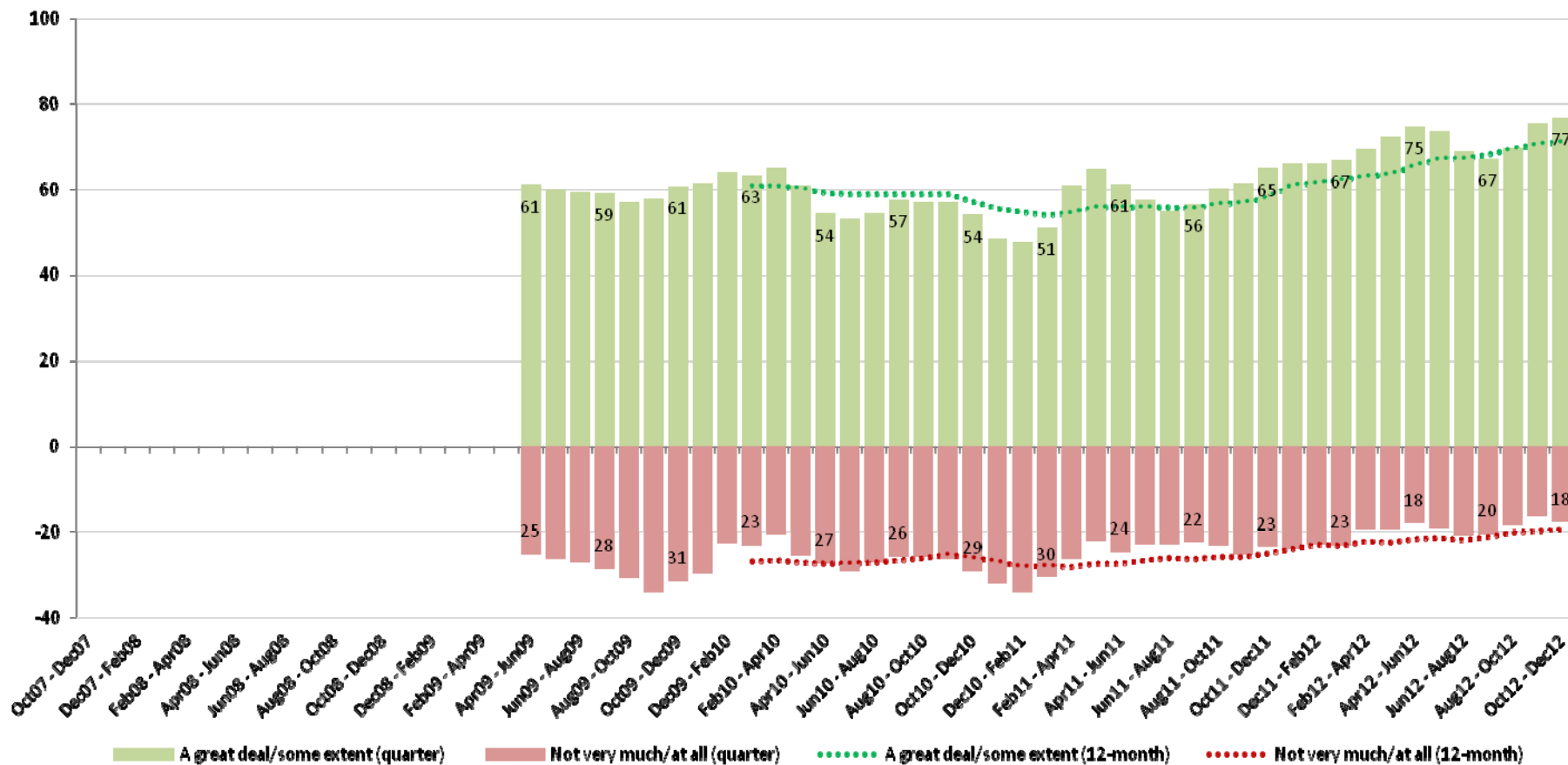
A great deal/some extent	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	76.7	71.2
Change on last quarter	+9.7 (***)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	+11.9 (***)	+13.0 (***)
Lowest score to date	47.4	54.0
Highest score to date	76.7	71.2

A great deal/some extent	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	86.0%	Northfield (2)	78.8%
Erdington (6)	69.1%	Perry Barr (4)	76.0%
Hall Green (8)	64.1%	Selly Oak (3)	76.9%
Hodge Hill (10)	59.3%	Sutton Coldfield (5)	73.4%
Ladywood (7)	65.3%	Yardley (9)	63.3%

133
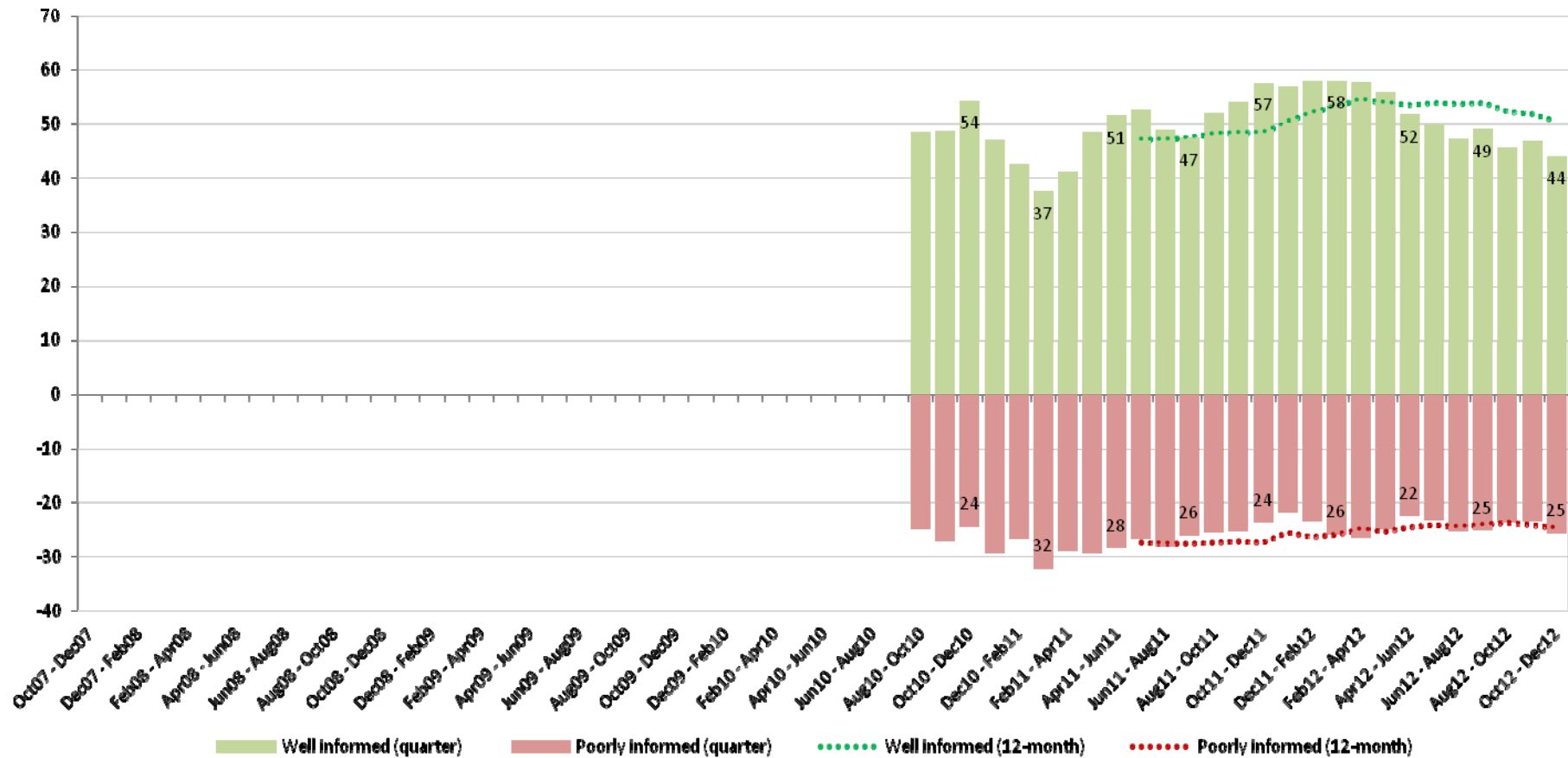
Well informed	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	43.9	50.5
Change on last quarter	-5.0 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	-13.5 (***)	+2.2 (Ø)
Lowest score to date	37.5	47.0
Highest score to date	57.7	54.6

Well informed	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	66.7%	Northfield (4)	52.8%
Erdington (5)	49.8%	Perry Barr (6)	48.7%
Hall Green (7)	46.2%	Selly Oak (2)	59.8%
Hodge Hill (10)	36.2%	Sutton Coldfield (3)	56.2%
Ladywood (8)	45.2%	Yardley (9)	43.4%

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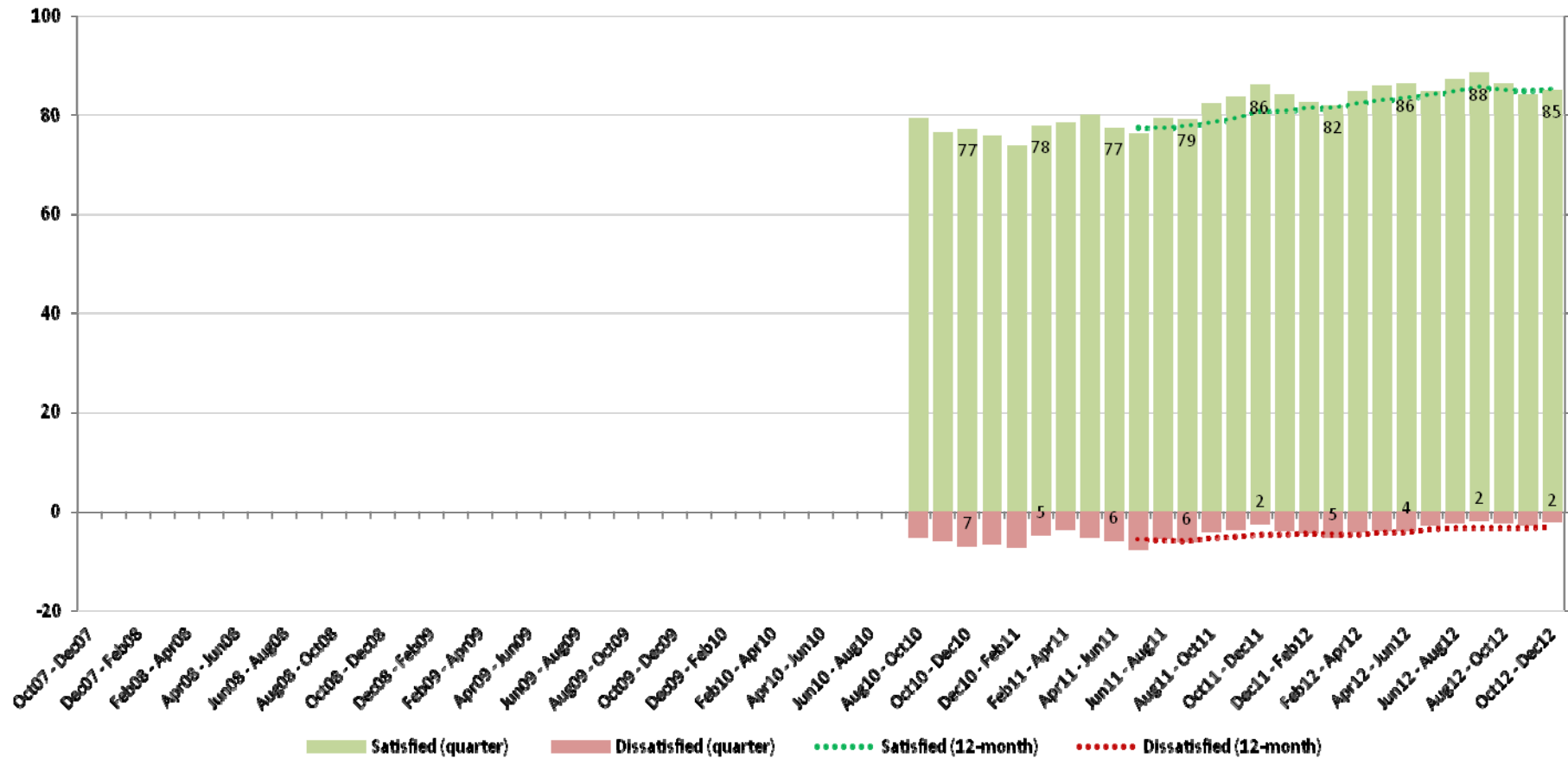
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	84.9	85.2
Change on last quarter	-3.5 (ø)	–
Change on Q3 11/12	-1.0 (ø)	+4.6 (**)
Lowest score to date	73.8	77.3
Highest score to date	88.4	85.4

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	97.0%	Northfield (5)	85.8%
Erdington (7)	80.1%	Perry Barr (2)	91.0%
Hall Green (9)	76.7%	Selly Oak (6)	84.6%
Hodge Hill (10)	72.1%	Sutton Coldfield (3)	87.0%
...lywood (4)	85.8%	Yardley (8)	78.6%

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Satisfaction with BCC e-mail newsletters [where read BCC e-mail newsletters in previous 12 months]

Legend: Satisfied (quarter) · Dissatisfied (quarter) · Satisfied (12-month) · Dissatisfied (12-month)
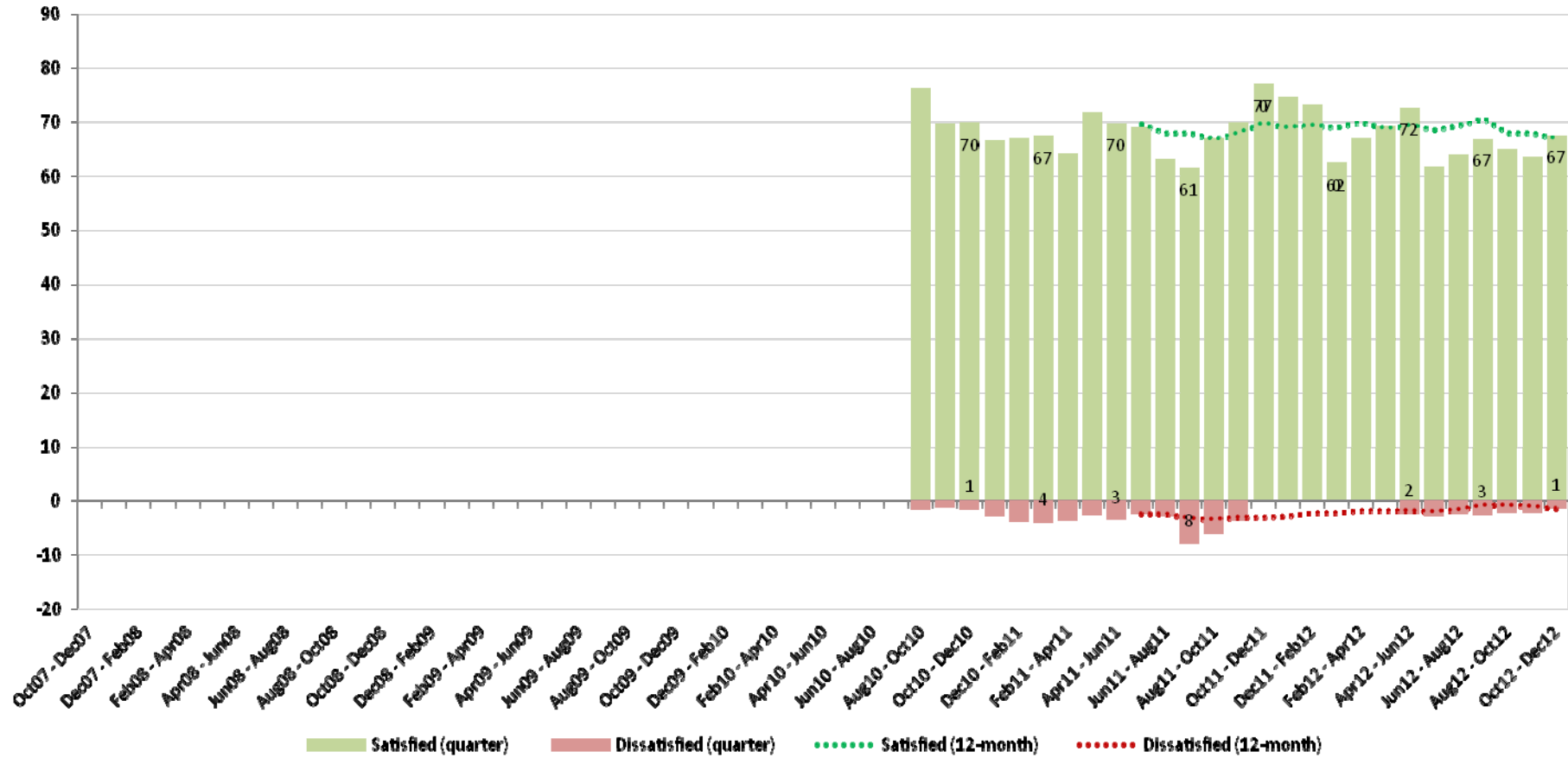
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	67.4	66.9
Change on last quarter	+0.7 (∅)	–
Change on Q3 11/12	-9.5 (***)	-2.9 (∅)
Lowest score to date	61.4	66.8
Highest score to date	76.9	70.6

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (2)	74.3%	Northfield (6)	67.3%
Erdington (5)	68.9%	Perry Barr (8)	65.2%
Hall Green (3)	71.5%	Selly Oak (10)	52.3%
Hodge Hill (9)	64.1%	Sutton Coldfield (4)	69.5%
Ladywood (1)	90.4%	Yardley (7)	66.0%

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Satisfaction with the BCC website [where used the BCC website in previous 12 months]
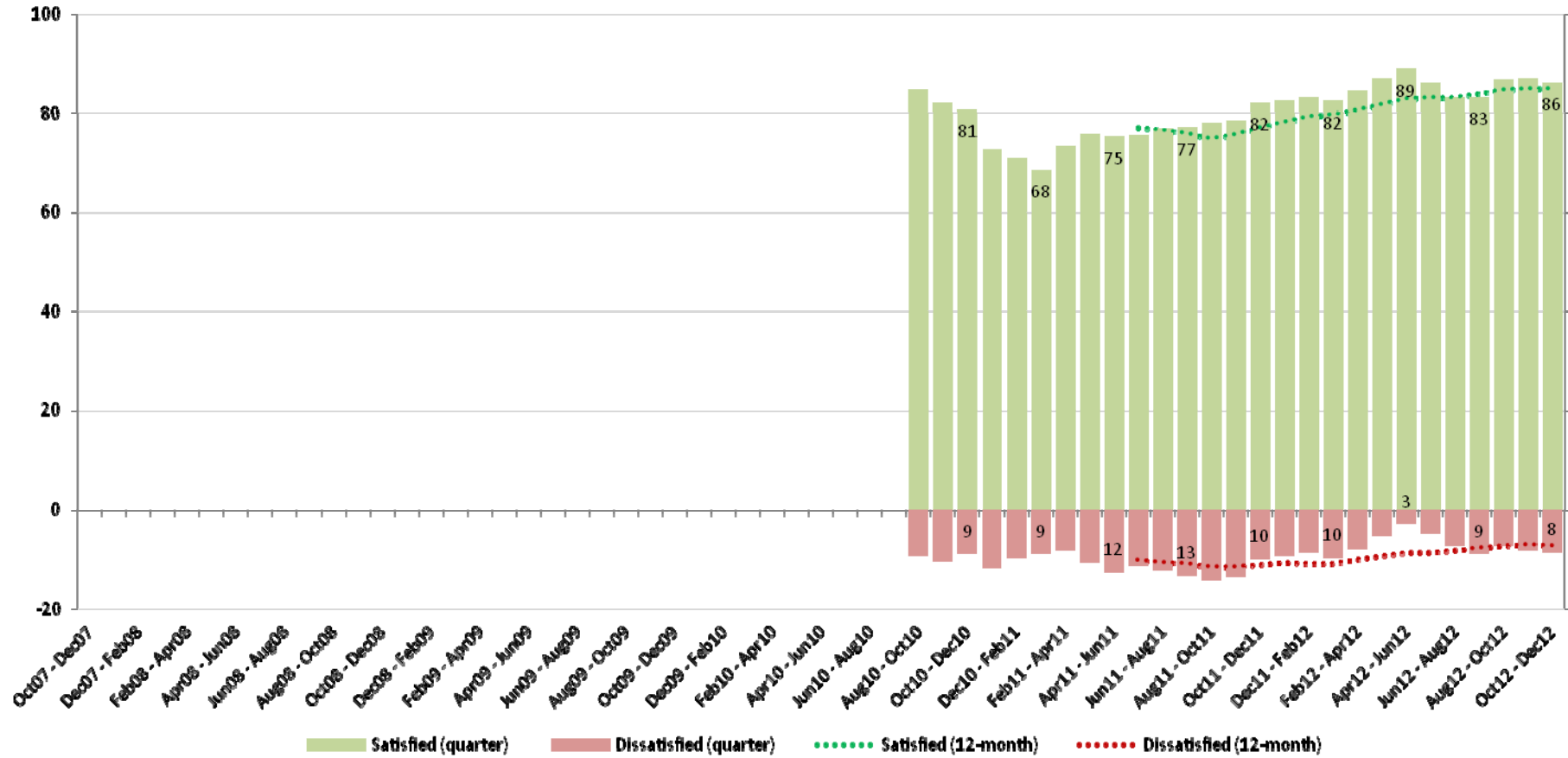
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	86.0	84.9
Change on last quarter	+2.9 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	+4.1 (*)	+7.9 (***)
Lowest score to date	68.4	74.8
Highest score to date	88.8	84.9

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	97.6%	Northfield (7)	79.8%
Erdington (5)	86.0%	Perry Barr (2)	92.1%
Hall Green (4)	87.4%	Selly Oak (6)	85.7%
Hodge Hill (10)	75.8%	Sutton Coldfield (8)	79.6%
Ladywood (3)	90.6%	Yardley (9)	76.8%

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Satisfaction with birminghamnewsroom.gov [where used birminghamnewsroom.gov in previous 12 months]
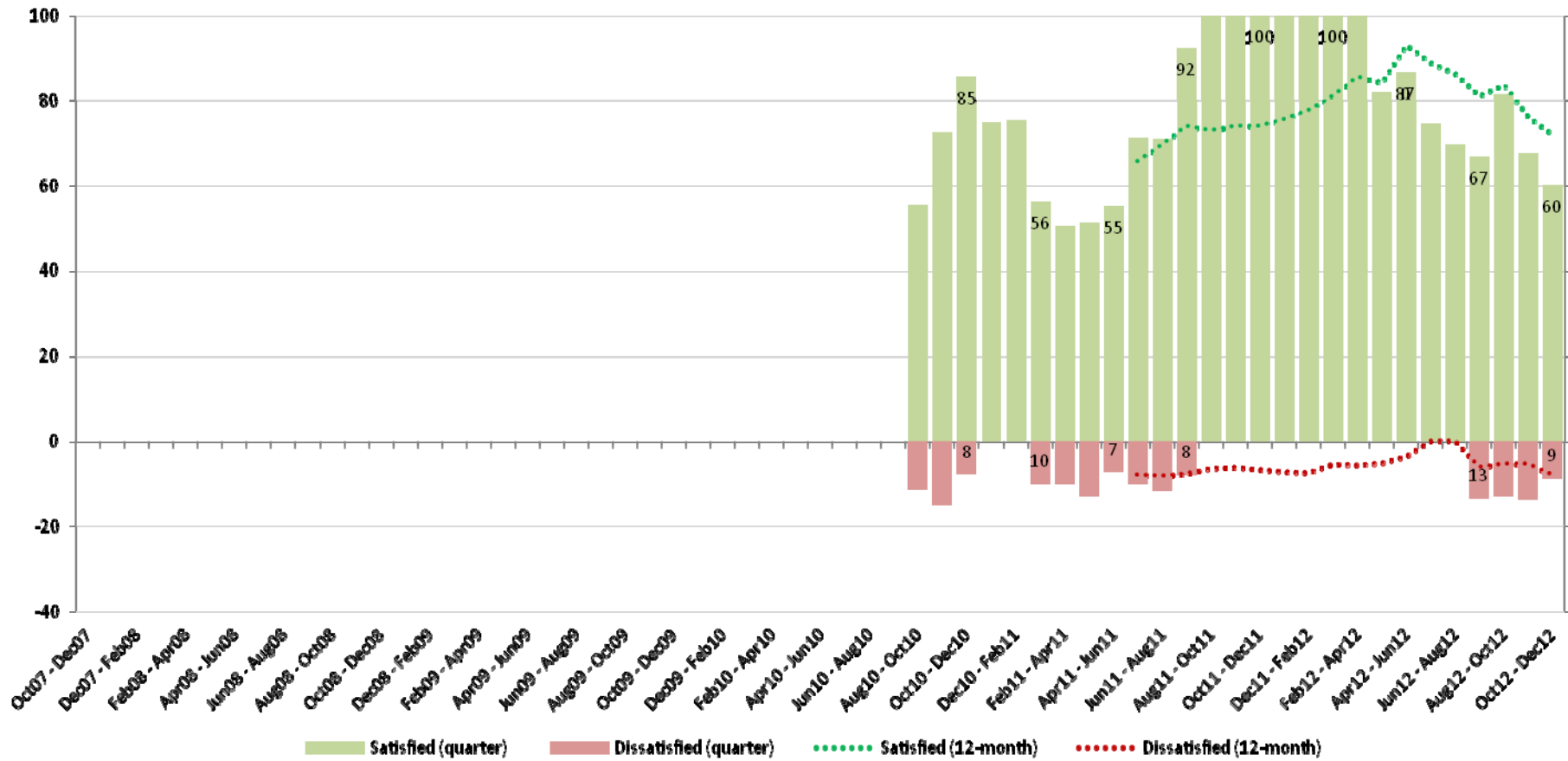
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	60.1	71.9
Change on last quarter	-6.6 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	-39.9 (***)	-1.9 (Ø)
Lowest score to date	50.3	65.6
Highest score to date	100.0	93.1

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1)	100.0%	Northfield (1)	100.0%
Erdington (10)	47.9%	Perry Barr (1)	100.0%
Hall Green (1)	100.0%	Selly Oak (8)	59.9%
Hodge Hill (1)	100.0%	Sutton Coldfield (9)	50.1%
...lywood (7)	62.8%	Yardley (1)	100.0%

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None of the above	21%
Contacting the council by telephone	19%
Through newspapers	14%
PC/laptop at home	7%
Contacting the council by e-mail	3%
Mobile phone	2%
In person at council locations	2%
Contacting the council by letter	1%
PC/laptop at work	1%
PC/laptop at a library or other council location	1%
PC/laptop at another location	0%
Social media	0%
Public-access kiosks	0%
PDA/blackberry (mobile location)	0%
MINICOM	0%
Digital TV	0%
Haven't looked for council information	14%
Haven't contacted the council	20%
Unsure	3%

66% of respondents who contacted the council were satisfied with the standard of customer care received – 24% dissatisfied

Note: data = Oct 2012 – Dec 2012

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Satisfaction with the way BCC runs things
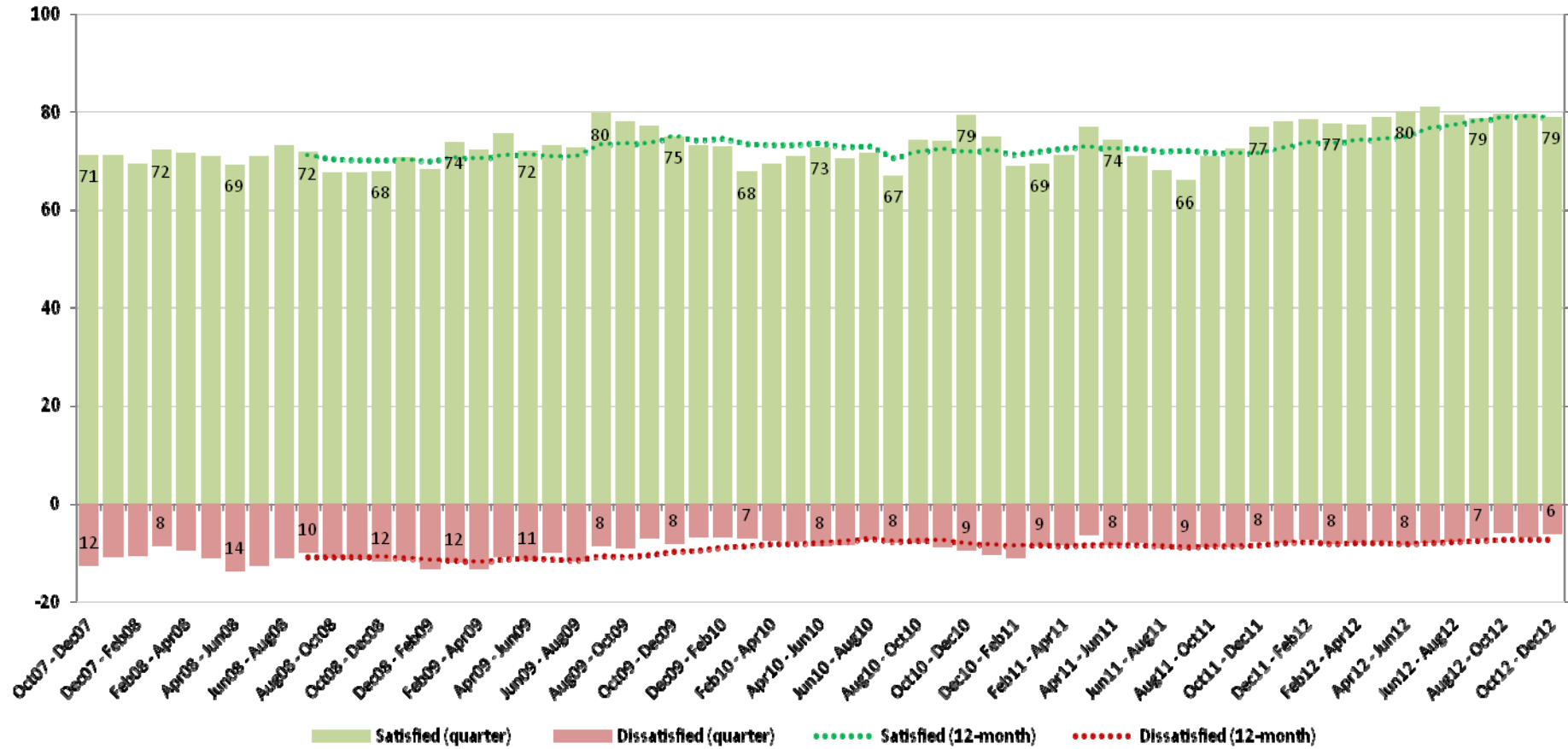
Satisfied	Quarterly data (%)	12-month rolling data (%)
Current	78.8	78.7
Change on last quarter	0.2 (Ø)	-
Change on Q3 11/12	2.1 (Ø)	7.4 (***)
Lowest score to date	65.8	69.8
Highest score to date	80.7	79.0

Satisfied	12-month rolling data (%)		12-month rolling data (%)
Edgbaston (1) ✔	87.5%	Northfield (4)	82.9%
Erdington (6)	76.5%	Perry Barr (5)	80.6%
Hall Green (8)	75.2%	Selly Oak (2)	86.2%
Hodge Hill (10) ⚠	67.5%	Sutton Coldfield (3)	83.7%
Ladywood (7)	76.4%	Yardley (9)	71.1%

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Reason	%
Other	33%
They neglect smaller/localised areas	20%
They do not listen to residents	18%
Poor service delivery	7%
Poor street/area cleanliness	7%
Unsure/Refused	7%
They do not do enough generally	6%
Poor quality of council housing and repairs	5%
They do not address complaints	5%
Lack of youth facilities	2%
They waste money	2%
Have an uncaring attitude	2%
Poor record on crime and ASB	2%
They take too long to get things done	2%
Slow pace of housing transfer	2%

Note: data = Oct 2012 – Dec 2012

141
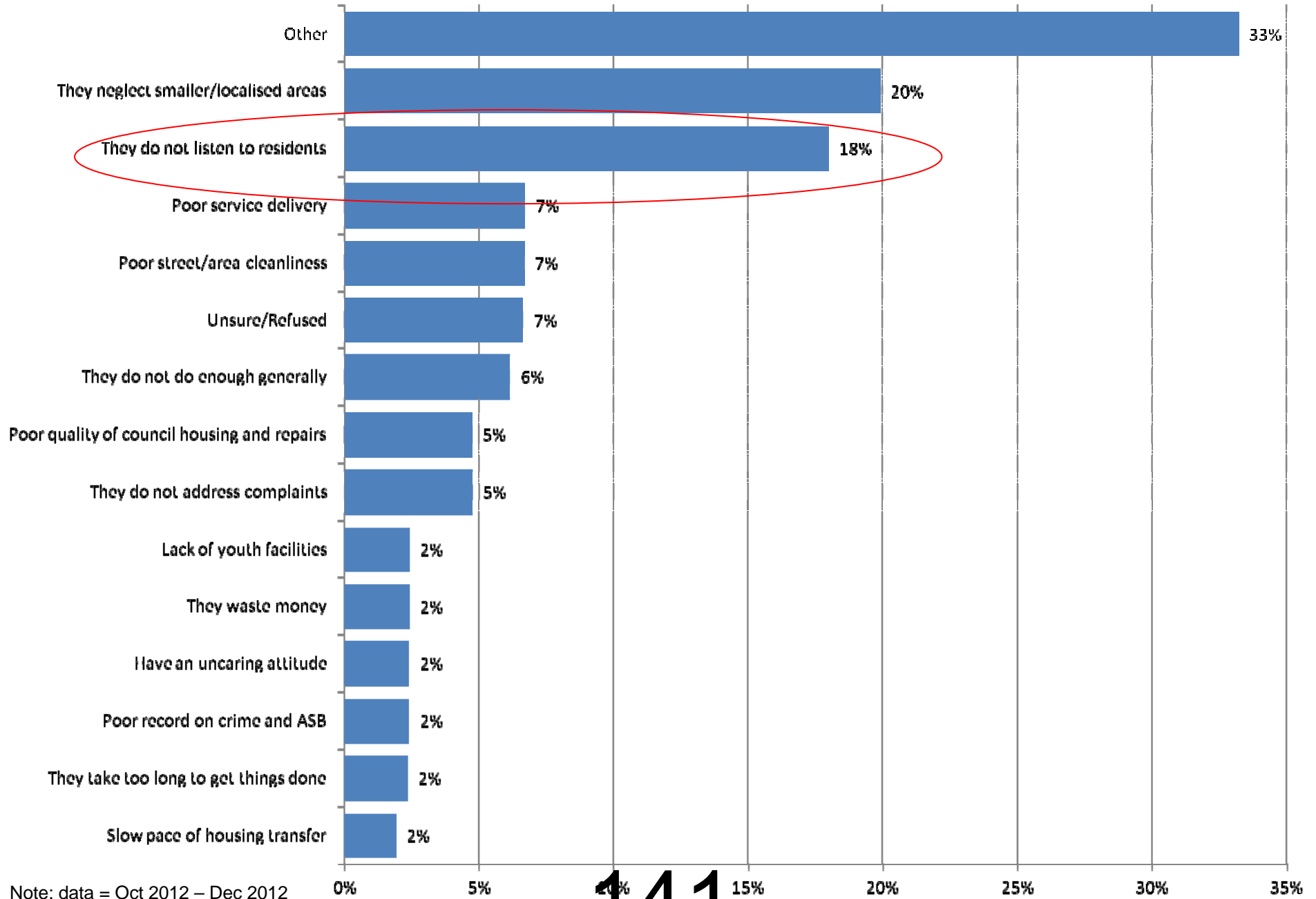
Constructing a Ladder of Participation for Birmingham

Tenant management organisations

Delivery of services thorough
mutual user-led organisations

Community Asset Transfer

Parish Council

Citizens' Jury

Discussion with community
leaders; community and voluntary
organisatiions on services
changes / policy developments

Formal consultations - digital by default
Consultation on individual needs
Referenda

People's Panel
Ongoing day to day exchanges which can
feed into service improvements –
User satisfaction surveys
Event evaluations
Email correspondence
Twitter exchanges
Complaints
Member – constituent exchanges

Citizen control

Partnership

Dialogue

Consultation

Conversation

Informed

Personal budgets

Co-production
Co-regulation in housing management

Community researchers

Young People's Co-option to Education
and Vulnerable Children O&S

Meetings, events to elicit formal
feedback – e.g. budget 2013+
roadshow

User groups – Both
facilitated by BCC and
independently organised e.g
Children in Care Council
Housing Liaison Boards
Neighbourhood fora

Specific events

- District Conventions

- Planning site
development consultations

Leaflets and written info
Forward
BCC advertising
Posters
Narratives in the media
Birmingham.gov.uk
Twitter

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 MARCH 2013

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 5 MARCH 2013 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE
ROOM 3, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: -   Councillor Trickett in the Chair;

Councillors G S Atwal, J Evans, T Evans, Islam, Pears, Pocock, Spence and Waddington.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Ms K Carson, Corporate Resources Directorate
Ms F Hughes, Local Services Directorate
Mr I Jones, Local Services Directorate
Ms C Quarshie, Corporate Resources Directorate
Ms A Simcox, Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer
Miss V Williams, Committee Services
Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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MINUTES

45   The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2013, having been circulated to Members, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

In response to a question by Councillor Pocock concerning the inquiry in relation to waste being conducted by the Transport, Connectivity and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred to on page 71 of the minutes, the Chair considered that the Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee should look at the consultation and procurement processes to establish whether there had been any opportunities for shaping policy relating to localism (minute no 42 refers).

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The Committee agreed to vary the agenda order and consider the following item at this point.

ENGAGEMENT - OVERVIEW

a)   Public Engagement – Discussion Paper

The following discussion paper of the Overview and Scrutiny Manager was submitted:-

(See document No 1)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the document and made particular reference to the different definitions of public engagement and the possible options for an inquiry.

The Chair advised that she was keen to establish a framework to evaluate the Committee's role regarding public engagement and to identify a working definition.

Councillor Waddington pointed out that Members representing Wards based in Sutton Coldfield wished to hold District Committee meetings within the Constituency rather than in the Council House, Birmingham, as they considered that this was a more effective way of engaging with local residents.

Councillor Pears suggested that the inquiry should look in more detail at the performance indicators set out in appendix 3 of the paper now submitted. He noted the variation between Wards referred to in paragraph 3.2 of the paper and considered that it would be useful to try to establish why those differences occurred.

He added that whilst it was important to identify local residents' requirements or preferences it was not always possible to meet those needs due to technical difficulties, for example.

Councillor J Evans considered that, sometimes, City Council consultations were not meaningful, decisions were made beforehand and often residents were fed up of being consulted. He was concerned that policy initiatives were rarely followed through and implemented.

The Chair recognised consultation as an element of public engagement. She considered that consultations sometimes worked well and cited the strategy regarding falls prevention as an example. However, consultations were not always a success.

Councillor T Evans referred to the role of Ward and District Committees in engaging with members of the public and pointed out that usually a specific issue, such as HS2, caused people to engage and become more involved. It was important to develop a better understanding of public engagement and how it fitted in with the devolution process.

Councillor Pocock in referring to appendix 3, page 6, noted the responses by residents living in different Wards regarding whether or not they considered that they could influence local decision making. He considered that it was a longstanding problem that would take time to turn around. Consultation needed to be carried out regarding issues that people were keen to influence.

The Chair questioned whether the local authority had ever looked at people's perceptions of what they thought they could influence. Residents needed to be clearly informed about what they could and could not influence.

Councillor Islam stressed the importance and success of district conventions as a means of engaging with members of the public. Members concurred with that comment.

Ms Wishart drew Members' attention to the next steps and recommendations set out in the discussion paper and it was agreed that the matter be considered at the next meeting.

46   **RESOLVED:-**

That the document be noted.

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b)   **Be Heard Consultation Database**

Ms K Carson and Ms C Quarshie, Corporate Resources Directorate, gave a presentation explaining the purpose of 'Be Heard', the Council's consultation database, and the following document was tabled at the meeting:-

(See document No 2)

Ms Carson informed Members that a review regarding support services was currently being conducted by the Leader and Deputy Leader. The review comprised three tranches and the first part was due to be completed by the end of March 2013.

Ms Carson explained the reasons for conducting consultations, legal requirements, best practice principles and the planning tool used to set them up.

In order to avoid duplication it was important to check the Be Heard website to ascertain whether or not a similar consultation had already been carried out.

Ms Carson outlined the improvements that had been made to the website and Ms Quarshie explained how Be Heard would be promoted internally and externally, as more particularly referred to in the document tabled at the meeting.

Councillor Spence, whilst recognising that it was useful to consult on issues, pointed out that what residents really needed was evidence of positive action.

The Chair stressed the importance of building up a stakeholder base and was concerned that the Council concentrated on following a process, often failing to see the human side of a situation. She was opposed to referring to people as 'customers' preferring the term 'citizen'.

In response to a question by the Chair, Ms Carson advised that Be Heard was a database with several features, including an instant questionnaire facility. However, Ms Quarshie pointed out that Be Heard was only one method of consulting with members of the public on issues.

Councillor T Evans stressed the importance of engaging with people in meaningful consultation.

Councillor Pocock considered that the Be Heard website was an excellent tool and suggested that it might be taken further by including a people's user group. He pointed out that a 'digital divide' existed and stressed the need to have parallel mechanisms of engagement in place to ensure that people without access to a computer were not excluded from the opportunity to take part in consultations. It was important to maintain human, face to face, contact.

Councillor J Evans noted that one of the ways in which the site would be promoted was via neighbourhood fora and pointed out that they often only represented a few people.

In response to a question by Councillor Islam, Ms Quarshie advised that Be Heard was not the primary or only method of consulting and she urged that people, for whom English was not their first language, should contact the department carrying out the consultation in which they were interested in taking part.

Ms Carson urged Members to try out the new website and welcomed feedback and comments thereon. She offered to attend a future meeting to update the Committee on the use of the website when it was fully operational.

47   **RESOLVED:-**

            That the document be noted.

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The Committee returned to the original agenda order.

DEVOLUTION: MAKING IT REAL INQUIRY

a)   Recommendations – Project Plan

The following report of the Service Director, Local Services, was submitted together with a revised report tabled at the meeting:-

(See document No 3)

Mr I Jones, Local Services Directorate, explained the project plan for delivering the recommendations of the Devolution: Making It Real Inquiry.

He outlined the key areas in the overall findings and advised that essential to delivering the outcomes would be the implementation of the five Ps – policy, process, partnership, performance management and procurement. He added that, to underpin devolution, there needed to be a cultural change programme based on the three Cs – common understanding, coherence and capability.

Mr Jones informed Members of the progress to date regarding each recommendation.

In response to a question by Councillor Pocock, Mr Jones explained that the final completion date for recommendation 1 was September 2013.

In referring to recommendation 3, the Chair stressed the importance of ensuring that the district plans highlighted the distinctiveness and individual identities of each area.

In referring to recommendation 4, the Chair pointed out the need to have a clear action plan in place and stressed the importance of not missing any opportunities to engage with the third sector.

In response to a question by Councillor Pocock, Mr Jones pointed out that Recommendation 12 dealt with the development of a framework for service level agreements (SLAs).

In referring to recommendation 5, the Chair stressed the importance of monitoring the performance and delivery of contracts.

In referring to recommendation 6, the Chair pointed out the need for clarity regarding meeting arrangements.

Councillor J Evans suggested that it would be helpful to have an idea, when attending Ward Committee meetings, of the subjects due to be considered at the next District Committee. Mr Jones concurred with that suggestion and recognised the need for a forward plan.

In response to a question by Councillor Pocock, Mr Jones explained the role of the District Committees regarding housing issues and advised that a report consulting on the proposed establishment of District Housing Panels was due to be considered by all District Committees.

In response to a question by Councillor J Evans, Mr Jones briefly explained recommendation 7 regarding adult education which was a localised service that ran along the lines of a SLA. The Chair stressed the importance of ensuring that the tests were applied correctly.

In response to a question by Councillor Spence, Mr Jones advised that the JNC/Grade 7 lead officer arrangements referred to in recommendation 8 were due to be implemented in the new municipal year in June 2013.

The Chair, in referring to recommendation 9, pointed out the need to ensure that the system was fully supported.

The Chair, in referring to recommendation 11, was unsure whether the establishment of a cross party working group was the way forward, sought clarity and further information and undertook to speak to the Leader and appropriate officers thereon.

Councillor Pears requested further information on who would be involved in establishing or serving on the group.

Councillor Pocock suggested the removal of zero based budgeting from the recommendation.

Councillor J Evans pointed out that resources needed to be available to deliver the recommendation.

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, undertook to add the item to the Committee's work programme.

In response to a question by the Chair regarding recommendation 13, Mr Jones explained how the improvement action plans were intended to work.

In referring to recommendation 14, the Chair pointed out that, in order to avoid duplication, it was necessary to map out everything that had been done in the past.

With regard to recommendation 15, the Chair was concerned that the deadline for completion might not be met. Councillor Pocock suggested that it might be necessary to revisit the recommendation at a future meeting.

In referring to recommendation 16, the Chair informed Members that Hall Green District Committee had already started to look at stakeholder mapping.

Councillor Pocock stressed the importance of developing partnership engagement.

Councillor T Evans recognised the need to work more closely with local community groups, be creative and be more pro-active.

Ms Wishart referred to a meeting she had attended recently and advised that other organisations were keen to develop partnership engagement.

The Chair stressed the importance of adopting a realistic approach regarding whether or not all the recommendations set out in the report were achievable.

48   **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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b)   Housing Issues – Update

49   The Chair advised that she had recently met with officers to discuss how the housing issues raised at the last meeting might be taken forward. She stressed the importance of capturing all aspects of housing and involving appropriate Members and officers in any future discussions. The Chair undertook to provide a further update at the next meeting.

COMMUNITY CHEST

a)   Resolution of the City Council (5 February 2013)

The following resolution No 18151 of the City Council meeting held on 5 February 2013 was submitted:-

(See document No 4)

b)   Way Forward

The Chair explained that the purpose of considering the resolution was to: promote the sharing of good practice in the use of Community Chest and in community participation in decisions about its spending; conduct an assessment of the impact of Community Chest, especially with reference to its impact on young people, the elderly and in the shaping of local services.

A discussion ensued as to the best way forward in developing a brief and Councillor Waddington stressed the importance of dealing with the matter as quickly as possible as no Community Chest allocations were currently taking place.

The Chair suggested that once it was clear what was happening regarding Community Chest it might be helpful to do a piece of work outlining the process.

Ms F Hughes, Local Services Directorate, pointed out that it was important to look at all aspects of work relating to Community Chest, including evaluation and the process for taking it forward.

Ms Hughes suggested and the Chair agreed that a progress report be submitted to a future meeting.

Councillor Pocock stressed the importance of community participation regarding Community Chest.

The Chair pointed out that 'place based budgeting' was very different from 'Community Chest'. She added that it was important to shape local services to local needs.

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, suggested that perhaps some Wards could test the new ways of working.

The Chair agreed that the item be considered at the next meeting with a view to identifying a process to take the matter forward and draw up a briefing.

50   **RESOLVED:-**

That the resolution be noted.

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WORK PROGRAMME

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the document and undertook to update the work programme to take account of issues raised at today's meeting.

The Chairman suggested and it was agreed that the meeting scheduled to take place on 23 April 2013 should finish no later than 1800 hours.

51   **RESOLVED:-**

That the work programme be noted.

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PROPOSED ADDITIONAL MEETING

The Chair proposed and it was:-

52   **RESOLVED:-**

That approval be given to an additional meeting of the Committee on Tuesday, 7 May 2013 at 1400 hours in the Council House.

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REQUEST FOR 'CALL IN'/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS IF ANY)

53   The Chair advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.

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AUTHORITY TO ACT BETWEEN MEETINGS

54   **RESOLVED:-**

That the Chair is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the
Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-
Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby
authorised to act in consultation with the Chair and that the Director of
Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to affix the Corporate
Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said
officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them;
further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted
to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority
was used.

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The meeting ended at 1618 hours.

…….………………………….
CHAIR

Getting Better at Public Engagement – What We Need to Do

1. Birmingham Council is failing to do meaningful public engagement leading to ACTION for residents

I've been a Councillor for 27 years and in all that time, under all political parties, the Council has achieved complete stagnation on this issue. The Council is not engaging with the public to make things happen.

We now have a Local Services Directorate but there is still no greater engagement with the public leading to action/getting things done/getting services improved.

2. Ward Committee

The purpose of our ward committee in Shard End is to get action for residents. We were holding 10 ward committees every year with as many as 60 people attending a meeting. On average about 30 residents attend every meeting.

Ward committee meetings need to rotate around the whole ward and residents who live around the venue need to be notified with a simple leaflet. The meeting needs to be about what residents want to see happen. It should not be dominated by a few councillors who are simply going through a load of council reports. Our meetings are about lots of action on issues that matter to the residents in that area.

3. Action for residents in a particular road

The local police sergeant and myself (Councillor acting as a community leader) are working in partnership with residents in one road on a community planning exercise. There is a massive problem in the area with parking on the grass verge. We are working with at least 40 residents, council officers on co-designing solutions. Again the focus is on meeting residents to get action.

4. We don't need to 'build capacity' with residents

A massive group of young working mums (and a few dads) came together to protest against the siting of a Probation Office in the local community (without any consultation). The group self organised and we councillors worked with these residents over many months, even getting to see Jack Straw MP who was the Justice Minister at the time. We did not need to 'build capacity' – these people did it for themselves. It is the middle classes who have set this ridiculous paradigm which suggests that if you are a resident you 'need your capacity built'. One of these young women who had not been involved with her local community before went on to lead the setting up of a local residents' group. She has now got a job doing community development work.

5. Housing Liaison Boards need to meet with a purpose

HLBs need to be about meeting with the purpose of getting action for tenants. I have recently suggested to one of our HLBs that as tenants they could reach out to other tenants. One way of doing this is to invite other tenants round a particular venue to meet the HLB tenants who then ask their views about various aspects of the housing service eg the repairs service, how antisocial behaviour is dealt with etc with a view to improving the service and getting action and change. The Housing Department however seem to have a view that you just get a few residents to drop by but not for any particular purpose because the council do not see tenant participation as anything to do with getting action for tenants to improve the service they are paying for. PROCESS BUT NO PURPOSE. PROCESS BUT NO OUTCOME.

6. Resident Scrutiny

It would be so helpful to have some simple service standard information or some simple information about how the housing service / other services are doing locally – residents could play an effective scrutiny role and get action to improve the service.

There has been a failure by officers to engage with the public for the purpose of getting action on issues that matter to people. Officers either don't get it or stop it. This O & S committee has identified officer culture as a big barrier to devolution and public engagement and they are right.

Councillor Marje Bridle

23.4.13

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 23 APRIL 2013 AT 1600 HOURS IN COMMITTEE
ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: -   Councillor Lisa Trickett (in the Chair);

Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Jerry Evans, Tim Evans, Ziaul
Islam, David Pears, Rob Pocock, Sybil Spence and Margaret
Waddington.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Councillor Robert Alden
Councillor Caroline Badley
Councillor Marje Bridle
Councillor Waseem Zaffar
Dr Catherine Durose, Director of Research, University of Birmingham
Fiona Hughes, Local Services Directorate
Ifor Jones, Local Services Directorate
Sharon Lea, Strategic Director of Local Services
Liz Richardson, Senior Lecturer in Politics, University of Manchester
Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer
David Smith, Committee Services Team Leader (Scrutiny)
Benita Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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MINUTES

55   The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2013, having been circulated to
Members, were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson.

The Chairperson referred to Minute No. 45 and advised Members that she had
corresponded with the Assistant Director - Fleet and Waste Management
regarding wheelie bins and the Cabinet Member - Green, Safe and SMART City
regarding localism. She understood that there was some local flexibility and
that consideration was going to be given to the pilot scheme and the way
forward. The procurement was being undertaken on a City-wide basis. She
suggested that the new Committee in the next Municipal Year could be
recommended to scrutinise the consultation arrangements.

The Strategic Director of Local Services advised that single households would be able to have a smaller wheelie bin and that families would be able to have a larger wheelie bin. However, it would not be feasible to vary collection periods.

The Chairperson drew attention to Minute No. 48 and advised, in relation to Recommendation 11, that the Committee had previously discussed the potential move to zero-based budgeting, but that its consideration would form part of the City Council's budget planning process. Service Review Panels had been established, which would determine the way forward, and the Chairperson clarified the membership of the Panels. It was noted that some Panel reports would be available in September 2013. She emphasised that there had not been an intention stated to establish a cross-party working group.

With regard to Minute No. 49, the Chairperson informed Members that a Housing workshop had been arranged on 22 May 2013, on which she would seek clarification regarding attendees and the outcomes.

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LOCAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE – SIX MONTHLY UPDATE

The following presentation by the Strategic Director of Local Services was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

In response to questions from Members, the following points were made:-

1.   The write-off of overspending from Districts equated to 2 amounts of £4.1 million and a strategy had been agreed for remaining sums. However, there would be a deficit for Leisure, Sport and Culture and difficult decisions would need to be made.

2.   Work was in progress with engaging all Directorates and there would be an opportunity to be involved in local areas. A full picture should be available in the next week.

3.   Quadrants would be important for co-ordination and addressing problems. Officers needed to develop an understanding of the situation across the whole of the City and that was work in progress.

4.   A programme of cultural change had been initiated with employees, which would encourage the ownership of and responsibility for services across the Directorate.

5.   The Strategic Director confirmed that the Housing Transformation Board was working in accordance with the forward plan.

6.   She noted concern regarding accountability for Adult Education, explaining that the service had been externally funded and had had a low profile and little contact with Members previously. The Head of Service had appreciated the interest shown in the service by District Committees.

With regard to questions on the following, the Strategic Director advised that a more detailed response would be provided to Members after the meeting:-
- representation of District Chairs on the Housing Transformation Board;
- control of funding by Districts;
- commissioning frameworks and guidance for Youth Services;
- the position of District Conventions in future priorities;
- progress on tenant engagement regarding KPIs;
- the localisation of Public Health funding;
- early priorities and the differences that would be seen by local residents;
- the thought that had been given to date to addressing different service balances between the Districts.

The Chairperson suggested that District Conventions and KPIs could be items for consideration at the next Committee meeting. Furthermore, Members might wish to request a further report from the Strategic Director after 6 months, along with future reports from other Directors on releasing responsibility for services.

56   **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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ENGAGEMENT

a)   **Reflections on Community Engagement**

57   The Chairperson welcomed Dr Catherine Durose, Director of Research/Senior Lecturer, INLOGOV, School of Government and Society, University of Birmingham, and Liz Richardson, Senior Lecturer in Politics, University of Manchester, to the meeting.

Dr Catherine Durose referred to the "Connective Communities" Project and Liz Richardson advised that the following "don't" lessons had been learned in relation to community engagement:
- Don't commence thinking you know what is best for people – make sure you consider what the best outcomes are for them and what will work for them.
- Don't start with services – consider networks and contacts. What works for the users of the services?
- Don't treat residents like children – hold intelligent conversations.

Dr Catherine Durose put forward the following "do" lessons that had been learned:
- Do trust and value local people.
- Do make discussions interesting – e.g. consider pamphlets circulated, keep discussions informal and loosely structured.
- Do inspire people – peer to peer learning and common interests/skills.

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b)   Local Learning

58   The Chairperson welcomed Councillors Robert Alden, Caroline Badley, Marje Bridle and Waseem Zaffar to the meeting to share good practice in public engagement and consultation.

Councillor Caroline Badley welcomed greater engagement with the community. She believed that one lesson from District Conventions was not to miss contacts or networks from the representation. However, it was beneficial to build relationships and listen to people.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar put forward the following 'do' lessons:
- Do try to value the work of community activists and the Third Sector.
- Do recognise the importance of local networks.
- Do use online engagement to supplement and complement face-to-face engagement.
- Do use twitter for formal evidence, e.g. tried for the "What Makes Us Brummie?" Inquiry, from which the 'hash tag' continued to be used.
- Do use 'Facebook' to promote meetings, provide information and encourage attendance.
- Do 'stream' meetings on the internet to enable people to observe meetings.
- Do set up Member surgeries by 'Skype', particular in winter months.
- Do act as Ward 'champions', promoting local facilities and amenities.

His main 'don't' lesson was not to hold District Conventions on weekday mornings. The timing was important in order to ensure better engagement and develop better relations.

Councillor Robert Alden made the following general comments:
- Officer support was needed to local meetings, in which assistance had been provided previously by Ward Support Officers.
- It was important to provide a local forum for residents, at which they were able to discuss key issues in the local area.
- Councillors were responsible for ensuring that residents were aware of the meeting arrangements.
- There should not be a restriction on the time allowed and everyone should have an opportunity to speak.
- Small schemes could be funded locally and would have greater local impact.
- Proper consultation should take place with residents, listening to their views and what they want, without pre-deciding or prejudicing the outcome in a particular direction.
- Members needed to be honest when engaging with the public and to not give false impressions.

Councillor Marje Bridle spoke to the following document tabled at the meeting:-

(See document No 2)

Concern was expressed that the officer culture could create a barrier to engagement and that officers and Members would need to avoid being obsessed with processes. Dr Catherine Durose concurred with the view that engagement should not be regimented and urged that good practice should be promoted, rather than producing a 'model' or 'toolkit'.

Liz Richardson advised that a big challenge would be determining what to do when different viewpoints or priorities resulted from affluent and deprived sections of the same local area. The Chairperson advised that a discussion on that situation had been scheduled in Ladywood District on 24 April 2013.

Members felt that residents needed to be involved in order that they would feel a commitment to actions being taken successfully and that nothing should be imposed or restricted. Simple actions should be identified to resolve problems. It was felt also that a core service response was required to address local needs, using sensible and relevant data. It was important to ensure that local services were in place and that issues were not ignored.

The Chairperson thanked the attendees for their contributions to the meeting. She advised that she had approached the Barrow Cadbury Trust regarding work on a further study and that she would like to give more consideration to community engagement at a later date.

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PROPOSED INQUIRY ON COMMUNITY CHEST – DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following report draft terms of reference for a proposed Inquiry on Community Chest was submitted:-

(See document No 3)

The Chairperson advised that the draft terms of reference had been circulated for information and drew attention to the issue of feasibility highlighted in bold on the second page. A detailed evaluation may not be possible and the Inquiry might have to concentrate on good practices. It was intended to come back to the Committee with a report on what would be possible and proposals for taking the Inquiry forward.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that, as the draft terms of reference were being prepared, it had become apparent from the data provided that the information required to undertake the request was not available. It was questioned whether a further report should be made to the next meeting.

Concern was expressed at the key question and the Chairperson explained that the motion put forward at the City Council had requested that the Committee considered the impact of Community Chest on young people and the elderly, in particular. It was felt that it would be important to identify that the request was not possible or realistic to undertake and then widen the field of consideration. It was suggested that this would need to be referred back to the Council Business Management Committee.

85

Members considered the history of Community Chest and previous funding allocations. It was felt that a 'light touch' Inquiry could be beneficial, considering how Community Chest had provided value for money and reviewing the status of District and Ward Development Plans. Hodge Hill District was considered as a focus, compared with at least one other District.

The Chairperson proposed, Members agreed, and it was

59   **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted and a report be submitted to the Council Business Management Committee advising on this Committee's findings on the feasibility of addressing the request set out in the motion to City Council.

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WORK PROGRAMME

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the document and undertook to update the work programme to take account of issues raised at today's meeting. The Committee agreed to cancel the proposed meeting on 7 May 2013.

The Chairperson proposed that the first meeting in the Municipal Year 2013/14 should consider Performance Improvement and the role of District Committees.

60   **RESOLVED:-**

That the work programme be noted.

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SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETING DATES

61   The Committee agreed in principle the following schedule of provisional meeting dates for 2013/14:

Tuesdays at 1500 hours –

2013	2014
18 June	21 January
16 July	11 February
3 September	25 March
22 October	29 April
19 November	
17 December	

Councillor David Pears asked that consideration be given to an earlier start time of 1400 hours, as that would be more convenient.

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REQUESTS FOR 'CALL IN'/COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION/PETITIONS IF ANY)

62   The Chairperson advised that there had been no requests for call in/Councillor calls for action/petitions received.

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AUTHORITY TO ACT BETWEEN MEETINGS

63   **RESOLVED:-**

That the Chairperson is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairperson and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

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OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

64   Members noted that Ruth Mugabe, the Committee Manager who had been supporting this Committee, had retired on 12 April 2013. The Chairman proposed, Members agreed, and it was

RESOLVED:-

That this Committee communicates its best wishes to Ruth Mugabe on her retirement and its thanks to her for all the work she had undertaken in support of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 1845 hours.

………..…………………………
CHAIRPERSON

Birmingham City Council

Information Briefing

Report from:	Charles Ashton-Gray	Date:	16th July 2013
Report to:	Districts and Public Engagement O&S		

Support Services Review: Public engagement and consultation

1.   SUMMARY

As part of the City Council's Service Review process, the "Green Paper: Support Services Part 1" was launched in early July. The Green Paper referred to a number of cross-council support functions, including public engagement and consultation.

Engagement is about involving the community in decision making processes. This is critical to the successful development of acceptable policies and decisions. "Consultation" and "engagement" are not the same things. Consultation is only one of the levels of engagement, along with inform, involve and collaborate.

2.   The Review so far…

The starting point in this review has been a proposal that the City Council should engage individuals as citizens (e.g. a resident of Wylde Green) and therefore users of multiple services, rather than as users of individual services such as libraries or refuse collection or social services, requiring numerous individual and disparate contacts. (Recommendations from the engagement and consultation strand of the Service Review are in appendix A.)

This has led to an initial proposal for re-drafting the Council's Engagement & Consultation Strategy which currently dates from October 2006. An initial draft for discussion is attached as appendix B.

The review also sought to address key external drivers such as 'digital by default', 'open policy making' and 'open data'.

In November 2012, the Cabinet Office published the "Government Digital Strategy." At its core is the concept of: digital by default. This is defined as:

"…*services which are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded.*"

Digital engagement should be based on four principles:

1. be useful;
2. be simple;
3. lead and join conversations; and
4. use intelligence to drive efficiency and business benefits.

In June 2012, the Government published the "Civil Service Reform Plan" which promotes 'open policy making', which is based on the premise that:

"…at its best policy making…can be highly innovative and effective, but the quality of policy advice may not always be consistent or designed with implementation in mind. There must be a clear focus on designing policies that can be implemented in practice, drawing on a wider range of views and expertise."

Good policy often depends on involving diverse groups of people in the process. To do this, policymakers should reach out to groups of people with a contribution to make wherever they are, rather than making policy behind closed doors.

Open policy making can be seen as a component of "involve."

Also in June 2012, the "Open Data White Paper: Unleashing the Potential" was published.

"Data is the 21st Century's new raw material. Its value is in holding governments to account: in driving choice and improvements in public services; and in inspiring innovation and enterprise that spurs social and economic growth."

"Opening up data is…offering people informed choices that simply haven't existed before, exposing what is inadequate and driving improvement."

Open data can be seen as a component of "inform."

The other key proposal is that digital engagement will be supported by widening participation in Ward Committees and the network of Neighbourhood Forums and other partnership arrangements (funded corporately) and user forums, as necessary (funded by individual directorates).

3.   Next Steps

We need to ensure that there is a 'customer voice' in these proposals and the Committee is asked to consider whether it would be prepared to work alongside the Green Paper to ensure that the Review proposes potential solutions which have a broad consensus.

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<u>Recommendations from the Service Review</u>

1.   The City Council will engage individuals as citizens (e.g. a resident of Wylde Green) and therefore users of multiple services, rather than as users of individual services such as libraries or refuse collection or social services, requiring numerous individual and disparate contacts.

2.   Digital engagement will be supported by widening participation in Ward Committees and the network of Neighbourhood Forums and other partnership arrangements (funded corporately) and user forums, as necessary (funded by individual directorates).

3.   Formal consultations (ie seeking views on issues yet to be decided upon) will be conducted through Be Heard. Any further resources to be expended will be sanctioned through a business case detailing the value-added sought in terms of either engaging seldom heard from groups (incl digitally excluded), or meeting specific needs such as a learning disability.

4.   Alongside the publication of open data sources (Open Data) and Council Plan updates, the Council will seek broader input and will encourage unsolicited inputs into policy development (Open Policy Making).

5.   These functions will be co-ordinated from a central unit (Corporate Intelligence Unit), building on dependencies with democratic services, communications, RAID, performance management, business planning, policy development and commissioning;

6.   The central unit will undertake in depth user engagement (co-production) to seek solutions to corporately identified issues, supported by the relevant directorates;

7.   Directorates may propose to establish/maintain engagement activity with their service users following the production of a business case to identify the value added being sought and the justification of diverting funding from front-line service delivery.

8.   It is assumed that this new engagement structure/FOM will have fewer FTEs than the aggregate of the existing directorate based functions.

9.   Explore the potential of new "Local TV" arrangements to enable wider engagement, including through broadcast of council events and involvement in consultation exercises.

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Talking Together; Working Together: An Engagement Strategy for Birmingham

The 2012 Leader's Policy Statement sets out a clear vision for Birmingham to become:

An inclusive city in which many more people can play their part – a fair chance for everyone in Birmingham.

What can this Strategy achieve?

We want to increase and strengthen the contribution of our communities to the delivery of better services in Birmingham, by:

- increasing everyone's understanding of how and why decisions are made – such as budgets, service planning or improvements to a local area;
- increasing trust between the citizens of Birmingham and the City Council;
- increasing involvement in the democratic process;
- achieving better decision-making and problem-solving; and
- increasing equality of opportunity in access to resources and services – improving fairness.

What is 'engagement' and how are we going to do it?

Engagement is about involving the community in decision making processes. This is critical to the successful development of acceptable policies and decisions.

As can be seen from the table below, "consultation" and "engagement" are not the same things. Consultation is only one of the levels of engagement, along with inform, involve and collaborate.

Inform	**What is it?** – Telling people something, such as giving information about events, a decision, services available or changes to services.
	Why do it? - So that everyone knows what is happening across the City and how to get involved
	How could we do it? - newsletters, posters, social media, leaflets, websites and meetings.

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Involve	**What is it?** – A participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making. **Why do it?** – So that people can contribute to things that matter to them **How could we do it?** – meetings such as Ward Committees or Neighbourhood Forums and social media
Consult	**What is it?** – A formal process which should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the decision or policy. It should be open to anyone to respond but should be designed to seek views from those who would be affected by, or who are particularly interested in the decision or policy. **Why do it?** – So that people can make their views known and influence decision making. **How could we do it?** – Questionnaires, focus groups, events and meetings.
Collaborate	**What is it?** – Working together to develop understanding of all issues and interests, to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions. **Why do it?** –So that people can develop solutions to local problems **How will we do it?** – Meetings, focus groups, social media, in fact all of the above.

Our Promises to You

In the future, these are the rules we will follow when we ask you what you think about our plans; or for your ideas to make things better. We will:

1.   use *different ways* of communicating to reflect Birmingham's diverse communities and ensure our communications are carried out in the most effective and appropriate ways. We will use plain language and ensure that we do not use jargon;

2.   take *every reasonable step* to engage with communities or representatives of communities on issues they consider relevant to them;

3.   always try to be *clear* about what we mean and what difference people's views can make to what happens;

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4. try to make sure that ***people can easily find out*** about opportunities they may be interested in;

5. use lots of ***different ways*** of listening, such as by telephone, using e-mail or meetings that people can get to easily;

6. try to make sure that people have the ***facts*** they need to decide what they think;

7. give ***clear*** timescales and ***sufficient*** time for consultations;

8. normally give you 12 weeks to get back to us when we ask for views in writing on very complicated or important things. When we can't give this amount *of **time***, we will explain why;

9. ***explain*** the decision-making processes to communities and be clear on what can and cannot be influenced and how;

10. make sure that we *feedback* what we heard to the people who make the final decisions. We will be ***honest***. This means we will feedback what people say, even when that is not what we would like to hear;

11. give clear, timely feedback following engagement. We will be open and honest and say what has happened as a result of engagement and why. In most cases this means we will ***publish*** this information on our web site.

12. take ***every reasonable step*** to ensure that interested parties are identified early in the process so that engagement exercises can be designed and targeted accordingly. It is important that people can decide quickly whether a consultation exercise is relevant to them; and

13. consider carefully how the ***burden*** of consultation can be minimised. While interested parties may welcome the opportunity to contribute their views or experience, they will not welcome being asked the same questions time and time again.

CAG & KK – 21/06/2013

DRAFT Terms of Reference – for discussion

Citizen Engagement

Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Lead Member:	Cllr Lisa Trickett
Inquiry Members:	All Members of the Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee: Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Jerry Evans, Tim Evans, Ziaul Islam, Chaman Lal, David Pears, Eva Phillips, Rob Pocock and Anne Underwood
Officer Support:	Benita Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager Amanda Simcox, Policy and Research Officer Dave Smith, Committee Manager Fiona Hughes, Service Integration Head, Localisation and Neighbourhoods

Context	Much is already in place to ensure that the council undertakes consultation and engagement with citizens. Appendix 1 sets out some of the themes included in the key documents which form the background to Birmingham's approach. It includes reference to • The current engagement and consultation strategy[1] • The City Council's constitution as amended in June 2013 • The Leader's Policy Statement (July 2013) • The current service reviews to enable delivery of key issues within increasingly limited budgets • Recommendations from two Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries from 2012/13 • The Giving Hope, Changing Lives Social Inclusion Process[2] • Other relevant Cabinet decisions
Key question:	**How should Birmingham City Council engage and consult with Birmingham citizens?**
Key lines of enquiry: (These incorporate key questions in the Green Paper on support services)	**What is the purpose of engagement?** - Why do we consult and engage (e.g. improvements to service delivery, gain the benefits of devolution etc)? - What is the legal framework? - Is there shared understanding of purpose and terms used e.g. engagement, consultation?

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[1] Birmingham City Council (2006) *Talking Together; Working Together*
[2] Birmingham Social Inclusion Process (October 2012) *Making Birmingham an Inclusive City*

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee,
16th July 2013

	How can we engage more effectively with the people of Birmingham? - How does the Council currently engage with and consult citizens? - What are the opportunities and risks of collaborating with partners to engage (e.g. police, health, third sector)? - What policies, structures, processes are in place and how do they need to be strengthened? **How can the Council's localisation agenda be used to improve engagement?** - How do ward committees need to be strengthened to achieve the constitutional aim of encouraging and facilitating dialogue, between the Council and local people? - What can be learnt from the approach of elected Members? **What opportunities exist to strengthen public engagement using digital technology?** - What are the opportunities and risks of technology e.g. "digital by default", the Be Heard web site and the Birmingham.gov.uk website? **What are the short and medium term changes required to make the devolved council ready for "engagement for action?"** - What are the possible risks and benefits of the changes proposed in the support services service review? What lessons can be learnt from examination of directorate case studies? - How does the engagement strategy need to be amended? - What does good practice look like? - How do we achieve that given current resource levels? - Are there sufficient resources / people/ partners on board to make the approach proposed effective? - How do we ensure Officers and Members know what is expected? - How do we mainstream citizen engagement part of the core of what we do?
Key witnesses to include:	- Councillors - Cabinet Members - Birmingham City Council (BCC) Managers and Strategic Directors - West Midlands Police - Health organisations – Healthwatch, BCC Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups - Schools - Community and faith organisations - Social media organisations e.g. Podnosh, hyper-local blogs - Steve Belling, Nehimiah A conversation with the public has been started regarding the budget cuts and service reviews. Ward committees will form part of this conversation. It is suggested that Committee Members observe ward committees and feed back on this process. A reference group will also be established, to include the Barrow Cadbury Trust.

Inquiry Plan:	July	Inquiry agreed – DPE O&S Committee and Chair of Governance, Resources and Customer Services O&S Launch Call for Evidence Final context session
	September	Evidence gathering (3rd September) Public engagement on engagement strategy (a workshop and attendance at 4 events?) Call for Evidence ends
	October	Evidence gathering (22nd October) Directorate Case Studies (work shop / small groups)
	November	Interim summary report on engagement drafted Further evidence gathering (19th November) Member deliberation
	December	Report drafted / agreed
	December/ January	8 day rule start – consultation with Executive Finalise report and send to print (by 16 January 2014)
	February	Report to City Council – 4th February 2014[3] (to be confirmed) More detailed indicative work programme will follow. Social media will be used to communicate progress and ensure broader views are considered. This will include: Twitter: http://es.twitter.com/bhamscrutiny Blog: http://bhamdistrictsscrutiny.wordpress.com/ BCC web site: http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/scrutiny

Anticipated outcomes:	The anticipated outcomes are: • A report to Council; • New engagement strategy developed with input from DPE Committee

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[3] Timescales to be revisited. It is currently unclear if there is a slot at Council in February, but this timescale might suit a refresh of the engagement strategy better than an April date.

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee,
6th July 2013

Appendix 1: Current Birmingham Context

1.   Introduction

This appendix outlines what is already in place for Birmingham City Council to enable and rejuvenate engagement. This includes reference to:

- The current engagement and consultation strategy[4];
- The City Council's constitution, as amended in June 2013;
- The Leader's Policy Statement (July 2013);
- The current service reviews to enable delivery of key services within increasingly limited budgets;
- Two Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries from 2012/13;
- The Bishop's Social Inclusion Process[5]; and
- Other relevant Cabinet decisions.

2   The Current Engagement and Consultation Strategy

The strategy dates from 2006 and is driven by the view that:

> "Only by listening and responding can we truly become the best run council and serve our community well."

Its explicit objectives were to:
- improve the quality and consistency of council engagement and consultation and
- ensure that the Council engages and consults efficiently with all sections of the community.

The steps to do this were to:

- Talk and listen to all of the different communities and people that make up the city of Birmingham, particularly those who may experience exclusion;

- Ensure that all engagement and consultation activity had a clear purpose and was of high quality, carried out by people with the necessary skills;

- Share information and co-ordinate consultations;

- Ensure better use of consultation outcomes in forming priorities;

- Ensure feedback is given to those consulted;

- Work together to involve local residents in planning and delivering services; and

- Make more effective use of public money in using consultation to change our services and policies.

It is worth noting that the strategy states that:

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[4] Birmingham City Council (2006) *Talking Together; Working Together*
[5] Birmingham Social Inclusion Process (March 2013) *Making Birmingham an Inclusive City, White Paper*

"We will always listen to groups that represent certain communities or people sharing particular interests. But we will also consider a much broader range of views, from individuals and organisations so that we can listen to the voices that are not usually heard. It is also important for us to consult with people who use certain services, for example meals on wheels, because not every service we provide is used by everyone."

As noted in the accompanying report (Support Services Review: Public engagement and consultation) the Committee will have an opportunity to contribute to the development of a new strategy in 2013/14.

3   The Constitution

The Council's Constitution sets out roles, expectations and requirements of structures, officers and Members. Volume A states that a key role of elected Members is to:

"contribute to the good governance of Birmingham and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making";

One of the rights of Birmingham citizens noted in the Constitution is participation is that:

"Citizens have the right to ask questions at Full Council Meetings. Citizens may be granted the right, if invited to do so by the Chairman of the relevant Committee, to participate and contribute to the discussion, except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is held in private."

Equally Overview and Scrutiny Committees may:

"consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;"

The Constitution sets out the role of ward committees being "to encourage and facilitate dialogue, between the Council and local people". This includes identifying and assessing local needs and articulating those to the relevant parts of the Council and:

"generally, maximising the influence of local people over the way in which the functions of the Council (or other public agencies) are discharged within the Ward."

Part B of the Constitution includes the Public Sector Equality Protocol which includes the requirement to undertake an equality analysis where necessary and if so, "consultation should then take place" to address any possible adverse impact upon service users and providers.

4   The Leader's Policy Statement

On 9th June 2013 the Leaders Policy Statement (LPS), setting out achievements for the previous twelve months and proposed actions for the next year, was presented to Council. The LPS sets out the council's mission. This includes:

"Democracy – to deliver on our vision for devolution and localisation and to rebuild engagement in local democracy by putting local people and communities at the heart of everything we do."

It proposes engaging local people and communities in making their own contribution to tackling local problems and designing better local services. It notes the positive contribution of active citizens and the knowledge and judgement of people when it comes to dealing with local issues.

One of the strands of the LPS is "A Democratic City: Involving local people and neighbourhoods". Some of the ways the council has improved public engagement in 2012/13 are noted as being Cabinet Member-led public meetings on the budget, public questions to the Cabinet, Be Heard on-line engagement, the People's Panel, open data, public conversation and engagement around service reviews and the on-going live streaming of council meetings.

The Leader proposed launching:

"a new approach to public engagement based on the principle of "Engagement for Action", ensuring we move up the ladder of public participation from previous tokenistic approaches towards engagement that leads to real practical action and a greater democratic right of residents to influence and shape the services they receive."

Specific proposals for 2013/14 under this strand include:

- Launching a youth engagement commission;

- Developing inclusive and sustainable tenant engagement structure, including setting up ten District Resident Panels;

- Developing a new neighbourhood strategy;

- Providing support to increase the number of Neighbourhood Forums;

- Developing the council's use of social media; and

- Launching a 'civic enterprise challenge' inviting Districts, Wards and resident groups to bring forward innovations in the way local services are managed and delivered and new ways of effectively involving residents in the work of Ward Committees."

5   Overview and Scrutiny

During 2012/13 two of the Overview and Scrutiny reports which were presented to Council included recommendations relating to engagement.

5.1   Birmingham: Where the World Meets

The Social Cohesion and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny's report *Birmingham: Where the World Meets* (Feb 2013) found that some communities felt particularly invisible and disengaged from the council and asked whether:

"there is any better way of supporting and engaging communities, for example by supporting groups based on neighbourhood or locality, rather than specific community. This would encompass everyone within an area, negating the perception that some are supported above others, encouraging them to have a stake in society and has the potential to bring people in a locality closer together."

The report notes the importance of communication as a foundation of engagement setting out concerns that:

"the opportunities for people to get involved in Council and City processes and the awareness or support available has not been well communicated, meaning new emerging communities, as well as some established communities, are not aware of the routes to engage."

The report included two recommendations due to be completed by September 2013:

- Better communication around how organisations and individuals can engage with council processes is needed. Ways to achieve this should be explored and in particular each ward should have a clear strategy on how to engage local communities.

- That the Executive sets out how it intends to use social media to increase engagement in City Council's democratic activities, taking into account issues raised in this report, the District& Public Engagement OS& Committee's report on Devolution, and the Governance, Resources & Member Development's report on Public Engagement in Council Meetings

5.2   Devolution: Making it Real

The Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee presented *Devolution: Making it Real* to Council in January 2013.

The report, in essence, argued that the city is too large to be run the same way in every locality and so devolution is required. Key to that is local engagement to be able to understand the needs of different areas across the city. In setting out how success might be measured the report suggested:

"within the next decade Birmingham is recognised for its integrated, citizen shaped local services as part of the city's ambition for social cohesion and regeneration."

One of the recommendations was that the Council develops opportunities for citizens to shape service delivery by working:

"with ward committees, Local Services Directorate and the corporate centre to develop citizen engagement opportunities, making the best use of existing networks (including natural community hubs e.g. school gates, local markets and places of worship), the City Council's own website and other websites and social media (within available resources) and encourage the development of improvement plans where necessary and ensure engagement outcomes feed into annual district governance reviews.

Early engagement in the commissioning and contracting process was also recommended to establish needs within localities and identify the best ways of delivering these.

The report also put forward the notion of the "citizen challenge" for the Executive Members for Local Services to set out for local citizens - to get involved, and say what decisions they want to influence more, at local, neighbourhood and city level.

5.3   Public Engagement Group

In addition to reports to Council the Governance, Resources and Member Development O&S Committee established a task and finish group to consider the potential use of technology to increase engagement in the democratic process. This concluded:

> "It is clear that even when the technicalities of live streaming Council meetings are resolved and the appropriate provider is chosen, careful consideration of the processes required is still needed. How Live Streaming Council meetings can fit comfortably into our existing and evolving democratic system needs to be established so that appropriate resources are in place to provide an interactive and user friendly system that assists both Councillors and Members of the public in the democratic process.[6]"

6   Social Inclusion Process: Making Birmingham an Inclusive City, White Paper (March 2013)

The Bishop of Birmingham chaired the Social Inclusion Process during 2012/13. The resulting White Paper sets out a number of commitments, of which one relates to embracing superdiversity. Within this is the intention to develop a set of rights and responsibilities for Birmingham to include "active citizen involvement in local democracy."

Specifically Commitment Six is to empower people to shape their neighbourhood in order to create a more inclusive city. The assertion is that some neighbourhoods have been insensitively designed due to public bodies' failure to involve local people. The relevant recommendations are to develop 'community contracts' to include information on how communities can engage with decision-making and to develop a neighbourhood strategy, co-designed with local people.

7   Cabinet reports

Two Cabinet reports in the last year are particularly relevant to this topic.

7.1   Be Heard

Be Heard is the city's newly relaunched digital consultation data base (which was presented to Committee on 5th March 2013). A report was subsequently presented to Cabinet in order to ensure that all consultations carried out by the Council are entered onto this public database. Agreement was also given to its use for non party political consultations by elected Members.

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[6] Public Engagement Group (January 2013) Feedback from Informal meeting on the 2nd November 2012

The report accepts the Cabinet Office guidance[7] that consultation should be "digital by default".

7.2 Adults and Communities Directorate Engagement

Prior to the Service Review into Adults and Communities Directorate the Strategic Director presented a report to Cabinet in December 2012[8] seeking to change the way in which the Directorate engages and consults and to carry out consultation in relation to this. Although that process has been put on hold pending the outcomes of the service review it is useful to note the direction of travel set out at that point in time:

"The current forums and groups supported by the Adults and Communities Directorate are well established and long standing, however the current model of engagement is not productive or effective; there is a lack of equality of opportunity, it is costly in terms of resources and there is little evidence of the benefits for the Directorate."

The purpose of engagement was to be:

- Improved ability to hear citizen's views of our services;
- Improved quality of services through co-produced solutions; and
- Provision of a representative pool of people from which we can recruit for co-production activity.

It was proposed to establish Service User Led Quality Boards to place users at the heard of improvements through engagement. A key driver is co-production because:

"Co-producing solutions together with citizens is a way of transforming services and making them effective, affordable and sustainable. It integrates the public resources that are earmarked for services with the private assets of those who are intended to benefit from services. It also allows us to move away from a deficit model whereby service users consume resources, towards a model where together, we work with individuals to minimise the risk of them losing their independence, by recognising their experience, abilities and aspirations."

8 Support Services Service Review

One of the service reviews carries out during 2012-13 related to the back office support services. One of the work streams within this was engagement and consultation. Another report on the agenda for this Committee meeting entitled "Support Services Review: Public engagement and consultation" sets out the recommendations which came out of the review.

Public dialogue has been launched in July 2013 through the **Green Paper Support Services Part 1.** It suggests that public engagement and consultation is about "Involving local residents in developing our vision and priorities, and in delivering agreed outcomes."

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[7] Cabinet Office (2012) *Consultation Principles: Guidance*
[8] Strategic Director of Adults and Communities (10th December 2012) *Adults & Communities Citizen Involvement –The way forward*

The proposed approach to this is that the council should engage with individuals as citizens; users of multiple services; and as members of localities. An aim of change would be to better co-ordinate such activity better and reduce duplication. It also suggests that use of digital technology needs to improve, to enable better two-way discussions and listening.

The Green Paper sets out three key questions for citizens and stakeholders to respond to which are included in full here as they have helped frame the draft key lines of enquiry:

> ***How can we engage more effectively with the people of Birmingham?***
> *We are keen to engage with people as citizens, residents and service users, in a way that helps us build a rounded picture of the issues which individuals and neighbourhoods are facing. Your thoughts on how best to achieve this would be welcome.*
>
> ***How can the Council's localisation agenda be used to improve engagement?***
> *We have revised the Council's constitution so that decision-making on a wide range of services (e.g. council housing and libraries) now takes place at local district committees consisting of local elected councillors. How can we make best use of ward committees, neighbourhood forums, specific user group forums and front line community-based staff to improve local engagement further?*
>
> ***What opportunities exist to strengthen public engagement using digital technology?***
> *Digital technology provides an opportunity to increase the public's ability to engage at all levels – from the future direction of the Council to providing feedback on specific services. On-line engagement via the Be Heard database, the People's Panel, Open Data, public dialogue on the service reviews and the on-going live streaming of council meetings are all examples of where technology has helped. If you have other ideas for how we can use digital technology to widen the public's engagement do let us know."*

9   Conclusion

It can be seen that the Committee's proposed work on engagement can not be carried out in a vacuum, but needs to build on work already undertaken, in the context of the council's renewed devolution agenda and the increasing opportunities for technology to support dialogue.

Background Committee Papers

Public Engagement Discussion Paper for Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee March 2013

Minutes of Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee meeting March 2013 – Discussion with Catherine Durose, Liz Richardson and invited elected Members.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS
AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTOVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 16 JULY 2013 AT 1500 HOURS,
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL HOUSE,
BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:-   Councillor Trickett in the Chair;

Councillors Atwal, J Evans, T Evans, Islam, Lal, Pocock and
Underwood.

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor P Holbrook – Chairman of the Executive Members Local Services
    Forum

Mr C Ashton-Gray – Adults and Communities Directorate
Mr M Barrow – Development and Culture Directorate
Ms F Hughes – Local Services Directorate
Mr I Jones – Local Services Directorate
Ms A Simcox – Research and Policy Officer
Ms B Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Miss V Williams – Committee Manager

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APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE AND CHAIRMAN

The Chairman thanked retiring Members for their contribution throughout the
last Municipal Year and welcomed new Members to the Committee.

At this point, the Chairman also welcomed to the meeting four young people
who were in attendance for work experience.

65   **RESOLVED**:-

That the resolution of the City Council appointing the Committee,
Chairman and Members set out below for the period ending within the
Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2014 be noted:-

Labour Group

Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Tim Evans, Ziaul Islam, Chaman Lal,
Eva Phillips, Rob Pocock and Lisa Trickett (Chairperson).

Conservative Group

Councillors David Pears and Anne Underwood.

Liberal Democrat Group

Councillor Jerry Evans.

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APOLOGIES

66   Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Pears
and E Phillips.

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67   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and
non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this
meeting.   If a pecuniary interest was declared a Member must not speak or
take part in that agenda item. Any declarations would be recorded in the
minutes of the meeting.

Councillor Underwood advised that she was the Executive Member for Local
Services – Sutton Coldfield.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference were submitted:-

(See document No 1)

68   **RESOLVED**:-

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

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MINUTES

69   The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2013, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman advised that she was due to meet with the Barrow Cadbury Trust on 17 July 2013 (minute no 58 refers).

The Chairman informed Members that she had drafted a letter which she intended to refer to the Council Business Management Committee regarding the proposed inquiry and the possible difficulties that might be encountered in evaluating community chest. She undertook to circulate the letter to Members for their comments (minute no 59 refers).

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DEVOLUTION

A.   Progress One Year On

Mr M Barrow, Strategic Director of Development and Culture, updated the Committee on the achievements and challenges of the devolution agenda and made particular reference to the work of the challenge unit including social inclusion and devolution.

He went on to outline the work of the employment team and activities that were being undertaken within Digital Birmingham that supported the devolution agenda.

Mr Barrow undertook to provide Members with a briefing note thereon.

In response to questions by Members, the following were amongst the points made:-

1.   It was important to have a sense of direction and move forwards.

2.   It was important to determine whether deprivation should be measured based on an area or people.

3.   With regard to enterprising communities, long term strategies needed to be implemented.

4.   Mr Barrow briefly explained the role of the local enterprise partnerships.

5.   Communication and engagement were fundamental and Mr Barrow, as an example, briefly explained work being done in Aston.

6.   It was important to shape the agenda at the time rather than after an event.

7.   Although projects had been evaluated in the past much of the information and data collected was out of date.

8.   Ward and District Committees were an important part of the process.

Councillor P Holbrook, in her capacity as Chairman of the Executive Members Local Services Forum, gave an overall assessment of the achievements and challenges relating to devolution. She considered that there was still a long way to go, although things had improved.

Councillor Holbrook gave examples of how work in the local areas had made a difference and made particular reference to issues in the Erdington District including performance management and poor quality data which was often provided in different incompatible formats.

With regard to consultations, Councillor Holbrook referred to the variety of competence and engagement across the city and stressed the importance of the role of Ward Committees.

Councillor Holbrook expressed concern regarding the disposal of some local buildings and resources that could perhaps have been retained and better utilised.

Councillor Holbrook was disappointed at the lack of information regarding neighbourhood planning protocols. However, she recognised that there were also some good things happening and pointed out that District Committees had the ability to improve the situation such as influencing service level agreements.

It was important to share best practice throughout the districts and ensure that local residents understood that the purpose of District Committees was primarily as a management role rather than a public engagement function.

The Chairman suggested that the Committee consider the issue of differential capacity at a future meeting.

B.   Progress Report on Implementation: Devolution – Making It Real

The following joint report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion and Equalities was submitted:-

(See document No 2)

Mr I Jones, Local Services Directorate, introduced the report.

The Committee agreed with the Cabinet Member's assessment in respect of recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17 and 18.

With regard to recommendation 12, Members considered that the Cabinet Member's Assessment should be 3 – not achieved (progress made).

With regard to recommendations 3, 13, 14, 15 and 16, Members considered that the Cabinet Member's Assessment should be 6 – in progress.

Members suggested that consideration should be given to revising the way in which recommendations were scored as although recommendation 1 had been achieved the Committee was keen to revisit it at a later date.

With regard to recommendation 3, the Chairman stressed the importance of ensuring that district plans were embedded.

In referring to the evidence of progress set out in the report, clarification was sought regarding the status of the Leader's Policy Statement and whether it placed a specific requirement for District Committees to adopt an annul district policy statement that set out objectives for the year.

In referring to recommendation 6, the Chairman expressed surprise at the lack of stakeholder mapping in the city.

In referring to recommendation 8, Mr Jones advised that a list of ward champions, namely officers at JNC or grade 7, had now been finalised.

Members stressed the importance of working across wards.

With regard to recommendation 10, the importance of ensuring that past recommendations had been completed was highlighted.

Members stressed the importance of the service review process and pointed out that it should reflect devolution and localism. The Chairman suggested that the Committee should consider service reviews and the impact that they would have on the districts at a future meeting.

With regard to recommendation 17, the Chairman requested more information on how the Locale asset management programme would be applied in each district together with details of the financial implications thereon.

70   **RESOLVED**:-

That the report be noted.

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ENGAGEMENT INQUIRY

The Committee considered the following items together:-

A.   Support Services Review: Public Engagement and Consultation

The following information briefing was submitted:-

(See document No 3)

181

B.   Citizen Engagement

The following draft terms of reference of the proposed inquiry regarding citizen engagement was submitted:-

(See document No 4)

Mr C Ashton-Gray, Strategic Performance and Engagement Manager, introduced the documents.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the proposed inquiry into citizen engagement and Members' views on the draft terms of reference were sought.

The Chairman was keen to develop a new engagement strategy and welcomed a partnership approach.

Councillor Lal stressed the importance of listening to people and considered that residents might be put off by the promises set out on page 5 of the information briefing.

The Chairman concurred with that comment and considered that it was 'paternalistic'. It was necessary to move away from old style thinking, to be honest and realistic with what could and could not be achieved.

It was important to include a mix of different organisations and partnerships.

Councillor Underwood considered that district conventions had been successful and had worked well in Sutton Coldfield.

The Chairman suggested using district conventions as a discussion point and way of keeping members of the public informed. She suggested that the investigation should look at how the Council should engage for action.

Councillor Pocock suggested that the inquiry should investigate how things were being done and whether they could be improved. He also considered that members of the public should be invited to give evidence and suggested involving the Citizens' Panel as a way forward.

Councillor T Evans considered that it was important to engage residents in a natural way and not just through formal public meetings.

The Chairman urged Members to forward any other suggestions regarding the proposed inquiry to Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager.

71   **RESOLVED**:-

(i)   That the information briefing – support services review: public engagement and consultation be noted;

(ii)   that the draft terms of reference regarding the proposed inquiry into citizen engagement be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2013/14

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the work programme and highlighted the items proposed for consideration at future meetings.

72   **RESOLVED**:-

That the work programme be noted.
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DATES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

73   **RESOLVED:-**

(i)   That the Committee meets on the following Tuesdays at 1500 hours in the Council House:-

2013	**2014**
3 September	21 January
22 October	11 February
19 November	25 March
17 December	29 April

(ii)   that approval be given to Tuesdays at 1500 hours (excluding City Council where possible) as a suitable day and time each week for any additional meetings required to consider 'requests for call in' which may be lodged in respect of Executive decisions.
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REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

74   The Chairman advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.
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AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

75   **RESOLVED**:-

That the Chairman (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman if appropriate) is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairman and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

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The meeting ended at 1708 hours.

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CHAIRMAN

Terms of Reference

Citizen Engagement

Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Lead Member:	Cllr Lisa Trickett
Inquiry Members:	Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Jerry Evans, Tim Evans, Ziaul Islam, Chaman Lal, David Pears, Eva Phillips, Rob Pocock and Anne Underwood
Officer Support:	Benita Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager Amanda Simcox, Policy and Research Officer Dave Smith, Committee Manager Fiona Hughes, Service Integration Head, Localisation and Neighbourhoods

Context	Much is already in place to ensure that the council undertakes consultation and engagement with citizens. An appendix (available from the Scrutiny Office) sets out some of the themes included in the key documents which form the background to Birmingham's approach. It includes reference to: • The current engagement and consultation strategy[1] • The City Council's constitution as amended in June 2013 • The Leader's Policy Statement (July 2013) • The current service reviews to enable delivery of key issues within increasingly limited budgets • Recommendations from two Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries from 2012/13 • The Giving Hope, Changing Lives Social Inclusion Process[2] • Other relevant Cabinet decisions The concept of "place" is key to devolution in Birmingham. "Place" can refer to the whole city, a district, ward, or neighbourhood. Michael Lyons defines the act of place-shaping' as being "the creative use of powers and influence to promote the general well-being of a community and its citizens."[3] Engagement can be one of the tools used in the process to understand what's needed. One indicator of success of improved places would be citizens' increasing contribution to the 5 steps to well-being: • Connect – with the people around you • Be active • Give • Keep learning • Take Notice – of what's around you

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[1] Birmingham City Council (2006) *Talking Together; Working Together*
[2] Birmingham Social Inclusion Process (October 2012) *Making Birmingham an Inclusive City*

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee,
8 September 2013

Key question:	How can residents influence and shape place and how should the Council ensure "Engagement for Action"?	
Key lines of enquiry:	• What is the purpose of engagement? • How do we do it better? • How do we get results?	
Key witnesses to include:	• Councillors • Birmingham City Council (BCC) Managers and Strategic Directors • West Midlands Police • Health organisations – Healthwatch, BCC Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups • Schools • Community and faith organisations • Social media organisations e.g. Podnosh, hyper-local blogs • Steve Belling, Nehimiah It is suggested that Members of the Committee observe engagement opportunities outside their ward and report back. This could include ward committees elsewhere in the city. A reference group will also be established, to include the Barrow Cadbury Trust.	
Inquiry Plan:	July/Aug	Inquiry agreed – DPE O&S Committee and Chair of Governance, Resources and Customer Services O&S Launch Call for Evidence Final context session
	September	Evidence gathering (3rd September) Members to observe opportunities for engagement – to include ward committees Call for Evidence ends
	October	Evidence gathering (22nd October) Directorate Case Studies (work shop / small groups) Public engagement (e.g. on engagement strategy / social media surgeries / Citizens Panel TBC)
	November	Interim summary report on engagement drafted Further evidence gathering if required (19th November) Member deliberation
	December	Report drafted / agreed
	December/ January	8 day rule start – consultation with Executive Finalise report and send to print (by 16 January 2014)
	February	Report to City Council – 4th February 2014 (to be confirmed – subject to agenda availability). Social media will be used to communicate progress and ensure broader views are considered. This will include: • Twitter: http://es.twitter.com/bhamscrutiny • Blog: http://bhamdistrictsscrutiny.wordpress.com/ • BCC web site: http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/scrutiny
Anticipated outcomes:	The anticipated outcomes are: • A report to Council • New engagement strategy developed with input from DPE Committee	

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[3] Michael Lyons (2007) *Lyons Inquiry into Local Government. At* http://www.lyonsinquiry.org.uk/index8a20.html

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee
Citizen Engagement Scrutiny Inquiry

3rd September 2013 Committee Rooms 3 & 4 at 2pm

The purpose of this session is to gather evidence for the Inquiry and to consider the key question:

**How can residents influence and shape place and how should the Council ensure "Engagement for Action"?**

In carrying this out the key lines of enquiry can be followed:

- What is the purpose of engagement?
- How do we do it better?
- How do we get results?

Witnesses may also reflect on lessons learnt (both in their current and previous roles).

In addition West Midlands Police and the City Council each have their own engagement structures and Members may wish to explore if there are opportunities to work more smartly together.

Time (approx)	Witness	Organisation
Member introduction		
2.00pm – 2.15pm	Introduction from Cllr Trickett • Anticipated outcomes for the day	n/a
2.15pm – 3.00pm (45 mins)	Saidul Haque Saeed	Citizens UK
3.00pm – 3.45pm (45 mins)	Stephen Belling	The Nehemiah Foundation
3.45pm - 4.30pm (45 mins)	Chief Superintendent Emma Barnett	West Midlands Police
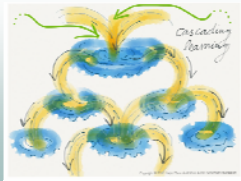
Residents influencing and shaping place
The Council ensuring Engagement for Action

Witness Contribution 3rd September 2013
Stephen Belling
Programme Director for the Nehemiah Foundation

Overview

1. Background

1. Experiences

1. Learning

1. Recommendations

Background

- Trainee Solicitor with the City Council

- Solicitor and Partner at Anthony Collins Solicitors in respect of area based initiatives and community development

- Programme Director of Kings Norton New Deal for Communities

- Programme Director for the Nehemiah Foundation

Key Birmingham Experiences
1991- to date

- Stockfield
- Perry Common (Witton Lodge Community Association)
- Optima (ERCF)
- Kings Norton- 3 Estates (NDC)
- Community Based Housing Organisation
- Flourishing Neighbourhoods (SRB)
- Nehemiah Foundation   (10 neighbourhoods)
- Near Neighbours (NN)   (3 neighbourhoods)
- Social inclusion Steering Group

Key National Experiences

- City Challenge
- Estate Renewal Challenge Fund
- Single Regeneration Budget
- New Deal for Communities
- Neighbourhood Management
- Near Neighbours

Common Themes

- Needs to be addressed
- Area/ neighbourhood focus
- Resident engagement, involvement & ownership
- Public expenditure challenges
  - Housing
  - Health
  - Education
  - Cohesion/ integration
  - Employment / economic resilience

Reasons for Engagement

1. Obtain information

1. Gain support and collaboration

1. Effect change

What helped ?

1. Clarity of aim
2. Initial recognition
3. Ongoing dialogue
4. Prospect of improvement
5. Prospect of a community asset
6. Word of mouth
7. Skilled people
8. Key committed individuals
9. Local schools
10. Faith communities
11. Young people
12. Art work
13. Fun workshops
14. Partners
15. Community events & activities
16. Planning for real
17. Appreciative Enquires
18. Information and knowledge
19. Networks and relationships
20. Shared understanding
21. Element of independence

What hindered?

1. Previous negative experiences
2. Sense of being used
3. Being asked again
4. Failure to listen properly
5. Everyday demands & pressures
6. Outsiders
7. Wasted resources
8. Last of trust
9. Over dominating individuals
10. Off putting speakers
11. Lack of information
12. Failure to connect with opportunities
13. Underestimates of time
14. Changing goals posts
15. Loss of momentum
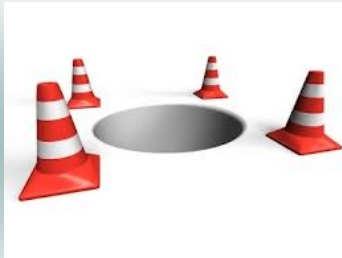
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1. Joint Statement of Needs

- What needs to be addressed?

- What do we want people to do?

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2. City Wide Invitations
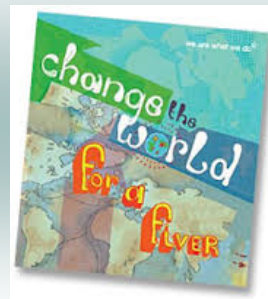
- Attractive invitations

- Manageable activities

- Collaborative production

- Multiple engagement

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3. Engagement Check List

- Produce collaboratively
- Share learning
- Save resources
- Increase efficiency

4. Collective Memory

Of
- Good initiatives
- What they delivered

For
- Leaders
- Strategists
- Interested parties

5. Continued Strategic Collaboration

- Social inclusion Process
- Summits on practical issues
- Neighbourhood Strategy

6. Joint Communication Budgets

- Joined up communications delivered through neighbourhood organisations where viable
- Help support growth of neighbourhood capacity

7.Long Term Neighbourhood Strategy

- Criteria for being commissioned
- Assistance with developing an income generating asset base
- Local knowledge and resources

8. Local Commissioning to

- produce local letters
- use social media
- organise meetings and events
- carry out 1-1 consultations and surveys

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9. Open Database of Neighbourhood Organisations

Categories

•Developing
•Established
•Approved

10. Community Feedback & Endorsement

- *To* public sector bodies

- *By* Neighbourhood Organisations

- *Through* an agreed process

Summary

1. Complex Challenges Exist.

2. Progress requires collaboration.

3. Process involves coordinating a range of initiatives & actions.

4. Birmingham has people, resources & experience.

5. The Council can model and enable collaboration.

Examples for Response to Questions

- Witton Lodge Community Association

- Love Life, Live Lent

- Project for the Renewal of Druids Heath (PROD)

Witton Lodge Community Association

Love Life, Live Lent

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PROD- Druids Heath

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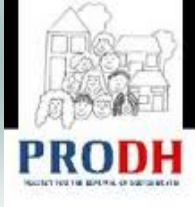
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 SEPTEMBER 2013

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 1405 HOURS, IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 3 AND 4, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

PRESENT:- Councillor Trickett in the Chair, Councillors Atwal, T Evans, Islam, Lal, Pears, E Phillips and Underwood.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Mr C Ashton-Gray – Adults and Communities Directorate
Mr S Belling – The Nehemiah Foundation
Chief Superintendent E Barnett – West Midlands Police Force
Ms F Hughes – Local Services Directorate
Mr S Haque – Citizens UK
Ms J Kimber – Community Safety Partnership
Ms A Simcox – Research and Policy Officer
Mr D Smith – Committee Services Team Leader
Ms B Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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APOLOGIES

76   Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Evans and Pocock. An apology was received from Councillor Underwood for her late arrival at the meeting.

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MINUTES

77   The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2013, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson.

With regard to Minute No. 69, the Chairperson informed Members that she had drafted a letter to the Council Business Management Committee and would circulate the letter to Members after the meeting.

It was confirmed that the further information requested regarding Devolution (Minute No. 70) had been circulated to Members since the last meeting.

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ENGAGEMENT INQUIRY

The Chairperson introduced the session and outlined issues being considered by the Inquiry, welcoming each of the following witnesses in turn:-

A. Mr Saidul Haque ("Saeed") – Citizens UK

Mr Haque explained the role of Citizens UK and advised that it had approximately 30 member organisations in Birmingham. Its key work was training and developing leadership in communities, giving guidance on being involved and engaged with the community. It worked with community groups to encourage communities to consider what was important to them and how to communicate that. In October 2013, its members would be voting on an agenda of 5 issues of greatest importance.

He gave an example of how the local community had been involved in addressing problems that had led to a child being knocked over by a vehicle in June 2013 outside Anglesey Primary School in Birmingham, by working with children, parents, grandparents and the Police Force.

In response to a series of questions from Members, he made the following points:-

1) The approach taken was to concentrate on issues in which people had most interest, starting with individual cases and building up the interest in wider issues to ensure that people in general were committed to the cause.

2) He believed that Councillors were very active and that they needed look for allies to take forward actions, involving the younger generations and meeting people individually in their own 'place'.

3) It was important to involve people in taking things forward and to interest them in wider issues. Interest had been shown in the 'Living Wage', youth employment, the availability of school places and what was being offered by schools beyond their first preference.

4) When Citizens UK had become involved in Birmingham 18 months previously, it had issued an open invitation to organisations and groups, bringing together a broad-based alliance of people and organisations and developing arrangements towards the vote on key issues in October 2013.

5) It used a method based on links and relationships between groups and organisations and agreed with the Chairperson's suggestion that it was using 'gatekeepers' to promote engagement. Citizens UK began with 'wins' for people and developed their perspective on situations.

6) He undertook to provide Members with a list of the organisations involved following the vote to be taken on 22 October 2013.

B. Mr Stephen Belling – The Nehemiah Foundation

The following presentation sheet and 'witness contribution' report were tabled:-

(See document No 1)

The Chairperson declared a non-pecuniary interest, having been involved in social inclusion research in her work at the University of Birmingham.

Mr Belling gave a presentation on the Nehemiah Foundation and its experience of public engagement. In response to questions from Members, he made the following points:-

1) He did not have an immediate answer to the management of unreasonable expectations, which he believed were generated by self-interest and required a culture change in order that they could be addressed.

2) The population of the City was changing and people were suffering deprivation, meaning that there were no easy means of engaging them. The Foundation offered its experience, which was backed by expertise available from its links with the Diocese of Birmingham.

3) The Foundation worked with local organisations to build up knowledge and experience and to develop a 'collective memory'. It considered what consultation had been undertaken previously and tried to build on it, rather than duplicating previous work.

4) He noted concern that the electoral cycle creating difficulties with developing collaboration and that the leadership skills of Councillors needed to be enhanced. He confirmed that the Foundation pulled together existing knowledge and experience in order to try to create a 'living' plan.

5) The Foundation promoted engagement through communication networks and strategies, giving emphasis to what people wanted and would accept. It was important for ideas and issues to be fed through to local Councillors, but also to acknowledge that one model did not fit all situations.

C. <u>Chief Superintendent Emma Barnett – West Midlands Police Force</u>

Chief Superintendent Barnett advised Members on Police engagement, with the support of Ms J Kimber from the Community Safety Partnership. The following were among the matters she highlighted:-

a) Engagement was a key to policing in order to build confidence in the community and obtain knowledge or intelligence.

b) The neighbourhood was seen as a key 'place' and officers tried to build a 'picture' of the local community in order to understand its components and concerns.

c) Engagement was seen as a means of informing people and obtaining feedback that would influence the activity of local officers, in partnership with statutory and voluntary partners.

d) There was a need to understand how to measure the effectiveness of engagement. A "Feel the Difference" survey had been undertaken, interviewing approximately 6,000 local residents face-to-face each year, the results of which could be broken down to Local Command Unit and District levels.

e) Satisfaction levels were tested through a "Contact Counts" survey, in which 4,000 victims of crime were interviewed in Birmingham each year. Any issues of concern highlighted in the survey were taken on board to be addressed.

f) The engagement and feedback was used to set priorities publicised in the Strategic Plan for Birmingham. Details were included in the Local Police and Crime Plan and the website provided a 'snapshot' of communities, concerns raised and opportunities to engage.

g) Officers attended local meeting places, such as schools, libraries or supermarkets, and involved partner organisations in engagement activities. Attempts were made to address issues of local concern with residents' involvement, for example Local Speed Watch.

h) Officers were engaging with young people through various activities, including school 'tracker panels' of 14 and 15 years old pupils and local school liaison officers being 'tasked' by pupils to address issues and report back.

i) The Police Force was embracing social media for communication and engagement. 68,000 followers had been attracted across 67 user accounts on Twitter, a Facebook page was maintained and 2 million photographs had been uploaded to photograph sites it had opened.

j) Work had been undertaken with local 'bloggers' to host webcast events, such as discussions on anti-social behaviour. A virtual meeting had been organised with a Google 'handout', which had generated greater involvement that was usual at a local 'patch' meeting.

k) Social media was not the answer to everything, but was part of the Force's approach to crime prevention, contact and informing people. It helped in attempting to involve residents in decision-making.

Ms Kimber added the following comments:-

l) A significant question was how to engage people with whom there was normally no contact. The Community Safety Partnership used a "Resident Tracker" survey managed by BMG, which provided a useful range of information.

m) The Partnership had taken a 'snapshot' of issues raised by Districts and Wards and focussed its community engagement on Wards. However, some issues were approached at a District or City-wide level. Highway safety had been a regular concern and had been set as a specific issue to address.

n) She agreed to provide Members with a schematic illustration of the levels at which issues were addressed.

o) Community partnerships were being promoted and community-based priority setting was being developed. Priority setting was generated from the community upwards, with significant Government led priorities added on top. Officers faced a challenge to balance priorities and the use of funding.

In response to a series of questions from Members, the Chief Superintendent made the following points:-

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1) There were various layers of issues ranging from City-wide to local significance, involving differences in scale. It was necessary to understand the key issues for communities at a particular time, some of which could be resolved quickly and others requiring long-term action. She offered to discuss that matter further with Councillor Eva Phillips after the meeting.

2) She reviewed District Committee agendas to identify relevant issues for the Police Force and believed that there were opportunities for interaction at District level, with officers having found District Conventions to be particularly useful.

3) The involvement of local residents in community safety would be driven forward by the Police and Crime Panel. The Force saw asset building with communities and partner bodies as being important, with a focus on pre-emptive action.

4) Officers worked with local groups and schools, but were liable to move around for career development and new roles. However, she looked for a legacy of structures and processes to be left in place in order to lessen the impact of changes in personnel.

Members were concerned to avoid duplication of discussions regarding issues at various levels, to widen the involvement of local residents and to ensure that District Committees had the opportunity to consider information available. It was felt that there was too much imposition of agenda items from the Centre. District Conventions had generated good ideas, but initiatives had been halted by the Service Reviews and that had caused residents to question what value there had been in that exercise.

The Chairperson thanked the attendees and welcomed the receipt of written submissions.

78   **RESOLVED**:-

That the witnesses' contributions be noted.
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WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2013/14

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the work programme and highlighted items proposed for consideration at future meetings. Members discussed the possible consideration of inter-relationships between the City Council, the West Midlands Police Force and Clinical Commissioning Groups. It was noted that an appropriate time to consider neighbourhood tasking would be at the end of 2013. Scrutiny Officers were asked to prepare a schedule of meetings regarding Service Reviews for Members to attend and observe.

79   **RESOLVED**:-

That the work programme be noted.
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REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

80   The Chairperson advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.
_____

AUTHORITY TO CHAIRPERSON AND OFFICERS

81   **RESOLVED**:-

That the Chairperson is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairperson and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.
_____

The meeting ended at 1655 hours.

……..…………………………….
CHAIRPERSON

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee
Citizen Engagement Scrutiny Inquiry

22nd October 2013, Committee Rooms 3 & 4 at 2pm

Time (approx)	Witness	Organisation
Member introduction		
2.00pm – 2.15pm	Introduction from Cllr Trickett • Anticipated outcomes for the day	n/a
2.15pm – 3.15pm (1 hour)	Roundtable discussion with Social Media representatives to include: • Nick Booth • Dave Harte • Lol Thurstan • Najm Clayton • Guy Evans & Geoff Coleman	Podnosh Bournville Village B26 Community Sutton Coldfield Local CIC Birmingham City Council
3.15pm – 3.25pm	**Break**	
3.25pm – 4.25pm (1 hour)	Roundtable discussion with Health Organisations: • Charles Ashton-Gray • Dr Peter Rookes, Lay Advisor for Public Involvement • Jenni Northcote, Partnerships Manager • Helen Baglee, Volunteer and Engagement Co-ordinator	Birmingham City Council Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commission Group (CCG) Birmingham South Central CCG Healthwatch
4.25pm – 4.55pm (30 mins)	Jonathan Gurling, Executive Secretary	Birmingham Faith Leaders Group
Informal Meeting		
Following end of formal meeting	Chair and Committee reflection	

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A Written Submission to Birmingham City Council's
Districts & Public Engagement Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Inquiry into Citizen Engagement

From: Jonathan Gurling, Executive Secretary, Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group

Date: 3rd October 2013

The Districts & Public Engagement Overview & Scrutiny Committee is thanked for this opportunity to provide evidence to its Inquiry into Citizen Engagement. This document is written in my personal capacity and should not be taken, at this stage, as a formal statement of the views or policy of the Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group. However, both this statement and the summary of the Committee's aim and scope will be circulated to faith leaders and their responses will be reflected in a further submission which may be made either in writing or in person at the Evidence Gathering meeting on 22nd October.

Citizen Engagement in Faith terms

Most of the major faiths consider that their adherents form a community. Every faith has a concept of people following a particular personal path, guided by a set of broadly held beliefs. In this context it is adherence to a belief system which binds people together into an identifiable community. Whilst each person has their particular beliefs, observances and practices, their faith calls them to act as part of a community. The social context is therefore an essential and defining aspect of faith.

Most religious belief systems place some sort of obligations or expectations upon adherents to act with responsibility and care in their dealings with others, to do justly and to act righteously, to defend and support those in need, to protect the outcast and the stranger, to understand and protect the created order and to seek 'the common good'. All of this provides the moral context for the life of faith. Therefore most faiths place a high priority on the community, which is both the community of the adherents of that particular faith, but is also the wider community which may be defined by geography (the concept of 'place'), ethnicity, nationality or some other defining feature.

Citizen engagement is not, by accident, a tendency for people of faith. The tenets of all major faiths place a level of expectation upon their adherents to act as 'good citizens', respecting the laws of the state in which they live and acting for the wider good of the whole community, as well as seeking their own personal spiritual growth. Citizen engagement is therefore a highly prized activity, and in some instances a religious obligation. So, the principle and the language of citizen engagement (which clearly includes

concepts such as social inclusion, cohesion, justice, respect and wellbeing) finds a significant level of support within the faith communities. For instance:

- The Jewish faith espouses the concept of Mitzvah which is rooted in Biblical commandments to love your neighbour as yourself and to love the stranger, and injunctions to deal fairly and charitably with the poor, the stranger and the outcast. The prophets teach the importance of practically caring for the poor, feeding the hungry and providing shelter for the homeless.
- Christianity has inherited much of this faithful social concern through the teachings of Jesus, which in many regards echo those of the prophets. As with Judaism, these teachings, at the very heart of the faith, have led believers to pioneer much of the social action in fields of justice and care for the poor, health care, education, housing and homelessness, penal reform and care for the stranger and the marginalised, which have all become so familiar in our world today.
- The Sikh faith promotes the concept of sewa (selfless service) as an obligation among its adherents. One of the best known practical results of this is the offering of langar (food offered by the Gurudwara as a communal meal, to all, irrespective of caste, colour or creed). No one is turned away.
- One of the pillars of Islam is that of zakah – the obligation to share one's wealth with the poor and needy, the debtors, the prisoners or the wayfarers. The principle is that those who are less fortunate than oneself in material ways are no less important within the community and no less valued by God. Special alms are given on major religious festivals and particularly on Eid-ul-fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan.
- For Hindus, karma is a central concept through which one's actions determine one's condition in this life and rebirth in the next. Good deeds result in good karma.
- Buddhists seek the way to liberation through the Noble Eightfold Path, leading to the ending of suffering. This includes ensuring a right resolve, speech, action and livelihood. Buddhism emphasises the avoidance of evil and the undertaking of good.

Presence

A key contribution which communities of faith offer in the field of citizen engagement is their presence within every community. This will often be the presence of a building and spiritual leaders. In most cases there will also be individual members living within the community. Presence can be important particularly in areas which have otherwise lost much of their leadership and their organisations. It is also important in an area such as the city centre and districts of a predominantly industrial or commercial nature.

It is important to recognise that faith also interprets presence in ways other than location in and service to a specific geographical community. Other models of presence have been developed, especially through chaplaincies in areas such as industry, commerce, hospitals

and health services, prisons, etc. Then there is presence interpreted as the involvement of people of faith in and through their own workplaces and social and leisure pursuits.

Presence indicates a significant level of commitment and longevity. Generally faith groups and providers and individual people of faith are in it for the long-haul and not just for short-term gain.

Service

One of the key avenues for citizen engagement by people and communities of faith is through service. Virtually every local community in Birmingham has some form of service provision by at least one of the faith communities. The great majority of communities have many such services. In this paper I will not even attempt to summarise the breadth and extent of such service. I would simply direct the Committee to the **Birmingham Faith Map** (*www.birminghamfaithmap.org.uk*). This partnership between the faith communities and Birmingham City Council was started by the previous administration some 3 to 4 years ago, under the auspices of Cllr Alan Rudge and has been enthusiastically taken up and extended by the current administration, with the support and encouragement of Cllr John Cotton. The completely redesigned website is now live and will be officially launched at an event at St Philip's Cathedral, on Monday 18th November, as an opener for this year's Inter Faith Week in Birmingham.

I would suggest this is a nationally significant initiative which demonstrates the benefits of a strong working partnership between faith communities and the local authority and which is sustainable and beneficial regardless of the political complexion of the local authority at any particular time.

The Faith Map website is a tool available to a range of interested parties to locate, organise and mobilise a huge range of local engagement for the wider good of communities.

Five years ago, in a report produced by the Institute of Public Policy Research [1], Professor Michael Kenny observed that "the inadequate mapping of the extent of religious involvement in social provision is a serious weakness given that there has been an important drift, largely below the radar of media attention and political debate, towards the greater involvement of such groups and organisations in providing schemes, services and opportunities for the non-religious in many different neighbourhoods and communities." The Birmingham Faith Map is one of the best and most thorough responses to address that weakness and we can be thankful that the rich tradition of working together in Birmingham has enabled that to happen.

The Birmingham Faith Map was developed in the context of the Faiths Round Table, a joint forum involving the faith communities of Birmingham meeting and increasingly working together with Birmingham City Council.

During the last year the think tank Demos has published two reports, disseminating evidence from its wide-ranging Inquiry into Faith, Community & Society, which has been chaired by Stephen Timms, MP. The two Demos reports *Faithful Citizens* (2012) and

Exploring the Role of Faith in British Society and Politics (2013) contain a wealth of evidence to support the whole concept of what people and communities of faith bring through their citizen engagement. The 2013 report concludes:

> "In *Faithful Citizens*, we argued that people of faith are likely to be a vital base of support for any future election-winning progressive coalition. Religious citizens were more likely to volunteer, to be compassionate towards immigrants and to value equality over freedom. This report argues that faith-motivated service providers are committed and passionate advocates for reducing social and economic inequality and protecting the most vulnerable." *(2)*

The particular gifts which faith-based engagement and service bring to local communities, is an important consideration. In a recent collection of research evidence on faith in the public realm *(3)*, a compelling argument was presented that "faith organisations tend to have strong local identifications and the capacity to develop a long-term and holistic approach to community service and community action." They also "serve to emphasise elements of human-being in the public realm that are generally downplayed…….faiths can remind the public realm of the purpose for which it was created, namely the collective well-being of humankind."

The authors then go on to make an important and insightful observation about the potential of faith action within the community and public sphere:

> "The key contribution……….at its best, is rooted in wisdom, tradition and culture but also looks forward to the realisation of new human and social potentialities. Such resources are not measurable: targets do not capture them or value the role they play. Yet they have the capacity to resonate with those who are alienated from politics in an era of managerialism, spin and celebrity, and the collapse of ideological certainties. Faith engagement is potentially part of a wider civil society movement to 're-inscribe the public domain with values associated with the private and personal spheres." *(4)*

Observance and Ritual

Whilst the public sphere, and much of the local community, will be interested only in what faith providers and individual members of faith groups can bring to the well-being of the whole community, it is important partners recognise that a principal motivation for engagement by people of faith lies in the relationship between that engagement and the requirements of their religious observance. For most people of faith their commitment to their local community will include the importance of prayer and worship and these are not private and 'hidden' activities. Worship is usually a public and visible practice undertaken often on a daily basis. Other observances such as festivals are evident well beyond the confines of the religious community itself and celebratory events are increasingly shared

with the wider community and provide opportunities for the whole community to come together.

   Other aspects of religious observance also emerge into the public sphere in factors such as:

- the observance of Ramadan and other periods of fasting,
- dietary and clothing requirements,
- the observance of a Sabbath day,
- the marking of some of the major religious festivals including the enjoyment of periods such as Christmas, Easter, Vaisakhi and Diwali by those who do not necessarily share the totality of their religious significance
- public community events such as Remembrance Day services.

Religious observance certainly has its individual and private aspect but, in essence, it lies within the public arena and increasingly has its impact upon the wider community.

Mutuality, Respect and Sharing

   We know that Birmingham is now the most diverse large urban area in the UK, and probably in Europe. A large element of that diversity is to be found in the range of faith communities. It is no accident that an important international committee tasked with finding a location somewhere in Europe, for a new Museum of World Religions, chose Birmingham as the obvious place. This concept is now well advanced and potential sites are being investigated.

   Birmingham's strong and unique religious history is a gift we should all treasure, not as an interesting relic of the past, but as a living reality which has developed from the religious freedom of the city's early growth, through the strong social inclinations of Christian non-conformism and the enlightened practices of Quakerism, to the strong and confident growth of communities of major world faiths.

   The principal gift which Birmingham now has to offer in this regard, lies in the innovative way in which faith communities now work together in mutual understanding and service. It is important to recognise that this is generally not a reflection of an often maligned 'multi-culturalism'. Faith communities increasingly recognise in one another a certain affinity of purpose and values. There is a thirst for recognising and exploring the common understandings which many faiths share, whilst not trying to water down the important character and insights of each person's beliefs and practices. There is also a growing sense among faith communities that their shared action can be a beacon of hope and a blueprint for the kind of community many people wish to see.

   However, it is important for the Committee and all others to recognise that mutual respect and sharing between faith communities is not always easily achieved. The recognition of difference is a prerequisite for being able to build new and effective understandings. There is no shortcut to good relationships between people of different faiths. It is only achieved through prolonged commitment and the taking of risks at key moments. One of the major

examples of such good inter-faith relationships, is the Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group which had its origins in the great risk taken by the late Rabbi Leonard Tann of Singers Hill Synagogue, to visit the Central Mosque the day after 9/11 and pledge his support for the city's beleaguered Muslim community as it was singled out for a campaign of hate and ill-informed prejudice.

In September 2011, the Faith Leaders' Group celebrated its 10th anniversary. In a keynote address Archbishop Vincent Nichols, the leader of the Roman Catholic community in England and a former member of the Group when he was in Birmingham, spoke of his belief "that faith in God is not a problem to be solved but a gift to be discovered afresh. I believe there is a shift in public opinion, recognition that belief in God, and all that it brings, is enrichment and not an illusion, a contributor to society and not simply a problem." *(5)* Speaking just a month after the civil disturbances which broke out in Birmingham and many other English cities, he reflected that during those disturbances religious buildings "acted as focal points for those who wished to express their desire and determination for peace and solidarity with the victims of damage. And here in Birmingham was the most well-known example of all: the words and actions of Mr Tariq Jahan."

That was certainly one of the most startling and memorable recent examples of citizen engagement motivated by religious faith but directed towards the wellbeing of the whole community. But it should not divert us from a recognition that most citizen engagement is low-key and far from noteworthy – the continuing work of many individuals, in some sense motivated by their beliefs, who work to make their communities better places, and who often do so across what some may see as religious boundaries.

For the last four years, at the behest of successive governments (sponsored by the Department of Communities & Local Government), a national Inter Faith Week has been held in late November. In Birmingham, faith and Inter Faith organisations, along with some organisations in the public sector, have been active in assembling a diverse programme of events, leading up to and during that week. This, along with UN World Inter Faith Harmony Week held internationally at the beginning of February, have been important opportunities to showcase the good practice of the city's faith communities, but it has now been recognised that this work is going on 52 weeks a year. Therefore, in 2013/14, Birmingham will be pioneering a new approach, linking those weeks together and encouraging groups to take action throughout the year, relating to a broad common theme. For 2013/14 the theme, to be launched at the Birmingham Faith Map event on 18th November, will be 'Peace & Reconciliation'. This provides an opportunity for organisations and communities, whether or not they have a faith focus, to explore their work and aspirations in terms of the overarching theme.

Relationships between Faith and Civic Authorities

Faith organisations are well adapted towards the strategy of rolling power and decision-making out to District level because it is at the more local level that the engagement of faith

organisations and their members is most naturally found. This is not to say that faith organisations do not operate at the higher strategic levels. Of course they do, but they are particularly adept, and have a long tradition of engagement in communities. Faith leadership involved in the Faiths Round Table has expressed a commitment to engage within the Districts and encourage their local memberships to do so.

It is important that nothing in this submission is interpreted as suggesting that faith organisations are the only ones capable of delivering real citizen engagement, or that they necessarily understand it or do it better than secular organisations. It is, however, undeniable that, aside from local authorities, faith organisations, taken as a whole sector, are by far the largest contributor to delivery of services in local communities. Faith organisations are certainly the largest single part of the Third Sector. They do not necessarily always identify themselves as such, to the extent, for example, that they were completely absent from a recent survey of the Third Sector in Birmingham.

In terms of the growth in discernment of the ways in which civic authorities and faith communities can work creatively together, I would like to draw again from the address of Archbishop Vincent Nichols, when he quoted Pope Benedict XVI as saying, "I would suggest that the world of reason and the world of faith – the world of secular rationality and the world of religious belief – need one another and should not be afraid to enter into a profound and ongoing dialogue, for the good of our civilisation." The Archbishop found this "a huge encouragement and guidance for wider recognition of the role that faith communities can place in fashioning a more stable, principled, just and compassionate society."

The fact that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has cited faith organisations among the key witnesses from which evidence would be sought for this Inquiry, and that it elicits a submission which argues overtly for a constructive relationship between secular authority and communities of faith, is evidence of the encouragement the Archbishop perceived.

Motivation and Practice

There are, of course, those who remain suspicious of both the motivation and the practices of faith organisations and individuals in seeking to act within the community as 'faithful citizens'. The accusations are laid that people of faith have a hidden agenda to proselytise and 'add to their numbers', especially offering services to people who are at a particular point of need in their lives; that they are exclusive and selective about who they will help; or that they tend to discriminate against those who do not adhere to their own beliefs or moral perspective. The Demos Inquiry found little evidence to support these claims. Indeed, they found that "faithful providers are highly motivated and effective, and often serve as the permanent and persistent pillars of community action within local communities."

The research findings of the Demos report identified three broad themes around local engagement by faith groups and providers. These get close to the core of what is perceived as being important in sustainable community activity.

" -   faith provides a unique underpinning to the commitment and motivation required to provide services to the most vulnerable and can be highly and uniquely effective
   -    faith-based service providers can be highly and uniquely effective in some policy areas, and are mainly motivated by the needs of the community rather than a desire to proselytise
   -    faith groups and institutions provide valuable and important 'permanent structures' within local communities that make them well placed to aid in addressing social problems." *(6)*

Responding to the challenges facing Local Government

The Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group, and many communities of faith in general, recognise the increasing challenges faced by local government as it struggles with the financial challenge of providing local services. They also recognise that a whole different set of problems can emerge when faith organisations go down the route of receiving public funding for provision of services. Many faith organisations do, very properly and productively receive public funding, but there is an increased recognition that the relationship between faith organisations and the public sector should not simply be that of recipients of funding vis-à-vis the fund giver or service commissioner.

During August the Faith Leaders' Group wrote to the Leader of Birmingham City Council offering the support of the faith communities as the serious and worrying decisions need to be taken about the dilemmas of local public funding and how crucial services can continue to be provided to many of the most vulnerable in the community. The faith leaders believe the District model is one important aspect of developing a new approach to these questions. They also believe that faith communities are an as yet under-used resource for addressing the problems we are all increasingly facing. The engagement of faith communities and individual faithful citizens may not only help to meet some of the current challenges but will also help to fashion a fresh vision of the common good in communities across the city.

<u>Notes</u>

1. *'Faith in the Nation', Ed. Zaki Cooper and Guy Lodge (IPPR, 2008), p66.*
2. *'Exploring the Role of Faith in British Society and Politics', Ed Jonathan Birdwell (Demos, 2013), p139.*
3. *'Faith in the Public Realm', Ed Adam Dinham, Robert Furbey and Vivien Lowndes (The Policy Press, 2009), p226.*
4. *ibid, p227-8.*
5. *The Most Rev Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster quoted in '10 Years Working Together for the Faithful City' (Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group, 2011),*
6. *Demos report, p159.*

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 OCTOBER 2013

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2013 AT 1400 HOURS, IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 3
AND 4, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:-   Councillor Trickett in the Chair, Councillors, T Evans, Lal, E
Phillips, Pocock and Underwood.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Mr C Ashton-Gray – Adults and Communities Directorate
Ms H Baglee – HealthWatch
Mr N Booth – Podnosh
Mr G Coleman – Corporate Communications
Mr G Evans – Corporate Communications
Mr S German – Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Mr J Gurling – Birmingham Faith Leaders Group
Mr D Harte – Bournville Village
Ms F Hughes – Local Services Directorate
Councillor T Kennedy
Ms J Northcoat – Birmingham South Central Clinical Commissioning Group
Dr P Rookes – Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commissioning Group
Mr L Thurstan – B26 Community
Ms A Simcox – Research and Policy Officer
Mr D Smith – Committee Services Team Leader
Ms B Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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APOLOGIES

82   Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Evans,
Islam and Pears.

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MINUTES

83   The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2013, having been previously
circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson.

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ENGAGEMENT INQUIRY

The following session plan for the day and written evidence were submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

The Chairperson introduced the session and outlined issues being considered by the Inquiry, welcoming each of the following social media witnesses in turn:-

A. Mr N Booth, Podnosh

He drew attention to the website "socialmediasurgery.com" and advised that:-
- 90-minute sessions were held to show people how to set up pages on the internet.
- 150 surgeries had been held across the United Kingdom and abroad.
- 4,000 organisations and 500 volunteers were involved.
- It was built on "social capital" – trust and enjoyment of social engagement.
- A volunteer had set up a user-friendly version of the Big City Plan to open it up to wider discussion in the City.
- An alternative to the City Council's website had been set up by volunteers as an example of how it could be improved following its last revision.
- Thought needed to be given to how people (including employees) could be involved as a collection of individuals.

In response to a series of questions from Members, he made the following points:-

1) The Service Reviews needed to be approached differently. Details should be publicised as individual issues on social media, which would then be disseminated across the social media network.

2) People should be approached in places where they gathered and general discussions should be held regarding issues, without using presentations.

3) Internet access was becoming cheaper and people should be encouraged to use this tool, rather than being physically excluded.

4) Connections and interests were a help in breaking down barriers, particularly where someone could look at the internet with friends or family.

5) The technical process of governance should be managed online and officers should be allowed to act as citizens, thereby breaking down the bureaucracy rather than following processes.

Members felt that there was a fear within the City Council of other people being involved in the process of engagement between the City Council and residents. It was questioned whether Ward Committees were effective as a means of engagement and it was suggested that a 'co-productive' model should be adopted, in which the City Council became a participant and did not just lead. Mr D Harte, Bournville Village, advised of problems with the Democracy in Birmingham webpages and gaining access to meeting papers. Consideration was given to the feasibility of webcasting Ward Committee meetings without using the level of equipment installed at the Council House.

B. <u>Mr L Thurstan, B26 Community</u>

Mr Thurstan advised that he had attended a session run by Podnosh because he had not known how to set up the website that he wanted to produce, making information available and involving people. He had contacts with various local organisations and received crime information from the West Midlands Police Force. Members noted a demonstration of the website content.

Members felt that it was important to identify local 'leaders' who were providing information or acting to resolve problems, rather than selecting or appointing leaders. It was a matter of building relationships and making use of those contacts to communicate with local residents. Mr Thurstan advised that the City council should tell people what it was doing and provide links into official information, photographs and plans, rather than controlling the engagement.

Mr N Booth emphasised that it was important to signpost people to information and to look for people with relevant skills in the community, using them as a conduit to enable voices to be heard. It was possible by going online to widen the number of voices heard, which meant that people with more strident views who attended meetings were outnumbered online by 'mid range' views.

C. <u>Mr D Harte, Bournville Village</u>

He advised that he managed the Bournville Village 'blog' site and worked as a researcher with the University of Birmingham. The 'blog' existed as a 'hyper-active' local website, creating local networking and value for the local economy.

He informed Members that:-
• There were believed to be approximately 500 'hyper-active' local websites in Britain, mainly run by volunteers and publishing stories every 2 minutes.
• There were 26 'hyper-active' local websites in Birmingham.
• He had the flexibility to incorporate interactive maps and photographs from other people, as well as typed words.
• He picked up information from the City Council's website and included links to items on it, such as Community Chest funding matters.
• He was aware that the City Council's Corporate Communications Team was making connections with 'hyper-active' local websites.
• There was evidence that regional media companies were picking up issues from local sites and that people were interested in 'place'.

Mr G Coleman confirmed that the Corporate Communications Team was connecting to local websites and was sending press releases to them at the same time as to regional media companies. He felt that discussions were needed regarding the value of those releases to the local website organiser and what resources were useful to them. Mr D Harte advised that all releases were of initial interest and that local websites were shaped by the organiser's own agenda. In the case of school closures, as an example, local residents often received the news first. Mr N Booth drew attention to the value of the plurality of media, with different layers of online activity.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their contributions.

At this point in the meeting, Members agreed to adjourn for a 'comfort' break of 15 minutes ands the meeting was continued at 1535 hours.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr C Ashton-Gray from the Adults and Communities Directorate set the scene in relation to new health bodies having been established, each of which was approaching citizens of Birmingham from a different viewpoint. Therefore, it was important to consider what engagement could be undertaken together and more effectively.

The Chairperson welcomed each of the following health witnesses in turn:-

D. <u>Dr P Rookes, Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)</u>

Dr Rookes advised that:-
* He was a liaison officer for the Birmingham Council of Faith, in addition to being involved in the CCG.
* He believed that those people most in need of care were less likely to receive care and that priority needed to be given to them.
* The CCG had existed for only 6 months, with a Patient's Council being established and patients' networks being developed in each community.
* 200 people had registered to participate in focus groups, giving them a voice online.
* Outreach arrangements were important, connecting with people in their local centres and informal meeting places, where discussions could be more relaxed and informative.
* NHS England had released a "call to action" for increased public engagement. He believed it was necessary to work with partner organisations and to use simple terms, explaining meanings.

In response to a series of questions from Members, he made the following points:-

1) He had worked in various countries across the world and had experienced people's disconnection between their spiritual, mental and physical health, which needed to be addressed.

2) It was important to value, rather than devalue, people and address their situation in relation to housing, infrastructure, self-esteem and employment /voluntary work.

3) He believed that people's faith needed to be more central to their lives and that they needed to feel that they were part of the faith community in order that they did not feel they were alone. The Bishop of Birmingham's Social Inclusion Programme sought to address that issue.

4) Structures could create barriers, which it was important to break down and develop networks. People needed to be given the opportunity to express solutions they wanted, rather than solutions being imposed.

5) He wanted to have more psychological therapies available within GP Surgeries. He believed that the future of health services lay in Primary Health and that the CCGs were concerned with commissioning arrangements feeding into GP Surgeries.

Members felt that it would be a difficult challenge to encourage professionals to listen to what people wanted, rather than imposing solutions and that it was important to ensure that all age groups were engaged.

E. <u>Mr S German, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust, and Councillor T Kennedy</u>

Mr German gave a presentation on "Seeing Things Differently", advising that:-
- A network of contacts was being developed involving 1.2 million people.
- Data had been gathered from Birmingham CCGs and work had been undertaken to map social-economic groups across the City, as well as identifying dominant groups across each area.
- Differences had been highlighted in average life expectancy and levels of cardio-vascular disease and other health issues could be linked to areas.
- He referred to "Healthy Villages", with 4 different levels of engagement, service provision and integration towards whole system arrangements.
- The model started with real people, expanding from the situation for 1 person up to the situation for an infinite number of people.
- He undertook to provide a copy of the presentation for circulation to Members for their information.

Councillor Kennedy advised that it was work in progress that was gradually evolving. It used a socialising approach to health, with household prescriptions, co-design and alignment of services.

F. <u>Ms J Northcoat, Birmingham South Central CCG</u>

Ms Northcoat advised that the CCG had taken an approach of identifying what motivated people to become involved in service considerations: the items in which they were interested, or which they wished to discuss, or about which they wished to complain. It had needed to use existing networks and had identified the main contacts. The CCG had worked with partner bodies and had identified where people were meeting and discussing issues. It had tried using stimuli for discussions and video-capture to record them, listening to what was expressed. She believed that the CCG was part of the community and needed to be involved in it, rather than seeing itself as being separate. It was sharing information and details of discussions with partner bodies.

The Chairperson suggested that it would be helpful for Members to have an understanding of the level of budget used by the CCG.

G. <u>Ms H Baglee, HealthWatch</u>

She advised Members that:-
- HealthWatch's role was to ensure that the citizen's voice was heard every step of the way in health care.
- It was working together with CCGs and had a significant amount of new information regarding health services to communicate.
- It commissioned local volunteers and was open to discussions on health needs and issues. It involved people in discussions regarding the future as well as current needs.

- The HealthWatch website would be launched in January 2014, with links to various services and social media feeds. It would be encouraging input from citizens.
- She believed that people needed to be given a better understanding of what engagement involved and how they could participate.
- The People's Forum was seen as a good means of engagement and HealthWatch would like to replicate it in relation to health care.
- The complaints process was not appropriate for many people, who had a fear of reprisal and wanted matters to be put right, rather than blame to be apportioned.
- HealthWatch was responsible for ensuring that officers decommissioning and redesigning services heard patient's voices and it would be trying to enable that to happen.

Members felt that there was significant engagement taking place, but that consideration should be given to combining exercises and measuring their effectiveness. There was concern that citizens were interested in immediate matters, whereas the City council was considering reshaping, rebalancing or reconfiguring services over a longer period. Ms Northcoat suggested that it was necessary to have continuous dialogue with citizens, rather than short-term engagement exercises. She commented also that regard should be given to people's views as citizens and as employees in the City. Councillor Kennedy drew attention to meetings with NHS representatives and expressed concern that Acute Trusts did not have representatives on the Health and Wellbeing Board. Mr Ashton-Gray emphasised that it was important to work in partnership on engagement and to try to ensure that all partners listened to citizens' views.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their contributions.

At this point in the meeting, the Chairperson welcomed Mr Gurling and invited him to give his views on engagement from the perspective of the Birmingham Faith Leaders Group.

H. Mr J Gurling, Birmingham Faith Leaders Group

Mr Gurling advised that:-
- Faith groups could be used as channels to parts of the community that were more difficult to reach.
- They were not all the same, but collaboration between different faiths was a developing trend.
- The Faith Map website had been produced in collaboration between faith communities and the City Council and listed 763 faith places at the present time.
- The Faith Map provided a source of information on faith sites and he tabled 4 examples for Members of faith site details from the website.
- There was an important role for faith organisations to undertake in developing local leadership and, while they were not the only interested parties, there were distinct examples of the part they could play.
- He emphasised that consideration should be given not only to places, but to activities taking place outside of places.

- There were substantial differences between faiths, but addressing those differences could lead to positive creativity.
- Faith Leaders met each year and involved local senior school pupils in discussions, which had led to consideration of different perceptions.

Councillor Tim Evans declared a non-pecuniary interest as he managed a Third Sector organisation with a faith base and was part of the 'Drive' group with the Diocese of Birmingham.

Members felt that faith communities were an important part of the City's DNA, but that there was a need to respect differences between them, while recognising that there were constraints and conflicting views. Dr Rookes believed that the networking and commitment of faith groups were important to tap into, but suggested that there would be restrictions on the extent to which faith groups could be engaged. He felt that it was necessary to recognise differences and not important to find common denominators. It helped to understand how more extreme views had arisen.

It was noted that there would good examples among faith groups of working together and bringing people together, with faith groups being involved in the local activities. Members felt that it was important to develop a community infrastructure that gave people trust that everyone wanted to co-operate. The language used need to be easily understood and it was important to address issues of exclusion.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their contributions and summed up the themes discussed during the meeting.

84   **RESOLVED**:-

That the witnesses' contributions be noted.

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WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2013/14

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Ms B Wishart, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, introduced the work programme and highlighted items proposed for consideration at future meetings. She advised that the next Committee meeting would be a continuation of the Citizen Engagement Inquiry.

The Chairperson suggested that the Committee could reflect on the Service Reviews with District Chairs in January 2014 and it was thought that the session could consider the role of the District and Ward Champions. The Chairperson advised that she would like to hold a focus group meeting with Ward Champions in advance of the next Committee meeting, which it was suggested could include a discussion on the effectiveness of Ward Committees.

85   **RESOLVED**:-

That the work programme be noted.

_____

REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

86   The Chairperson advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.

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AUTHORITY TO CHAIRPERSON AND OFFICERS

87   **RESOLVED**:-

That the Chairperson is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairperson and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

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The meeting ended at 1720 hours.

                                                   …….………………………………….
                                                   CHAIRPERSON

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee
Citizen Engagement Scrutiny Inquiry

19th November 2013, Committee Room 6 at 3<u>pm</u>

THIS MEETING WITH BE LIVE STREAMED

Time (approx)	Witness	Organisation
3.00pm – 3.15pm	Introduction from Cllr Trickett • Anticipated outcomes for the day	n/a
3.15pm – 4.00pm (45 mins)	Angus McCabe • Findings / lessons from their research - in particular around engaging with informal groups and the third sector.	Third Sector Research Centre
4.00pm – 4.30pm (30 mins)	Raj Mack, Head of Digital Birmingham • A strategic perspective on the plans for digital inclusion in the city – in particular around engagement.	BCC
4.30pm – 5.30pm	Learning from recent engagement experiences:	
4.30pm – 5.00pm (30 mins)	a) **Local Services Directorate** Chris Jordan, Head of Service Integration, Local Services • Reflections on the approaches to engagement by the Local Services Directorate	BCC
	b) **Local Services Directorate** Paul Slatter • Specific dialogue undertaken in the summer by the Chamberlain Forum.	Chamberlain Forum
5.00pm – 5.30pm (30 mins)	c) **Green Papers** Sarah Hinksman, Corporate Strategy • How citizens can engage and influence outcomes and decisions • How transparent the process is • Lessons learnt	BCC

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DISTRICTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 1500 HOURS, IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

PRESENT:- Councillor Trickett in the Chair, Councillors T Evans, Islam, Lal, Pears, E Phillips, Pocock and Underwood.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Mr C Ashton-Gray – Adults and Communities Directorate
Ms F Hughes – Local Services Directorate
Ms S Hinksman – Strategy Team, Corporate Services Directorate
Mr C Jordan – Local Services Directorate
Mr R Mack – Head of Digital Birmingham
Mr A McCabe – Third Sector Research Centre
Ms A Simcox – Research and Policy Officer
Mr P Slatter – Chamberlain Forum
Mr D Smith – Committee Services Team Leader
Ms B Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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MINUTES

88   The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson, subject to the following amendment to Minute No. 84, Section D to include an additional point '6)' in the responses given by Dr P Rookes stating "He emphasised that engagement needed to be based on integrity and trust, for example ensuring that residents did not have difficulty accessing a GP."

With reference to Minute No. 84, Section F, it was noted that Members had not received information to date from Ms J Northcoat regarding the level of budget used by the Birmingham South and Central CCG and the Overview and Scrutiny Manager undertook to pursue that request.

ENGAGEMENT INQUIRY

The following session plan for the day and written evidence were submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

The Chair introduced the session and outlined issues being considered by the Inquiry. Councillor Underwood clarified that Sutton Coldfield Councillors had tried to reduce the number of Ward Committee meetings in the District, but had been advised that Committee Services had been instructed that there should be 6 meetings in each Municipal Year.

The Chair welcomed each of the following witnesses in turn:-

A. <u>Mr A McCabe, Third Sector Research Centre</u>

The following written submission was tabled:-

(See document No. 2)

Mr McCabe advised that:-
• Organisations needed to differentiate between engagement, consultation and communication.
• Engagement suggested an opportunity to influence decisions and needed to involve a clear process, with people understanding the outcome.
• Policy making was meant to be a clear, logical process, but issues could be emotional for residents and that generated a conflict of approach.
• The single, most important commandment for engagement should be to respect the participants in the process.
• Organisations should recognise the emotional cost of participation and value each person's participation, even when people were challenging.
• There was a cost in undertaking community engagement, but a failure to engage would be more costly.

Councillor T Evans declared a non-pecuniary interest as he managed a Third Sector organisation.

In response to a series of questions from Members, Mr McCabe made the following points:-

1)   He believed that the involvement of people of all ages in social action depended upon what was expected of them and that often they would act when not expected, for example in the clean up after the Tottenham riots.

2)   A risk of social action was that it could give voice to those people who had strong views already. However, he believed that there was an appetite for taking action in one's own community for that community, which did not extend to managing larger services.

3)   It was important to protect spaces where people could gather together.

4)   With regard to accusations of apathy, he emphasised that large parts of the City were subject to deprivation and that a person's interest in a subject related to its effect upon their local community.

5)   When undertaking community engagement, it was necessary to be clear about what the organisation was engaging on and to respect all views expressed.

6)   Predominant voices needed to be taken into account in the process.

7)   Structures established for engagement could create barriers and the sub-contracting of work could create additional problems.

Members felt that it was necessary to engage people in spaces where they felt safe and to engage with employees on issues that affected them, such as Service Reviews. They acknowledged the relevance of points made to Ward Committee meetings and the need to consider those further. It was felt that a particular problem was the propensity to try to action decisions made centrally with people who were resistant to that imposition.

B. Mr R Mack, Head of Digital Birmingham

Mr Mack advised that:-
*   It was important to make sure that the information available was clear and that citizens could use the technology made available.
*   He believed that social media was used mainly for communicating messages, rather than for engaging people, but that technology could enable people to be included.
*   It was necessary to engage people widely and not just to listen to the key voices.
*   Thought needed to be given to engaging assets in the community, such as reaching parents through young people. There were existing channels that could be used and television was a particularly important medium.
*   People who were most difficult to reach were probably most affected and, therefore, it was important to engage with them.
*   He asserted that everyone could use technology, as long as it was made sufficiently easy for them. The provision of free Wi-Fi and the hardware available had an impact on usage.
*   Digital Birmingham was attempting to map out existing information technology (IT) assets, such as Wi-Fi services.
*   It was trying to work with schools and parents to widen knowledge of using information technology and was working with officers responsible for Universal Credits to provide information on forthcoming changes.
*   Internal employees were a valuable asset in widening learning and understanding of technology, while social media surgeries were able to show people what could be achieved.

In response to a series of questions from Members, he made the following points:-

1)   It was his belief that people with the greatest need would engage, if given the opportunity, and that it was necessary to change attitudes.

2)   Organisations should identify people who needed their services and provide access for them.

3)   At the same time, there was a need to ensure that people who had an understanding of using technology for some purposes were not left behind as progress was made in other areas.

4)   He understood also a concern that striving for equality in one area could disadvantage people, such as the problem of elderly residents who did not have bank cards being unable to access services or discounts online.

5) He believed that people should be encouraged to use online services and that it was important to ensure that appropriate support and precautions were in place.

6) Implementing cross-city connectivity would be the first step in widening IT access. Consideration should be given to opportunities for widening Wi-Fi provision, such as energy companies installing Wi-Fi access to meters.

7) Community groups and organisations could help with funding Wi-Fi in libraries and would benefit from that connectivity.

8) He was aware that Performance and Development Reviews included IT literacy within the City Council and he suggested that its employees could be advocates for online access to services.

9) He accepted that a balance was needed between the use of technology and the level of face-to-face contact. He pointed out that the internet could create routes for physical engagement and that, while more people were shopping online, they were increasing their visits to the City Centre and social places.

10) He acknowledged that social media provided a good tool for discussions and communication, but that some people needed support to access and use it.

11) He noted concern regarding the percentage of citizens accessing services online, but advised that figures given in the evidence were national statistics and that there were no precise figures for Birmingham.

Members felt that citizens were attending libraries more to access computers and the internet and that equal access should be provided to Wi-Fi services and training on using IT. However, there was a concern that charges levied by Service Birmingham had prevented some libraries from extending their IT facilities. It was felt that some citizens could suffer from IT poverty unless they were given appropriate support. The Chair asked that officers provided details of the number of e-Petitions that had been submitted since the facility had been made available in order to assess what effect that had had on how petitions were submitted.

Mr McCabe commented on the speed at which technology changed and the variation in use between age groups. He was concerned that many websites were not easy to access or to navigate by computer. Members accepted that social media could increase communication, interaction and engagement, but the Chair emphasised that it did not in itself promote action.

At this point in the meeting, Members agreed to adjourn for a 'comfort' break of 10 minutes and the meeting was continued at 1635 hours.

C. Mr C Jordan, Local Services Directorate

He informed Members that the report submitted as part of the evidence pack set out the range of services within the Local Services Directorate and the emerging and developing process of engagement.

D. <u>Mr P Slatter, Chamberlain Forum</u>

Mr Slatter advised that:-
- He welcomed the efforts of Friends of Parks to promote good engagement and emphasised that consultation needed to be treated as an ongoing conversation.
- The 'Summer of Dialogue' had been conducted across 10 areas to discuss the neighbourhood strategy.
- There had been exasperation expressed with the City Council, as it had only begun asking people their views when resources were restricted.
- There was a perception of extreme bureaucracy and the wasting of resources at the City Council.
- People were concerned at the tendency towards central decision-making, for example taking District Committee meetings back into the centre.
- Citizens were pleased that they were being consulted and put forward good ideas, but were frustrated that there was no process to take those ideas forward.
- They wanted to scrap Ward Committee agendas and to replace them with a forum for positive discussion. There was concern that many items were submitted to 'tick boxes', rather than to promote discussion.
- There was a sense that apathy might be an expression of being resigned to not being taken seriously or listened to when views were expressed.
- He believed that social action should be welcomed and that there should not be a consideration of whether other people in an adjacent area would be disadvantaged. If the action was successful, there was a potential for it to spread.

E. <u>Ms S Hinksman, Strategy Team, Corporate Services Directorate</u>

The following presentation sheets were tabled:-

(See document No. 3)

Ms Hinksman advised that:-
- The exercise had not been a consultation in a formal sense, but was an early stage in the process.
- All feedback received was being considered and would be placed on the City Council's website in a digest of views. A report on the feedback would be submitted to the Executive.
- Ward Committee meetings had been used as a means of signposting to the documents and the invitation to submit comments. Over 1000 letters had been received.
- There would be a formal consultation on the budget proposals following this exercise.
- Officers would have liked to have had more resources available and to have used social media more to promote the exercise.
- Asking citizens for their views at an early stage was confusing for people because the details available were less clear.
- Officers had struggled to convey the message regarding the financial situation and that the City Council was not making cuts because it wanted to do that.

- Discussions at Ward Committees had seemed to be focused on local issues and there was some variation in the level of interest and response.
- There had been difficulties in generating the documents for Ward Committee meeting and the Ward Champions arrangements had been in the process of being introduced.
- It had become clear that citizens needed more assistance and support to give feedback.

In response to a series of questions from Members, the following points were made:-

1) Mr McCabe suggested that the City Council should not assume that people would approach the Council, but should go out to approach citizens.

2) Presenters should be carefully selected, as it was not the case that everyone was a good presenter, and the process of discussion should be considered carefully, with non-negotiable matters being stated clearly.

3) It was important to be honest that many local issues could not be solved at a local level.

4) Mr Jordan urged that the City Council should use technologies and processes with which citizens were familiar and comfortable.

5) Mr Slatter pointed out that the City Council would have to change and had begun the process of transforming already. It was important to be honest about that situation, to listen and to focus on what the City Council would become.

6) The City Council should avoid collecting and monitoring equality information during engagement as that was unnecessary.

7) Ms Hinksman believed that more complex and high volume engagement was needed in future, without providing a large quantity of information.

Further to the evidence given and answers to questions, Members made the following observations:-

i. Engagement by the Local Services Directorate appeared to have been successful when undertaken in local places.

ii. The Green Paper process seemed to have transformed from engagement into an emphasis on budget setting.

iii. It should have been admitted that the City Council would be forced to make cuts whether or not it wanted to make them.

iv. The Service Reviews should be part of a longer process of engagement, looking at what was wanted for the future of the City, but there was concern that the process might be lost.

v. Too much time and money had been wasted on producing large documents for the Ward Committee meetings and it was questioned whether the cost of the exercise had been justified by the response.

vi. The emphasis on savings, even in the number of copies of the large documents produced, gave an impression of there not being a full commitment to the exercise.

vii. The work undertaken by Friends of Parks demonstrated that there was interest among citizens. However, there was concern that important parties had not been consulted on the potential for charging for cars parking in parks.

viii. Ward Committee meetings received poor attendance and thought needed to be given to how people could be encouraged to attend events and could be engaged in discussions.

ix. There was concern that the evidence from the Local Services Directorate implied complacency that sufficient was being done, but that there was no arrangements in place to draw together strands of engagement and to promote a neighbourhood approach.

x. It was important that citizens had a perception of the City Council being honest with them during engagement and having an intention to listen and continue to engage.

xi. The presentations to Ward Committees had varied greatly in quality and consideration needed to be given to using a small number of good orators.

xii. Short summary documents should have been produced and the City Council needed to learn how to state the questions clearly, rather than assuming that it knew the answers.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their contributions and summed up the themes discussed during the meeting. She proposed that the Committee produced an advisory report putting forward a cross-party message on how the City Council could engage better. She believed that it would prompt a positive response from the Executive that would lead to immediate progress. Members noted that the recommendation in the advisory report would be that an action plan was produced. It was agreed that a draft report be circulated to Members for consideration and approval at the beginning of December 2013.

89   **RESOLVED**:-

That the witnesses' contributions be noted.

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WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

The following work programme was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

The Chair suggested that scrutiny relating to District Housing Panels in December 2013 might need to be deferred. She advised that she would report back in a "Chair's Report" to future Committee meetings regarding seminars and other events or matters between meetings.

90   **RESOLVED**:-

That the work programme be noted.

_____

REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

91   The Chair advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.

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AUTHORITY TO CHAIRPERSON AND OFFICERS

92   **RESOLVED**:-

That the Chairperson is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairperson and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

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The meeting ended at 1755 hours.

…….…………………………….
                                                              CHAIRPERSON

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN EVIDENCE

THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

TO

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE INQUIRY

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

TUESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2013

Angus McCabe

Senior Research Fellow

Third Sector Research Centre

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Introduction

The following summary evidence submission to Birmingham City Council's Scrutiny Inquiry on Citizen Engagement draws of the work of the Third Sector Research Centre's (TSRC) work with 'below the radar' with small scale community groups and activities. The paper draws on learning from research across England and at different tiers of Local Government: from rural Parish Council's to large Metropolitan Unitary Authorities See TSRC Briefing and Working Paper 51 on community engagement and social action).

The paper addresses, in brief, not only 'what works' in citizen (or community) engagement but also the prerequisites for effective engagement.

A Starting Point

To start on a light – perhaps but still important – note: a short quiz:

- When was the following statement written
- About which local authority?
- What has changed?

'…it is fair to say that the local authority does remarkably little to inform the public about events and issues. A monthly news sheet is produced but it reaches a tiny proportion of citizens and contains little in the way of local controversy. Apart from the annual rate demand and the electoral register form, the writer only received one communication from the council inviting participation in local affairs during his eight years as a resident. These are scarcely conditions which encourage mass participation'.

The quote may (or may not) seem dated but it does reflect a shift over the last thirty years from the idea of government to governance: from local authorities being central to the planning, management and delivery of services to becoming one of a number of stakeholders in any given locality. Alongside other statutory bodies, the private and voluntary sector 'citizens' are one of a multiplicity of stakeholders. It is therefore important to define, as a clear starting point that then informs the processes of involving people in governance, what is meant by the term citizen, or community engagement.

The terminology around 'active citizenship' has changed following the May 2010 general election. Previous Labour administration to refer to citizen engagement (see for example Communities in Control: Real People Real Power: 2008) Under the Coalition, the language of social action (and community organising) has emerged. At one level this may seem a purely semantic shift – and there are certainly policy continuities in terms of 'involving citizens (eg participatory budget setting/asset transfer/service modernisation etc). However, this underplays a significant shift in what government expects of citizens. Historically there has been a focus on citizens/communities 'having a say' in, for example, the configuration of local services. Under localism and the Localism Act, this has become an expectation that citizens (with the community rights to challenge etc) take on the management of local services.

So perhaps a starting point is clarity about what, in turn, Local Government is expecting of citizens: 'engagement' or control?

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Further, in a more local context, it is interesting to note that Birmingham City Council' Strategy Statement (2006) Talking Together: Working Together uses the terms citizen engagement and consultation interchangeably. Yet these are very different. Consultation is often a one off exercise around a specific issue. Engagement implies a longer term, and continuing, relationship between the Local Authority and citizens.

So a second set of questions – and ones that are important in times of austerity? Is BCC primarily investing in consultative exercises as and when required – or in sustaining that longer term relationship with citizens? What return on that investment is expected? And 'what is in it' for citizens?

What Works in Citizen Engagement? Some Fundamental Issue

There is a growing body of toolkits and techniques for citizen engagement: from Planning for Real through to Community Visioning, Wold Cafes and Open Space Technology. However, these methods, which can be powerful tools – or simply 'tricks', are less important are less important than planning the process of engagement. Techniques without due process, particularly when used in consultative exercises, tend to be experienced as 'gimmicks' and tokenistic. Drawing on TSRC research and the wider literature on participation, key elements of that planning process are:

Clarity: there is, in engaging/consulting with citizens, no such thing as a blank sheet of paper. There is a budget, a history of service configuration etc. Not everything is negotiable.

So what is highly negotiable? Where might there be areas of compromise to reach consensus – and what is actually no- negotiable (eg statutory responsibilities, safeguarding etc?. What can/will change – and what cannot? And if things do change – what are the timescales involved? These may well be different for communities (wanting to see change in the short term) and the Local Authority where affecting change may be a longer term process.

Transparency: as noted, governance involves a range of stakeholders – not just the Council and citizens. Yet it is not always clear where power lies in the process. For example, in consultations around re-configured health services how much weight is given to the views of managers, the professionals, of patients or the wider public? Is consultation happening to 'ratify' decisions that have already been made? The lack of openness on this issue often leads to a cynicism, and disengagement, on the part of the engaged citizen which is them blamed on 'apathy'.

Democratic process: linked to the issues of transparency is, in engaging citizens, what kind of democracy are we talking about. Is it representative democracy, where the Local Authority consults but ultimately accountability lies with elected members? Is it deliberative democracy where the debate is with 'representative' bodies who have an accountability back to their members/community? Is it participatory democracy – where individuals can be involved and express their own views – rather than being 'representative' of a wider constituency?

Benefits and Costs: there is a broad academic and practice literature on the benefits of citizen engagement. For service providers, it is argued, for example, that the process leads to more effective and responsive service. For the citizen, participation in 'a good thing'. This, however, does not recognise the costs of 'engaging'

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- **Financial**: there is often the assumption in consultative exercises that the citizen will come to 'the consultant'. This costs. One interviewee in below the radar research, who had been very active in tenants and residents associations, estimated that, in a three year period, they had spent just over £3,000 in travelling to meetings, phone calls etc – *'and I can no longer afford this'.*
- **Emotional:** being seen to be actively engaged can involve (often unrecognised) personal risks – for example in areas of high crime.

Recognising the costs of engagement to the citizen is, therefore, a vital element of planning the engagement process

Rules of Engagement; what is expected of the 'active citizen' is not always clear in engagement strategies and exercises. Is the commitment open ended – in which case people can burn out? Is it time limited? And do people have the right to withdraw from the process without blame or guilt?

Engagement: Solution or Problem? Consultative and engagement mechanisms (such as ward Sub-committees, Neighbourhood Forums etc) are often experienced as spaces of conflict where. Put bluntly, 'the public' shout at the members who shout at the officer. The exercise becomes one of reinforcing mutual frustrations. Addressing this can be as simple as thinking about the layout of a room. The formal meeting is, after all, culturally alien to many. But is also require a different way of thinking: a shift from 'You have a problem, what are you going to do about it?' - to 'We have a problem, what are we going to do about it?' Moving the process from a 'problem' to a 'solution' based focus.

What's the Real Issue? A further frustration – for members, officers and citizens – can be the mismatch between what is really important to a community – and what a Local Authority is required to consult on – which may, or may not, be of interest and relevance to people's daily lives. Citizens engage when the issue is real'. After all, the most effective way of engaging communities, of promoting participation, is to take decisions that make people angry.

Citizen Engagement: Ways Forward

As noted, there are a plethora of community engagement and participation techniques. These, however, are only as useful as the processes of engagement. Without careful planning and reflection on the why, who, what, when and where of engagement short-circuits that process and results in failure – no matter the good intentions.

Previous evidence submissions have stressed the importance of different and varied routes into and through engagement: the use of social media as well as 'real time' events and the crucial nature of feedback. These are all important. Meaningful engagement is, however, also about attitudes, beliefs and values – as well as the techniques, structures and systems.

In taking forward any strategy, it may be useful to draw on the work of Luciau Botes and Dingie van Rensburg (2000) and adapt their 'Community participation in development: nine plagues and twelve commandments'. Whilst these were developed in the context of international development, they still have pertinence in the national and local UK context. Among those commandments are:

- Respect the skills, knowledge and experience of citizens and communities. This includes the 'awkward' as well as the active citizen
- Act as facilitators and catalysts of community engagement and activity. Avoid dominance and paternalism.
- Promote co-decision making in defining needs, setting goals and formulating policy
- Communicate failure as well as celebrating success
- Guard against the domination of one/particular interest group
- Recognise that process related issues can be as important as the hard product related issues. If task overwhelms process, and the social aspects of engagement are lost in the tasks – people withdraw.
- Aim to release the energy in communities without exploiting or exhausting them
- Strive to ensure equity in the outcomes of citizen engagement. Is the City a fairer place as a result of the process?

Concluding Remarks

The challenges facing BCC in taking forward citizen engagement are formidable. This is not only because of severe budget cuts – but also the (growing) diversity of the city's population. Democracy, engaging citizens, costs money. Reaching out, in particular, to the supposedly 'hard to reach' groups has financial implications. Justifying such expenditure in hard times may appear difficult – a luxury we cannot afford. But the cost of dis-investment in engagement strategies may well cost more in the medium to longer term.. There is a growing body of evidence (both internationally and, post the riots in Tottenham and elsewhere, in the UK) that where citizens do not feel they have a stake in their community, where they lack influence and voice, things fall apart both in terms of people's quality of life generally and, more literally, in a decent into factionalism and violence.

Angus McCabe

Senior Research Fellow

Third Sector Research Centre

University of Birmingham

November 2013

Districts and Public Engagement Overview and Scrutiny, Community Engagement Inquiry

Local Services Directorate Submission

October 2013

Overview

The Local Services Directorate is responsible for delivering 50 front line services which are at the heart of shaping community life whether these are parks, local libraries, housing or leisure centers. It is not possible to deliver this array of public-facing services without engaging communities and individual service users in a sustained dialogue whether this is providing the right information to enable people to access the services, to consult on how to improve how these services are provided or to enhance them by engaging people directly in delivering through volunteering.

Most of our staff and managers are active across all these engagement levels in their day jobs. In addition they also work in their own right as volunteers, mentors and more recently as champions at a ward, district level or quadrant level. We also have experts in the field who play a leading role for the Council as engagement specialists e.g. tenant engagement officers, community development officers and ward support. Our staff are standard bearers for community engagement working to the highest standards and innovating and developing new forms and channels of engagement whether that's social media or community budgeting.

We face an unprecedented and profound financial challenge and sustaining the local services we are responsible through current delivery arrangements will inevitably be transformed. However, in facing up to these challenges there is an opportunity through effective and new models of community engagement to bring about new and sustainable delivery arrangements. These will need to have far more input from citizens and communities and with a far bigger role for the voluntary and community sector working alongside the Council and other public services. That is why the Local Services Directorate is looking to expand within its resource envelop the quality and innovation around engagement to grow capacity and momentum for greater co production and community self management

This submission from Local Services sets out a story of what is going on across our 50 services and how our engagement offer is being extended to meet new challenges and priorities. The information has been produced by different divisions within the Directorate and I have left some of the information provided as raw data written in the words of staff and managers.

Sharon Lea

Strategic Director local Services

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Appendix 1

Library Volunteer Programme

The Community Library Support Unit (CSLU) has established a programme of volunteering opportunities.

Currently there are seven types of volunteering opportunities that are being encouraged, more details on these are included in appendix 1.

Types of volunteers:

1. Front of House
2. Back of House
3. ICT help
4. Coffee mornings
5. Toddler sessions
6. Events helpers
7. Neighbourhood Libraries

Numbers of Volunteers:

The CLSU have so far recruited and trained 19 volunteers (May 2013 data).

Recruiting Volunteers

A range of processes have been designed from scratch to recruit volunteers including posters, web promotions, hard copy and e-mail application form, utilising BVSC to promote opportunities, promotional material has been designed such as postcards and the T-shirts provided to volunteers are a highly obvious way of promoting the ability for others to volunteer

Volunteer Training and Management

The time spent training volunteers has been between 7-10 hours for each person over 3 or 4 sessions. Almost all training to date has been on an individual basis due to the different dates that people are approaching us but also the differing skill levels of those volunteering means that training needs to be adapted to suit their individual needs. The training has been site specific and CLSU staff time spent travelling to and from libraries across the city is an additional factor that needs consideration.

The CLSU understand the sensitivities of staff working at sites that will be using volunteers and visit staff meetings prior to recruitment to talk through the issues with them.

The CLSU intends to hand the management of volunteers who have completed a successful period of volunteering (4-8 weeks) over to management by the local library. This may cause difficulties at the local library and will need to be monitored.

The time spent training volunteers is currently one of the main factors limiting a major expansion of the scheme. This will need more detailed consideration if we want to commit to a significant and speedy escalation of volunteer recruitment

Corporate Pilot
We are complying with the requirements of the corporate pilot and in time an evaluation will emerge. Although expenses are not being paid under the pilot and may not be affordable, it is likely that 10 additional volunteers would have been secured if expenses could have been paid.

Types of volunteers:

1. Front of House

a. FOH volunteers show members of the public how to book themselves a computer session on the Netloan kiosk and how to issue and discharge their books from the self-issue machines.

2. Back of House
    a. Back of house volunteers will be helping those libraries with self-issue machines to complete the tagging of their stock.

3. ICT help
    a. IT buddies provide help and guidance to members of the public who want to either start using a computer or enhance their computer skills.
    b. IT buddies tailor their help to suit the borrower but can also be recruited to take library customers through the 1st Click BBC programme or the Go On/Learn My Way programme by UK Online.
    c. IT volunteers can also be used to show borrowers how to navigate their way around public services online. This will help Birmingham residents be prepared for the change in the way benefits are accessed which is linked to the role out of the Government's Universal Credit programme.

4. Coffee mornings
    a. Volunteers help set-up tables and make tea and coffee for social coffee mornings in certain libraries

5. Toddler sessions
    a. Volunteers assist members of staff to set-up and manage story time and craft sessions.

6. Events helpers
    a. Volunteers can be used to help set-up rooms for events, e.g. by putting out and stacking chairs and managing refreshments.

7. Neighbourhood Libraries
    a. Volunteers will help members of the public issue and return books using the self issue machines and enable people to book onto and use the available library computers. Volunteers also help to keep the library tidy, welcoming and user-friendly.

Promotional Material

Postcards:

Volunteering within the Parks Service

Birmingham Parks Service is committed to providing opportunities for individuals, groups, communities, and businesses to "get involved" in the in the development, enhancement, use and promotion of their local green spaces.

With over 60,000 volunteer hours recorded in parks last year (value in-kind £419,243).

Birmingham Parks officers work with and for their local communities on a daily basis to facilitate opportunities for real, measurable involvement that brings a wide range of "added value" outputs and outcomes for local green spaces, the individuals taking part, and the communities that use the facilities

The Ranger Service is committed to developing and facilitating opportunities through which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds, and needs are fostered and valued, and where those with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities are able to participate and contribute and make a real difference.

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF) works to support volunteers and Friends Groups who want to be actively involved in the management and improvement of their local parks and open spaces. BOSF is made up of just over 150 member Friends Groups.

Empowering Local Communities

The Parks Service through the Rangers facilitate the following opportunities for volunteering:

Individual Volunteers - working alongside rangers in a support role (e.g. Assistant Ranger, Warden, Information Officer, Animal Carer, type roles).

Groups of volunteers attending regular work days led by rangers – working mainly on practical conservation tasks such as surveying and monitoring wildlife, and creating and maintaining habitats using traditional management techniques. These groups may also include employees from local businesses carrying out a single voluntary project linked to corporate social responsibility objectives or team building exercises.

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Groups of volunteers doing work on their own - following an agreed programme of practical conservation tasks under the supervision of a trained and competent group leader. These groups are usually well established, with their own resources and public liability insurance whose members have regular contact with Parks Rangers.

Areas of Work

Examples of tasks that are carried out by the Ranger Service volunteers include

- Leading walks, giving talks
- Carrying out habitat management activities
- Carrying out grounds maintenance activities
- Carrying out litter picking and community clean ups
- Providing administrative support
- Providing a customer welcome and information role
- Carrying out flora and fauna surveys
- Fund raising and community consultation
- Assisting with the conservation of animal collections
- Assisting with the conservation of heritage features

All these opportunities are supervised by Parks staff.

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF) and local Friends Groups.

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF) works to support volunteers who want to be actively involved in the management and improvement of their local parks and open spaces.

BOSF is made up of around 150 member Friends Groups, BOSF is a valued part of the community sector in Birmingham.

Areas of work undertaken by Friends Groups

Gardening	Events & Activities
Collecting leaves	Apple Wassail
Planting shrubs bulbs and flowers	Candle Lit Carols
Planting trees	Community Festivals – eg CoCoMad
Cleaning debris from the stream and drains	Amphitheatre Performances
	Tai Chi
Turning and tidying compost heaps	
Pruning and feathering trees	
Barrowing bark chips	**Young People**
Litter picking	Forest School
Weeding	Citizenship & Duke of Edinburgh volunteering
Dig vegetable beds	Spray Art
Moving slabs	Bushcraft
Sawing logs	Bouncy castle
Digging post holes	Sports coaching
Clearing brash	Scouts, Guides and woodcraft visits –
Coppicing	volunteering and educational
Hedging	
Willow weaving	
Maintenance	
Mending benches	
Grass cutting	
Graffiti cleaning	
Tidying tool shed	
Painting noticeboards or other structures	

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Ranger Service facilitating volunteering

In 2012-13 the Ranger Service worked with **3,282 individuals** who volunteered in a variety of roles (see above) delivering a total of **40, 985 volunteer hours** worked.

Using Natural England's "Market Value Daily Volunteer Rates" (unskilled rate of £50 per 7.2 hours worked) this equates to an **in-kind value of £273,233**.

(This closely matched the volunteer involvement recorded in the previous year 2011-12)

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum and Friends outputs

In 2012-13 BOSF reported a total of **19,386 hours** recorded across the city by their member groups.

Using Natural England's value for volunteer time this equates to an **in–kind value of £134,625**

NB – both the Friends and Ranger "£ in-kind" figures have both been calculated at the NE lowest rate – in both cases there are "semi-skilled volunteers" that carry out planning tasks that would attract double the basic rate.

"Empowering more people to be more active more often"

Parks officers and BOSF representatives have established strong links with colleagues from Public Health which from April this year is now delivered through the Local Authority.

Public Health funding has also been agreed to facilitate First Aid and Risk Assessment Training to empower more local groups to work un-supervised.

Parks Officers are negotiating a blanket Public Liability insurance cover to allow Friends to not have to cover this cost from their funds.

Lay Assessors

The Considerate Contractor Scheme has now been running for 14 years. The cooperative nature of the scheme successfully builds relationships between contractor, authority and public by providing a discussion forum for street works without the backdrop of regulation, blame or complaints. After 14 years the original mission had faded a little and under new management the challenge has been set to reinvigorate the scheme.

Recent work by the street scene team with particular support from Severn Trent Water and Enterprise has provided refreshed ideas to take the scheme forward. Access to the scheme is key so Enterprise have developed a lay assessment app (available from the App Store) which will help ad hoc inspection without the need to carry forms. Maintaining interest is also vital so Severn Trent have supported a training day for new lay assessors with a tour of the treatment works at Minworth and setting up dummy sites for assessment.

With this engaging, value added approach from all contractors we also hope to gain regular public feedback on highway issues, including those outside of street works, while capturing and sharing contractors' best practice between all users of the highway. With greater levels of interest we also hope to grow the scheme as a valuable resource for consultation and debate.

A38 Queensway and St Chad's Tunnels

The first phase of the refurbishment works for these two major tunnels in Birmingham was successfully completed within programme in the summer of 2013.

The works are designed to upgrade these major assets to current standards incorporating fireproofing,

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fire safety engineering, improved ventilation and resilience, installation of incident detection camera and PA systems.

In undertaking the design a Tunnel Design Safety Consultation Group was formed with full participation of all major stakeholders and emergency services who led, contributed and guided the design. Full consultation with elected members and businesses in Birmingham also took place and significant traffic management modelling to ensure least disruption to the network during the works was carried out. This was further supported by a coordinated and extensive communication and media campaign.

Dogpool Lane bridge

The new Dogpool Lane Bridge over the River Rea was reopened to traffic in May replacing the previous substandard bridge built in 1907. The new structure has been designed to cater for current traffic loading standards and to provide improved water flow capacity, within an enhanced hydraulic envelope, under the bridge, hence reducing flooding risks in the area.

The scheme was delivered by Amey as part the Birmingham Highway Maintenance PFI Contract in close collaboration with staff from Street Services Division and Traffic Management Services. In delivering the scheme, extensive consultation was carried out with the elected members, residents, flood action groups and local businesses with their feedback taken into account in the design.

An event to celebrate the completion of a Dogpool Lane bridge in Selly Park, took place last month with 100-year old local resident Daisy Glenn and Councillor Tahir Ali unveiling a commemorative plaque.

Citizen Engagement delivered by the Safer Places Team

Local services safer places team are responsible for facilitating the cities LDGs.
The LDG brings together key partners such as the police and council to resolve those community safety issues that matter most too local people.
In order to do this work the safer places team are involved in a range of engagement activities designed to identify local concerns and views about crime and anti social behaviour.

Examples of types of engagement:

1) LDGs help to facilitate and oversee quality and outcomes from 40 ward based neighbourhood tasking meetings. These are face to face meetings and involve council and police meeting directly with members of public. One of the disadvantages of this engagement technique is that the meetings tend to be poorly attended my members of public. (Only those persons not in work can attend during the day). In Edgbaston the meetings are held in the early evening, and this has been shown to increase the numbers of public tat attend

2) Social media
South LDG and east LDG have been involved in training large numbers of frontline staff to use social media, to engage with those members of the public that are either unable or not wish to attend public meetings (a summary of this approach in south LPU is attached.)

In terms of what works best and lessons learnt, SPOs feel that:

1) Face to face engagement works best
Two surveys conducted in Billesley and Druids Heath in the last 15 months, which were successful in quantity and quality because they were conducted face to face on doorsteps of people's homes. Engagement with students is done where possible face to face, via "All Out Days" – more info available via http://lovesellyoak.com/2012/09/26/feedback-from-welcome-to-selly-oak-day-top-issues-queries-and-answers

2) Understanding the audience

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3) Taking the Selly Oak Student work again a process was set up to engage and survey student victims of crime – these are not done by the Police, but by the Guild of Students who can provide a different tone and approach than the Police. The results from this survey work are used to inform the communications strategy each year.

4) Use marketing profiles to develop tactics for your audience – the Excel spreadsheet I did is attached and this is still referenced regularly (though needs updating). From this various tactics have been developed including how and where social media capacity is developed, where and how newsletters are done. More importantly though it has stopped the use of tactics which don't work.

5) When designing communications like newsletters include content about items the community are concerned and interested about – Druids Heath and Billesley both shaped on the survey response.

6) The social media work has been led by profiling and intelligence – we know there are a large number of 30-55yrs active on social media in parts of the City. We also know that they don't have time to engage in public meetings and processes, but we also know that there are a good proportion of these who do want to take part or find out about their community. My report to convince the LDG to invest in this last year is attached, which might be helpful. Also attached the PowerPoint that went to POG.

7) From the initial push on social media in Birmingham South last year this is now moving on to start bringing networks together and to identify gaps to build capacity. To help inform this, I've started mapping this with quarterly updates. Most up to date one is attached.

8) Bringing things together into one place

9) Also as part of the social media network building, I've started compiling and grouping Twitter "lists" where people can filter down to interest and area. These are regularly being used by a range of people and attract more people to my @SouBhamComSafe Twitter account and my @WhatOnSouthBrum Twitter account. Example from Bham South attached.

10) And finally, the "Whats on South Brum" approach was really successful this summer. This combined a bespoke website with a twitter account to provide one place for agencies, families and young people to find activities in their area in south Birmingham. This was designed for one purpose – to increase attendance at local youth clubs and activities, via improved promotion and signposting. Overall 1,800 views over the 6 week summer holidays. I'm doing an evaluation of it at the moment, but the initial briefing/guide is attached.

11) The three neighbourhood sites and the community safety site I have developed and run also take this principle and are being very well used. They bring all the different news, services and issues for that neighbourhood/item into one place – http://lovesellyoak.com; http://bhamsouthcommunity.com; http://druidsheath.com; http://threeestatespartnership.wordpress.com

Neighbourhood Management

Local Services Directorate have engaged in the Social Inclusion Process and developed out of the Place key line of inquiry a Neighbourhood Strategy. This sets out a framework approach to neighbourhood working across Birmingham contributing to tackling social cohesion and closing the gap on employment and public health, reintroducing a new model of community leadership that can help coordinate different agencies input on the ground, developing new models of social finance and external funding opportunities to invest in capacity and neighbourhood improvements.

At its heart is an approach predicated on setting out very clearly what the Council and other public sector partners are able to deliver, and how they can do this more effectively by working together alongside a and a progressive agenda around building the capacity of individuals and communities to co produce outcomes and contribute to transforming place.

The strategy will see a variety of different approaches emerging in different places or neighbourhoods across the city reflecting the local context and recognizing that the traditional and historic assumptions

around Birmingham's places have been changed by its own unique development path, the decline of manufacturing industries, emergence of new opportunities for growth and of super diversity and faith.

District Committees will play a key part in setting out through their Annual Policy Statements priorities for their area which will form the basis for shaping longer term District Development Plans. It is expected that models of governance will embrace and adopt a variety of forms and tailor to local circumstances building on the myriad of opportunities outlined in this paper from open access consultation through Neighbourhood Forums through to more representative engagement through Neighbourhood Councils.

Tenant Engagement

Resident Engagement by Housing

The housing service offers a wide range of opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to become engaged and involved. At the core of our engagement structure and process are the 357 members of the 30 Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs) spread throughout the city. HLBs are normally Ward based, are chaired by tenants or leaseholders and are supported by their Tenant Participation Officer (TPO) and Housing Officer. HLB members are elected by the tenants and leaseholders living in the wards or neighbourhoods they represent and elections are held bi-annually.

The HLBs meet on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and focus on improving their Ward or neighbourhood. Elected members often attend or join HLBs, and meetings are also normally attend by representatives from the Police and from the Housing Repairs contractor The HLBs each have an improvement (budget based on the number of bcc properties in the area they represent) .The budget is used to improve communal facilities and for projects (such as fencing and gating) which will benefit a number of tenants).

Housing Liaison Board members join their Housing officer on a monthly estate walkabout. The walkabouts are often joined by the police and environmental health officers and the Housing officer leaflets the area to be inspected prior to the walkabout, to encourage local residents to join the walkabout and to highlight local problems.

The local HLBs are all represented on the City Housing Liaison Board (CHLB). The CHLB's constitution states that: 'The CHLB is a consultative partnership between the Council's tenants and leaseholders, elected members of the Council and officers of the Council …and exists to represent the views of the Council's tenants and leaseholders and other stakeholders in the Council's housing service'. The CHLB meets every six weeks and is supported by the Central Resident Involvement team and senior officers.

Following an extensive consultation exercise on tenant engagement in the autumn of 2012, the service has engaged the Chamberlain Forum to help the HLBs become more representative, to prepare the HLBs for a developed role in co-regulation and for their engagement with District Housing Panels. Based on a consultation exercise with the HLBs the Chamberlain Forum are currently creating a 'Know How Guide' for HLBs to help encourage the sharing and use of best practice. The Chamberlain Forum is also developing a central website for the HLB network. The website will show up to date information regarding the meeting times and venues for the HLBs, together with updates on recent improvements initiated by HLBs and on local events and activities. A number of the TPOs and HLBs already have Twitter accounts and local blog sites (for example beinvolvedyardley.wordpress.com) and these will feed into the central website to provide local news updates.

Following the Cabinet Report of 11 February 2013 the District Committees are required to determine the structure of their District Housing Panels and to make a formal decision in advance of the final arrangements in each District being reported to Cabinet in January 2014. It has been recommended that a HLB Chairs Panel is established in each District to meet with their Senior Service Manager to overview housing management issues including unsatisfactory performance or co-regulation matters. Depending on the structure of each District Housing Panel the HLB Chairs may also be part of, and be able to raise issues to, a District Strategic Housing panel or a wider District Engagement Panel.

In recent years the service has reintroduced *Birmingham in Bloom* a gardening competition for tenants and leaseholders throughout Birmingham. There are six categories of entry including best front garden, best balcony, hanging basket or pots, best vegetable patch and best communal garden. This year there

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were over 500 entries and the winners were presented with their prizes by Councillor Lines the Deputy Lord Mayor. The aim of the competition is to celebrate and reward those tenants and leaseholds who take care of their gardens and balconies and to encourage other residents to improve the appearance of their gardens and neighbourhoods.

First initiated in Ladywood District the TPOs have also recruited over 100 tenants and leaseholders as Block Champions. Block Champions live in bcc high rise or low-rise blocks and act as a point of contact for the Housing officers. The Block Champions in high rise blocks join the Housing officer on their monthly block inspections and they jointly agree the recorded standard of cleanliness and maintenance. Block Champions also act as advocates for their blocks and raise concerns with the Housing officer on behalf of other residents. Housing is also in the initial stages of developing a role of Neighbourhood Champion where tenants or leaseholders would act as a champion for their street or neighbourhood and join with the Housing officer on Walkabouts. Neighbourhood Champions are also trained in how to report problems to the appropriate agency and on how to initiate community clean ups.

The service also supports over thirty Resident Associations. Some associations where the majority of the members are council tenants qualify for a small start-up grant and then a working grant to help with administration costs and some groups are just attended by the TPOs and Housing officer when invited.

The TPOs in each District also engage with tenants and residents in a wide variety of other ways. Some of the initiatives over the last twelve months include:

East Quadrant Block Champions Event in March 2013 gave all the Block Champions in the three Districts the opportunity to come together and to share ideas on how the role could be improved, to meet Housing Staff and local elected members.

South Quadrant Sheltered Housing Information Day was held in May 2013 in response to requests from older residents for more information and access to various agencies.

Area North Garden Community Event at Park Court Sheltered Scheme June 2013. This event was supported by Birmingham Parks, Wilmot Dixon, local groups and churches, and it offered gardening advice, stalls, refreshments and encouraged entries for Birmingham In Bloom.

Cockhill Estate "Makeover" Week June 2013. The Local Housing Team carried out a "makeover" on the Cockhill Estate. Neighbourhood Caretakers, Housing Officers, Trainees and other Agencies and Groups joined the TPO throughout the week to carry out clearance of graffiti, litter removal and addressing issues that arose in the course of the work. There was also a Housing Surgery where residents could talk to the Housing Manager about any issues that concerned them.

Resident Involvement Showcase Event. In July 2013 the two TPOs in Ladywood District held a Showcase event to highlight and promote the valuable and positive work carried out over the past 18 months by Resident Associations HLBs and Tenant Groups within the Ladywood District. Attendees stated that this event enabled them to network with other groups, gain ideas, share best practice and feel encouraged that they were recognised for all the hard work they had put into making their neighbourhoods a better place to live in.

Community Clean up in Newtown August 2013. Working with amongst others local residents, Newtown Neighbourhood Forum, Keepmoat, Mercian Housing and Midland Heart they filled over 40 black bags of rubbish. In addition they involved young people and the Boys Brigade managed to obtain numerous furniture items from local residents to be reused by local residents unable to buy furniture.

Perry Villa Residents Community Garden. The TPO in Perry Barr has supported the development of a community garden which has transformed a previously shabby unkempt patch of grass within a dense area of housing into an 'oasis of nature 'available to all residents. The idea developed during a meeting between the youth forum and Perry Villa residents association and was a cross generational project.

It's Your Neighbourhood Awards. In September the TPOs from the East Quadrant joined representatives from 8 neighbourhoods and community gardens to receive awards at the Royal Horticultural Society's Its

Your Neighbourhood Event at the Tower Ball room which was opened by Councillor Bore the Leader of the Council.

Kinver Croft Community Garden, Hall Green, began in March 2013 by taking part in the Big Dig Event which was an event across Birmingham for Community Gardens. The garden is a small piece of land adjacent to 53 Kinver Croft. There are now four gardeners from varied tenure, 3 council and one owner occupier. The plants and flowers have been bought by the gardeners. This is an excellent example of cross tenure working. Kinver Croft Community entered three gardening competitions this year winning a prize in each one and achieving the Gold Prize for a Vegetable Patch in Birmingham in Bloom 2013.

Black History Month, the Edgbaston and Selly Oak Districts are jointly planning an event to celebrate Black History month by bringing together all communities, faiths and cultures. They are working with the young people from Lordswood School who will be taking part in the event.

Hall Green, Hodge Hill and Yardley Gardening Competitions. The East Quadrant has this year once again held its own three gardening competitions sponsored by the local HLBs. This year there were over 250 entries and the Awards Ceremony planned for October will be attended by over 150 residents, HLB members, elected members and officers.

Neighbourhood Forums

As part of its developmental support programme for Birmingham Neighbourhood Forums the Council in Partnership with Chamberlain Forum facilitated a series of neighbourhood forum engagement activities in late 2012 and early 2013. These events include:

- The launch of the Neighbourhood Forum Know How guide and website (www.theneighbourhood.info) at the Council House in September 2012. The event was well attended by forums from across Birmingham, who (in the main) responded positively to network and discuss common issues.

- The launch was followed up by quadrant events for neighbourhood forums and other resident led organisations across the North, East, West Central and South quadrants. Peer support between forums was brokered through quadrant events, where forums shared their experiences and offered advice to one another.

- In addition to the quadrant events, two *know your neighbourhood* events were organised, one in the Selly Oak, and the other in Handsworth. The session in Handsworth was curtailed because of lack of participants, whereas the session in Selly Oak was well attended by local forums.

- In order to support a higher level of peer support and ideas exchange between neighbourhood forums, an online forum has been set up on the *the neigbourhood.info site*. Registered forum users can only use the online forum –although their content is public. The online forum section can be found at *http:theneighbourhood.info/forums*.

Learning

Forums clearly relate to each other well at district level. And many value a citywide dimension to network and peer support. However, the quadrant approach to working with and engaging forums was less effective.
Developing peer support takes time and resources. Once established as a way of working, it is a sustainable and valuable way of sharing learning and ensuring forums have access to support and expertise. However, it needs fuelling initially, and for a more sustained period of time than has currently been tested.

Districts

Districts are well placed to enable on-going dialogue and engagement with community groups and citizens breaking down barriers and demonstrating in action a new way of working. They are able to harness the facilities in their area such as Community Libraries, Community and Play Centers, Sports and Leisure facilities and use experienced and trained staff from their local teams including Community Development, Ward Support and District Heads to stimulate a conversation.

The Districts teams are pioneering creative engagement in place at a District, Ward and Neighbourhood level. Examples from the Selly Oak District include:

• Social Media – development of creative engagement techniques including twitter feeds, blogs and networking websites. E.g. Selly Oak started a twitter feed in Oct 12 and now there are a further 3 Districts on twitter – Hodge Hill, Ladywood and Yardley.

• Social media training – to enable both officers and community groups to develop networking skills, either blogs, twitter feeds, podcasts etc started in Selly Oak District with Podnosh and then developed more fully across the South Quadrant. Now an established South Community Engagement Group – BCC, partners such as CCGs, Police, Fire Service and community groups.

• Great way of getting information out and networking on specific projects eg Stirchley Baths www.stirchleybaths.org and twitter feed @stirchleybaths – used to complement more formal engagement meetings as can get information out in a creative way to a wider audience

• District Conventions –every District holds an annual District Convention to include citizens, officers, members and partners as well as key District staff.

• Discussions on either a thematic or geographic focus – some were also tweeted (Northfield, Ladywood and Selly Oak) enabling those unable to attend to actually participate and be aware of discussions. Selly Oak produced a précis of day on *storify*.

• Ward Committees – Aspiration that meetings are focus for community engagement. Recent dialogue has been on the service reviews and green papers. However current format and presentation is far too formal and thinking needed to make them more accessible and interesting or people to choose to come along

• District Calendars and Newsletters – most Districts produce event calendars of BCC and community group events and distribute across the District and a number produce newsletters celebrating key achievements and activities as well as "putting faces to names" of key District staff

• District Youth Forums – a number of Districts have established Youth Forums such as Northfield and more are being developed i.e. Selly Oak – giving a voice to young people. In addition a number of Districts have co-opted young people reps onto District Committees e.g. Selly Oak

• Housing Panels – being developed across all Districts, cross tenure including HLBs, key Housing associations and co-option on to District Committees. New toolkit for HLBs just being produced

• Neighbourhood Forums – network established across Districts. Tool kit produced in 2012 by Chamberlain Forum to assist in process and good practice

• Friends of Parks Groups and Active Parks – well developed network of Friends Groups, particularly in the South of the City - engendering good relationships and co-production between citizens and BCC

• Community Centre and Play Centres – Advisory Committees and Friends of Groups – again structures assist with more informal citizen engagement and working together on development of activities, supported generally by community and play staff

• Selly Oak – pilot Co-operative District-looking at developing new ways of working such as Brandwood Ward Community Groups network – structured dialogue / real time community change – collaborative working between community groups and ward. District establishing "Scaffolding support" sessions for com groups on key areas of work where budget going from BCC and com groups take on board e.g. events, CAT and bid writing and starting regular informal "come and meet" lunchtimes with key District staff and com groups and residents – no set agenda but key issues that citizens and GPs want to bring up.

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Service Reviews Introduction

Sarah Hinksman
Service Reviews Programme Manager

Birmingham City Council · Service Reviews

Quick Introduction to Service Reviews

- Root and branch review of all council services to meet financial challenges
- Looking at what we legally need to provide and what is discretionary
- Seeking to reduce the impact on the most disadvantages people and places in the city
- Concentrating our resources on the Council's priorities
- Looking at what other organisations and communities could and should provide

Birmingham City Council · Service Reviews

The Three Tranches of Reviews

Tranche 1
January – April

- Adults Social Care Review
- Education Services
- Service Birmingham
- Sport and Physical Activity
- The Future City Council
- Support Services 1
  - Research, analysis, information and data
  - Policy and strategy
  - Commissioning and contract management
  - Public engagement and consultation
  - Marketing and communications
  - Complaints
  - Member services
  - Project Management

Tranche 2
April – July

- Developing Successful and Inclusive Communities
  Functions aimed at improving community life, building social capital, well-being and community engagement – with a particular focus on supporting the most excluded and disadvantaged residents in the city.
- Developing a Successful and Inclusive Economy
  Functions aimed at helping the city succeed economically and building an inclusive economy.
- A Well Managed and Resilient City
  Functions to support the proper regulation of commercial and social life in the city.
- Support Services 2
  - Professional Support Services
  - Civic Catering
  - Building Cleaning
  - Services Management
  - Customer Services
  - Internal Charging

Tranche 3
July – October

- Safeguarding, Supporting and Educating Young People
  Supporting young people in the city, including safeguarding and functions to support positive outcomes for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people. It also included further work on education services.
- Safe, Clean and Green Neighbourhoods
  Functions aimed at improving the living environment and making Birmingham safer and environmentally sustainable.
- Adults Social Care
  Further work on this review.

Birmingham City Council · Service Reviews

Service Review Process

•Review boards chaired by a Cabinet Member looked at each of their allocated services in detail, with presentations and information from the relevant teams

•Discussions were held and Green Papers written and launched

•Citizens, other local organisations and staff were invited to send in views on these discussion papers and the services

•Dialogue took place at Ward Committees, through the People's Panel, online, by letter and email and through meetings held by directorates and services

•Feedback distributed to reviews and EMT, published on the web and a report prepared…

Feeding into….

…the Budget Process

•The Green Papers and the responses are shaping the proposals for the 2014/15 budget

•The Budget and a white paper on the future of the Council will be published in early December

•There will be various ways to participate in Budget Consultation

•Formal consultation will take place for a month and will include a community event and four public meetings alongside traditional and new media

•Final budget will be prepared for February Cabinet and March Full Council approval

•Directorates and services carry out specific engagement with staff and service users, organisations and so on.

And the Future Council

Service Reviews 'Green Paper' Dialogue

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More about Service Reviews 'Green Paper' Dialogue

- Written responses to the mailbox
- Tweets, Facebook and Google+
- Birmingham People's Panel Forum
- Be Heard consultation portal
- Responses on service review post cards
- Notes from ward discussions
- Feedback from specific meetings with interested parties such as schools and head teachers and adults' service users and carers

Birmingham City Council

Service Reviews

Some Comments from 'Green Paper' Dialogue

- 'Leave the Libraries alone'
- 'Local people could run some local facilities e.g. Community Centres'
- Stop 'spending our Council Tax for your own benefit of travelling to places that do not help the public'
- 'Cut some of the Council staff to pay for services you have already cut'
- Keep 'Economic development, but only if it generates more retained business rates than cost. Social Care, Highway Maintenance. Parks - but expand to make fit for purpose for young children, teenagers, fitness, leisure.'
- 'We should be looking at increasing services, NOT reducing any of them.'
- 'Leisure centres – private sector takes over'
- Provide 'Centres for people to meet in safety manned by volunteers'
- 'So many cuts have been made to services already to consider anything else feels bad'
- Keep 'Litter collection around the area'

Birmingham City Council

Service Reviews

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Briefing Note

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Subject : Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee Citizen engagement Scrutiny Inquiry

Date of Meeting: 19th November 2013

Introduction

This paper sets out the work undertaken by Digital Birmingham to engage with the citizens and stakeholders of the city and the approach it adopts to ensure that they and those who work in the city have the tools and capabilities to proactively engage with the City and its activities.

Technology is transforming everything we do, and most of us are now accustomed to being connected anytime, anywhere.   With smartphone penetration set to reach 90% in the next 3 years and the advent of mainstream 4G services signalling a faster, more ubiquitous mobile experience, our digital demands and capabilities are only set to increase.

The way citizens engage and consume information has radically changed since the growth of the knowledge economy. People are no longer "waiting to be told or be advised of new initiatives" instead they are actively searching for information and gathering views from multiple stakeholders through the use of social media tools such as twitter, Facebook, YouTube etc. This has enabled citizens to not only engage in the conversation, but also act to further disseminate messages to new audiences.

The real challenge to the public sector is to ensure that our information and engagement strategies reflect the way citizens choose to receive and consume information.

The traditional ways that local authorities engage with citizens are changing but are not changing fast enough. Local authorities are still printing leaflets that simply bypass the citizens and often go straight in the recycling bin.

Ward meetings and public meetings provide an important platform for the public sector to relay our messages and provide citizens with the opportunity to engage. However, we must recognise that these mechanisms are often narrow and are not representative of the communities we serve. Many of those who attend these meetings are very often those who are already engaged. Therefore, we need to consider how these meetings can be augmented and supported by using new forms of media that recognise and utilise the devices and medium that citizens choose to use and reflect that we live in a 24/7 environment.

Enabling engagement through digital inclusion

Digital Birmingham has worked with city stakeholders to deliver digital projects and activities that support citizens to better engage with public services.

(i)   **Aston Pride Initiative** - A 4 year project that provided both connectivity and computer devices to 1500 households. The project enabled pupils at a number of schools in the Aston ward to gain access with schools online systems and educational materials directly from their home. Although the project was aimed at improving academic attainment levels, it had considerable social inclusion impacts and enabled residents to access online services for skills, learning and job opportunities. It received awards through Nominet for Innovation and the National e-Government.

(ii)   **Keeping IT in the Family** – A city wide physical and online comic style resource co-designed with children to teach their parents and grandparents important IT skills such as email, use of the internet for shopping online, searching for information and social media skills. It was awarded the European "Excellence in Children Services Award in Stuttgard.

(iii)   **Interactive Digital TV - Looking Local Channel on TV** – A communication and engagement channel for the council to put out information, messages etc. All the information that is put onto this channel is available multi-platform e.g. can be access via television sets plugged into Sky and Virgin, FreeSat (due to come on board shortly), mobile phones, smart phones, tablets, facebook, gaming consoles, and pc's. This channel attracts over 190,000 hits per month (without any advertisement) , costs circa £18,000 per annum and is underutilised by the Council as a means of communication.

(iv)   Other projects have included:

a. E-petitions, which enabled citizens to petition the council on important issues; The Timely Information Pilot developed an online community that enabled local people to influence the planning and delivery of services with the creation of BeVocal.
b. Supported the development of the Social Media Strategy for the City
c. Computers for Pupils and Home Access to Computer Initiatives - delivered 20,000 computer devices into the community
d. Established the Birmingham Bulletin – an email newsletter and alert service delivering information directly to citizens inbox
e. Helped create the city's computer recycling scheme to support people to get on the digital ladder

Improving and getting better engagement through digital inclusion

The UK Government is driving "Digital-by-Default", calling on all departments to become digital in thinking in order to deliver services which are suitable for users. At the same time, local authorities remain under significant pressure to reduce costs and increase efficiencies, and at the same time deliver better services to local communities.

The "O2 Digital Communities Report 2013" revealed a growing demand amongst citizens for their local councils to do more to engage with them through technology. 48% said when it comes to essentials like paying council tax, or getting information on local services such as social care and education, they would like to the use the internet, mobile apps and social media.

Digital Birmingham is working with the Welfare Reform Group to establish a programme of activities that recognises that

(i)   18.5% of our citizens are still offline and of those 50% are estimated to live in social housing.
(ii)   80% of all benefit applications and 600 government transactions with the citizen will be delivered online by 2017 (GDS Nov 2012) and 90% of all jobs will require ICT skills by 2015 (Go ON UK)
(iii)   Although young people know how to use social media tools, there remains a significant proportion that are still digitally illiterate and cannot use the internet to improve skills and employment opportunities.
(iv)   The take up of smartphones, tablets and other connected devices will continue to grow amongst all age groups and the council must adapt its engagement channels to go to "where the eyeballs are"

The aim is two fold; firstly to provide residents with connectivity and secondly to support citizens with adequate training to ensure they have the capabilities and confidence to use the technology.
Our activities for connectivity include;

(i)   Providing free wifi connectivity in the city centre in areas of high footfall
(ii)   Working with a telecommunications provider to trial free wireless connectivity within a socially excluded major housing estate with opportunities for further expansion
(iii)   Working with a telecommunications supplier to build a sustainable model that provides free broadband to a number of multi- occupancy units across the City
(iv)   Undertaking a mapping exercise across the City to identify internet access points that can be used by citizens to get online for free and to map those with support.
(v)   Preparing the business case to deliver free wifi within public buildings to enable citizens to use their own devices to access the internet and which are closely linked to communities.

Our activities for providing support to help develop the skills and the raison d'être to get people online include:

(i)   Running a Go-Online campaign to recruit 2000 Digital Champions from within the community and front line staff to support citizens to gain the skills to get more engaged
(ii)   Working with universal credit team and housing associations to train tenants and develop the very successful digital logbook as a tool to access services and engage with local services
(iii)   Working with schools to ensure pupils have access to computer devices with connectivity to support their own learning attainment as well as help parents develop digital and engagement skills
(iv)   Working with a number of organisations to identify funding opportunities to support digital inclusion
(v)   Developing the open data agenda that will enable citizens to access localised data/information about their neighbourhoods and support better decision making and targeting of resources
(vi)   Establishing a series of open data surgeries (aka social media surgeries) that will develop the skills of communities, third sector and customer groups in the use of data to influence policy makers, campaign for changes in services or argue for entirely new ways to help people.

Issues and opportunities to further improve engagement through digital technologies

(i)   A proportion of council staff are of the generation that have not grown up with the technology; many do not have the skills to see how it can be used in their service areas. This is slowing down the process of change and adoption of web 2.0 tools for engagement and participation. There is an opportunity to identify those early adopters in the organisation that are exploiting the use of digital technologies for public engagement to help drive change and act as digital champions.
(ii) In a consumerism, always on society, increasingly people want to access services and information at a time to suit them and technology is enabling this to happen. This means that the Council needs to be developing more interactive digital ways of connecting to the public, particularly its younger audience.
(iii) Every citizen should be able to choose how they receive information, services, messages, etc. We need to get better at finding out and recording how people want to have information delivered to them and use technology to make it happen more effectively and efficiently in a far more targeted and resourceful way

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Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee

Scrutiny Inquiry: Citizen Engagement

Evidence Pack

November 2013

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Overview & Scrutiny – Engagement Enquiry

Q1: What is the purpose of engagement?

Healthwatch is central to the governments intentions to *"put the patients at the heart"* of the NHS and social care, by *"strengthening the collective voice of patients and the public"*. **(Healthwatch England)**

We believe that when the public and consumers are involved in decisions affecting the commissioning and delivery of health and social care, it has resounding benefits. Services that are shaped around the needs of the individuals can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of care pathways. When patients are better informed about services and care pathways they can better understand the links between different services and can take informed decisions in how they use services.

We believe, above all, that Healthwatch Birmingham can achieve this by promoting the principles of consistent involvement and engagement

Our key engagement roles:
- To promote and support the involvement of the public and consumers in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services.
- To obtain the views of people in relation to their needs for, and their experiences of, local care services.
- To make reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved, to persons responsible for commissioning, providing managing or scrutinizing local care services and to HWE.

"Involving citizens in the shaping of their services and care, and engaging them in decision making is key to success, the health service <u>must be confident enough to engage citizens</u>" **(Mike Farrar NHS Confederation Chief Executive – Conference 2013)**

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Q2 How do you do engagement / what could we learn from?

- Serious consideration needs to be given to why an individual might engage in the first place. This includes understanding what may motivate them, what they would like as a result of their engagement, what engagement tools and approaches might be effective with them, and identifying what feedback they wish to receive after their engagement has been considered.
- Effective engagement communication needs to take account of the patient or member of the public. The language used must be accessible, avoiding or explaining jargon, and specific communication needs should be addressed, including "easy read" materials.
- Digital technology provides many opportunities for effective engagement and should be used alongside other more traditional approaches, so as to reach greater numbers of people from a range of backgrounds.

Healthwatch Birmingham is developing an Engagement and Active Citizenship Strategy based on the following:

- Assertive engagement – clear, timetabled in advance and appropriate to the audience to be reached
- Long term thinking – providing a vision as well as outcomes
- Working on the ground with real knowledge and experience – local networks as a basis for communicating in all directions.
- Support Commissioners and service providers to actively engage with and listen to patients and the public
- Easy to contact – useful and accessible access points across and within local communities

Volunteers will become the public face and resource of Healthwatch Birmingham – our key connectors and communicators:

"Recruiting and retaining volunteers and using their experience, skills, knowledge and commitment is a key part of ensuring Local Healthwatch will be a success" **(Healthwatch England)**

- **Enter & View Programme:** Well supported and trained – critical friend investigations of Health & Social Care Services. Working with CQC, Monitor and other statutory agencies to ensure best impact of findings and recommendations.
- **Community Champions:** Locally based and community hub supported local Champions who will act as a connector and researcher in their neighbourhoods/wards. Identifying local issues and solutions together with Healthwatch Birmingham Partners.
- **Participation Academy** – Healthwatch Birmingham is developing a programme of support for Patient Representatives, Patient Participation Group Chairs and other User Forums. This will be a city wide programme developing in partnership with CCG's, Trusts and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Our new website (launching in December) will enable patients and service users to engage with us about their priorities at a time that suits them. They will, for example, be able to rate services they use, giving feedback about their experiences, as well as accessing our own engagement drives.

Q3. What opportunities are there for different organisations (BCC / CCGs / West Midlands Police etc) to work more closely to get more effective engagement and avoid engagement fatigue?

It is hugely important that as statutory city infrastructure organisations, we focus on engagement that is interactive with individuals and communities and less extractive, taking information and views with no feedback or context of what has happened because views were shared.

The relationships with statutory sector and voluntary sector are key to information flow:

- To build up networks and partnerships to ensure there is a range of cohesive and effective services without unnecessary duplication or gaps.
- Identifying organisations that link to one another and/or engage with citizens.

Healthwatch Birmingham is committed to supporting all sectors to work effectively with us.

Engagement Framework
In Health and Social Care, Healthwatch Birmingham believe it is sensible to revisit a simple framework regarding Engagement involving civil Society and statutory agencies in order to get a sector wide agreement on how we undertake Engagement

Below are the principles of a partnership framework Healthwatch England have developed called the **Public Voice Concordat.**

"A partnership agreement to capture and utilise the public & consumer voice – shaping delivery of health, social care and wellbeing services"

Together we will:

- Provide effective engagement and involvement bringing about improvements to the experiences of health and social care consumers.
- Promote the values of public and consumer involvement in decisions affecting the commissioning and delivery of health and social care (including Public Health) and related services.
- Work together as critical friends to identify areas and activities of engagement and involvement where Healthwatch Birmingham can add value.
- Evaluate the impact of engagement and involvement." **(Healthwatch England)**

We are also aware of **The Birmingham Compact** which has a wider scope than just Health and Social Care, but does outline meaningful engagement for any public body:

"For meaningful Engagement, a public body needs to publicly show it has done the following:

1. Goes beyond the 'Usual Suspects' to attempt to ensure all those affected by a decision have been heard.
2. Looks at the impact on different groups separately as well as collectively.
3. Ensures questions are answered and enough context has been provided so that stakeholders can make informed decisions.
4. Provides information on what is open to change, and what has already been decided.
5. Provides information on how and where feedback will be provided on what has changed as a result of the consultation.
6. Provides a variety of methods for people to feed into the consultation, ensuring that they are accessible.
7. Holds meetings and events with enough notice and at times and places that allow as many people to take part as possible.
8. Provides feedback on the consultation and what has happened as a result."
   (Compact Voice 2012)

Q4. How do we get results from engagement?

- Step away from deciding and consulting – need to get involved in co production and partnership – trust the community to be part of the consultations right from the start.

- "Closing the loop" is crucial - being able to inform all stakeholders of what has happened 'on the back' of feedback, not just the feedback itself

- Engagement is a long-term process, requiring a menu of different tools and techniques for different audiences; there is no blueprint.

- Providing high standard and appropriate support and mentoring to people in the city who are Patient, User, Resident Representatives in the Health & Social Care Sector to empower them to fulfil their roles and to address the information and power imbalance between citizens and those who commission and manage Health & Social Care Services.

Conclusion

We believe that, by working together, we can not only help to meet the enormous challenges facing health and social care in terms of financially constraint and high demand, but also fundamentally to improve health and social care services for the people of Birmingham and those who use the services within it.

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NHS
Birmingham CrossCity
Clinical Commissioning Group

Public Involvement and Partnerships Action Plan

2013/14

Excellence in Commissioning
Through Excellent Primary Care

Glossary

CCG Clinical Commissioning Group

GB   Governing Body

HW   Healthwatch

LCN Local Commissioning Group

PIP   Public Involvement & Partnership

       Committee

PPG Patient Participation Groups

NCB National Commissioning Board (NHS)

VCS Voluntary Community Services

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1. Introduction

On the 1st April 2013 Birmingham CrossCity CCG (BxCCG) became responsible for commissioning local health care services for a population of 730,000. Each year Birmingham CrossCity CCG will publish a plan to make it easier for people to understand what health services will be commissioned and what our priorities are to improve local health services.

This action plan supports these commissioning priorities and provide details on how Birmingham CrossCity CCG will engage and ensure that the voice of patients play a critical part of shaping local health services.

This action plan fits within Birmingham CrossCity CCG's wider *Involvement, Engagement and Partnership Strategy*. This document is available to download from: https://www.bhamcrosscityccg.nhs.uk/

1.1. Public Involvement and Partnership Committee

Public Involvement and Partnership Committee (PIP) will have strategic oversight for delivery of the *Public Involvement and Engagement Action Plan* reporting into the Governing Body. This Committee is chaired by Dr Peter Rookes (Lay Advisor), Vice Chair, Barbara Webster (Lay Advisor) and Clinical Lead for Partnerships, Dr Aqil Chaudary.

1.2. Birmingham CrossCity CCG Management Team

A separate internal **Communications and Engagement Delivery Group** will be established to coordinate delivery within the Birmingham CrossCity management team. The responsible officer for public involvement within Birmingham CrossCity CCG is Jenny Belza (Chief Nurse) and Tracey Thorne (Local Commissioning Support Manger (Partnerships) who will coordinate the involvement and engagement programme. Suzanne Cleary (Head of Strategy and Primary Care Development) will have a key role in terms of ensuring public involvement is integral to how Birmingham CrossCity CCG commissions health services.

Regular reports on public involvement will be provided to Birmingham CrossCity CCG's Governing Body, chaired by Dr Gavin Ralston. These meetings are held in public and details of these meetings and relevant papers can be found on the above website.

1.3. Building the foundation for engagement

This action plan for 2013/14 has been designed to build on existing involvement and engagement activities carried out during the authorisation process, leading up to the establishment of the CCG. Information from a variety of consultation events, meetings and forums have helped shape and inform these actions.

Birmingham CrossCity CCG was authorised and established as a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) from 1st April 2013. Birmingham CrossCity CCG is the statutory commissioner, responsible for purchasing health care, as previously

undetaken by the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

Birmingham CrossCity CGG has high level commitment and support from within the organisation to ensure that patients and public are at the heart of what we do. We have established the Public Involvement and Partnership Committee (PIP) as well as appointing a Lay Advisor for Patient and Public Involvement to lead and drive this work forward.

Birmingham CrossCity CCG has also invested additional resource to develop our capacity to engage, by incorporating public involvement within key staff roles. To enhance our commitment to public involvement and engagement, we have procured dedicated communications and engagement support through the NHS Central Midlands Commissioning Support Unit (CSU).

Public involvement has been adopted as part of Birmingham CrossCity CCG's core business and this action plan sets out a range of actions that will be developed and delivered alongside our day to day activities.

2. **Development of the action plan:**
This action plan has been developed based on the following activity;

- Review of the legacy of engagement activities undertaken by previous local Primary Care Trusts
- Discussions with the Governing Body and Public Involvement and Partnership Committee about priorities
- Internal and external meetings to discuss the level and type of engagement required for key strategic developments
- Discussions with other Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Local Authority on ways to avoid duplication and to develop collaborative approaches
- Reviewing other key strategic plans for Birmingham e.g. Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Reviewing the legal framework for CCGs and national guidance on patient engagement and involvement, as well as supporting the development of Birmingham Healthwatch
- Listening to the views of patients and public from a number of consultation and engagement events as well as focus groups held since October 2012
- Meetings with Patient Participation Groups and feedback from the CCGs Local Commissioning Networks
  - Feedback from Birmingham CrossCity 360 exercise with stakeholders Feedback
  - from the draft Action Plan from stakeholders, which include an online consultation survey

3. What we mean by Public Involvement and Partnership

Birmingham CrossCity CCG is committed to developing an approach to involvement and engagement to ensure that we are patient focused. The diagram below highlights the three elements to our approach to involvement and engagement; a description of each of these is included in Appendix 1.

Figure 1: Types of Involvement and Engagement
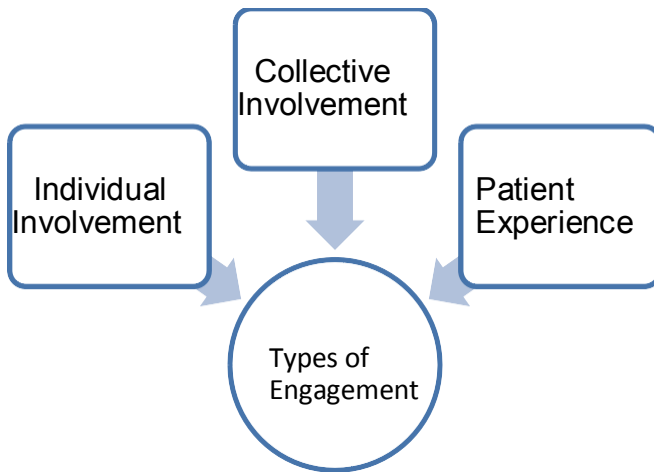
The quality of relationships that patients have with their health professionals is key to good individual engagement and patient experience. Wider community engagement is about developing and maintaining relationships that we as a CCG will have with local people, communities and their representatives. We have a responsibility and desire to understand our communities to ensure that our commissioning decisions are based on what patient's want and need, by putting patients first.

We are adopted the model below to make sure that we build engagement into commissioning local health services in the future.

Figure 2: How to build engagement into commissioning

4. Equality and Diversity

Birmingham CrossCity CCG serves a diverse population. We are determined to promote equality and human rights in all that we do. Many of the actions that we have included here in the implementation plan will enable us to gain a better understanding of how we can more effectively involve and engage our population.

We recognise that many sections of our communities have been marginalised and under-represented in local NHS engagement activities. Successful engagement of all sections of the population is essential if we are to improve health outcomes for all communities. We will undertake targeted activity to involve under-represented groups and those who experience the highest levels of health inequalities e.g. Black, Minority and Ethnic groups.

5. Commissioning priorities

This action plan is linked to the *Birmingham CrossCity CCG Integrated Plan,* which sets out our commissioning priorities up to 2015.

Based on the health needs of our local population we have identified the following priority areas:-

- Address health inequalities
- Innovative, high quality and safe healthcare delivered by practices and commissioned providers.
- Mental health service users and other vulnerable groups receive the right care
- Support people to live a good quality life.
- Patients report that providers treat them effectively, safely and with dignity Gain
- the engagement and support of our patients and public in making decisions that affect their health and local health services

Further details of our priorities and how we plan to address these are shown in our Plan on a Page (Appendix 3)

Our engagement around what we commission will mainly focus on the population covered by our 117 member practices. However, Birmingham CrossCity CCG also leads the commissioning of the following key priority areas:

- Urgent care
- Mental Health and Learning Disability Services

We will ensure wider engagement of Birmingham residents relating to the commissioning of these services.

6. <u>Legal framework</u>

This action plan has been developed in line with the statutory duties set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which states that:

Each Clinical Commissioning Group must, in the exercise of its functions, promote the involvement of patients, and their carers and representatives (if any), in decisions which relate to:

a) The prevention or diagnosis of illness in the patients, or
b) Their care or treatment

Each Clinical Commissioning Group must make arrangements to secure public involvement in the planning of commissioning arrangements and in developing, considering and making decisions on any proposals for changes in commissioning arrangements that would impact on service delivery or range of health services available.

In addition to this legal requirement, CCGs are also required to operate within the principles and values set out in the NHS Constitution. This is available as a download from Birmingham CrossCity CCG website.

Action Plan

The action plan includes details of accountability at a Governing Body level responsibility for actual delivery of the plan will be with Birmingham CrossCity management team.

The table below is split into the following four key sections;

1. **Organisational, Accountability and Leadership**: Actions that the CCG will take responsibility for leading across the organisation
2. **Commissioning Health Care Services**: How we will utilise local public involvement and partnership to shape and inform local health commissioning
3. **Working Together** : How we will deliver effective public involvement and partnership by working collaboratively with others
4. **Communications and Mapping**: How we will engage effectively using communication tools

Actions		How	Governing Body Lead	When
1.	**Organisational, Accountability and Leadership**			
1.1	We will ensure we have 3 lay advisors on the Governing Body including - 1 Lay Advisor for Patient and Public Involvement	Recruit 3 lay advisors using NHS jobs	Gavin Ralston	April 2013
1.2	We will ensure that public involvement and partnership forms part of our organisational values and all strategic documents/plans for 2013/14	• Include in the CCG Constitution • Include in the Integrated Plan – which sets out what we will commission	Gavin Ralston	April 2013 onwards
1.3	We will create a culture where the public are routinely involved in commissioning of health services within the CCG	• Develop an engagement toolkit/checklist for the CCG Staff training • Recruitment and appraisal of staff Develop internal communications about engagement* e.g. staff newsletter/ members area/ staff training	Paul Sherriff	July 2013 onwards

	Patient Representation			
1.4	We will ensure that the CCG through its processes of commissioning is involving the public in decision making and that we have a model for involvement	• Develop a model for patient representation • Set up a patient CCG Council Create an online registration tool where people can register/volunteer to get more involved in the CCG – CrossCity Voice • Communicate the model and ways to be involved	Jenny Belza	June 2013 onwards
1.5	We will ensure we raise awareness about the voluntary representative roles, to recruit 10 to 12 people and plan how we can support them to be confident in the delivery of the role expectation	• Create role descriptions and training programme • Open recruitment and marketing campaign • Set up an independent selection panel • Appoint volunteers and set up initial training and support • Provide ongoing support to volunteers	Jenny Belza	July 2013 onwards

1.6	We will be open and transparent, provide access to public Governing Body meetings and we will hold an annual general meeting	• Ensure that the dates of the Public Governing Body meetings are online • Promote dates of meetings and AGM via stakeholders • Publish an annual calendar of events • Explore options to live stream public meetings	Paul Sherriff	July 2013 onwards

		Engagement and Partnership Committee			
1.7	We will establish a Public Involvement and Partnership Committee which will be accountable to the CCG Governing Body/members	- Establish committee and develop terms of reference - Establish work programme for 2013-14 - Run monthly Committee meetings and communicate with members	Gavin Ralston	February 2013 onwards	
1.8	We will make sure we deliver the actions set out in this action plan and publish the progress we have made	- Finalise and publish the action plan - We will develop a performance framework showing the difference we are making or evidence where we need to improve - We will publish some targets and report back on these (outcomes) - We will review this action plan in the Autumn to check we have got it right - We will published results in the CCG annual report	Jenny Belza	June 2013 onwards	

1.9	We will produce a three year Public Involvement and Partnership Strategy using information and lessons learnt from our first year	- We will review all related documents and look at experience from delivery in year 1 - Establish strategy working group January 2014 and develop/undertake stakeholder involvement - Undertake equalities analysis and identify budget - Produce final strategy in 2014 - Communicate the strategy	Jenny Belza	June 2014
1.10	We will ensure that our Public Involvement and Partnership plan fulfils our duty to promote wider engagement and encourage the voices of a diverse section of the community to be heard	- Carry out an equalities impact analysis on our engagement and partnership activities - Employ a community development worker to reach into communities - Establish a database for engagement activity and monitor - Use of electronic media (social, online, Well TV) to widen our local reach through non-conventional channels	Jenny Belza	May 2013 onwards

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		Organisational Training and Development			
1.11	We will ensure that all our members and staff value engagement/involvement and develop their knowledge/skills in this area	• Develop engagement/involvement training for CCG Board Members, Committees and LCNs • Include information on CCG statutory duties • Carry out a staff patient engagement skills audit	Jenny Belza	August 2013
1.12	We will produce a development program for the Public Involvement and Partnership Committee to support delivery of this action plan	• Hold quarterly development sessions (including social media/online tools) • Agree topics and feedback/learning tool	Jenny Belza	June 2013
1.13	We will Include a mandatory module in the corporate annual training programme on patient engagement to ensure staff develop the right skills and knowledge which will include	• Develop mandatory module Ensure positive staff response rate and monitor learning /feedback	Paul Sherriff	September 2013 onwards

1.14	We will design a training and support programme for patient/public representatives that will form part of the agreed "Patient and Public Representation Model"	• Design training and support programme, which will include capturing session evaluation feedback • Plan relevant communications and social media training • Delivery of communications, engagement and insight, media, marketing and social media training to all staff • Ensure patient engagement and involvement is part of the organisation induction • Set up dates and implement	Jenny Belza	July 2013

	Finance and Resourcing			
1.15	We will ensure that the Central West Midlands NHS Commissioning Support Unit has a clear plan to ensure delivery of its Communications and Engagement Contract	• Agree CSU Service Level Agreement and develop specification by May • CSU to produce separate delivery plan for Communications and Engagement including staffing model by May • CCG to agree performance lead and framework to monitor the CSU delivery	Paul Sherriff and Jenny Belza	May 2013
1.16	We will develop a system to refund or reimburse patients, public and lay advisors when they are taking part in engagement/involvement activities (where advertised only)	• Develop a remuneration policy for patient and public involvement • Identify additional budget including improving access/participation e.g. transport where appropriate • Set up payment system	Phil Johns	July 2013
1.17	We will allocate an additional budget to support this engagement action plan to include reimbursement of expenses	• Include estimated costs in the action plan • Allocate administrative support and set up payment system	Phil Johns	July 2013

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2.	**Commissioning Health Care Services**			
2.1	We will be realistic about making sure in year 1 that we lay the foundation to ensure that patients, carers, patient groups and the public help us to commission better health services, based on what people want and need	• Use "You Said We Did" as a tool to demonstrate how people's views and involvement have made a difference • We will publish our first **Integrated Plan** which shows what our priorities are for 2013/14 • We will produce an annual calendar of engagement activity based on getting ready and involvement for next year's commissioning priorities • We will use online consultation tools to widen engagement using surveys and Citizenspace/Be Heard • To develop and implement a model for patient, carers and public involvement and partnership voice model e.g. appoint PPI representatives	Suzanne Cleary	May 2013 onwards

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2.2	We will develop a process for meaningful patient and public involvement in all our processes to commission new health services or the redesign of existing health services linked to our priorities - (See Plan on a Page Appendix 3)	Coordinate a programme of engagement and involvement linked to commissioning of local health services • Communicate process to staff Appoint PPI representatives to each committee and as when required to new project groups • Set up Patient and public Voice Council and process to influence commissioning • Communicate plans and proposed service changes to encourage involvement • For all major service redesign projects or programmes we will develop patient, carer and public involvement in the programme including designing the Aspiring to Clinical Excellence (ACE) • Develop communications plan to inform public and share results	Suzanne Cleary	April onwards

	Local Commissioning Networks			
2.3	We will work with each LCN to enable them to listen to the views of patients, carers and the public to ensure they use this information to inform their commissioning at a local level	• Assist each LCN to include patient, carer and public involvement in their local commissioning plans • Assist each LCN to help them map and reach local groups include running local activities e.g. "pop up" events • Provide engagement training and tools including collecting data/recruitment of interested people to get involved • Publish feedback showing the difference this is making*	Pete Thebridge	August 2013 onwards

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	Practice based Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)			
2.4	We will carry out a mapping of PPG's to measure local engagement, support member practices/LCN's to development of PPG's and coordinate a communications campaign to increase participation	• Undertake annual mapping exercise and create PPG database and publish online list of PPG's (May) • Set up a learning forum (May) Communicate findings to practices and LCN's with recommendations on how they could increase participation • Coordinate a communications campaign to increase membership	Peter Thebridge	June 2013
2.5	We will produce a Patient Participation toolkit to enable PPG's to build their capacity to be engaged and involved in the commissioning process, to include training, support to get new members and communications (to PPG's and Practices)	• Develop in partnership with PPG's a toolkit for PPG groups and practices • Make available and promote toolkit	Peter Thebridge	May 2013
2.6	We will ensure the involvement of PPG's in development of quality of primary care and related commissioning and involvement in ACE Scheme e.g. trained as appraisers	• Inform and involve practice based patient participation groups • Develop PPG members in ACE appraisal scheme from 2014	Barbara King	May 2013 onwards

2.7	We will facilitate holding an annual PPG Conference	• Develop PPG conference through PPG network • Set up small PPG task group in December to plan the event* • Feedback outcomes and publish You Said We Did after the event	Peter Thebridge	February 2014

	Patient Experience and Individual Involvement			
2.8	We will regularly ask people what they think about services and how they are commissioned; linking feedback provided by complaints and compliments	• We will ensure that we develop a process for individual involvement linked to the national guidance – No decision Without me About Me • Web based GP feedback tool implemented provides GPs with opportunity to give us feedback, and raise issues or concerns about commissioned services • Dedicated phone line for public to contact us direct to be set up • Patient stories to be presented to Governing Body • Develop patient experience framework	Jenny Belza	May 2013 onwards
2.9	We will listen to people's views and experiences of local services which are expressed using social media and other online websites e.g. patient opinion	• Monitor data available on social media and online platforms* • Provide regular reports highlighting main themes/issues*	Jenny Belza	August 2013

3.	**Working Together**			
	Joined-up working with the Local Authority			
3.1	We will work in collaboration with Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure we are joined up and are delivering efficiently on public involvement and engagement	• Establish relationship with BHWB and representation on the Board • Working jointly with Engagement lead and other CCG's on priorities • Feed into JSNA process and use information to improve are engagement to reach those people that experience greatest health inequalities	Aqil Chaudary	June 2013 onwards

3.2	We will establish a joined-up approach to engagement/involvement with the Local Authority particularly to reach seldom heard groups and to reach out to local communities in Birmingham	• In year 1 mapping/or sharing of data on local Boards, Committees and Forums including citizen led Neighbourhood Forums • Mapping local authority resources/partnerships that can be used for engagement activity to widen the CCG's reach e.g. children's centre's, youth and community centre's • Carry out targeted work to involve under-represented groups and those that experience the highest health inequalities e.g. BME Groups • Working collaboratively to deliver the Carers Strategy for Birmingham and other key strategies that impact on people's health and wellbeing	Aqil Chaudary	July 2013 onwards

		Working together with the NHS			
3.3	We will collaborate with local CCGs to join up activities linked to our commissioning priorities to ensure we are working together to meet the needs of our population	• Establish a CCG Engagement and Partnership Network with Birmingham South Central and Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG's • Identify key joint initiatives and work programmes • Develop some Birmingham wide good practice and shared processes	Aqil Chaudary	May 2013 onwards
3.4	We will collaborate with the National Commissioning Board to develop engagement within the CCG and ensure our representatives can be involved in regional and national NCB patient initiatives	• Revise actions in line with any new national patient and public involvement guidance • Ensure links to regional and national activities • Facilitating patient involvement e.g. National Patient Assembly • Publish information on our CCG	Aqil Chaudary	Sept 2013 onwards

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Birmingham Heathwatch				
3.5	We will be actively involved in development and creation of Healthwatch (HW) in Birmingham, which include ongoing promotion to keep local people informed of their service	• Participate in HW Steering Group Establish relationship with team and HW Board • Provide information via the CCG website and events • Provide information to practice based PPG's	Aqil Chaudary	April 2013
3.6	We will develop a working agreement with Healthwatch to set out the nature of the relationship and our commitment to partnership working	• Collaborate with the other CCG's to agree a working • Publish the agreement on our CCG website	Aqil Chaudary	June 2013

•

•

		Patient , Carers and other Groups			
3.7	We will engage with patient groups/panels, carers and other forums/groups to promote active listening, involvement and joined up working	• Mapping of key groups and initial relationship building include those linked to 3rd sector organisations • Provide information about the CCG and how groups can get involved* • Meet key NHS leads for groups linked to NHS Provider Trusts and establish process for joint working		Jenny Belza	August onwards 2013
3.8	We will ensure that the views of young people are heard and that we engage young people in commissioning decisions	• Collaborating with the Children's Young Peoples Group at Birmingham Children's Hospital Trust • Map other young peoples' groups Explore the use of social media to engage young people • Join up working with other NHS CCG's, the local authority, Heathwatch and the 3rd sector to reach young people • Develop a young peoples' checklist to make sure our events are young people friendly		Jenny Belza	September onwards

3.9	We will work with the voluntary sector and community (VSC) groups to support "bottom up" health initiatives and to reach out to local communities/seldom heard groups	- Identify VSC oganisations/groups linked to health initiatives - Form partnership with BVSC to link into 3rd Sector Assembly - Review of existing groups supported as part of PCT legacy work in partnership with the other CCG's - Scope out neighbourhood projects and/or initiatives in partnership with the Local Authority - Identify opportunities for joined	Aqil Chaudary	June 2013 onwards
3.10	We will widen our reach by working with community and faith based organisations and develop partnerships with key community leaders	- Indentify key organisations not already mapped including housing associations - Run stakeholder sessions and attend community events to network and extend our reach - Develop key contacts and plan for 2014 of some joined up doing	Aqil Chaudary	Dec 2013

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4.	Communications and Mapping			
4.1	We will review the CCG website and ensure that it supports patient involvement/partnership. This will include providing clear information on ways that patients can get involved as well as using it for public consultations	• Carry out an online survey to get public/staff views to improve the website • Redesign website and ensure easy for the public to use • Regularly monitor data and report on engagement via web • Integrate social media on the website to improve engagement and use data to shape local commissioning • Develop CCG use of online tools for consultation – via staff awareness/training • Run online consultations and surveys	Jenny Belza	May onwards
4.2	We will identify and/or incorporate an online consultation tool to the CCG website	• Link in new citywide consultation tool – Citizenspace / BeHeard • Review use and impact of the consultation tool	Jenny Belza	November 2013

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4.3	We will develop innovative use of social media to support patient involvement/engagement including providing training for patient groups and collate data to look at how impact of social media	• Review social media options and agree 12 month plan, including setting key objectives • Set up reporting system to capture data and impact • Run development session with CCG EP Committee to explore benefit of social media for engagement and as listening tool • Establish some pilot online consultations and campaigns using social media e.g. maternity and home births • Training for staff involved in using social media	Jenny Belza	May 2013 onwards
4.4	We will promote individual involvement and awareness of the impact of new initiatives/services to ensure patients can make informed decisions about their health e.g. personal health budgets	• Coordinate as part of communications and marketing plans • Use targeted and news ways to widen our reach • Engagement of GP member practices to involve/inform patients	Jenny Belza	August 2013 onwards

4.5	We will develop a data collection system to measure the progress we are making to engage people and to look at the impact/gaps	• CSU to develop high level data collection and reporting including data from social media • CCG to develop local monitoring and report for community engagement	Jenny Belza	July 2013 onwards
4.6	We will develop and maintain a patient involvement database to include contact details of patients/public as well as system to register online through the CCG website	• Set up online registration tool - CrossCity Voice • Set up and maintain database Review numbers engaged and impact after first 12 months • Promote via leaflet in practices and CCG events	Jenny Belza	July 2013 onwards
4.7	We will identify from our mapping ways to address the gaps in engaging with sections of the community whose voices are seldom heard	• Develop profile of groups/individuals not engaged • Develop customer insight profiles for each LCN and at a CCG to improve communication and engagement • Identify community champions and routes into communities	Jenny Belza	Sept 2013 onwards

4.8	Ensure visibility of the CCG Chair and Lay Advisor for Patient and Public Involvement as the organisation chief champions for patent engagement	• Develop communications plan Provided information on the CCG website, using social media and via CCG events	Paul Sherriff	July 2013 onwards
4.9	Develop internal communications channels to provide regular dialogue and information to member practices on patient involvement/engagement	• Develop communications plans about member (GP practices) engagement • Develop members forum area to communicate and create document library for engagement	Paul Sheriff	Sept 2013 onwards
4.10	We will make it easier for people to understand what we commissioning and do by publishing simple information	• Develop a set of fact sheets Publish information using the website and social media including using video clips	Paul Sheriff	July onwards 2013

This action plan will be reviewed every six months; this will provide flexibility for our approach to public involvement to evolve over the next twelve months. It will also provide opportunity for the new CrossCity Council once established to coproduce future plans and approached to public involvement. We will publish the progress we are making against this action plan annually.

Appendix 1: What we mean by Patient Engagement

Individual Involvement	Engaging individual patients in their own health and care, through shared decision making and giving them more choice more control over how, when and where they are treated – helping to delivering "no decision about me without me".
Collective Involvement	Engaging patient cohorts (patients with common conditions) to help get services right for them, engaging with the public in decisions about planning design and reconfiguration of health services, pro-actively as design partners and reactively, through effective consultation and commissioning activities.
Patient Experience	Engagement activities capture direct feedback from patients, service users, carers and wider communities, which is used alongside information on clinical outcomes and other intelligence to inform quality improvements, reshaping of local services and contract arrangements with providers.

Appendix 2: Plan on a Page

Excellence in Commissioning Through Excellent Primary Care

Plan on a page 2013/15

NHS Birmingham CrossCity Clinical Commissioning Group

VALUES
- This is a membership organisation, it's you, it's us, not them.
- Wherever possible work smarter not harder.
- Big enough to redefine the system, local enough to listen.
- An NHS that you and your family are happy and confident to use.
- Change delivered together, by creating a common understanding across primary and secondary care, patients and the public.

PURPOSE
- Improving quality across the whole system
- Make services work better and more seamlessly both in health and social care
- Commissioning the best healthcare to give the best outcomes whilst balancing the books
- Work across the city to identify & roll out good, innovative practice.

OFFERS EVERYONE COUNTS: PLANNING FOR PATIENTS 2013/14
1. NHS services, 7 days a week.
2. More transparency, more choice.
3. Listening to patients and increasing their participation.
4. Better data, informed commissioning, driving improved outcomes.
5. Higher standards, safer care.

NHS OUTCOME FRAMEWORK DOMAIN	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	IMPROVEMENT OUTCOME NEEDED	2013/14 ACTIONS	2015 END STATE AMBITIONS
1 Preventing people from dying prematurely	Address health Inequalities	Improved experience for patients with learning disabilities and their carers	Increase numbers of people with a learning disability on primary care registers (LQPP**)	Reduction in health inequalities by addressing the 7 conditions that contribute most to our life expectancy gap
		Improve maternity and early years services	90% of all pregnant women on vitamins	
		Primary Care Scheme to address 7 conditions linked to 70% of our life expectancy gap	Primary Care Quality Premium	
2 Enhancing quality of life for people with long-term conditions	Innovative, high quality and safe healthcare delivered by practices and commissioned providers	Innovative high quality General Practice throughout our area	Primary Care Quality Premium and GP Administration Data System (LQPP**) OFFER 4	42,500 (50%) of people with a diagnosis of CVD, heart failure, Diabetes and COPD are optimally managed
		Improved identification and management of long-term conditions	Introduce clinical assessment service reducing outpatient attendances by 7,000 (3%)	
	Mental health service users and other vulnerable groups receive the right care	Transform dementia services to improve outcomes	Improve dementia diagnosis rates and access to memory assessment service	Better mental health outcomes for people of all ages and a reduction in long-term anti-depressant prescribing
		Review and improve access to psychological therapies	Improve numbers going through therapy to 8,113 per year (10.5%)	
3 Helping people to recover from episodes of ill health or following injury	Support people to live a good quality life	Ensure the urgent care system meets the needs of our population	Roll out of IMPACT* across LA local areas	Integrated care across our local health and social care system to streamline and remove gaps
			Acute Clinics across the city, reducing emergency admissions by 5,000 (6%) OFFER 1	
		Improved support for people living in care homes	Additional GP and nurse support to care homes	
4 Ensuring people have a positive experience of care	Patients report that providers treat them effectively, safely and with dignity OFFER 5	Improved identification and management of people towards the end of their lives, so they can die in the place of their choice	Agree city-wide strategy to enable people nearing the end of their life to die where they choose to (80% of people)	Systematic use of patient experience feedback to inform commissioning decisions
		Improve patient experience and feedback	Roll out of friends and family test and local patient experience surveys OFFER 2	
5 Treat and care in safe environment and protect from avoidable harm		Reduce incidence of avoidable harm	Improve quality of referrals to safeguarding services (LQPP**) Reduce c.diff rates by 21%	Better integration of safeguarding services and primary care. Achieve target reduction of healthcare associated infection
Gain the engagement and support of our patients and public in making decisions that affect their health and local health services OFFER 3		Systematic approach to patient and public engagement at all levels of the organisation	Implementation plan for Involvement, Engagement and Partnership Strategy underway	'No decision about me, without me' clearly at the heart of our commissioning decisions.

*IMPACT: Integrated Multidisciplinary Primary and Community Care Team. **LQPP: Local Quality Premium Priority.

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For further information or to request a copy of this document in an alternative format pleases contact:

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Adults & Communities Directorate.

Background

In 2012, the Directorate undertook a review of the service user and carer forums and groups that it supported. These were well established and long standing, however it was felt that this model of engagement was not productive or effective; there was a lack of equality of opportunity, it was costly in terms of resources and there was little evidence of the benefits for the Directorate.

An analysis of all Adults & Communities clients (as at 31st March 2012, including those receiving meals, adaptations, equipment and professional support) indicated that 35% of clients were under 65 years of age, 25% were in residential care homes and 35% had a mental health condition or a learning disability. None of these groups were particularly well represented in existing engagement activity.

At that time it was proposed that there be three main outcomes of future engagement activity. To:

1. **improve the quality of services** by co-producing solutions;
2. **improve our ability to hear** citizen's views of our services, and
3. provide **a representative pool of people** from which we can recruit for co-production activity.

Two proposals were also made. The first proposal was a structural one; that:

- The Citizen Led Quality Boards (CLQBs) for Assessment & Support Planning and Commissioning should sit at the centre of all engagement activity
- Service user and carer forums, representing the wider service user and carer cohorts would sit around the CLQBs, receiving requests for information, feeding back views and experience and representing the cohort in both 'task and finish' groups and as Board Members,
- The 'task and finish' groups would look at specific areas of concern, identified by the Boards, using a co-production model, in support of the 'Making it Real' initiative.

The second proposal was a methodological one. It was proposed that the Directorate uses 'co-production'. The following working definition is proposed:

> "Co-production means delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change."

The planned consultation has not yet taken place. In January 2013, the City Council commenced a Service Review of engagement which is still on-going.

Potential good practice:

Based on our two citizen-led Quality Boards and the national 'Making It Real' initiative (see attached article and powerpoint), Adults & Communities is trialling a co-production approach to service improvement.

The Boards, one for Assessment and Support Planning, the other for Commissioning have their own workplans and share a number of common themes such as safeguarding, but come together to take forward 'Making It Real'

In addition, we have established a new website: MyCareinBirmingham.org as our principal information portal.

Difficulties faced

There is a distinct difference between our traditional 'campaigning' user groups challenging the Directorate as opposed to coming together as equals in co-production to identify issues from a citizen's perspective and developing solutions together.

In a service the size of adult social care, there are going to be any number of opaque procedures, galling delays and unsatisfactory responses. Our first major challenge was identifying a workplan which was at the same time, manageable, addressed key issues and was achievable.

Other challenges include:

- Bringing together a representative group of individuals to sit on the Boards, people who use services, carers and citizens;
- Ensuring that robust support systems exist – transport etc
- Finding facilitators with the necessary skills and experience of group work looking to achieve action within a defined timescale;
- Finding time to engage with senior managers to promote co-production

The term *co-production* is not necessarily the easiest to explain, so the CLQBs have re-defined it:

"Our aim is to improve Adults and Communities services. We believe the only way to do this is by people who use services; carers; citizens and people who provide services and the Council, working together to keep hold of the things that are going well, and find ways of improving the things that need to get better. We call this co-production."

Lessons learned

In our experience:

- the citizens who volunteer their time prefer to have defined protocols and terms of reference;
- not everyone wants to, or can, attend meetings;
- there needs to be clear and frequent communication between meetings/activities;

- meetings/activities need to be planned at times and venues which suit the needs of the volunteers – not starting before 10am and not finishing after 3pm.

CAG – 16/10/13

(Making it Real article for next ASP Newsletter Summer 2013)

Making it Real in Adults and Communities

Adults and Communities, in partnership with its [Citizen-led Quality Boards](#) have signed up to be part of the Think Local, Act Personal 'Making it Real' programme. This is a way of checking how well Adults and Communities are doing in offering support that is individual to the person and that they have choice and control over the care they receive.

'Making it Real' is based on 26 "I" statements developed by people who use services that express what people want to see and experience in adult social care services.

It helps organisations to:

• look at what they're doing at the moment and check to see how well they are getting on
• see which areas need to be better and come up with plans for action, and
• let others know how they're doing - especially the local community and the people they serve.

Staff from the Continuous Improvement and Citizen Engagement teams have been working with people who use our services and carers from our Citizen Quality Boards for ASP and Commissioning, to agree 3 'Making it Real' priority work areas which are based on the following 3 "I" statements:

1. Information and Advice:
"I have access to easy-to-understand information about care and support which is consistent, accurate, accessible and up to date".

2. Active and supportive communities:
"I have access to a range of support that helps me to live the life I want and remain a contributing member of my community".

3. Workforce:
"I have access to a pool of people, advice on how to employ them and the opportunity to get advice from my peers".

See our [Making it Real action plan](#) for details of how we have been getting on with working together (co-production) on these three areas.

Reviewing our action plan and setting new priorities

Members of both Citizen-led Quality Boards will be attending a Making it Real awayday in early September to review our current action plan and agree new priorities for work over the next six months.

Citizen feedback
We have been encouraging citizens of Birmingham to give us their views

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about our Making it Real work through printed questionnaires and an online survey on our website: Making it Real Survey.

You can find out more about the national Making it Real work and how we have been involved by going to the Think Local, Act Personal website at www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

Related documents
You can see our Making it Real Action plan with details of the work we have been doing here:

Making it Real Action Plan (Size: 183 Kb Type: PDF)

Find out more about how we first got involved in Making it Real here:

Birmingham_City_Council_Making_it_Real_June_2012 (Size: 404 Kb Type: PDF)

Find out more about our Co-production work here:

CoProductionSCIE case study (Size: 41.6 Kb Type: PDF)

For more information about Adults and Communities Making it Real work, contact Melanie Gray, Continuous Improvement Team Email: Melanie.j.gray@birmingham.gov.uk

Birmingham City Council

Adults and Communities Directorate

Assessment and Support Planning Service User-led Quality Board

'Making it Real'

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What is Making it Real?

Part of Think Local, Act Personal – over 395 organisations, including 66 councils signed up to change adult social care for the better through personalisation and community based support.

Personalisation and support in the community:

• People having choice and control over their support

• Making sure the support is right for the individual

• Support with the things that are important to the person

• Having support from family, friends, being part of local community

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What is Making it Real?

A way of checking on how things are going

A checklist to help councils and organisations they work with:

1. Look at what they're doing at the moment and check to see how well they're doing it

2. See which areas need to be better and come up with plans for action

3. Let others know how they're doing – especially their local community and the people that use their services

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26 'I' statements

Personalisation and support in the community means people having choice and control over their support

Checklist
26 "I…" statements that say what people want to see and experience

For example: "I have information about my care and support that is always easy to understand, right and up to date."

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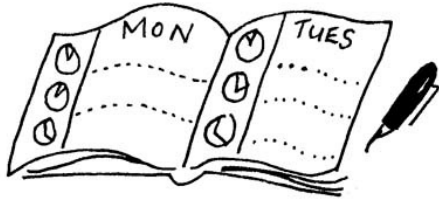
Getting started

Feb 2012
Service User-led Quality Board said Yes to Making it Real

March 2012
Adults and Communities managers and Cllr. Anderson thought it was a good idea

April 2012
Adults and Communities on the Making it Real website

May 2012
Making it Real Workshops started by choosing 3 of the 26 "I" statements

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Making it Real Priorities

For each 'I' statement, we asked are we…

• **Still in the dressing room?** - Not really done anything

• **On the starting blocks?** - Thinking about what we might do

• **Started but not got very far?** - Started but still a long way to go

• **Halfway there?** - Going well, but still quite a lot to do

• **Nearly there?** - Lots of work has been done and starting to see improvements

• **Crossed the finishing line?** - Citizens, service users and carers say it is a good service with good outcomes
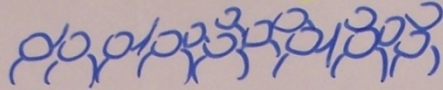
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An Olympics theme!

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Making it Real 3 Priorities

1. Information and Advice - Having the information you need, when you need it:

"I have access to easy-to-understand information about care and support which is consistent, accurate, accessible and up to date".

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Making it Real 3 Priorities

2. Active and supportive communities:

"I have access to a range of support that helps me to live the life I want and remain a contributing member of my community".

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Making it Real 3 Priorities

3.   Workforce – my support staff:

"**I have access to a pool of people, advice on how to employ them and the opportunity to get advice from my peers**".

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Active and Supportive communities

I have access to a range of supp[ort]
that helps me live the life I want a[nd]
remain a contributing member of m[y]
community.

What are things like now?

What We think this means

Help to be as independent as possible

More people given right to be independent

Media reports - Hate Crime awareness of abuse

Hate crime. discrimination.

Travel. Support from Carers.

Parents + Carers are worried.

ACCESS

Complications because of different agencies involved.

Be Safe → make own choices

H + S constraints

We are starting here:

People at house - no service
+ under radar - no service
Pockets of good Practice - youth service
Equality issues. Payment for...
Transport is a big barrier for...
People being unabled in community
Not enough support hours for...
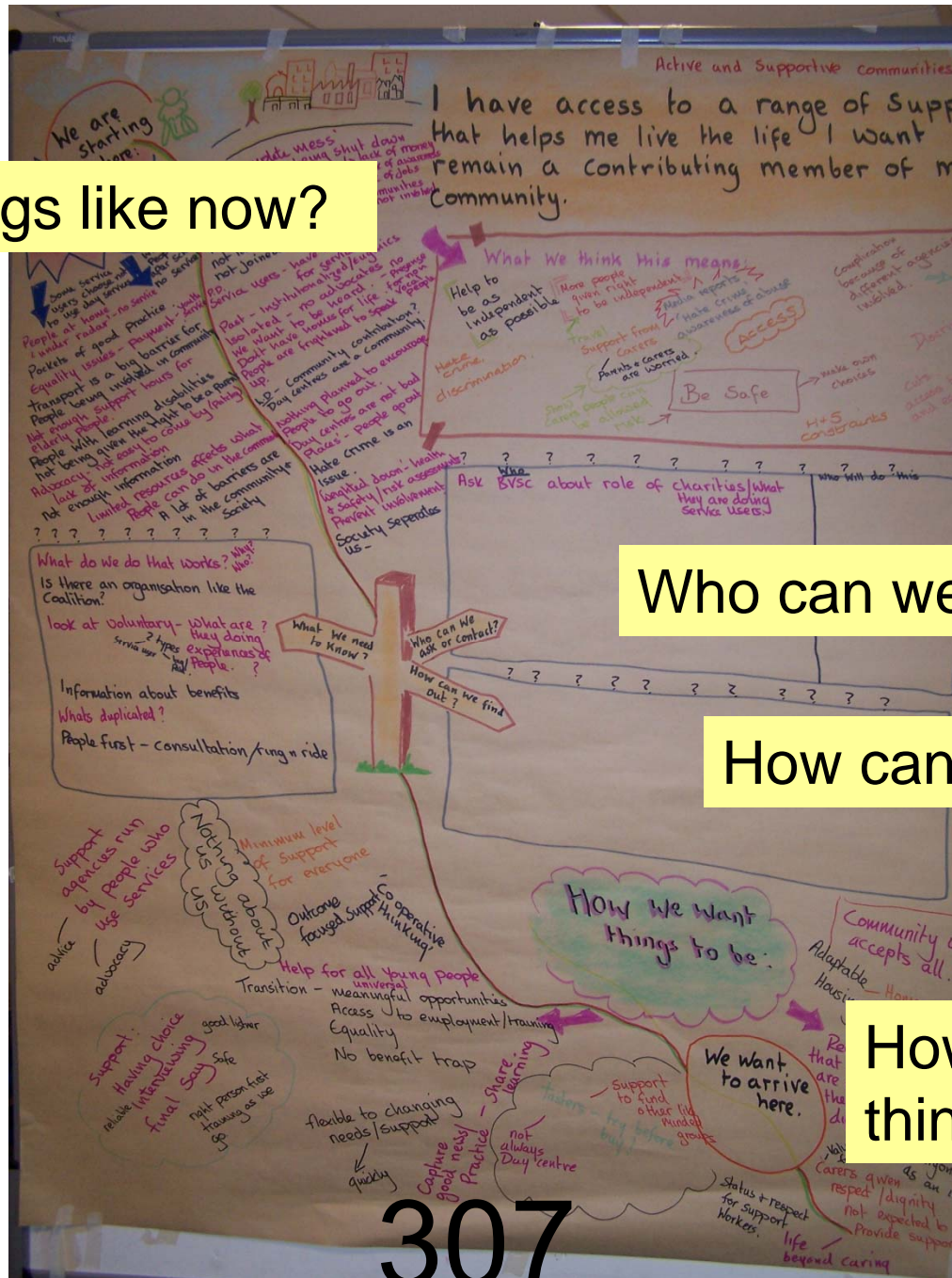Elderly people
People with learning disabilities
not being given the right to be a...
Advocacy - lack access to come by (parking)
lack of information
Limited resources effects what...
Not enough People can do in the community
A lot of barriers are in the community
Society

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

What do we do that Works?

Is there an organisation like the Coalition?

look at voluntary - what are they doing? types experiences of my People.

Information about benefits
Whats duplicated?
People first - consultation / ring n ride

not joined up.
Service users - for services
be heard.
We want involved to speak
Don't are frightened to speak up.
VP - Community contribution?
Day centres are a community.
Nothing Planned to encourage People to go out.
Day centres are not bad places - People go out.
Hate crime is an issue.
weighted down - health + safety / risk assessment. Prevent involvement
Society Seperates us -

Ask BVSC about role of charities / What they are doing Service users.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
who Will do this

Who can we ask?

What We need to Know?

Who can We ask or Contact?

How can we find out?

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

How can we find out?

Support agencies run by people who use services

advice

advocacy

Nothing about us without us!

Minimum level of Support for everyone

Outcome focused Support Co-operative Thinking

Help for all Young people universal
Transition - meaningful opportunities
Access to employment / training
Equality
No benefit trap

Support. Having choice reliable interviewing good labour final say Safe right person first training as we go

flexible to changing needs / Support quickly

Capture good news / Practice - Share learning

not always Day centre

How We Want things to be.

Community w accepts all.
Adaptable - Housing

We want to arrive here.

Re that are the d

Traders - try before buy

How we want things to be

Support to fund other id window groups

Carers given as done resped / dignity an in not expected to Provide support
life beyond caring

Status + respect for Support Workers.

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Action Plan

Making it Real Action Plan October 2012

Birmingham City Council Adults and Communities

(Assessment & Support Planning Services)

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Keeping positive

• Equal partners – no 'us' and 'them' but 'we'

• What's working well? (not just things that need to get better)

• Share the learning

Keeping it relevant and meaningful

• Agree 3 Making it Real 'I' statements most important to **our group**

• Agree an Action Plan – aim high but practical and realistic

• Think about services and opportunities that meet everyone's needs - people's culture, sexuality, age, religion, race and disabilities

Keeping people engaged

• MiR meetings, materials and places accessible for everyone

• Good communication at, and in between meetings

• Interactive – support people to participate

• Regular meetings – keep the momentum!

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Birmingham City Council Adults and Communities

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Making it Real Website:

www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

Made with
PHOTO
SYMBOLS 3

ChangePictureBank www.changepeople.co.uk

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D&C Response to Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee – October 2013

Examples of Citizen Engagement

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
Birmingham Development Plan This will set a framework for new development in Birmingham for 2011 to 2031. It is a key policy document for the City Council. The Council is under a legal obligation to produce the Plan and there is a statutory process which must be followed (including requirements for consultation at different stages.) This is the same as the process for Area Action Plans summarised below. The Plan must also respond to national planning policy which requires that Councils should plan to meet 'objectively assessed' needs for new housing and employment.	• The plan is city-wide and there are many stakeholders – local people, businesses, developers, infra-structure providers, adjoining Councils etc • The process is lengthy, complicated and there is a lot of technical material • The plan is strategic and has a long time frame - but may have significant implications • Resources are limited • There is a risk of legal challenge if we get the process wrong	• 'Plain English' summaries are important • At city-wide level, starting point is likely to be via groups/ associations etc. Up-to-date mailing list is essential • Need to ensure Elected Members are informed and make use of 'formal' structures (District/Ward Committees etc) where possible
Area Action Plans These are statutory spatial plans prepared to guide land use change over a long term period. The preparation of these follow a set process based on the development of options, public consultation on options, development of preferred option, consultation on preferred option, submission to government for a public inquiry and subsequent adoption. The Council has successfully developed	• Process leads to long timescale from consultation to plan adoption, can lead to frustration/early raised expectations • Need to continue ongoing consultation once the plan has been adopted e.g. Longbridge	A variety of consultation techniques work well e.g. telephone surveys, question-naires, newsletters, open forums, a Citizen Panel, roadshow, active website etc • Techniques

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
and adopted Area Action Plans through this process and delivery on the ground can now be seen on the Longbridge Area Action Plan and the Aston, Newtown, Lozells Area Action Plan. The Bordesley Park Area Action Plan has reached preferred option stage for which the public consultation has just finished.	monthly consultative meeting which has capacity issues • Cost of effective consultation • Need to avoid consultation being dominated by the old familiar faces – need to target difficult to reach & the silent majority • Recognition that there may be a wide range of stakeholders • Aston, Newtown Lozells Area Action Plan covers an extensive area, required more resources • Consultation on the Bordesley Park included a range of venues to target hard to reach parts of the community, some notably more popular than others • Purpose of consultation not understood, tends to generate queries, complaints on a range of other issues	used need to be bespoke to an area and its communities • Use of consultation venues that are accessible as part of people's everyday life such as supermarkets • Ongoing consultation whilst recognising consultation fatigue and capacity • Need to record and be seen to respond to all issues raised through consultation.
Localisation Agenda The Localism Act and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning Regulations introduced a number of neighbourhood planning tools; Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders; for which community groups would be responsible for initiating, local engagement, development and	• Responsibility for engagement and consultation in the use of the Neighbourhood Planning tools is with the designated community group and not the local authority • Cost of consultation to a community	• Advice and support from the local authority on consultation • Access into network of local groups • Early engagement by the designated Forum with local

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
preparation and consultation. The City Council as the local planning authority is responsible for managing the process of applications, designations, an independent enquiry, referendum and adoption. To support interested communities the City Council has a Neighbourhood Planning webpage and an approved Neighbourhood Planning Protocol. To date the City Council has received one application to undertake a Neighbourhood Development Plan by the Balsall Heath Neighbourhood Planning Forum, who are preparing for consultation on their draft Plan.	organisation • Capacity for on-going engagement • The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations set a minimum expectation for consultation with notification to stakeholders where Plan can be viewed	stakeholders • Use of existing established communication channels • Requirement for designated Forum to set up and use website
Wholesale Markets The future of the Wholesale Markets in Birmingham has been a contentious issue, which has led in the past to the threat of legal proceedings. Since 2011 the City Council has carried out extensive consultation with Wholesale Market traders, traders of the other Bullring Markets, customers & suppliers to the Wholesale Markets concerning options for the future. Regular (every 2 weeks) meetings have taken place with the Wholesale Market traders since August 2011 and since January 2013 with all other markets concerning process. The Peoples' Panel was also used as part of the consultation process. Dialogue continues following the Cabinet Report of March 2013 to take forward two relocation sites on the basis of a series of regular meetings to develop the relocation options and appropriate mitigation measures.	• Threat of legal proceedings • Distrust of BCC	• Importance of dialogue with impacted parties whilst not necessarily agreeing with stakeholder's views. • The perception of being heard is important but this process is resource intensive.
Street Naming A competition was held about three years ago to get a pre-approved list of new street names that reflected various localities or celebrated local history etc. This was presented, where we were able to, at various Ward Committees to gather interest and we also made contact with local historian	• Gaining the right level of interest • Design work was complex as there are so many caveats that have to be taken into	• Utilised texting, as this was the prime social networking medium at the time, and this had limited success. Would be encouraged to use

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
groups etc.	consideration e.g. names should have a local connection, historically, geographically or culturally. Names of living people should not be used etc. Getting people to appreciate and take on board these restrictions • Resource intensive – as this was city-wide. Trying to cover everything in the consultation timescale • Gaining consensus for approval	Facebook and Twitter for any re-runs as feel this medium would be quite effective for this type of consultation

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
Jewellery Quarter Controlled Parking Zone Review Controlled Parking Zones and Residents' Parking Schemes are subject to lengthy consultation prior to implementation (1st stage consultation on the principal, seeking 60% of relevant responses in favour; 2nd stage consultation on detailed design; and finally, formal advertising of the Traffic Regulation Order) and it is BCC's policy to review a CPZ or RPS after approximately 12 months of operation. The aim of this consultation was to gather feedback on the operation of the Jewellery Quarter CPZ from the point of view of residents, businesses and workers in the area. In this case, the following consultation methods were used: • Engagement with Ward Councillors; • Engagement with key local stakeholders including Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Forum, and Jewellery Quarter Development Trust; • Leaflet with questionnaire (freepost or online return) delivered to all properties within the CPZ; • Details of the review uploaded to www.birmingham.gov.uk/jqparking; • Details of review and online questionnaire added to Be Heard database; and • Attendance at an established business breakfast and residents' 'MyJQ' evening event.	• Balance between the needs of residents, businesses and local workers; and • A few local issues e.g. regarding bay designations or restrictions.	• Active local groups and residents were key to raising awareness, mainly via social media; • Review of existing parking schemes is less controversial than consultations on their implementation; • Alongside public consultation, information and feedback was gathered from BCC colleagues on planned developments, parking enforcement and levels of parking in bays where the parking bay sensor trial is in effect (tbc that we can definitely get the data); and • Since the CPZ was implemented, any feedback received has been saved and it has been useful to feed this into the review.
Establishing and maintaining Local Arts Fora in each District In 2010/11 the service initiated the concept of creating Local Arts Fora in each District to develop and expand community led arts engagement activity at a local level. In order to establish these Fora it was necessary to recruit and fund a	• Suitability of certain arts organi-sations to lead the Fora in some Districts – these have been changed • Limited capacity of	• Need regular engagement with local community leaders; District representatives who identify groups with contacts – emails,

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
locally based arts organisation in each area to manage and administer arrangements on the ground. The service has managed to continue to support these organisations to help develop and improve the Fora in areas such as governance, recruitment, programming and managing projects. Several of the Fora have since managed to become constituted in their own right and the service continues to assist and advise others to do the same. The Local Arts Fora brought together District Senior managers; local Arts organisations and artists; volunteer and community groups and the Arts Champions for each District. Over three years these networks have been supported and guided by a Culture Commissioning Officer and progressed from a network to a delivery agency for local arts projects. Regular quarterly meetings for all 10 Local Arts Fora leads with Arts Champions are held centrally to share good practice and lessons learnt across the city.	volunteers to commit the time to develop the organisational capacity of the network • Lack of local skills and knowledge required to move things forward – in terms of arts and event management to raise the profile of local arts • Managing the different agenda's – some Fora have a strong artist voice without necessarily reaching the diverse needs of the local community or District • Persuading Fora about the benefit of becoming a constituted organisation – e.g. to be able to apply for funding • Tying in the work of the Fora with District priorities / arts plans and other cultural agents in the area such as Arts Champions • The economic support from Culture Commissioning Team to the network has not been matched by District funds and is insufficient to support robust local arts infrastructure	meetings etc • Targeted delivery to reach and sustain arts work with communities requires considerable time, advice, guidance, encouragement and leadership • Increased external funding to support these endeavours is required and constituting appropriately will be key to securing Arts Council / DCLG funding in 2014 and beyond
Neighbourhood Based Community Budget (now branded 'Our Place') – Cultural Pilots in Shard End, Castle Vale and Balsall Heath This project has been developed with the existing structures for Community Based Budgets in Balsall Heath, Castle Vale and Shard End and follows the existing	• Research timeframe was limited to 3 months and 20 days with local community groups in targeted areas and recommendations limited to one researcher's views	• Good and effective delivery of local arts requires good community & arts leadership • New consortia require effective leadership

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
Community Based methodology. In each area, residents and stakeholders worked with a cultural intermediary to audit current activities in the area and then were supported to develop a framework for commissioning pilot activities to address gaps in provision with targeted communities. Evaluation methodology was identified to measure the effect of these on a range of outcomes. The current stage of the process is piloting arts and cultural activities with residents engaged in all levels of design and delivery of projects. Current evaluation methodology will produce in-depth case studies that will be shared in a city wide symposium to share the learning which can be adapted for future application across the city during 2014.	• Delivery time divided into two phases to allow for immediate delivery in first phase to allow for more co-design and delivery with resident engagement in the second phase • Local cultural infrastructure very different in all three areas so pilot projects could not be the same in all three areas • Communities were not the same in each area and demographic research was not immediately available e.g. Somali migrant population not so visible in Balsall Heath; Black British in Castle Vale not so visible • Planning new delivery of arts projects with residents takes time for effective delivery so phase two projects had to be extended towards February 2014. • Evaluation framework took time to evolve and articulate with external professionals	• Large scale arts projects require community groups to work together for common aim and purpose and then have longer term impact • Diverse communities respond differently – open access application to Balsall heath revealed new artists working in different communities

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
Digital Birmingham – EU CIP funded DISCOVER Project The DISCOVER project is a 3-year funded EU Project that is focused on developing the digital skills of carers – both paid for and informal (friends and family). The design and development of the e-learning portal and resources is based on reiterative design process (Living Lab approach). This means that carers and their stakeholders are involved right from the very beginning and throughout the development process in helping to shape the design of the end service and resources. This user centric design process starts by working with the trusted intermediaries to help identify carers to be involved with the project (for instance existing networks - third sector – Midland Mencap; Birmingham Carer's Centre; Carers UK; Care providers – e.g. Midland Heart); These groups provide reach to their networks of carers, from which we can then create small focus groups that we work closely with throughout the project. The focus groups are engaged through a combination of face to face facilitated meetings at local centres as well as through use of online tools so that they can make comments and feedback on any improvements at a time to suit them. A wider Project Advisory Board made up of stakeholder groups (care and training providers / academics / training providers) meet online virtually helps address wider policy / strategic issues. Wider dissemination and communication through case stories help promote wider engagement and awareness.	• Gaining trust • Investment in time to develop networks and to develop user groups • Drop out rate of carers due to the high vulnerable nature of this group • Target group are from all walks of life and have very varying needs, which have to be addressed (e.g. time / IT skills) • Addressing privacy and ethical issues • Language barriers	• Develop a user engagement methodology to ensure that privacy / ethics etc are adhered to • Good, effective communication with target groups and wider stakeholders • Provide a support network by establishing champions through peer groups and support agencies • Contextualise their involvement - i.e. needs to be relevant to their aspect • Reiterative design is an important element – one off feedback / consultation does allow for individuals to co-design the solution
Housing Investment & Regeneration The regeneration of Newtown is included within the Aston Newtown and Lozells Area Action Plan and is anticipated to be a 10-15 year programme. The first stage of the regeneration undertaken through Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) consists of 260 new homes, three new schools, a young person's centre, a public square and public open space. Stakeholders developed Crocodile Works 126 apartments and 42 town houses and Newtown Extra Care Village with 180 one and two bedroom apartments. The programme is led by Birmingham	• Not all communities are represented at all times. • Managing expectation between aspirational development and affordability. • Managing residents' expectations over the 10-15 years can be challenging. • Ensuring the correct information is	Inclusive Consultation has been undertaken by; • Varying the timing and location of events and meetings. • Staff and architects available to provide training and development to residents. This greatly helped their understanding of the process and timescales for

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
City Council and requires close partnership working between key partners including; Ward Members, Local Services, Education, Health, Highways, Police, Midland Heart, Extra Care Charitable Trust, Newtown Neighbourhood Forum and Newtown Residents Design Group. **Public Consultation Approach** A number of consultation events have taken place, Ward Committee has been attended and residents have been encouraged to join Newtown Residents Design Group. The group is made up of a cross section of the community and representatives from local groups. The purpose of the group is to specifically comment on the regeneration proposals. Residents have been trained in Urban Design, Sustainability and BCC's planning processes. This has equipped the group to successfully input into the design and planning process from a local residents view. The group also input into the annual ".Newtown Hockley & St Georges Living Newsletter" which is circulated to Newtown residents.	disseminated.	development. • Regular and sustained meetings are important and have built trust between officers and residents. • Production of an annual Newsletter with all stakeholders contributing has been an excellent consultation tool. • Working with 3rd sector local enterprises has been of benefit • Continuing to work with service providers in the area (such as The Lighthouse, Schools and Extra Care Village) to target residents.
Transport Study 2012/13 Transport decisions made by BCC have a universal impact on our residents, irrespective of chosen mode of travel. The Transportation Programmes team undertook the Transport Survey 2012/13 to update intelligence on how residents make their transport choices. In addition to this, the horizon for transport and our citizen base has experienced considerable change over ten years and no more so than the transport decisions facing Birmingham over the next 20 years; we sought to understand how the public felt about various potential changes to our cities transport priorities/infrastructure. The Transport Survey 2012/13 is made up of 1001 telephone	• Obtaining a representative cross-section of citizens to reflect Birmingham's diverse population	• Have a clear idea of key groups to be targeted and represented in your consultation. • When designing a questionnaire have a plain understanding of what you aim to achieve, in terms of which issues you're hoping to have a comprehen-sible understanding of.

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
interviews conducted by independent researchers to capture residents' transport use, journeys into the City Centre as well as views on congestion and transport priorities in Birmingham to inform transport policy.		
Transportation – Public Highway Most works on the public highway delivered by Infrastructure Projects (Development and Culture Directorate) are subject to public consultation and engagement. The consultation proposals are recorded in a "Consultation and Engagement Plan", this is where the intended consultees are listed, the method of consultation is stated together with the timescales and cost of consultation. The document is checked and approved by project Manager and a Senior Manager. We endeavour to use the most appropriate consultation methods to gain access to the residential and business communities. Letters are delivered to consultees within the vicinity of the project a prepaid envelope is normally included to encourage consultees to return questionnaires. On more complex/larger projects such as Controlled Parking Zones/Residents Parking Schemes a project leaflet is prepared giving more information about the project. The delivery of information to consultees is now being done, in most cases, using sustainable delivery companies such as Cycles4U. We use Ward Committees, Residents and Business meetings to facilitate presentations and face to face dialogue on project proposals. In addition, particularly on the larger projects, drop in	• The planning and production of paper copies of letters and plans can be time consuming and expensive. It is important the programme allows sufficient time for preparing for the consultation, an appropriate consultation period and evaluation of the responses. A simple letter directing consultees to a webpage for details/information would be quicker and cheaper however, residents may not have internet access. • Establishing the appropriate groups to consult with, there are now numerous residents and business groups that officers may not be aware of, at the preparation of the Consultation and Engagement Plan stage officers should access this information via Ward Councillors, BID Managers, Town Centre Managers, District Directors etc.	Good Practice: • Establish Consultation and Engagement Plan at the start of the project. • Use information leaflets when appropriate. • On long term projects set up monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly consultative group. • Use sustainable methods e.g. cycle groups to do letter drops, use internet as a platform for consultees to respond to, use email rather than letter particularly for key consultees such as Ward Councillors, emergency services etc. Lessons Learnt: • Allow sufficient time for the whole consultation process and include in project programme. • Plan consultations to avoid holiday periods.

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Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
sessions and exhibitions are arranged in order that the community have opportunity to view the proposals and ask questions of officers in attendance, e.g. Local Sustainable Transport Fund Project. All consultations are posted on Birmingham City Council's webpage (Beheard), the link to the webpage is stated in the initial consultation letter to consultees. On large long term projects regular community meetings have been held, such as on the Selly Oak New Road, this has proved to be a good forum for the exchange of information and for cascading progress information to the community.	• Constraints on funding influence project programmes, consultations should be planned to avoid holiday periods when residents may be away and businesses closed. • Many of our projects are complex and technical, the information presented to the community must be easy to read and understand, sometimes we have difficulty simplifying the information without losing essential information.	• Establish the community/residents/business groups at the start of the project. • Arrange exhibitions/drop in sessions on the more complex projects. • Keep scheme plans/drawings as simple as possible, and check all material carefully before it is sent out.

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
Transportation – LSTF (Bike North Birmingham) In April 2011 Birmingham City Council bid to the Government's new Local Sustainable Transport Fund for Bike North Birmingham. In July 2011 £4.1M was awarded for a four year programme of new cycle routes and supporting cycling activities aiming to take cycling to a new level and help improve the environment, the local economy and health and fitness in the process. Bike North Birmingham engages directly with the communities in Erdington and Sutton Coldfield though working with schools, workplaces and in the community through dedicated Bike Hubs providing programmes of cycling related activities, training, led ride and bike loans/hire. The target audience for the project is the 'near market' for cycling, sometimes called 'maybe cyclists' i.e. those who have previously cycled or own a bike but do not use it, or those who are considering cycling for health or financial reasons. Engagement on Bike North Birmingham consists of: o Making potential customers aware of the services on offer; o Getting feedback on the offer to ensure that customer needs are being met; and o More conventional consultation on infrastructure measures (i.e. we're building a cycle route near to your house, what do you think)	• Agreeing overarching brand and brand hierarchy on a partnership project; • Finding the right methods in terms of effectiveness and value for money to target a diverse population (contrasting areas of higher deprivation in Erdington and Castle Vale with more affluent areas); • Balancing the requirement to print by exception with the needs of the local population, particularly with regard to cycle route mapping; • Balancing the needs of all road users when developing infrastructure – for example conflicts between residential parking and cycle lanes on the carriageway can result in local objections.	• The importance of having a strong and consumer focussed brand and identity – a real strength of BNB is the growing brand recognition and how attractive and professional all the materials look; • If projects like BNB are to be sustainable beyond the life of the existing funding then working with existing community groups and developing good pools of volunteers to take forward is key. There is a great deal of willingness to get involved – for example working with the Sutton Coldfield Muslim Association we have trained them to lead their own cycle rides and assisted with funding applications; and • Understanding how to 'sell' your offer to different audiences – the way to get workplaces engaged is very different to a primary school, which in turn is different again to a secondary school.
Planning & Regeneration Non Statutory Consultation Aside from our statutory obligations Planning and Regeneration has a variety of stakeholder groups with which to consult. Due to the nature of the work we have both internal and external customer groups. Each group has different characteristics and so will need to be consulted with	• Cost of effective consultation • Resources are limited	• A variety of consultation techniques work well e.g. telephone surveys, questionnaires, newsletters, open forums, user forums

Consultation Engagement Approach	Difficulties faced	Lessons Learnt/Good Practice
in different ways appropriate to their needs. Areas that will be consulted on are, service improvements, service performance, timeliness and quality, the Culture and Organisation, information and access, customer Insight and delivery. There are a wide variety of tools, which will be used, depending on the topic for consultation and the stakeholder groups to be consulted. Additionally, the method of consultation will be chosen depending on the type of information we need to elicit from it, for example quantitive data requiring facts and figures or more qualitative information understanding what people think. In addition to the proactive consultation methods employed, we will also use reactive tools to collect customer views and comments, including complaints, letters and emails. All of the results will be evaluated by the responsible team/officer. These results will be considered when planning follow on or future communication or activity. Any lessons learned and good practice will be shared via the Be Heard Consultation Database. All the results will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will be not shared with any third parties.	• Commitment from both staff and customers to participate	• On-going consultation is essential • Need to record and be seen to respond to all issues raised through consultation. • Demonstrate continuous analysis of data including trend analysis

Feedback from Lol Thurstan, B26 Community

I was very pleased to be invited to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting and explain to the committee what part I play in communicating via a webpage to my local community.

I thought I got some very good feedback from the various Councillors at this meeting. Yes... they feel that with cut backs in all budgets, there needs to be better ways of communicating with local communities so that they don't feel left out in the democratic process.

This brings me on to the reason as to why I got involved with the "B26 Community". I sit on the O.A.G. (Operational Advisory Group) at Stechford, chaired by Chief Superintendent Alex Murray, it had been explained to us that the budget cut for the West Midlands Police was 20% over 4 years, they realised that they had to involve the local community because of the budget cuts.

The West Midlands Police then decided to involve Neighbourhood Watch more, they also set up Street Watch, but they needed to get communication out to the public, hence the course set up for Social Media in conjunction with Birmingham Safety Partnerships. If BCC are to reduce the budget they have to be less bureaucratic, there is too much paper work and not enough action, they have to involve the local community more, increase the Community Chest Fund would be a good start.

My experience over the years with my two daughters is that they are constantly on Facebook or Twitter, however, the seniors are not letting them get away with it, they going to Silver Surfers at their local libraries and are doing the same thing.

Najm Clayton, Sutton Coldfield Local CIC

Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee:
Citizen Engagement Scrutiny Inquiry - 22nd October

What does citizen engagement mean to me?
A transparent, two way process of communication with individuals rather than their official representatives that promotes the active involvement of those individuals in decision making and the generation of innovative ideas.

There are things that BCC do well but there is room for improvement in order to develop genuine engagement.

My thoughts on how BCC can improve engagement with the citizens of Birmingham:

Implementation of online resources to aid two-way communication
This would include the effective use of social media as one of the channels of communication. By effective, I mean with genuine engagement rather than just as a platform for broadcasting.

The recognition and use of active citizens:
There are numerous people across the city taking an active interest in the community, be they bloggers, neighbourhood forum members, environmentalists etc. who are in a position to act as a communication 'bridge'

My own experience was that for the first year of running Sutton Coldfield Local it was very difficult to get information from local councilors. It took until the second year before some of the Sutton Coldfield councilors began to recognise us and engage. Some still do not. I believe that this is due in part to a preference to only go through traditional media. Citizen led websites and blogs such as ours are not always taken very seriously.

Early involvement of citizens in the planning process
In order to create true engagement people need to be involved at the very beginning of a process. Things such as identifying relevant "experts" to be included in the process are important. Providing public meetings after the important early decisions have been made reduces the feeling of truly being part of the process.

Nick Booth, Podnosh

Here are 3 thoughts (I have many more):

1   Thanks in part to the social media surgeries and the work of many active hyperlocal bloggers Birmingham already has a head start in what I call online civic engagement. The work we are doing (funded in part by different parts of the public sector) is helping to develop the skills to get involved in these online conversations among public servants.

2   The internet allows people to get to know each and collaborate to make things better. This is very different from how public services normally consider engagement - which is a time and subject specific process. For public services to be part of how these new connectedness changes thing public servants need to be allowed to get involved in the conversations and then use the relationships and the ideas that emerge from that to change things - iteratively.

3   There is a big challenge around culture. Allowing public servants to think like citizens rather than servants of a council process is a big step towards that.

and 4th

We're already good at using the web for civic good in Birmingham - embrace it support it, don't try and own or control it.

Ward Committees

1 Purpose

1.1 To provide some analysis on public attendance at Ward Committees for the period May 2012 – September 2013.

2 Headlines

2.1 Each Ward Committee has had from 5 – 8 meetings within May 2012 – September 2013. Of these:

- Longbridge Ward Committee had the highest number of public attendees (311 in total)[1]

- Shard End Ward Committee had the second highest number of public attendees (307 in total)

- Sutton Trinity Ward Committee had the highest number of public attendees at a single meeting (120)

- Tyburn Ward Committee had the lowest number of public attendees for this period (30 in total)

- Bournville; Erdington and Kingstanding Ward Committees each had a meeting whereby one member of the public attended

- Sutton Trinity had two meetings whereby one member of the public attended

2.2 The Ward Committee Members for the above were contacted for their reflections on the meetings and their thoughts on what more could be done to engage with citizens. These comments, where received, are included in this paper.

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[1] Please note: a number of the same people can attend more than one meeting and some of the numbers quoted are approximate

3   Details

Number of Ward Committee Meetings

3.1   Each Ward Committee has had between 5 – 8 meetings within May 2012 – September 2013. The table below provides the number of meetings that each Ward Committee has had and the number of public attendance (please note that some of the number of public attendees are approximate).

No. of Meetings and No. of Members of the Public Attending from May 2012 – Sept 2013

5 Meetings	No.	6 Meetings	No.	7 Meetings	No.	8 Meetings	No.
Bartley Green	81	Tyburn	30	Harborne	260	Erdington	109
Edgbaston	69	Bordesley Green	53	Quinton	235	Kingstanding	85
Sutton Four Oaks	107	Washwood Heath	81	Moseley & Kings Heath	101	Stockland Green	76
		Nechells	75	Hodge Hill	71	Hall Green	259
		Oscott	74	Aston	121	Sparkbrook	219
		Billesley	42	Soho	152	Springfield	119
		Bournville	68	Kings Norton	134	Shard End	307
		Brandwood	45	Weoley	45	Ladywood	270
		Sutton New Hall	101	Handsworth Wood	219	Longbridge	311
				Lozells & E Handsworth	74	Northfield	252
				Perry Barr	86	Sheldon	145
				Selly Oak	107		
				Sutton Trinity	178		
				Sutton Vesey	156		
				Acocks Green	71		
				South Yardley	87		
				Stechford & Yardley	94		

Longbridge Ward Committee

3.2   Longbridge Ward Committee had the highest number of public attendees in this period (Approximately 311 in total).

Date of Meeting	No. of Public Attendees
June 2012	60
September 2012	25
November 2012	14
February 2013	10
March 2013	30
April 2013	27
June 2013	135
September 2012	10

3.3   The highest number of attendees was at the 18th June 2013 meeting (approximately **135** attendees). Councillor Andy Cartwright and Councillor Ian Cruise were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- Sainsbury's Development

- Update on Policing Issues in the Ward

- Update on the work of the West Midlands Fire Service in the Ward

- Trident Reach and the proposal for Deelands Hall to be a Community Hub

3.4   Cllr Andy Cartwright, Chair of the Longbridge Ward Committee comments were:

The reason being is we have engaged with our community to find out their local issues. Empowered the residents to attend the meetings to raise their concerns also compliment issues that have been positive.

We regular attend community activities also put mini events on to engage our residents with a focus of the issues and situations they are feeling. I.e we held network meetings for the older citizens in the ward and had lead professionals there for them to access one stop support.

We have done this with all different needs and this has been successful.

Another point with the regeneration we have met with the businesses that want to invest in our community and put our residents needs first I.E local jobs / invest in community this is why a large number attended the Ward meeting at Deelands as we bought the chance of local jobs to local people.

Over all summary true grass root working putting our residents needs first. A proactive instead of a reactive response.

Shard End Ward Committee

3.5   Shard End Ward Committee had the second highest number of attendees in this period (approximately 307 in total). The highest number of attendees was at the 29th July 2013 meeting (approximately **70** attendees) and on the 23rd September 2013 there were approximately **60** attendees.

3.6   Councillors Marje Bridle and John Cotton were at both the 29th July and 23rd September meeting. Cllr Ian Ward was in attendance at the 29th July 2013 meeting. The main items on the agendas were:

29th July 2013	23rd September 2013
• All Saints Square – Upkeep • Police Issues – Shard End • Brownfield Road – Illegal parking on grass verges	• "Bedroom Tax" • Police Issues – Shard End • Moorfield Hall Refurbishment Update • Cole Hall Traffic Calming Update

• Cole Hall Lane Traffic Calming Review • Discussion on the Future of Council Services • Possible Interference to Freeview Television Signals	• Community Chest 2013/2014 Fast Track Projects Summary • Update on the Former Yardley Sewage Works • Response to Petition – Car Parking Bay in Packington Avenue • Relocation of Doctors Surgery

3.7 Councillor Marje Bridle, Chair of the Shard End Ward Committee provided their 'formula' and reasons for Shard End Ward Committee's success in engaging the public:

We believe the following factors have contributed to the success of Shard End Ward Committee in engaging the public:

1. We rotate the meeting round different neighbourhoods in the ward. So we meet at a venue in a different neighbourhood each time. Our meetings are therefore in effect neighbourhood meetings.

2. We advertise the meeting in that neighbourhood with a simple leaflet through doors in the streets surrounding the venue.

3. We think of agenda items appropriate to that neighbourhood. These will be items important to that neighbourhood and identified under the themes of emerging neighbourhood plans.

4. We promote the meetings as being about 'how to get problems resolved in your area'.

5. We attract a wide range of 'community champions' – residents who are interested in getting ACTION in their neighbourhood. We are building a ward team of active citizens.

6. We keep the 'community champions' informed about the forthcoming meetings and ask them to let other residents know.

7. We want the job of the committee clerk to include not just recording the meeting but really following local issues through to ensure action is taken and that the resident(s) who raised the issue is given some feedback. The committee clerk needs to get a note of the names and contact details of those who have raised issues.

8. We feel that the agendas of ward committees should be focused on action on issues in that area and that paperwork should not be in 'council speak' but in simple plain English with pages numbered so that the Chair can easily guide residents to the relevant page – we ask our ward committee clerk to handwrite page numbers onto every sheet once all the papers are ready.

9. As the Chair, I encourage residents to speak as much as possible and I discourage Councillors from 'hogging the show'. These meetings should not be about Councillors having a meeting in front of a public audience. They are an opportunity for residents to get things done about concerns in their area.

Sutton Trinity Ward Committee

3.8 Sutton Trinity Ward had the highest number of attendees of all the Ward Committees at a single meeting. There were approximately **120** attendees at the 22nd November 2012 Ward Committee meeting. Councillors Margaret Waddington, Philip Parkin and David Pears were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- Whitehouse Common Primary School

- Birmingham Development Plan – Consultation on Growth Options

- Maney Hill Road (lighting columns)

- The Jericho Re-use Centre

- Community Chest Funding 2012 – 2013

3.9 Sutton Trinity Ward also had two meetings with only 1 person in attendance at each (14th June 2012 and 26th September 2013). Councillors Philip Parkin, David Pears and Margaret Waddington were in attendance for both these meetings.

3.10 The main items on the agendas were:

14th June 2012	26th September 2013
• Appointments and Nominations to Leisure Services Organisations Serving Local Communities 2012 – 13 • Ward Refuse and Recycling Services • Highway Issues in the Ward • Community Chest Fund 2012 - 2013	• Street Lighting – Falcon Lodge Estate • Dog Fouling Issues in the Ward • Birmingham City Council Services Reviews • Wheelie Bins Information Update • District Committee Information Update • Community Chest Fund 2013 – 2014 • Planning Applications

3.11 Cllr Philip Parkins comments were:

> The meeting with 120 attendees had the issue of green belt development on the agenda – an issue of huge public interest in Sutton. (Despite this level of concern and show of 'people power' the Birmingham Development Plan still proposes building on the green belt. No wonder people are disillusioned with politics!).
> The other meetings that you refer to no doubt did not include such issues of wide spread public concern. A large number of agenda items at Ward Committee meetings are purely there for 'noting' or information purposes anyway, with the decisions having been made elsewhere.

3.12 Cllr David Pears comments were:

> It's about having subjects on the agenda that interest or effect many residents. Building on Green belt was one issue, creating extra places at a local school which was opposed by residents and parents was another issue.

Promoting the meeting in the media added value.

Lack of promotion and a mundane agenda set by the centre led to poor attendance at another.

Lack of interesting issues is sometimes a problem perhaps due to the fact we had to book meetings to achieve 4 in a year.
Better to have fewer meetings and call extra ones when there are real issues.

Tyburn Ward Committee

3.13   Tyburn Ward Committee had the lowest number of public attendees (approximately 30 attendees) in total. They had two meetings less than Longbridge, who had the highest number of public attendees.

Date of Meeting	No. of Public Attendees
June 2012	4 attendees
September 2012	5 attendees
November 2012	7 attendees
March 2013	5 attendees
June 2013	3 attendees
August 2013	6 attendees

3.14   At the Ward meeting on the 13th June 2013, where they had their lowest attendance. Councillors Lynda Clinton and Mike Sharpe were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- Co-Designing Culture Commissioning in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods – Part of the Culture on Your Doorstep Programme

- Shelforce Information Update

- Astral Centre and Pype Hayes Focus - Update

- Consultation on the Implementation of Wheelie Bines in Birmingham

- Community Chest Funding 2013 - 2014

Bournville Ward Committee

3.15   Bournville Ward Committee had one member of the public attend at their 23rd January 2013 meeting. Councillor Rob Sealey and Councillor Timothy Huxtable were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- West Midlands Fire Service – Information Update

- Sainsbury's Redevelopment Information Update

- Future Operating Model (FOM) – Selly Oak District

- Community Infrastructure Levy

- Community Chest Funding Allocation 2012 – 2013

- Stirchley Neighbourhood Forum

Erdington Ward Committee

3.16 Erdington Ward Committee had one member of the public attend their 23rd January 2013 meeting. Councillors Robert Alden, Bob Beauchamp and Gareth Moore were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- Lyndhurst Regeneration – Update Report

- Sainsbury's Store – Update on Planning Application

- Traffic Warden Enforcement on Erdington High Street and Surround Area

3.17 Councillor Robert Alden, Chair of the Erdington Ward Committee comments were:

That ward meeting took place during the heavy snow and indeed at least one item was cancelled in advance of the meeting due to officer being unwilling to come out in the snow. It was also at a new venue (we are having a meeting their this year again and will see if this is a problem with the venue as well). The meetings main item was to be an update on Sainsburys that was cancelled by them a week before due to court action by Asda. We wrote to the members of the public who had wanted to attend due to this so they were aware and therefore they did not attend. Therefore the combination of all this led to a very low attendance.

…Sadly the November attendance will be low again as the venue had to be changed on the night due to the School not opening up! This meant we had to go across the ward to another venue and being a cold night a number of residents who attended went home instead of going with the change of venue.

3.18 Councillor Gareth Moore's comments were:

That Ward Committee date had low attendance due an agenda item being withdrawn and it being the time of the bad snow. Attendance is generally lower in winter and will very much depend on the items of the agenda. We have very good attendances normally, with some meetings have 150 people present. Ward Committees need to be relevant and engaging, otherwise people are not interested.

In terms of moving forward, better advertising of Ward Committee would help. We currently publicise the meetings ourselves based on what the agenda items are and so would argue that the good attendances we achieve were more a result of the work of ourselves than any contribution by the Council. I do not think the odd poster and a small article in the Mail is sufficient advertising and more could be done around this.

Kingstanding Ward Committee

3.19   Kingstanding Ward Committee had one member of the public attend at their 6th December 2012 meeting. Councillors Des Hughes and Peter Kane were in attendance. The main items on the agenda were:

- Kingstanding Youth Strategy – Community Chest Spend Update
- Community Chest Funding 2012 – 2013
- Footpath – Witton Lodge Road / Maxted Road

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