



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities

Alternative Approaches to Neighbourhood Management

6 Full Case Study Reports

National Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Management
Pathfinder Programme



Neighbourhood
Renewal Unit



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Renewal Unit

March 2006

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: London

National Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme

The National Evaluation of the Pathfinder Programme is being undertaken by a consortium of organisations, led by SQW Ltd:

- SQW Ltd
- GFA Consulting
- European Institute for Urban Affairs, Liverpool John Moores University
- Cities Research Centre, University of West of England, Bristol
- Cambridge Economic Associates
- Local Government Centre, Warwick Business School, Warwick University
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Introduction

The national evaluation team led by SQW is assessing the progress of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's Pathfinder Programme of 35 neighbourhood management partnerships. To complement this work, the team has recently studied seven further neighbourhood management initiatives, outside of the Pathfinder Programme, to explore a wider range of neighbourhood management practices.

This report presents six case studies of current neighbourhood management initiatives from around England. These are the full case study reports.

There are two further publications that complement this one:

- A large detailed case study of the neighbourhood management initiative in **Wolverhampton**, published in the autumn of 2005; and
- An **overview report** that includes a summary of each of the seven neighbourhood management case studies (including the six described in this report and Wolverhampton) and some analysis.

All seven of our case studies (the six here and Wolverhampton) were selected to represent the range of practice being developed, and all have been operating for at least a couple of years. We have sought to explore how neighbourhood management is operating in a range of institutional and geographical contexts.

In all of our case studies, we have visited the areas, interviewed participants and reviewed background documents. We would like to thank all of the case study participants for agreeing to take part in our research.

Case Study A:

Poplar HARCA, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of a brief evaluation of the Poplar HARCA neighbourhood management initiative. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by Geoff Fordham from the National Evaluation team for the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

Introduction

Poplar HARCA (an acronym for Housing And Regeneration Community Association) was established in 1997, the first local housing company in the country, following a ballot of local authority tenants which approved a stock transfer of 1800 homes. A further 2500 units were transferred the following year, and currently the HARCA owns and manages some 5,500 homes. This number may increase as a result of a 'Housing Choice' process being run by Tower Hamlets Council which will lead to further ballots on stock transfer.

The HARCA is thus first and foremost a social landlord, though from the beginning its perception of the landlord's role extended beyond housing: hence the 'R' in HARCA. The principal focus was on community-based regeneration – but they started to use the phrase 'neighbourhood management' before the Social Exclusion Unit's PAT4 report on it in 2000. One of the features that characterised the area (and in part explained its selection for the local housing company) is its isolation. Therefore early on in the life of the HARCA, a neighbourhood based approach was seen as essential, to help overcome the isolation and develop links with local and thoroughly disengaged communities. The work was originally carried out under the direction of a team of 'Community Area Directors', but these eventually became (with appropriately amended functions) the Neighbourhood Directors that are now responsible for neighbourhood management within Poplar.

Although some version of neighbourhood management had been reflected in HARCA activities since the beginning, its *formal* involvement in neighbourhood management began in 2001, with a successful bid for SRB6 support from Leaside Regeneration, to develop a model of neighbourhood management for the whole of Poplar. That led to a further bid (submitted to the first round of Tower Hamlets NRF), which has since then financed neighbourhood directors across the four wards in Poplar where the HARCA stock is located. The directors are employees of the HARCA, but are formally seconded four days a week to the Tower Hamlets Partnership to carry out their neighbourhood management functions, and on the fifth undertake a variety of other functions for the HARCA. In practice of course, this apparently neat separation is less clear cut: for example, one of the four, on her HARCA day, manages the youth services programme that the HARCA runs on subcontract from the council – but this is itself run on a neighbourhood basis and is therefore complementary to the neighbourhood management work.

Aims and objectives of the initiative

The Poplar HARCA's Mission Statement is:

“To work with local people to create an environment where they want to live, and to work with them to define and achieve their own financial and social aims”.

The organisation's aims are summarised as follows:

“To help make Poplar a better place to live we:

- promote a resident-led organisation
- continue to develop partnership working
- deliver a responsive and efficient housing service
- lead the regeneration of Poplar through neighbourhood management
- invest in and support our staff
- manage Poplar HARCA to the highest requirements of business excellence.”

The HARCA board which oversees the whole operation, including neighbourhood management, is resident led, composed as follows:

- seven residents (including the chair)
- five councillors
- six independent directors, drawn from the private sector the local community sector and a regeneration partnership. (There are no main service providers represented on the main HARCA board, though they are involved at Local Area Partnership level – as explained in more detail later in this report.)

Rationale given for choice of this initiative for this neighbourhood

In the case of Poplar HARCA there are two dimensions to this: first, why Poplar was chosen as the focus for the local housing company (rather than some other part of Tower Hamlets); and second, why the HARCA was chosen for the neighbourhood management pilot.

According to the HARCA, Poplar was the most neglected part of the borough, with the worst housing: other parts of Tower Hamlets had benefited from the London Docklands Development Corporation (covering the Isle of Dogs and Wapping), a Task Force (around Spitalfields), a Housing Action Trust (Bow), a City Challenge partnership (in Bethnal Green) and a number of SRB small area initiatives, while Poplar was largely ignored. In part this also reflected the area's physical isolation, cut off by a triangle of the A12 and the A13 dual carriageways, and the River Lea.

So far as the second question is concerned, the area selected itself on the strength of the HARCA's track record and its entrepreneurialism: the borough was not well-organised to make best use of NRF when the first round was announced, and according to one interviewee there was a vacuum. The nascent LSP therefore were pleased to accept a proposal from the Poplar Area Neighbourhoods (PAN) partnership, (of which the HARCA is a member) to introduce a neighbourhood management pilot in the area.

(iii) The Neighbourhood

The neighbourhood management initiative covers four wards in the east of the borough:

- Mile End East
- Bromley-by-Bow
- Limehouse
- East India and Lansbury

At the time of the 2001 Census, the combined population of the four wards was 46,700, of whom about 26% were 15 or under. Similarly in 2001 the housing tenure mix (out of a total of nearly 18,000 households) was:

- Council: 46%
- Owner occupier: 22.1%
- RSL: 17.7%
- Private rented: 9.6%
- Other: 4.6%

Since then stock transfers to the HARCA have changed the balance but nevertheless some 60% of all households are in the social rented sector.

The main ethnic groups in 2001 were White British (41%) and Bangladeshi (33%).

Of the nearly 33,000 aged 16-74, around a third were in the ‘professional, employers, managers’ category, though in Limehouse ward the figure was 40% – reflecting the gentrification of Docklands. Nearly 20% of adults were in the ‘routine and semi-routine’ category, 16% were long-term unemployed, and 26% were students or ‘other’.

Poplar sits on the edge of one of the most buoyant labour markets in Europe: All Saints Docklands Light Railway (DLR) station (opposite the HARCA offices) is three stops away from Canary Wharf and five from Bank underground station in the City. There is also a direct connection via the DLR to Stratford. In principle therefore Poplar residents are well-placed to benefit from opportunities in preparation for and during the Olympics, and from the development of the Thames Gateway. The 2001 Census indicated that over 75% of those in employment relied on public transport or motor transport to get to work – suggesting that at most a quarter of local people with jobs worked locally. No more detailed information is available about *where* local people work.

As discussed below, Poplar is covered by two of the eight Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) now operating across the borough. Each has produced an action plan reflecting both statistical analysis of local issues and the priorities of local residents. These summarise the key issues facing each area as follows:

LAP 6 (Bromley-by-Bow and Mile End East)	LAP 7 (Limehouse and East India & Lansbury)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic burglary • Male mortality rates • Income deprivation • Unemployment, especially among young people • Education attainment, especially at KS2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic burglary • Feeling unsafe at night • Teenage pregnancy • Youth unemployment • Education attainment in both primary and secondary schools

However the central issue for the HARCA – and one that has dominated the development of the community regeneration agenda since the beginning – is poverty: a combination of high levels of worklessness and low pay for a substantial proportion of the population, leading in either case to benefit dependency. A recent funding bid prepared by the HARCA suggested that more than 75% of children in the area are eligible for free school meals.

(iv) The Delivery Process

Key players and structures

The structures through which neighbourhood management is delivered in Poplar appear complex at first, reflecting in part the history of neighbourhood management in the area, and the continuing development of the neighbourhood renewal infrastructure through the Tower Hamlets Partnership. The key structural elements include:

- **Poplar Area Neighbourhoods (PAN) partnership:** this predated the LSP, having been operating for some years to co-ordinate community regeneration activities in Poplar. Membership consists of:
 - Tower Hamlets College
 - Leaside Regeneration

- Bromley-by-Bow Centre
- SPLASH
- Poplar HARCA

Formally the PAN partnership submitted the original bid for neighbourhood management support to the Tower Hamlets Partnership, and neighbourhood management achievements are publicised through a regular Poplar Area Neighbourhood News. An evaluation of neighbourhood management across the borough in 2003 described Poplar HARCA as the biggest partner in the PAN neighbourhood management pilot, rather than the neighbourhood management organisation.

- **Local Area Partnerships (LAPs):** as already mentioned, there are eight LAPs across the borough, two of which cover Poplar. These have responsibility for developing and overseeing neighbourhood renewal strategies within their areas. Full partnership meetings are open to all residents and local stakeholders, but each also has a steering group, formally composed of residents, councillors and a representative of the voluntary and community sector. However key service providers also attend steering group meetings, and, in the case of the two Poplar LAPs, this includes the Neighbourhood Directors, employed by the HARCA.

Poplar has five constituent neighbourhoods (Blackwall, Bromley/Lincoln, East India, Lansbury/Locksley and Mile End East) each of which has a neighbourhood group, which includes local residents and which draws up an action plan. Within these neighbourhoods on the seven housing estates where Poplar HARCA owns properties, it also supports the operation of estate boards, which include local tenants and which meet every 4-6 weeks.

There is a complex and inter-relating series of dimensions to the HARCA's role in neighbourhood management *delivery*, (which they summarise as 'leverage, linkage, brokerage') in addition to its membership of these partnerships. These may be summarised as follows:

- **Employer of Neighbourhood Directors:** these are *formally* seconded to the LSP who pays for 80% of their costs from NRF to cover their time working in the Neighbourhood Director role. In practice they operate within the HARCA structure, with twin reporting relationships, to the HARCA Director of Community regeneration, and to the appropriate Area Director employed by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on behalf of the LSP. Each Director is responsible for one neighbourhood.
- **Owner and manager of neighbourhood centres:** At the heart of this approach to neighbourhood management is a network of 10 local centres, each of which accommodates the HARCA's housing officers (though symbolically they are called neighbourhood officers), and a range of other services, including those delivered directly by the HARCA and by other agencies. As one senior interviewee said, 'co-location is at the heart of our approach to neighbourhood management.' As an example we list below the services provided in just one of these, the LINC centre:

Services provided in the LINC centre

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • ESOL training | • Neighbourhood housing office |
| • Sewing social enterprise | • Housing advice centre |
| • Job club | • Breast-feeding course |
| • Crèche | • 'third party reporting' |
| • Playgroup | • community cafe |
| • Computer course | • Youth Project |
| • Childcare course | • Junior Youth Club |
| • Parenting skills course | |

- Service provider:** in both the previous sets of roles the HARCA acts essentially as facilitator, providing support and co-ordination; but what sets it apart from most other neighbourhood management models is its role as direct provider of services. Most obviously this includes the services it provides as landlord – housing management, estate maintenance and cleaning. But in addition, it delivers statutory youth services on behalf of the council in Poplar, and runs training and employment access services from a series of hubs based in the neighbourhood centres.
- Fund-raiser:** since the contract with Tower Hamlets Partnership only supports a portion of the Neighbourhood Directors' time, the HARCA has to raise funds to support the other neighbourhood-based work. Through applications to SRB, NRF, other central government grant programmes as well as charitable sources, the HARCA has extended the range of youth provision it provides, (roughly doubling the value of the contract from the council), supported a range of environmental initiatives, and projects run from the neighbourhood centres. At the time of the fieldwork the HARCA was awaiting a decision from Comic Relief on a bid for £264k to help support a sports-based programme aimed at young people, and designed to tackle some of the growing tensions among different groups of young people locally. The bid involves a range of partners, including for example the local Connexions service, a community group run by and for young people, a community school and the Youth Offending Team. However, leadership and co-ordination, and if the bid succeeds, project management, are provided by the HARCA.

The structures may appear complex, but in practice the operations are relatively seamless. For example, *formally* the Neighbourhood Directors are working for THP four days a week; but they are completely integrated with neighbourhood-based activities that are managed and funded by the HARCA independently of the THP neighbourhood management contract. Moreover, each Neighbourhood Director is supported by a small neighbourhood team funded by the HARCA. So, there is no 'accountable body' in the strict sense; and it is very difficult to assess the costs of the neighbourhood management activity, since it is deeply embedded in all the work of the HARCA – indeed inseparable from its core business as social landlord. The evaluation published in 2003 estimated the costs of neighbourhood management for 2003/4 as follows:

Cost item	£
Core staffing	361,176
Related staffing (managerial support, administration)	378,762
Other costs (accommodation, office costs)	351,384
Total	1,091,322
Per capita*	23.37

* The Census of Population showed a combined total for the four wards of 46,700, which would give a per capita cost of £23.37

The basis on which these costs are attributable to neighbourhood management rather than any other activity is not made clear: for example, they include a share of the costs of the senior managers at HARCA and Bromley-by-Bow centre but what proportion is not stated, nor the criteria that led to that particular allocation. However, given the interrelationships between neighbourhood-based service delivery and the core business of both organisations, any allocation is bound to be arbitrary. **However, it is important to stress that these figures are for the costs of five neighbourhood managers, support teams and associated costs.**

The Poplar neighbourhood management structure is connected to the THP and its strategies in a variety of ways:

- The LAPs to which the HARCA relates closely are themselves part of the THP infrastructure;
- HARCA staff sit on two of the five Community Plan Action Groups (the THP's thematic sub-groups);
- HARCA staff are represented on the groups overseeing the development of two of the four LAA blocks (Health & Elders and Living Safely);
- Strategic connections directly influence the HARCA's activities:
 - the borough-wide Community Strategy influences and is influenced by the LAP action plans
 - in turns the LAP plan influences and is influenced by neighbourhood plans which...
 - ...reflect and help shape estate plans which...
 - feed into the HARCA's internal service plans

Local institutional context

As already mentioned, the principles of neighbourhood management have underpinned the HARCA approach since the beginning, before the phrase 'neighbourhood management' was in common use. The original budget granted under the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund that supported the establishment of local housing companies provided an allocation of £2 per household per week for community development and regeneration activities – many of which consisted of what we would now think of as neighbourhood management, and in particular, the co-ordination of main service delivery, and the establishment of mechanisms that bring providers closer to service users.

The 2003 evaluation report argued that the origins of neighbourhood management in Poplar have “...evolved out of a broad range of community and economic regeneration activity which has been undertaken by the PAN partners over the five year period prior to the development of the neighbourhood management initiative as part of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.”

Key activities undertaken by neighbourhood management partnership

The scale of the HARCA’s activities and the length of time it has been in operation (with ‘neighbourhood management’ activities predating its formal neighbourhood management role on behalf of THP) mean that it is not possible to describe the whole of its portfolio in this short report. This report has already mentioned the range of services in which the HARCA is involved as provider, funder or partner. However, to give a flavour of both the diversity and nature of the actions it has either undertaken or been partner to, we set out some specific examples under the main headings of the THP community plan.

- *Living safely: reducing crime and anti-social behaviour*
 - Police Community Support Officers: under a partnership between the HARCA, the Metropolitan Police Service and the PAN partnership, eight PCSOs were recruited at the end of 2003;
 - Third party reporting scheme: available at all the neighbourhood centres, the scheme enables local people to report, in confidence, anti-social behaviour, hate crime and other offences;
- *Living safely: improving the environment*
 - Dog warden service: run by Poplar HARCA on contract from Tower Hamlets Environmental Health team, animal wardens patrol local estates under the Dogs (Fouling of Lands) Act, providing an enforcement, awareness-raising and training service;
- *Living well: improving health and social care*
 - Healthy food co-ops: at two of the HARCA neighbourhood centres healthy produce purchased from Spitalfields market is sold at cost;
 - Welfare benefit surgeries: these are held regularly at all the neighbourhood centres;
- *Living well: improving housing*

Clearly the core business of the HARCA, more than £100m has been spent on refurbishing properties after stock transfer, a process that continues under the council’s Housing Choice programme. However, the HARCA has also sought to make housing management more effective and responsive.

 - Cross Service Groups: meetings usually consisting of a Neighbourhood Director, Corporate Management Team member, Housing Officer, Corporate Regeneration Manager and representatives from Estate Services and the Youth team meet to identify and resolve operational issues;
 - Estate Boards: these meet every 4-6 weeks on each estate, with tenants’ and leaseholders’ representatives, a resident chair and HARCA officers;

- *Creating and sharing prosperity*
 - Café ReConnect: a not-for-profit social business which opened in 2003 after a two-year programme of capacity building, fundraising, refurbishment and joint planning. The café trains, employs and develops local people who are then helped into mainstream employment;

- *Learning, achievement and leisure*
 - Langdon Park Youth Inclusion Project: aimed at Year 9 pupils who were either excluded or at risk of exclusion, and who often disappear from the system, the project combined recreation and a vocationally based curriculum;

 - Holiday provision and summer scheme: funded through Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) and Crime prevention funds, a variety of activities have been provided for a five-week period during the summer holidays across Poplar, including sports, art, trips, and residential;

 - Tea dances aimed at older residents;

 - Working Neighbourhood pilot: one of a series of DWP pilots, this programme focuses intensive support on a series of postcodes across Poplar, overseen by a steering group consisting of Reed, Jobcentre Plus, an LSP representative, Tower Hamlets College, LAP 7 and Poplar HARCA.

Extent to which evidence is used to shape decisions and priorities and monitor progress

Since the beginning, the Poplar HARCA has sought to be resident-led. Indeed in its early days its 'quick win' philosophy focused on the development of interventions that met residents' priorities as part of a capacity building and empowerment process. Through resident involvement at estate, neighbourhood, LAP and HARCA board level, resident leadership continues to be a driving principle for the HARCA: indeed as we quoted earlier, the HARCA's mission statement stresses the importance of working with local people to "...define and achieve their own financial and social aims". The 'evidence' therefore that drives the selection of priorities has largely derived from resident perceptions of what is important.

Although that principle still holds good, the connections with the Tower Hamlets Partnership, the reliance on NRF, and indeed the HARCA's own perceptions of its role mean that decision-making about neighbourhood management priorities increasingly focuses on the analysis of floor target performance locally. For example, each Local Area Partnership was presented with a statistical analysis of the priority issues facing its neighbourhood, based on progress locally towards floor targets. Thus the 'Local Area Partnership 7' floor target priorities emerged as follows:

- Domestic burglary – persistently high rate over the period 2002-2004;

- Female life expectancy below borough average in both wards and has fallen over 2002-2003;

- East India & Lansbury – second lowest male life expectancy of all wards in the Borough;

- Teenage pregnancy rate still above the borough average in both wards;
- Unemployment – East India & Lansbury ward – third highest rate of all wards;
- Low income – In parts of the LAP over 40% of households are on low income – mostly concentrated in East India & Lansbury; and
- Average attainment level of pupils below borough average although evidence shows improvement in results.

Key issues arising affecting delivery

The key *barriers* to effective delivery to have emerged from the fieldwork include the following:

- The housing management approaches of some other social landlords in the area;
- The limits to partners' understanding of the impacts of neighbourhood management interventions and approaches;
- Council policy of environmental service delivery, some elements of which remain centrally managed;
- The difficulty establishing the notion, among some service managers within the HARCA as well among partners, that neighbourhood management – neighbourhood-based service delivery is core business rather than an optional extra.

The main *facilitating* factors include the following:

- Neighbourhood centres – a genuine focus both for resident engagement and the promotion of joint working *simply* by virtue of co-location;
- The seniority of the Neighbourhood Directors – providing clout to deal with other senior service managers;
- Joint working, especially where it is issue based (eg anti-social behaviour among young people);
- Localised service delivery;
- Staff retention: senior staff working through the HARCA and its partners have stayed longer in the neighbourhood than would be likely with local authority career patterns.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

Since the start community development and capacity building have been at the heart of the HARCA approach. Much of the activity that takes place within neighbourhood centres is undertaken through local community organisations – even where it could have been done by

HARCA staff – a part of the process of creating sustainable renewal. For example, with assistance from the Neighbourhood Director, the Lincoln Area Regeneration Group was established as a resident-led organisation to raise funds for projects on the estate and carry out small-scale projects. Last year almost £250k was raised, providing among other things a mini-bus and the development of community gardens on the estate. But the key here is that the regeneration activity is carried out and managed by local people – a key element in the HARCA’s strategy for sustainability.

This report has already mentioned the variety of levels at which resident-led decision-making takes place. The neighbourhood centres themselves play a critical role in engaging local residents, and not simply as service users. The HARCA’s literature is full of stories of individuals from the most excluded groups whose first contact with the HARCA was as a service user in a centre, but who subsequently became active as a volunteer, undertook training and ended up in employment – often with the HARCA or one of its partner organisations. An analysis of attendance at the centres by ethnicity shows that in many cases the proportion of BME clients attracted *exceeds* their share of the population at large.

Compared to the neighbourhood management pathfinders the operational capacity of the community regeneration and neighbourhood management team is substantial: the Community and Economic Regeneration directorate’s organisational chart shows a staff complement of 144 staff, deployed as follows:

Functions	Number of staff
Management (including Neighbourhood Directors)	9
Resident empowerment	8
Employment and training	8
Youth	57
Neighbourhood support teams (excluding the Neighbourhood Directors)	44
Technical services	18
Total	144

Impact on community capacity

Rigorous measures of change are not available; however, Poplar is no longer the fragmented and isolated community that existed prior to the HARCA’s establishment. As already described, there are now structures in place from estate, through neighbourhood, LAP and to the HARCA, that bring local people into contact with all the key service providers. The focus of this activity, and in particular in the development of the LAP action plans, helps ensure that local preferences inform the design and delivery of services.

There are also examples where the HARCA or its partners in neighbourhood management have helped local community organisations to deliver services. These include:

- Community cafes in neighbourhood centres;
- Environmental protection and improvement initiatives;
- Estate-based hairdressing salon;
- Youth summer schemes;

- Sports training
- Breakfast club
- Young people's timebank scheme

Impact on mainstream service providers' behaviour in improved services

There are numerous examples of redesigned services and improved co-ordination that have occurred over the last few years; how far these are attributable explicitly to the neighbourhood management structures is hard to say, because of the range of complementary actions currently underway. For example, in the wake of the establishment of the Poplar neighbourhood management pilot, two other neighbourhood management initiatives have been launched in the borough: one, supported by NDC resources, on the Ocean Estate; the other, in Bethnal Green, is led by the council. In consequence, the idea of neighbourhood management is now enshrined in the Community Strategy. As already described, LAPs operate throughout the borough, providing a structure within which service provision is expected to become more responsive to residents' priorities.

Similarly, the Metropolitan Police have established a Safer Neighbourhood Team – as they have across many comparable areas of London – which cannot be attributed to the HARCA or the Poplar neighbourhood management pilot, but which nevertheless meshes in with and builds on the PCSO resources that had been established through the neighbourhood management pilot. Nevertheless, interviewees identified a variety of examples where neighbourhood management structures and influence helped shape service design or delivery.

- The youth service are co-located with housing officers and therefore develop intimate knowledge of local people and families: so it is easier to convene multi-disciplinary teams if specific issue arises, for example in connection with anti-social behaviour;
- Use of neighbourhood centres for employment surgeries improves access for hard-to-reach groups;
- Neighbourhood Directors' links with the PCT helped influence the location of a Health Centre;
- As a result of the Employment Providers' meeting, a Bangladeshi voluntary organisation was introduced to Jobcentre Plus, who now provide outreach services in their centre;
- A successful HARCA bid for £250k for after-school provision is helping prepare for the demands of extended schools;
- The PCT had four locality bases across the borough, but had not made any major difference to service delivery; now formal PCT policy is to deliver public health services at neighbourhood level – at least in part as a result of the Poplar neighbourhood management pilot;
- Providing instant access to the local community when Sure Start arrived – taking space in a neighbourhood centre enabled it to exploit HARCA contacts. Co-location assisted intelligence sharing: so, if an example of domestic violence arises, it is much easier to co-ordinate a variety of services.

Impact on the neighbourhood

The HARCA is still exploring ways to assess the impact of its actions. Although an intrinsic problem in the evaluation of neighbourhood management, which normally seeks to achieve its objectives through influencing the actions of others, the issue in Poplar is compounded by the extent and the complexity of the partnership arrangements. A variety of agencies and partnerships are pursuing a range of broadly complementary neighbourhood management objectives, and disentangling the impacts of each is problematic. As discussed above, localised service delivery is moving into the mainstream and attributing outcome change to any one of a number of concurrent and complementary initiatives is difficult.

Generally internal monitoring focuses on process milestones or outputs (for example, footfall in the neighbourhood centres by ethnicity, age and type of service accessed). Some interviewees had difficulty thinking about outcomes, while others expressed frustration at not having a more rigorous view of the consequences of their actions. However, senior staff are aware that the increasing emphasis on outcome monitoring by central government (through floor targets, performance management frameworks and now on the LAA structure) requires the development of a more sophisticated approach to impact assessment. The evaluation of the neighbourhood management pilots across the borough commissioned by the council explicitly shies away from the identification of impacts. As we argue in our conclusions, developing a cost-effective and credible evaluation framework through which to assess outcome change that plausibly relates to HARCA actions is now a key priority.

A recent HARCA publication *Neighbourhood Management Achievements 2004-5* summarises changes in key performance indicators and floor targets after describing neighbourhood management interventions. But most of the changes described – for example in relation to education floor targets – apply at borough rather than Poplar level. As we discuss further in our conclusions, the data are generally available now that would allow the comparison of *local* performance *with* the rest of the borough, and that would help identify where this particular approach to neighbourhood management makes a difference.

(vi) Conclusions

Key messages from the research

As we have discussed, there are limits to the extent to which the HARCA has the data that would allow a rigorous assessment of its effectiveness in securing or facilitating real outcome change. In fairness, this is not included in its objectives, which, as quoted at the start of this report are:

“To help make Poplar a better place to live we:

- promote a resident-led organisation
- continue to develop partnership working
- deliver a responsive and efficient housing service
- lead the regeneration of Poplar through neighbourhood management

- invest in and support our staff
- manage Poplar HARCA to the highest requirements of business excellence.”

Not all the objectives are directly relevant to neighbourhood management; however, on the evidence of this study, we can say:

- there is strong evidence that at all levels the HARCA is resident-led;
- all interviewees spoke highly of the HARCA’s contribution to the development of partnerships and partnership working in Poplar;
- residents interviewed described improvements in the standards of housing management, though this is not the main focus of this evaluation;
- the HARCA’s contribution to regeneration activities, explicitly embracing the concept of neighbourhood management has been substantial, in terms of leadership, fundraising, staff resources and capacity building.

The key factors, identified earlier, appear to be:

- a neighbourhood-based approach, with physical centres providing the opportunity for both localised service delivery and co-location;
- combining the roles of service provider and service influencer: compared to neighbourhood management pathfinders, the first appears to increase the status and clout needed to achieve the second;
- self-evidently, staff and financial resources to plug the gaps in mainstream services (about which the HARCA was unapologetic: there are gaps that need to be filled) as well as influencing how existing services are delivered.

Every single interview with external partners was highly positive, about the concept of localised service delivery and the HARCA’s specific contribution. However, for reasons already set out, there were few answers to the question: so what? The HARCA’s client base is among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the country. Progress, in education attainment, employability, and other key areas of policy is bound to be slow. In many cases the kinds of measures on which floor targets are based are inappropriate: level 4 performance in KS results or A-C GCSEs. But this does not remove the need for the construction of rigorous outcome targets and monitoring and evaluation strategies to identify added value.

Key partners as well as senior HARCA staff are acutely aware of the importance of appropriate and rigorous performance measures. But despite their absence, there is unquestioning (and plausible) support for the notion that localised service delivery with substantial resident involvement makes a difference: as one senior partner said, “...we know local management has impact.” The study suggests that localised and co-located service delivery makes services more accessible to the most vulnerable groups. It is clear that they are designed and delivered in ways that are more user-friendly; there are partners who now work together in ways that did not happen previously; what is important now is to find ways to show that all this leads to more effective results.

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Stuart Lynd	–	GONW
Suzanne Wolfe	Neighbourhood Director	Poplar HARCA
Keren Miller	Neighbourhood Director	Poplar HARCA
Colin Barrett	Youth Area Manager	Poplar HARCA
Nigel Huxted	Resident	
Anne Matthews	New Opportunities Director	Poplar HARCA
Babu Bhattacharjee	Neighbourhood Director	Poplar HARCA
Jane Hodges	Neighbourhood Director	Poplar HARCA
Rob Trimble	Chief Executive	Bromley-by-Bow Centre
Matt Sheldon	Manager	Sure Start
Shazia Hussain	Area Manager	Tower Hamlets Partnership
Colin Davies	Sergeant	Metropolitan Police
Chris Ley	Community Regeneration Director	Poplar HARCA
Roger Mullings	Employment Training Manager	Poplar HARCA

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

- Poplar HARCA Corporate Plan
- The Poplar HARCA story
- Neighbourhood management successes 2004-5
- Evaluation of neighbourhood management in Tower Hamlets, EDAW

Case Study B:

North Benwell – Neighbourhood Management Initiative, Newcastle

(i) Introduction

This report sets out the findings of a brief evaluation of the North Benwell neighbourhood management initiative in Newcastle. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by SQW Ltd as part of the national evaluation of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

The North Benwell Neighbourhood Management Initiative is being evaluated separately by Social Regeneration Consultants (SRC), who produced an interim report in September 2005 for North Benwell. Given that SRC has recently consulted extensively with local stakeholders, we have sought in this case study not to over-burden local partners with additional consultation. Where possible, therefore, we have drawn on findings from SRC's interim evaluation throughout this report.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

Aims and objectives of the initiative

The initiative's aims and objectives have recently been refined, following the establishment of a partnership board. Its aims are as follows:

1. Ensure a healthy mixed-tenure housing market
2. Narrow the gap between this area and those that are better off
3. Create a cohesive, sustainable community
4. Reduce crime levels to the national average

5. Create a local partnership that monitors and has direct influence over the range of improving and responsive services in the area.

The objectives during the first year of the Initiative (2003-04) were:

- to tackle the number of empty homes
- to deal with environmental issues
- to reduce the amount of crime
- to develop community involvement
- to develop communication and marketing
- to develop a strategy for the physical regeneration of the area

During the second year (2004-05) the priorities extended to include:

- increasing owner-occupation and house prices
- carrying out target hardening measures
- developing wider involvement and establishing a Partnership Board
- developing an ongoing evaluation mechanism
- encouraging health organisations to increase their work into the local area
- starting work with education providers.

Rationale given for choice of this initiative for this neighbourhood

In 2002 Newcastle/Gateshead was selected as one of nine Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders across the north of England, with the name *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*. The bid for funding submitted by them – guided in its geographic scope by socio-economic and other data – encompassed a total of 21 wards (12 in Newcastle, including Benwell, and 9 in Gateshead).

The *Bridging NewcastleGateshead* bid incorporated around 100 separate projects, one of which was the North Benwell Neighbourhood Management Initiative.

Bridging NewcastleGateshead delivers three broad types of intervention across the region, which it describes as:

- a) Neighbourhood improvements (where no demolition is required and people want to stay in the area)
- b) Neighbourhood management schemes (where a combination of physical and social regeneration is required)
- c) Neighbourhood development (demolition and clearance)

The Neighbourhood Management Initiative (NMI) in North Benwell falls into the second category. It is an integral part of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. It was set up in response to long-standing problems in the area relating to low demand for housing. The area was characterised by low levels of owner occupation, high turnover of residents, an increasing amount of private landlord activity and poorly maintained houses. In 1997 the neighbourhood had been designated a Housing Renewal Area, which led to some demolition and clearance. Activity during the period 1997 to 2002 resulted in much success, but local initiatives – and their funding sources – came to an end before the threshold of market renewal was reached.

(iii) The Neighbourhood

In this section we look briefly at the characteristics of North Benwell, focusing on two aspects:

- Location and brief description of the neighbourhood
- Key problems and opportunities

Location and description

The NMI area currently comprises 2,067 households and a population of 3,750 (based on figures supplied by Newcastle Neighbourhood Information System for 2001). It covers parts of two electoral wards. This is a relatively small area in neighbourhood management terms: typical populations covered by Pathfinders are 10,000 to 15,000.

The area is dominated by two-storey Victorian terraces, including a number of the characteristic Tyneside flats (workers' housing dating back to the industrial era) which can be found across the city-region. Almost half of all properties are privately rented, with low levels of owner occupation. Much of the housing is owned by Your Homes Newcastle, which manages property on behalf of Newcastle City Council, along with a number of housing associations: Home Group Ltd, Newcastle & Whitley Housing Trust, and Two Castles.

North Benwell has a large proportion – around 20% – of black and minority ethnic groups in the community. The majority of these are of Asian origin, but the ethnic mix of the area has been widened in recent years with the influx of a number of asylum seekers and refugees. There is also an increasing number of immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Compared to other parts of Newcastle and the North East, the area has a higher proportion of young people and a smaller number of old people. Partly due to the younger profile of the local population, there is no significant gap between the health of residents in North Benwell and the rest of the city.

Unemployment in the area is high, at almost double the Newcastle average – although there are indications that the figure is starting to fall. Levels of pay are low, as is the level of car ownership (another indication of household income). In 2001, over 66% of households did not have access to a car or van – higher than the Newcastle average of 45%.

The area benefits from having relatively good access to services. A wide range of shops and facilities are available – including post offices, banking services, the Benwell Shopping Centre, West End Health Resource Centre and West Gate Centre for Sport. Schools, a hospital and police station are located nearby.

North Benwell has been a multi-cultural neighbourhood for many decades, and the variety of cultures within it is increasing. Job seekers from Eastern Europe are also moving in; there are also asylum seekers and refugees from various parts of the world. Given the huge variety of ethnicity in the area some racial tensions might be expected, and indeed the police report some instances of this. Most problems, however, are reported to be associated with youth in general, rather than with ethnicity or race.

North Benwell has been the subject of mixed attention in the local and national media. Towards the end of 2004 it was given a highly negative portrayal in a BBC television programme, which upset many local people. It has also, by contrast, benefited from very positive attention in the form of nomination for a UK Housing Award in 2005. Home Group Ltd also received a 'Big Tick' award from Business in the Community this year for its work in North Benwell. The initiative has also received positive attention at Government level.

Key problems and opportunities

The neighbourhood faces several problems in terms of its social, economic and environmental conditions, many of which are inter-related. They can be summarised as:

- Low income
- High unemployment
- High void rates
- A weak housing market with low demand
- Low levels of owner occupation
- High crime levels
- Poor physical environment

These disadvantages are off-set by the relatively good access to services, the potential for a vibrant and multi-cultural neighbourhood, and the improvements in joint working at micro-level which promise significant long-term benefits.

There are opportunities to build upon the existing range of community based facilities in the neighbourhood, which include: Dolphin Street Community Centre; the Millin Centre; North Benwell Detached Youth Project; Search Project; Plus Project; Benwell Library; the Riverside Community Health Project, etc.

(iv) The Delivery Process

In this section we consider the following aspects of the initiative:

- Key players and structures
- Local context
- Funding and key activities

- Use of evidence in shaping priorities
- Positive and negative influencing factors

a) Key players and structures

Accountable body and lead delivery agency

The accountable body for the initiative is Newcastle City Council. The Council is not, however, the lead delivery agent: this role falls to an external agency, Home Group Ltd. Crucially, the Neighbourhood Management staff are employed by Home Group Ltd, and other operational staff involved in the Initiative (including some employed by the City Council) report directly to the Neighbourhood Manager.

Organisational structures

When the initiative was established the Neighbourhood Manager took a decision *not* to set up a partnership board straightaway. It was considered that the priority should be to start delivering change and ‘quick wins’ immediately – which could potentially be held up if the Manager’s time were primarily taken up with engaging and training members of the community to become effective Board members. In the early stages, therefore, the NMI was led by a steering group which was free to start making decisions and taking action whilst at the same time commencing a parallel process of community engagement.

The steering group comprised five organisations: Newcastle City Council (8 representatives), Northumbria Police (2 representatives), *Bridging NewcastleGateshead* (1 representative), Home Group Ltd (1 representative) and Your Homes Newcastle (1 representative).

Three working groups were also set up to address three themes: housing and environment; development of a youth strategy; and community safety. The membership of these working groups included local residents.

The steering group and working groups all had terms of reference setting out what they were to do. They met monthly and provided their own administration.

SRC Consultants, the evaluators of the neighbourhood management initiative, conclude that this structure suited the Initiative in its first year of operation: it was simple and practical, allowing staff to establish the Initiative and concentrate on service improvements rather than managing and supporting structures. However, it was clear that in the longer term the NMI would require a more representative and inclusive structure involving a wider range of interests. In November 2004, therefore, a process was started to set up a partnership to lead the initiative which would involve residents and community groups as well as agencies and funders.

A partnership board was established in July 2005. The Board consists of 24 members, who come from a wider range of organisations than the steering group membership. Board membership comprises:

- *Bridging NewcastleGateshead* (HMR Pathfinder and main funder)
- Home Group Ltd (lead delivery agency)

- Newcastle City Council (accountable body)
- Northumbria Police
- Representatives of various local residents' associations and community groups
- SureStart
- Your Homes Newcastle
- Millin Centre (voluntary organisation which provides services and activities for members of the local BME community)
- Chair of Detached Youth Project – who is also the local vicar
- 2 local councillors

The headteacher of the local school was also a member, but had to resign due to pressure of other commitments. Two further seats on the Board are also currently vacant.

In contrast to some of the other neighbourhood management initiatives across the country, the influence of local councillors in North Benwell is not a prominent feature. Local councillors are supportive, but are not a dominating presence in the NMI.

Staff team

The staff team comprises a neighbourhood manager and a neighbourhood management assistant (both employed by Home Group Ltd, the lead delivery agency). A community development worker, employed by the City Council, is seconded to the Initiative. A part-time neighbourhood assistant is employed on a week-by-week arrangement with an agency paid for by the City Council. There are four street wardens, all employed on contracts with the City Council. Finally, a trainee on a Wise Group intermediate labour market project has been employed to provide administrative support and will continue to be employed until March 2006. *All staff report to the Neighbourhood Manager* – whether they are employed by Home Group Ltd or the City Council.

A police team of 11 officers and four Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are part-funded by Northumbria Police and *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*. All are employed directly by Northumbria Police and cover a wider area than the Initiative.

Management systems

The Initiative uses three main forms of monitoring: the Neighbourhood Manager's monthly reports; data collected monthly on crime, housing tenure and void levels; and monthly BNG monitoring forms. An annual report is also produced.

SRC concluded that the quality of information being collected is generally good: for the most part the material is easy to read, relevant, and timely. They note, however, that the content of the information could be standardised and enhanced – for example, by including some explanatory text to support the housing and crime statistics collected. Our own consultations with agencies such as Northumbria Police suggest that this should not be difficult to arrange.

The NMI does not yet produce an annual monitoring report. This, as SRC suggest, would be a useful tool in assessing ‘what works and what doesn’t’, to help direct future funding and to enable easy access to key statistics relating to the NMI.

There appear to be problems in pulling together financial information relating to the Initiative, and it is difficult to provide a snapshot picture at any one time. SRC note that: *“the current funding and financial approval arrangements are too complex and spread amongst too many agencies.”*

Administrative boundaries

The boundaries of the Initiative when it first commenced were within the Elswick ward. However, its reach was subsequently extended to encompass the High Cross area, which falls within the ward of Benwell and Scotswood. The neighbourhood management area therefore crosses electoral boundaries. As far as we are aware, however, the only issue arising from this has been the difficulty of maintaining consistent baseline statistics.

b) Local context and history

It is important to take into account some of the prior history of North Benwell when considering the challenges and opportunities faced by the present intervention. North Benwell has benefited from regeneration initiatives going back some 35 years. Crucially, however, most of these previous initiatives were partial and temporary in their nature. The initiative which preceded the NMI involving local management had made an impact and was starting to see results: local residents had been opposed to its withdrawal and had lobbied for a replacement, particularly in the face of increasing problems and reduced access to service providers after it had gone.

This has implications for the current intervention. As Social Regeneration Consultants note in their recent evaluation report, *“the NMI has had to face a difficult mixture of scepticism and expectation from residents. On the one hand, some residents are doubtful that it will be around for long, while on the other, there is a relatively high degree of understanding from some long-standing residents about the benefits of local management and what they can expect”*. It will be important for the initiative to capitalise upon the relatively sophisticated understanding of local regeneration which already exists among local people, whilst at the same time addressing an underlying cynicism.

c) Funding and key activities

The majority of funding for the Initiative comes from the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*. The City Council (accountable body) and Home Group Ltd (lead delivery agency) provide funding for certain elements as well as in-kind support through management and administration. Northumbria Police make a significant contribution through the provision of additional police officers and PCSOs.

Financial responsibilities within the NMI are organised along the following lines:

- Home Group Ltd (the lead delivery agency) manages the salaries of NMI personnel in addition to an annual operating budget of £150,000
- Northumbria Police manages the salaries of staff delegated to the NMI

- Newcastle City Council manages the salaries of the street wardens and community development workers.

The following breakdown reflects funding for financial years 2004-05 and 2005-06:

- *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*: £1,434,000 for police, environmental works (the 'Living Streets' programme) and core costs (salaries, wardens, revenue)
- Newcastle City Council: funding for one part-time post, rent and in-kind support through management and financial administration, plus a sum of £2,493,000 which is ring-fenced for physical improvements
- Home Group Ltd: £30,000 for resident involvement and evaluation, plus in-kind support through management and financial administration support and access to in-house services such as personnel and public relations
- Northumbria Police: significant funding (approximately £200,000 per annum) to match BNG funding for increased police resources in the area.

The Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*, the City Council and Home Group Ltd provide the management and financial approval mechanisms for the Initiative. As the funder, *Bridging NewcastleGateshead* has a key role in spend and project approval. The funding is routed through the City Council as the accountable body. The Council also retains control of the funding it contributes directly, both revenue and capital.

The interim evaluation conducted by SRC Consultants confirms our own findings that the current financial management systems are less than perfect. Under the existing arrangements the Neighbourhood Manager is unable (as indeed are the evaluators) to access a 'snapshot' overview of the initiative's finances at any given time.

Below we look at some of the key activities undertaken by the neighbourhood management partnership since its inception. We categorise them under the following headings: quick wins; research and development; pilot/demonstration projects; direct delivery of services; and community involvement. It must be noted that the neighbourhood management activities are an integral part of the work funded by the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder and therefore separating out the added value from the NMI is particularly difficult in this case study.

Quick wins

Perhaps the best example of a quick win in the North Benwell area is the decorated boards scheme, by which the windows of empty properties are covered not by metal shutters or wooden boards, but by brightly painted panels. This is a simple cosmetic measure which has the effect of brightening up the streets while sending out an important signal that 'things are changing'. Text from the Initiative's own website describes the project well: *"These bright and quirky designs have been installed on those empty homes with long term plans for improvements. They have been an instant success, bringing a bit of colour and humour to the streets. The residents agree this has been a good idea as they are better than looking out onto drab shutters, often covered in graffiti. A positive sign is that there has been minimal damage to them so they are proving to be a big hit."*

As in other neighbourhood management initiatives across the country, the employment of Street Wardens provides a very visible means of reassuring local residents and raising awareness that things are being done. The locally-based foot patrols can respond quickly to low-level incidents that would otherwise tie up Police capacity; they are trained to deal with issues in a non-confrontational manner, and are also able to provide rapid and valuable feedback to police officers.

Two 'Clean Sweep' weeks have taken place, in 2004 and 2005, which can also be characterised as quick wins. These events encourage local people to come out into the streets to take part in improving their area: local residents and school children have been involved in litter picking, bulb planting and planting hanging baskets to display by front doors. In the first event in 2004 the Street Wardens collected over 10 tonnes of rubbish. The effect of such activity on the local environment is immediate, and has the effect of promoting the Initiative as well as increasing local people's sense of ownership of their own neighbourhood.

Several community safety initiatives have been funded and implemented, including:

- distribution of free car security locks
- distribution of 'smartwater' to identify personal belongings in case of theft
- home security initiative, whereby police officers and street wardens deliver and install window and door alarms to all properties in North Benwell (builds residents' confidence as well as providing the opportunity for the police and residents to get to know each other)
- in partnership with Newcastle City Council, free installation and monitoring of house alarm systems for residents who have been repeat victims of burglary
- mobile CCTV and surveillance to reduce criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

In addition, the Police have taken a firm stance on issuing ASBOs (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders) against local residents who continually offend. These have brought success in modifying individuals' behaviour, and have a huge impact on the streets in which those individuals live. ASBOs are used in a highly targeted way, not as a blanket approach to problem solving; this targeted approach has been shown to work well in North Benwell.

Research and development

A Living Streets Audit was carried out in 2004 to ascertain what investment was needed in the streets and green spaces of the North Benwell terraces. Independent auditors worked with residents to produce a report which should influence the City Council's spending on environmental improvements in the area.

The Initiative commissioned the Neighbourhood Services directorate of Newcastle City Council to carry out research in 2005 to explore residents' perceptions of North Benwell in terms of the environment, community safety, service provision, community facilities and general quality of life. One of the aims of the research (involving 200 structured interviews with residents) was to identify issues which residents felt were priorities within the area, and to compare the findings with an earlier survey undertaken in 2004.

Pilot/demonstration projects

Home Group Ltd (the external lead delivery agency), working with the City Council, has made the decision to renovate and convert 20 of their long-term empty Tyneside flats into 10 private houses. It is hoped that this will result in the successful sale of the new properties and act as a catalyst for an upturn in levels of private owner-occupation.

The first Service Level Agreement was established in 2005, with the City Council's Neighbourhood Services directorate for Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance. This is regarded as something of a pilot/demonstration activity – both by the Initiative and by Neighbourhood Services – and it is hoped that similar Agreements with other service providers will follow.

Direct delivery of services

The NMI is not involved in the direct delivery of services. The focus of neighbourhood management is on co-ordinating, joining up and improving the quality of existing service provision, and the Initiative has no aspirations to become a service provider in its own right.

Community involvement

When the Initiative first began, very little community involvement work from statutory providers existed. The NMI, however, appears to have been the catalyst that is enabling the alignment of key voluntary agencies and support services with the needs of local residents.

The Initiative is based in a multicultural community. It has taken some time to engage with each of the different groups and encourage them to engage with each other, but good progress is now being made. Ongoing liaison is taking place between the Initiative and the Millin Centre (the local BME provider) on developing different groups, such as those from Africa and Bangladesh. However, it is felt that there are still groups that are not being reached, and joint working continues to be required in this respect.

Several cross-cultural events have been held. The 'Benfest' community festival co-ordinated by the Initiative has proved a very successful event which provides the opportunity for residents to get to know each other and to fundraise for local causes. Other activities have included an Afro-Caribbean event and a Local Routes festival. The Initiative is currently preparing a Hello Winter festival, which will run for several months and incorporate a variety of activities relating to sport, IT and food. It is intended that the Festival will encourage long term 'pairings' of people, between age groups and between cultures, and will join up with other local initiatives. The Neighbourhood Manager hopes that it will help to open up some of the BME groups which are traditionally closed to others, and that it will build trust and confidence between ethnic groups who would not otherwise have communicated. The festival is cited as the kind of 'small-scale, low-cost' activity which brings huge benefits to the community.

The local park next to Farndale Road has been a source of concern for local people. In order to increase amenities and encourage greater use, a long term strategy is in place to redevelop it. Fundamental to this has been the involvement of local young people from the Detached Youth Project, who have taken ownership of the redevelopment by leading in the design, planning and extensive consultation.

Local residents have also initiated plans for a community garden within the terraces of North Benwell, on a former demolition site. It is led by a small team of volunteers, who plan to develop the garden over time. The garden is currently fenced off and gated: the plan is to lock the gates at night and open up during the day so people can enjoy it. Other residents are encouraged to offer their skills and expertise, and any new volunteers are actively welcomed.

d) Use of local evidence to shape decisions and priorities and to monitor progress.

This is perhaps most clearly seen in the case of crime statistics and the activities of Northumbria Police.

The information technology systems used by Northumbria Police are regarded as ‘state of the art’ (and reportedly better than those used by many other regional police forces), and are used pro-actively by local officers and inspectors to ensure that any problems in the North Benwell NMI area can be addressed as swiftly and effectively as possible. Seasonal variations in crime levels occur as a matter of course across the country, but any sharp fluctuations in crime in North Benwell are recorded and acted upon immediately. Sudden increases in crime levels are often attributable to particular individuals moving into the area or being released from prison. In such instances local officers will use highly targeted ASBOs, or put extra officers on the beat at particular times of day, in order to address problems as soon as they arise.

Police consultees report that policing at micro-level (such as that which has been facilitated in North Benwell through the NMI) – combined with joint working with other agencies – is unquestionably the way forward. If police officers encounter a problem which impinges upon other agencies they know that they can immediately contact the Neighbourhood Manager, who in turn will know which individual in which agency is best placed to help. Without the NMI, and in particular without a Neighbourhood Manager, the Police would be unable to circumvent the time-consuming process of tracking down the relevant personnel themselves. The neighbourhood management approach means *ownership* of the local area: if a streetlight is broken in the local park, the Police now know exactly which individual to telephone to ask to mend it instead of having to submit a request which “*gets lost in a bureaucratic chain*”. *Things get done faster and smarter as a result of neighbourhood management*”.

e) Key issues affecting delivery (positive and negative)

Positive factors

The most important factor exerting a positive effect on the delivery of the NMI is the **choice of an external agency (Home Group Ltd) as the lead delivery agent**. The fact that the Neighbourhood Manager is employed by such an external agency rather than the City Council gives the initiative significantly more credibility. This has been of tremendous value in gaining local residents’ confidence.

Although the choice of external agency is important, it should at the same time be noted that the **role of key policy officers from the City Council** (accountable body) has been instrumental in the success and development of the Initiative.

As the initiative is not part of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder programme it does not benefit from enhanced levels of funding available to the Pathfinders over a number of years. However, the Initiative benefits from **relative freedom to decide its priorities**. The Neighbourhood Manager's ability to circumvent bureaucracy and make decisions on the ground (including management of an operational budget – £150,000 in the current year) has been a vital part of the Initiative's success to date.

The **location of the office** – directly within the terraces of North Benwell – is another important factor in ensuring local residents' awareness and involvement in the Initiative.

The **one-to-one relationships and joint working between agencies at operational level**, all of which has improved in North Benwell as a result of the NMI, is a major factor in its success.

The Initiative has succeeded in **engaging local people/groups** in neighbourhood management by getting them involved in activities that interest them (in one case, setting up a sewing group) and then saying, "by the way, would you like to become involved in the Board"? This has proved a good way of securing a wider involvement in neighbourhood management.

Neighbourhood management has been a **liberating and creative experience** in North Benwell. It is said to have freed people's minds to opportunities and ideas, rather than tying them into a bureaucracy of fixed procedures. The street wardens, for example, have come up with various ideas of their own since the Initiative commenced – described by the Neighbourhood Manager as 'simple stuff that makes a difference' (such as the plan of one street warden to dress up as a dog and go into local schools, to engage young pupils in what he is doing). The wardens are able to circumvent normal procedures and fast-track certain things for local people, such as the procurement of wheelie-bins when required.

Restricting factors

Newcastle City Council, **the accountable body, has been undergoing a period of re-structuring** which has led to lack of capacity to engage and deliver in some areas. The Initiative's evaluators note that: *"departmental reorganisation and policy development within the Council have resulted in some uncertainty about local authority representation to the Initiative (particularly from Neighbourhood Services) as well as the likely future direction of and support for neighbourhood management across the City."*

The Neighbourhood Manager highlights the frustration of being **unable to use ODPM funding for community engagement**. This has been circumvented by accessing a small amount of funding from Home Group Ltd. An initiative such as this benefits from being able to distribute small amounts of seedcorn funding to local community groups.

Bureaucracy in public bodies can lead to unacceptable delays. To take one example, the Junior Street Warden scheme was held up by the Council because they needed to investigate the health and safety implications. A year after her initial request to the Council, the Neighbourhood Manager finally received the guidance and toolkit she needed from a similar initiative in Hull.

Some agencies have an **imperfect understanding of what is meant by the neighbourhood management approach**. Within the City Council, for example, different directorates are said to have different ideas about what the approach entails.

Finally, **uncertainty over the future funding of the Initiative** is in danger of eroding morale amongst staff and residents. As noted by the evaluators Social Regeneration Consultants, *“it will be vital to the future of the Initiative that further funding can be agreed as early as possible.. the longer this is delayed the greater the chances of a loss of confidence by staff, agencies and residents, compromising much of the work that has taken place in the last couple of years”*.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

In considering the initiative’s capacity for sustainable renewal, we need to take into account the capacity and maturity of the neighbourhood partnership, and the effectiveness of linkages to other partnerships and structures. We discuss these factors below.

Capacity and maturity of the neighbourhood partnership

As the Board was only established in July 2005 it is too early to make an informed judgement about its capacity to make decisions. However, Board membership includes several community representatives who did not take part in the previous steering group arrangement – including residents’ associations, the local BME provider and local councillors – and the new structure should therefore be much more inclusive than previously.

A core group of residents has been involved the development of the partnership. However, stakeholders note that it can be difficult to sustain people’s involvement, and there are mixed views about the level of participation of local residents in the decision making process.

There are several examples of the effectiveness of structures to engage community (including BME groups) and providers. One such instance occurred when, responding to local demand, the Initiative brought parents, Surestart and NAPI (Newcastle Action for Parents and Toddlers Initiative) to work together to set up a new, much needed Parent and Toddler Group.

Operational capacity of Manager, team, and office/systems

The evaluators of the North Benwell NMI, SRC, conclude that the current staffing arrangements are fit for purpose and do not need significant change (other than recommending that the Neighbourhood Assistant post become permanent). They note, however, that *“if the Initiative receives funding for a further four years, and particularly if there is further geographical expansion, it would be sensible to review the staffing structure and complement. The issue of whether or not the Initiative should be considering specialist posts (or giving responsibility for specialist roles to existing/new staff), particularly in the areas of young people and BME work, should also be considered.”*

The location of the NMI office in the terraces of North Benwell is vital to the Initiative’s success. However, the office – which is divided between two floors – does not contain sufficient space for meetings to be held. The layout separates team members from each other;

it does not foster team working or direct day to day contact with residents for those who work on the upper floor.

Capacity of partnership to learn and innovate

The new Board includes two representatives from the nearby Benwell-Scotswood ward, which has its own initiative, and there are hopes that the two neighbourhood management initiatives can help and learn from each other.

Effectiveness of linkages to city-wide partnerships and structures, including:

The Neighbourhood Manager has approached the Local Strategic Partnership on behalf of the Initiative but the LSP was not in a position to pursue the link at that time. However, there is strong awareness within the North Benwell team that the new Board will need links with other organisations (such as the LSP) to give it the credibility, strategic and operational support it needs to sustain itself.

The Neighbourhood Manager has also made an approach to Newcastle's New Deal for Communities partnership, which has expressed an interest in some form of linkage.

SRC's study notes that *"the Initiative needs to spend some time establishing wider links and developing relationships with a range of organisations, especially the LSP, senior managers at the City Council, and local regeneration programmes such as New Deal. In addition, it needs to ensure that it is represented within the Newcastle Plan and its relevant sub-strategies, such as the emerging regeneration strategy and the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy."*

Impact on community capacity

The recently introduced Service Level Agreement with the Neighbourhood Services directorate of the City Council is the first such Agreement to be signed. However, the new Board will receive training in the development and implementation of SLAs, and it is hoped that several more will be signed during the course of the Initiative. This will be an example of an improvement in capacity to hold service providers accountable.

Impact on mainstream service providers' behaviour in improved services

Here we briefly assess some of the changes made to mainstream services by providers that will benefit the neighbourhood, although it must be noted that the additional funding provided by the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder has been significant in this.

Re-shaping of mainstream service provision can be most clearly seen in relation to the Police. Local officers and inspectors from Northumbria Police are highly committed to the North Benwell NMI, and as the fruits of their labours have become apparent they themselves have become increasingly motivated. Neighbourhood management enables them to work at micro-level – that is, within a tightly defined number of streets – where small changes in provision can have a significant impact. The Police have been willing, and able, to make alterations in officers' beat patrols (in terms of timing or location) in order to tackle specific problems as they arise. They have also invested time in building up one to one relationships with many local residents.

This willingness to make changes in service provision at a very local level is not something to be taken for granted. We understand, for example, that the local Primary Care Trust regards North Benwell as too small an area to work with. As a result of their enthusiastic engagement in North Benwell, the Police have been able to pilot activities which have now been rolled out to other areas. For example, the team of individual officers who patrol North Benwell were people who specifically chose to work with the Initiative: they are therefore more dedicated and committed to achieving good results in the area. This approach is now being replicated elsewhere by Northumbria Police.

Joining up of services can be seen most clearly in the Initiative's efforts to reduce the number of empty homes. As lead delivery agent, Home Group Ltd works with the Newcastle Private Rented Project, Housing Associations and several City Council departments (Neighbourhood Services, Environmental Health). This multi-agency approach involves: targeting landlords with low management standards whose properties are in a state of disrepair; exerting pressure on landlords and anti-social tenants to reduce anti-social activities; providing advice and support to landlords who feel isolated and unable to deal with their anti-social tenants.

Joining up of services is also crucial in the context of the Police, who place a high value on inter-agency working at micro level.

An example of a *change in corporate policy and practice* can be seen in the Neighbourhood Services directorate of Newcastle City Council, which has signed up to a Service Level Agreement for cleansing and maintenance in North Benwell. Previously, such a venture is unlikely to have been welcomed by the directorate. Consultation with Neighbourhood Services reveals that the directorate is pleased with the increased level of community engagement, and is encouraged by residents' increasing willingness to take ownership of their neighbourhood (for example, by monitoring bins and rubbish collection). Likewise, the Environmental Health department is now working at a much more local level as a result of the NMI, and is now listening to the views of local residents and (importantly) the views of other agencies and service providers.

A further example of a change in corporate practice can be seen in the Private Rented Landlord Scheme, which has been brought under the umbrella of the City Council. The key postholder is now employed within the Regeneration directorate of the Council, whereas previously she was employed on a project basis through a package of various funding sources. As a result of the successful work in North Benwell, the City Council has come to appreciate the strategic significance of this kind of work (whereby private landlords are encouraged to maintain good management standards).

Impact on the neighbourhood

As noted above, the changes outlined here are as a result of the wider work and investment of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, of which the NMI is a part.

Crime

Crime was a particular problem in the area when the NMI commenced: indeed, the North Benwell terraces accounted for the majority of crime in the inner west of Newcastle. The participation of Northumbria Police as key partners from the inception of the NMI, and early action taken by the Police, has resulted in a significant reduction in crime. There is now a much smaller gap in crime statistics between North Benwell and the rest of the city.

Northumbria Police use sophisticated IT systems to record and monitor crime in North Benwell, and figures are reported to the Initiative on a regular basis. The Police report that crime reduced by 30% in the first year of the Initiative, and by a further 15% the following year. There are seasonal trends and fluctuations, but the overall trend is downwards.

Housing

Tangible results to date include:

- Average property price between 2000 and 2005 was £21,890. However, terraces on Ellesmere Road have recently sold for £82,000 and £75,000.
- 18% of housing stock is owner-occupied as of April 2005 (up from 16% in 2003-04)
- The number of empty properties fell from 121 in December 2004 to 98 in April 2005 (a 23% decrease); at the time of the most recent inspection in September this year the number had fallen to 89
- 2 properties have been accredited under the Landlord Accreditation Scheme, with a further 8 properties pending as at August 2005

Physical environment

Tangible achievements include:

- Service Level Agreement signed with Newcastle City Council relating to litter collection and street cleaning
- in August 2003 Envirocall took 40 calls requesting action on abandoned cars, litter and graffiti; in August 2005 this had fallen to 19 calls
- six activities achieved (against target of four): redesigning Farndale Park; Hanging Basket Day; development of community garden; bulb planting with Canning Street School; two Clean Sweep weeks; Homezone consultation events.

(vi) Conclusions

Here we attempt to summarise some of the main findings from the research.

There is consensus that neighbourhood management in North Benwell has resulted in a 'faster and smarter' way of addressing local problems. As a result of the significant improvements in joint working between agencies at street level, lengthy and bureaucratic communication channels can be circumvented and solutions can be developed and implemented swiftly.

The Initiative has made great strides in getting agencies and service providers to work jointly at local level. It has been the catalyst for much of the networking which has taken place in North Benwell in the last two years. Consultees who took part in this review speak extremely highly of the way in which the Neighbourhood Management team have gone about this.

In terms of **community safety**, Northumbria Police make the point that they are ‘making more inroads’ in North Benwell NMI than in the New Deal for Communities (NDC) area of Newcastle. They report that local police officers’ attitudes have changed as a result of working in the NMI area: they have much more opportunity to engage with local people on a daily basis, and to get to know them better. Neighbourhood management has led to much longer-term thinking on the part of the Police, along with joined-up problem solving between agencies. This does not happen as effectively in the NDC area. The neighbourhood management approach allows the Police to show their ‘friendly’ side as well being responsible for law enforcement. Consultations undertaken during this review confirm that local people now feel much safer in their homes and streets, and local police officers’ dedication to the neighbourhood is widely noted.

As far as **housing** is concerned, the Initiative finds itself at a crucial stage. If the planned conversion of 20 Tyneside flats into 10 private homes proceeds successfully, it could prove the catalyst for increased owner-occupation which will help North Benwell to become a desirable area in which to live. Much hangs on the success of this particular venture: if it works, it will play a key part in the sustainable regeneration of the area. All consultees who took part in this review stressed that increasing the levels of owner-occupation in the area – as part of a healthy mixed-tenure approach – remains a key issue. Likewise, there is still a need to tackle the recalcitrant landlords who have not yet engaged with the private landlord accreditation scheme.

In terms of the **local environment**, consultees report significant improvements. Ongoing problems with litter and unswept streets should now start to be resolved with the implementation of the first Service Level Agreement for Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance, through which the City Council and local people share responsibility for maintaining standards. Meantime, there are encouraging signs that local people are increasingly taking ownership of the neighbourhood’s green spaces: the development of a community garden is one example of this.

Some of the key factors influencing success, whether helping or hindering, have been outlined in Section (iv). They can be summarised as:

Positive factors

- the choice of an external agency (Home Group Ltd) as the lead delivery agent
- advice and support from City Council policy officers
- relative freedom to decide own priorities
- location of office within the neighbourhood
- one-to-one relationships and joint working between agencies at operational level
- getting local people involved through activities they are interested in.

Restricting factors

- restructuring within the accountable body has led to delays in implementing some activities, and has caused an element of confusion about role and responsibilities
- imperfect understanding in some agencies (including some Council directorates) of what is meant by neighbourhood management
- uncertainty over future funding impacts upon local morale and confidence.

The Initiative in its current form is funded to March 2006 primarily by *Bridging NewcastleGateshead*. A submission has been made to extend funding for a further four years to 2010 (a decision is due to be made at time of writing). SRC note that: *“it is clear that the work of the Initiative is far from complete; the considerable amount of good work that has been done needs a minimum of a further two years to be consolidated and entrenched. The approaches, processes and systems the NMI is trying to change have been in place for some considerable time and will necessarily take time to change.”*

Finally, the Neighbourhood Manager highlights several key recommendations for similar initiatives just establishing themselves:

- *“Get to know who’s working in the area, build local relationships, get agencies to come together and network (too many people in Benwell met for the first time as a result of her setting up a networking event, when they really should have been working together already)*
- *Be clear about your initial aims, and make sure they’re realistic (i.e. restrict initial aims)*
- *Make sure you constantly sell the message about neighbourhood management: it’s about joining up service in line with what residents want, not what service providers want*
- *Not having a huge pot of funding can work in favour of local initiatives, not against – because people/agencies will want to work with you for genuine reasons, not because they see you as a source of money.”*

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Andrew Sloan	–	Bridging Newcastle Gateshead
Jerry Barker	Police Inspector	Northumbria Police
Richard Beadle	Regeneration: Pathfinder Manager	Newcastle City Council
Christina Gates	Neighbourhood Manager	Home Group
Emma Knowles	Private Rented Scheme	Newcastle City Council (Strategic Housing)
Brian O'Doherty	Area Housing Director	Your Homes Newcastle
Sally Thomas Consultants	Evaluator/Consultant	Social Regeneration
Marion Chirnside	Chair of Board/local resident	Partnership Board
Judith Okoro	Chair of North Benwell Residents' Group/local resident	–
David Orr	Neighbourhood Response Manager	Newcastle City Council (Neighbourhood Services)

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

- “Reflecting on practice – assessing the effectiveness of neighbourhood management in North Benwell: Interim report” (Social Regeneration Consultants)
- North Benwell NMI: Baseline report (Social Regeneration Consultants)
- North Benwell NMI: Annual Report 2003-04 (North Benwell NMI)
- Several issues of ‘Newsround’, the quarterly newsletter from the North Benwell NMI

Case Study C:

Neighbourhood Management in Gateshead

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of a brief evaluation of the Gateshead Council neighbourhood management initiative. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by Dr Crispian Fuller from the National Evaluation team for the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

Gateshead has historically worked through borough-wide structures. Neighbourhood management was developed and implemented as an approach in 2002 and adopted into the Council's Improvement Plan as a medium term objective following the CPA. The practical experience of regeneration and the lessons learnt from involvement in a large number of initiatives have been an important impetus in the Council adopting neighbourhood management. These lessons include issues around sustainability, achieving strong involvement from different partners, being able to bend services and good quality resident consultation and involvement. There was also an impetus from members who were concerned that the council worked through departmental silos and lacked the capacity to work holistically and with sensitivity to local issues. Major processes at this time include restructuring of service departments with the purpose of removing organisational silos, and the development of a customer-service strategy.

Gateshead Council took the decision to deliver neighbourhood management across the Borough, rather than to use a more selective framework, because of the number of important but diverse issues across the borough. Five neighbourhood management areas have been identified: West; Inner West; Central; East; and South.

Neighbourhood management is at the centre of Gateshead Council's improvement agenda and is considered to play a key role in the renewal of deprived areas within the Borough. The main aim is for services to be responsive to community needs by bringing service providers together, developing greater co-ordination and joining-up of service provision at

area and neighbourhood levels, and for services to be accountable to local priorities. Neighbourhood management arrangements seek to change or realign local services and create structures to shape and fund future service delivery.

Neighbourhood management is one of six medium term objectives and service initiatives that are delivering the vision of the community strategy. This vision is one of “local people realising their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead” (Gateshead Strategic Partnership, 2004: 5). Effective neighbourhood management will achieve these by developing neighbourhoods where:

- There is a strong sense of community
- Services are delivered jointly by local people, a range of service providers and the Council
- The issues and concerns of local people are identified and resolved
- People influence services for their community

This forms an important component of the main responsibilities of neighbourhood management at the Council, which are:

- Support of existing and emerging community partnerships
- Management of programme resources such as SRB, NRF and Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder
- Problem solving
- Area Executive Forums (co-ordinating services at a neighbourhood level)
- Working with elected members

For the Police this broad philosophy of neighbourhood management, defined in terms of partnership working to address holistic problems and engaging local communities, is embedded within their strategic and operational priorities. This is also the case for the PCT, but within a more constrained organisational and broader governmental context. It is obviously difficult to gauge the opinions of a large and disparate voluntary and community sector. Comments from Empower Gateshead – Gateshead Community Network – are of the opinion that neighbourhood management principles are important to the voluntary and community sector and the sector actively seeks to engage through neighbourhood planning.

The neighbourhood management team are responsible for *influencing* and *co-ordinating* the delivery of local services, rather than direct management. They also seek to develop the capacity for communities to engage with and influence service delivery. More specifically, the main actions of the neighbourhood management team are to:

- Provide leadership and co-ordination in taking neighbourhood management forward
- Profile service delivery provision and local need for services
- Examine and report on how mainstream funding and external resources are used

- Set up area frameworks and infrastructure
- Create and measure local action plans
- Improve communication and engagement with all stakeholders
- Facilitate service improvement within neighbourhoods
- Advise on how to access and direct appropriate resources into local services
- Negotiate changes in services where local circumstances demand such an alteration
- Maximise the use of existing and new resources

Each area has an Area Action Plan which is developed through an Area Executive Forum, and these will come to form the basis for delivery of the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Community Strategy. These plans broadly seek to connect opportunities in the area with neighbourhoods in need, and identify whether existing services are addressing community strategy outcomes and community needs, and what needs to be undertaken. The forums and plans are therefore the management mechanisms in which to join up area and neighbourhood service providers around the ten broad policy outcomes within the community strategy, but focused on area circumstances that have been identified in the plans. These community strategy thematic policy outcomes areas are:

- Children and young people
- Employment and economy
- Lifelong learning
- Culture
- Community safety
- Housing
- Social care
- Health
- Transport
- Environment

Further neighbourhoods have been identified within the five areas. These are the focus for neighbourhood planning and various activities. Neighbourhood Plans are being developed that aim to express local community issues and priorities, with the purpose of influencing area and broader strategic priorities and actions. It is at this level where community needs are identified, within a context of the NM team seeking to develop community capacity, and which are fed into a neighbourhood plan that aims to influence strategic and operational priorities and activities. Some neighbourhood plans are completed, but there is no deadline for the completion or roll out of a programme approach.

There is an expectation locally that these plans will highlight complex underlying social issues, as well as obvious problems around crime and environment. As there are 85 neighbourhoods identified by the Vitality Index (see below), there is no expectation that all neighbourhoods will have a plan. It is hoped that around 15 are produced per year. The important issue for the NM team is that the concept of the neighbourhood plan is acceptable, that there is Council commitment to their further development, and that services respond. One route is 'neighbourhood agreements' which are being considered by the Council's Cabinet.

(iii) The Areas and Neighbourhoods

Gateshead covers a large area of 55 square miles, with a population of circa.190,000, covering both rural and urban areas. One quarter of the 126 IMD super output areas, constituting around 50% of the Gateshead population, fall within the top 20% of most deprived areas in England. A total of 9 of the 22 wards in the borough are within the top 10% of most deprived areas. As one would expect, the deprivation issues facing such a large area are disparate, ranging from isolated rural communities, to conditions of urban poverty. Given this diversity across a large area it is not possible to examine macro-level characteristics (since this obviously hides this diversity). It is therefore important to separately examine each area separately:

Key characteristics of the central area include:

- Total population of 35,392 people (18.5% of the total population of Gateshead)
- Around 50% of houses are rented (27% council rented; 9% housing association; and 15% privately rented), just above the Gateshead average of 43%.
- Vacant properties are widespread within the area, with Sunderland road totalling 23% of properties.
- There is a BME population of 3.5% in the area which is greater than the Gateshead average of 1.6%, and these tend to be concentrated in particular areas. There is also estimated to be an Orthodox Jewish Community of 4,000.
- Unemployment for those aged 16-74 totals 5.4%, with long term unemployed at 2.1%.

Key characteristics of the west area include:

- Total population 44,178 (23.1% of Gateshead)
- Rented accommodation accounts for 32% of housing (25% council rented; 2% housing association; 3% privately rented; 2% other).
- 1.0% of the population is BME and is fairly evenly spread around the area.
- 3.5% of those aged 16-74 are unemployed, with 1.3% long term unemployed. The unemployment rates vary from 2% in Crawcrook and Greenside to 3.7% in Chopwell and Rowlands Gill.

Key characteristics of the east area include:

- Total population 35,072 (18.3% of Gateshead)
- 49% of the houses are rented (38% council rented; 7% housing association; 3% private rented; other 2%), with 51% are owner occupied.
- 1.4% of the population are in BME Groups compared to the Gateshead average of 1.6%.
- 4.1% of those aged 16-74 are unemployed, with 1.4% being long term unemployed. There are higher unemployment rates in many parts.

Key characteristics of the inner west area include:

- Total population is 33,211 people (17.4% of the population of Gateshead)
- 34% of the houses in Inner West area are rented (24% council rented; 4% housing association; 4% private rented; other 2%), with 66% owner occupied. The average house price is approximately £106,000.
- 1.5% of the population are in BME Groups.
- 3.6% of those aged 16-74 are unemployed, 1.2% are long term unemployed.

Key characteristics of the south area include:

- Total population is 43,298 people (22.7% of the population of Gateshead)
- 41% of the houses in South area are rented (34% council rented; 3% housing association; 3% private rented; other 2%), 59% are owner occupied.
- 0.9% of the population are in BME Groups.
- 3.7% of those aged 16-74 are unemployed, with 1.2% being long term unemployed. Many areas experience higher than average levels of unemployment.

The evidence presented above and by the vitality index (see below) demonstrates that Gateshead experiences a broad range of problems which tend to vary across space, with intra- and inter- area and neighbourhood differences notable. At a broad level there are commonalities amongst the poorest neighbourhoods, these include crime, anti-social behaviour, and environmental issues, along with health issues such as a lack of access to services. The nature of the problems within these broad issues is likely to vary significantly between neighbourhoods.

(iv) The Delivery Process

Partnership and delivery structures

There is a **neighbourhood management team** at Gateshead Council that includes a team manager, five area co-ordinators and five community partnership officers. A dedicated neighbourhood officer for the Sunderland road area is also in place, funded through the housing market renewal pathfinder. Similar officer posts for particular neighbourhoods may also develop. The majority of funding for the team comes from the NRF (£354,000 allocation

for 2006-07), along with support from Gateshead Council and the Housing Market Renewal fund. The majority of the team are on permanent council contracts.

In terms of **partnership structures**, there are area executive forums with membership drawn from the main public sector agencies in Gateshead. The intention is to bring senior managers together that have the ability to change services, including heads of service and service managers. Along with developing area plans, these have responsibility to:

- Enable service providers to understand each other's services, targets, needs and challenges in delivering services.
- Establish the holistic baseline of service provision across the public, private and voluntary sector (what is currently provided in the area) and identify needs and gaps.
- Develop the ability to drill down their borough-wide targets and actions to better reflect what will be delivered in each of the five areas and neighbourhoods.
- Develop robust and effective communication mechanisms that enable local needs identified through the consultative process to begin to inform area-based actions/targets.
- Develop their respective action plans using a consistent template.
- The Forums must take ownership of the action planning process at both area and neighbourhood level.
- Meet at least bi-monthly to drive the process.
- Membership will reflect the current service issues for each of the areas and will be flexible to allow a "needs focussed approach " to be adopted.
- The membership will strike a balance between seniority (facilitating decision making, understanding service issues and resource commitment) and local knowledge (facilitating a greater understanding of the area).
- Service providers will be encouraged to raise and share service delivery issues in an open way to develop trust and improve understanding of neighbourhood service issues.
- Strong communication networks and processes will be required to ensure the Forums reflect the issues raised through the consultative process.
- Each Forum will need to identify a development budget as required.

All major public service providers are members of the forums (which meet bi-monthly), including strong involvement from the Police, PCT, and Gateshead Housing Company. The voluntary and community sector are not represented on these forums. Certain organisations find it difficult to support the forums, such as the LSC. As these forums do not have suitable day-to-day knowledge to make a significant local impact, various area-based thematic groups are being developed.

A number of multi-agency operational task groups have been developed, or are being developed, in each area for crime, health, children and young people and housing market renewal. The aim of these is to address particular issues and ensure that local priorities are

represented in neighbourhood, area and service delivery plans. One important example is the crime problem solving groups that operate in each area. Led by the Police, the groups meet every five weeks, with strong representation from the Police, environmental services, youth and community services, PCT and Gateshead Housing Company, along with the NM area co-ordinator. The groups developed slowly but have progressed as stakeholders have developed a greater understanding of each other's agendas and limitations, and as trust develops. The group also has a pot of funding of £100k, rising to £120k this financial year, from a variety of sources including NRF, the Building Safer Communities Fund, Safer and Stronger Communities Fund and GO-NE. Groups can request or bid for funding from the pot.

Tasking and co-ordination groups are also being developed to discuss and resolve with partners immediate operational issues that require quick fixes through joint working (as opposed to problem solving which addresses more strategic and complex issues). These involve frontline staff that meet fortnightly to discuss issues that have been raised as a concern by residents. The NM team are represented at these meetings.

There are health tasking groups in particular areas. Agreement was reached August 2004 with the PCT for these bodies and it is the responsibility of individual designated officers, with area responsibilities, to establish these groups. One example of an existing health group is the South Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). This is led by five representatives from the PCT and Council, but has involvement from a range of other services, including the Police and other partnerships such as the Healthy Communities Collaborative. There are also thematic groups for children and young people which are being developed and which will link directly into the children and young people work that is presently taking place. Broad terms of reference are already in place.

Finally, there is a proposal for area working groups for three neighbourhood management areas within the Housing Market Renewal area. The principles for this were agreed in November 2005.

In developing the neighbourhood management arrangements the Council aims to have a strong **community infrastructure**. This would be difficult at the area level, so emphasis has been placed on supporting the community infrastructure at the neighbourhood level. This was started through the adoption of a Vitality Index (VI), which identified 85 neighbourhoods across the Borough. This tool describes neighbourhoods and has the ability to rank neighbourhoods based on the floor targets, so that those with most need can be targeted. There are efforts to develop the community infrastructure and networks within these identified neighbourhoods. The VI is not however a formal part of the Council's policy arrangements.

The NM team work through existing community structures (e.g. SRB partnerships) – community partnerships – and various consultation mechanisms that seek to consult a broader range of residents. Methods include, inter alia, community events involving a broad range of service providers (e.g. fun days), visits to schools, house to house surveys, focus groups, Planning for Real, and street committees. Selection of the method depends on what is already in place and the nature of the community (such as Jewish women's meeting after bed time for children). Some of the activities are long-term processes. This work is fed into the development of neighbourhood plans, some of which are expected to produce detailed accounts of the complex issues facing these areas from the long term and in-depth community consultation that is taking place.

Involvement of partners

With respect to **partner involvement**, the Police are very proactive at the neighbourhood level and through the neighbourhood management team, at both strategic and operational levels. This is manifested in tasking on a neighbourhood basis and strong involvement in area executive forums, problem solving groups and tasking groups. This involvement is supported by a very proactive Area Commander, along with strong involvement by inspectors around area and operational issues. Neighbourhood management is considered to be coterminous with the objectives of the CDRP, with the area forums permitting examination of more area-based strategic issues. Each area has a policing team (inspector, sergeant, PCs and PCSOs) that have day to day interactions with the neighbourhood management team. For the Police, neighbourhood management makes an important contribution to addressing their targets by promoting partnership working between disparate agents at both strategic and operational levels. As part of the development of the 'wider policing family' neighbourhood wardens contribute to this, with neighbourhood management providing strategic direction to wardens.

There is a long history of the PCT working with partners at a strategic level, which has not always translated into working at a service delivery level. The Council has encouraged the PCT and other partners to work together at a far more local level where you can have direct contact with residents. As a relatively new body the PCT has been willing to work in a new way. The PCT has localities that are coterminous with the area boundaries set up in response to neighbourhood management arrangements, with services aligned as much as possible on this basis. As this is the first time the PCT has sought to work at this scale it is "still exploring the locality way of doing things" because it is a new way of working, requiring adaptation of services to localities. The PCT has a localities sub-group within the PCT that is looking at how localities develop and how it takes this forward into a neighbourhood agenda.

PCT representation on each of the area executives involves a liaison manager, locality matron and a service head from each of the allied professions. The latter have the task of attempting to represent the whole allied health sector across Gateshead, which is difficult because they do not necessarily know a great deal about the area, but they do have valuable knowledge of the health sector.

The impetus for PCT involvement comes from the desire to have health development (in terms of delivering better services and improving health) on the neighbourhood management agenda, and using the area executive forums to resolve key PCT issues. Neighbourhood management arrangements also provide a mechanism in which the PCT can ask other partners if these national agendas are relevant to them and to local people, and how they can be delivered, perhaps through new innovative ways that are not presently undertaken within the PCT.

Health issues are generally the same across Gateshead, and so the main issue is how services will be delivered. These issues are being examined in the health tasking group and the various events (SHIPSHAPE). These events have been important in highlighting issues that have an important indirect impact on health, such as access to leisure facilities, and young people not congregating and intimidating older people.

The area executive forums provide the PCT with a broad range of partners that have knowledge and skills that can help to deliver its agenda. For instance, there is pressure on the PCT to find suitable premises for community health facilities, because existing stock is aging and cannot support the delivery of the health agenda. These problems are being highlighted in the area forums, with the purpose of getting support for new developments.

Examples include where GPs have approach the PCT and Council about developing a new site but this has not been earmarked by the Council for redevelopment.

Gateshead Housing Company (GHC) has a strong relationship with the neighbourhood management arrangements in Gateshead, through the problem solving approach and the tasking and co-ordinating meetings. The basis of this is around addressing tenant issues and concerns, particularly on crime and anti-social behaviour issues. They are keen to work with the Police and NM team (as conduits with local communities). Indeed, a representative from GHC notes that without the NM team it would be far more difficult to engage local people and understand their priorities.

Involvement from other service partners is far less obvious. Job Centre Plus work through three areas across Gateshead rather than the area structures. Their level of involvement is constrained by internal structures and policies, as is the case with the LSC.

It is not possible to judge the nature of the relationship between neighbourhood management and an obviously large and complex voluntary and community sector. As a consequence the community empowerment network (Empower Gateshead) was interviewed to give a broad overview. The community network co-ordinator (Empower Gateshead) notes that as the network and neighbourhood management arrangements developed at the same time they did not initially work well. At this time the network spent a large amount of time negotiating with the LSP around representation on the theme partnerships, and with only a small team. Efforts over the last year have been on focused pieces of work between the network and NM team, with working relations having improved because of strong inter-personal relations.

Systems

In terms of **monitoring process/systems**, a neighbourhood management information system is in the process of being developed to provide baselines, profile service delivery in neighbourhoods and evaluate the impact of plans at a local level. There is a strategic intention to adopt system K for monitoring and reporting outcomes and outputs. The Vitality Index is developing baselines to monitor progress against domain indicators.

Performance management at the neighbourhood level forms part of the area plans and indicators. The area plans have targets and performance indicators. Area executive forums have responsibility for monitoring the progress towards achieving the targets within the plans through a regular reporting system. This will be reported to the Gateshead Strategic Partnership through an annual report and the Council's corporate reporting framework, along with feedback to service departments.

Main Activities

The neighbourhood management team are involved in a large number of tangible and tacit **activities**, from co-ordinating environmental improvements to influencing mainstream agents through networked bodies (e.g. problem solving groups). It is difficult to measure the latter, given its intangible nature, but interview comments suggest that the team are actively involved in consultation with a broad range of partners, including the Police, PCT and Gateshead Housing Company. As the NM team only have the capacity to influence services they are obviously not involved in directly providing local services.

One of the central functions of the team is community consultation. This occurs through a variety of mechanisms and where possible the team work through existing mechanisms, such as SRB partnerships. The team also support the development of Community Partnerships. Beyond this, a variety of other mechanisms are used to move beyond consulting the 'usual suspects', with the purpose of feeding this information into neighbourhood plans. This includes:

- Working with and helping to build the capacity of the borough's tenant and resident organisations
- Neighbourhood Planning in Schools
- Neighbourhood forums
- Community Events
- Planning for Real
- Establishment of the Community Infrastructure Database
- Development of an approach to community involvement that includes a detailed set of protocols for working with Gateshead communities

A number of specific project activities have been undertaken through neighbourhood management arrangements and involving the team. The following have been identified as important activities:

Table 1: Important NM Activities in Gateshead

	Activity	No. of projects
1.	Documentation of environmental issues	1
2.	Neighbourhood planning consultation	1
3.	Community consultation	1
4.	Access centres developed further	1
5.	Multi-agency group established	1
6.	Healthy fun day	1
7.	Neighbourhood planning in (primary) schools	9
8.	Reduction in anti-social behaviour through environmental changes	8
9.	Environmental improvements	1
10.	Support for a community organisation to develop a community centre	1
11.	Provision of a Multi-Use Games Area	1
12.	Development of a health and leisure facility	1
13.	Consultation over housing	1
14.	Neighbourhood management officer	1
15.	Reduction in litter	1

It is not possible to examine all these activities, given the spatial constraints of this report, but a broad range of project activities is briefly examined. In the main they are concentrated on community consultation, environment, crime and anti-social behaviour.

Sunderland road north

Multi-faceted deprivation has increased in the Sunderland road north area. Increased crime resulted from absentee landlords letting properties to anyone; properties had been vandalised; fly-tipping was widespread; there were increases in burglary, dumping of stolen cars, and drug and alcohol abuse, all of which tended to not be reported, because of a poor relationship between the Police and other stakeholders. The neighbourhood officer facilitated the co-ordination of a number of partners and community engagement, which supported the clearance activities of the Housing Market Renewal partners. A street committee was established to work with the Council, while various public meetings were also held. Properties were made secure through partnership working with the Police. A Neighbourhood Watch scheme was established. The Police and Council have also established surgeries.

Operation Goldfinch-Nest estate

Issues such as anti-social behaviour were not being reported to key agencies by local residents. There was also a specific privately owned piece of land which was subject to fly-tipping. The operation aimed to engage local residents with the purpose of identifying important local issues and aspirations, but also developing a relationship between service providers and local residents. During a week of community engagement the Police and wardens visited residents and undertook an environmental survey. A community centre was used for a range of activities.

Saltwell

In one street in this area there were a number of empty properties that were a victim of criminal and anti-social behaviour, while fly-tipping was also widespread, along with instances of drug and alcohol abuse. A poor relationship between the Police and local community meant that these crimes were rarely reported. The neighbourhood officer assisted in managing the security of the properties that were being acquired by the Council, along with working with the Private Sector Housing Team and informing the Police of anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

Millennium House

An information office, funded by external funding, was detached from the local community, with few local people aware and using the centre, poor links with other service providers and co-occupation with organisations that were not directly serving the local community. An important aim has been to raise the profile of the Millennium House with the community and service providers (the latter through new reporting mechanisms that inform service providers of community issues). The Gateshead Private Landlords Association and private landlords' team were also moved into the building.

Regeneration

Lack of community facilities were identified by local residents as a major priority, along with rural isolation and deprivation. Residents desired local facilities, particularly for younger people. The local community partnership with support from the neighbourhood management team consulted local residents. External funding was secured for bespoke facilities. The Council's Local Environmental Services provided revenue expenditure for the facilities.

Morton Green, Harlow Green

Young people were gathering outside the village hall and were engaged in anti social behaviour and vandalism to the building. Their behaviour was also intimidating local residents. A problem solving approach was used to identify the nature of the problem. There were targeted measures at certain young people, graffiti was removed and repairs were made to the building. The police and PCSO's had an increasing presence in the area. A crime prevention survey was undertaken. A multi-agency steering group was formed to increase the use of the village hall.

High Lanes Estate

Again young people were behaving in an anti social behaviour causing damage to buildings and vehicles, and graffiti. Residents were being intimidated. The problem was identified through a problem solving approach. Other actions included a clean up of the area, removal of graffiti by crime prevention survey and improve security to buildings.

Neighbourhood planning in schools

This project aims to educate children in local community history, increase involvement from the school in community initiatives, and support children in developing an awareness of community needs. The children organised and managed a community referendum on a new housing development, co-ordinated a community consultation event supported by the neighbourhood management team, and designed a community space in the new housing development. The children also undertook a study visit to Belfast to learn about regeneration there.

South Health Area Participatory Event

There are many other examples of significant activities that have been organised in conjunction with partners, or in which the NM team have provided support to the initiatives of partner. It was agreed through the locality structure that each health tasking group would examine one particular issue. The South Health Improvement Partnership is addressing the issue of lack of services, their under use and local unease. This initially took place through consultation that was tied in with a local event that was taking place to see how working together and examining broader health issues would work. This identified areas of concern for local people.

The outputs from this were used to inform the structure of a Malton Green healthy fun day (South Health Area Participatory Event – SHAPE). This was developed by SHIP in consultation with a focus group. The event was funded through the HAZ Health Inequalities Fund (£4k), with the overarching aim of tackling health inequalities within neighbourhoods in South Gateshead. The purpose of the project was to enable local people to have a role in influencing the provision of health and social care services, getting local communities to take greater ownership of services because “this is the only way it will work”, and developing a relationship between residents and services. It was organised through partnership working with the Police, housing support, voluntary bodies, Foundation Trust and the local community. The fun day involved a mixture of activities to attract people (quizzes, give-aways etc), health and health-related activities and advice for the community. A second event took place in another neighbourhood.

Other activities

The Police have also worked closely with the neighbourhood management team to understand community issues around the new licensing arrangements, so that the Police can respond to these particular issues. The Police are also working with the neighbourhood management team on concerns around the misuse of motorbikes and anti-social behaviour. It is too big an issue for one neighbourhood management area to address and while each area has their own specific problems, there are broad cross cutting issues. For example, it involves health issues in relation to accidents, education in terms of talking to children, and environmental issues around crime prevention. These different agendas and service providers are being pulled together through neighbourhood management. Prior to these arrangements it was not possible for the Police to undertake such an initiative.

There has been joint work between the NM team and the community network. An outreach worker that supports people in funding bids worked closely with the NM team in one particular area. They held joint events with the team, such as surgeries. This was a way in which the VCS could maximise their reach into communities using their limited resources. There is also a joint community infrastructure review which has been on-going, but which will become a joint bid with the NM team to the NRF fund. This will be an audit of the voluntary and community sector to produce baseline information and a database on the sector. The community network is also piloting a piece of area work (on issues such how people want to be engaged, what groups are in existence, what support is required for engagement etc.), with the purpose of preparing for the neighbourhood element funding that will be part of the Safer Stronger Communities Fund. There have been discussions with the NM team about where that should be focused.

The use of evidence

Evidence has a significant role in shaping decisions and priorities and monitoring progress. The NM team have been engaged in an extensive process of community consultation with a broad range of citizens and through a variety of mechanisms (see above). This is producing a large amount of information that is being fed directly into neighbourhood plans, but as there are so many identified neighbourhoods it is unlikely that all neighbourhoods will have a plan in the medium term.

A second important mechanism is the Vitality Index. This is using information from local and national organisations for territorializing particular indicators at the neighbourhood scale. The data is being used as the evidence base for the area and neighbourhood plans, development of a community infrastructure for particular neighbourhoods, and monitoring the progress towards the targets within the area plans. The VI has identified 85 neighbourhoods through a number of domain indicators (i.e. income, health, education, unemployment, crime and housing). Neighbourhoods are ranked according to these indicators, with boundaries produced by balancing meaningfulness in terms of reflecting neighbourhood issues and the ability to monitor trends.

Issues affecting delivery

There are important **key issues affecting delivery**. A broad range of stakeholders indicates that partnership working is strong in Gateshead. Neighbourhood management arrangements are supporting this at both strategic (area executives) and operational levels (e.g. problem solving groups). Partnership working permits information to be shared, understanding to be developed on the issues facing partners, and joint priorities and agendas to be agreed. The

success of South Health Area Participatory Event (SHAPE), for example, is attributed to strong partnership working and leadership, allowing front line staff to work in new ways with residents.

There are also specific organisational dynamics that affect delivery. The Police are flexible in their management arrangements, making it easy for them to work through neighbourhood management arrangements. The consistency of NM staff has also been important. Key people in the same role have supported the development and growing maturity of relations (e.g. trust); as one stakeholder remarked: “you grow together, you succeed together, or you make mistakes together.”

There are other issues facing neighbourhood management that have a detrimental impact on the delivery process. The NM team is small when compared with the large area, complex range of issues and variety of service providers that it has to address. With limited resources there is restricted capacity to engage all communities in a meaningful way. This is compounded by the Council not having an official community development team. At the moment the development of plans is being undertaken in a piece meal way by the NM team relying on support from partners.

The NM team does not have direct control over services, meaning that it relies on the attitude and capacity of service departments. This has the potential to produce time delays in responding to issues. For example, lower level community safety activities would be easier to task if the team had direct responsibility.

There is a perception that the neighbourhood management programme has moved slower than would have been expected. Organisational change takes time and it has been difficult to change service departments. Developing neighbourhood management arrangements occur within a Council context described by some as still working through departmental silos. Indeed, support and involvement from other partners was considered to be better than with service departments. Other stakeholders believe that service departments are keen to be involved with neighbourhood plans and the consultation process, although this is involvement with “an arm twisted behind the back”. Certain stakeholders take the view that senior manager support and buy-in has been strong, but communication to middle managers has not been as effective as it should have been.

There are other obvious limitations with certain services, such as Social Services and education, which are difficult to work through neighbourhood management arrangements because of a collective interest and individual client focus in the case of Social Services. There is a tension between neighbourhood/area-specific concerns and a service geared to non area-specific provision across the borough. In certain instances there may be a meeting point as certain areas (and groups of people within those areas) are targeted.

The PCT and other government bodies, such as the LSC, have primary responsibility for delivering a national agenda. This leaves the PCT with “little room for manoeuvre”. Making changes to mainstream services is thus problematic. Neighbourhood management is not considered to have made a large impact on the PCT as a corporate body, because it is a new way of working that the PCT is tentatively exploring. It is also very labour intensive and has been added onto the existing responsibilities of officers and managers. Having to engage in the neighbourhood management agenda and various groups can add to already burdensome work agendas.

It can be a challenge to get partners engaged in NM arrangements. The PCT has sought to involve GPs, but it has been difficult because their boundaries do not easily fit within area boundaries. GHC note that they have experienced difficulties in engaging local schools as part of anti-social behaviour partnership working.

There are also issues around the impact of staff turnover at operational levels on partnership working. Time has to be spent on developing relationships with new officers.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

It is difficult to judge at this time the actual effectiveness of community involvement in mainstream services. The NM team have undertaken a considerable amount of work to engage communities, community bodies and the voluntary sector. The team does not have the capacity to engage all communities. Selection is informed by the experience of partners and the NM team on the ground, along with the Vitality Index. This has led to the piece meal development of neighbourhood plans, with emphasis placed on priority neighbourhoods.

The community and voluntary sector does not sit on the area executive forums. Area plans were discussed at the Community Empower Network, but it is not clear how they will contribute to future plans. Nor is it clear how the progress of the area plans will be fed back to local communities.

The area executives provide an important mechanism to engage partners at a strategic level. Although some have lacked membership, many are developing new working arrangements. It has been left to partners and service departments to decide who attends area executive meetings. A challenging balancing act occurs between having representatives with area understanding but no positional power, and those with positional power but little understanding.

Problem solving groups and other operational bodies are cited by many partners as being well-structured mechanisms for tasking services through effective partnership working and joined-up actions around operational issues. Stakeholders agree that there is a process of partnership learning and innovation taking place as joined-up action addresses operational issues, such as around anti-social behaviour. Tasking and co-ordination groups are relatively new entities, thus making it difficult to discuss their progress.

A key learning process for neighbourhood management more broadly relates to a geographical best value review in 2004 (of Birtley neighbourhood), with the Audit Commission attending as a critical friend. Lessons were learnt from the difficult nature of applying a best value review to an area. A good baseline of the amount of resources going into the area could not be established. The timescales of the review were also too long. There was a lot of consultation with residents on what was good, what services needed to improve etc. It took a long time to get to the implementation plan, so that while the issues were still relevant residents would have forgotten that they were originally asked. A second refined geographical review is to be conducted in two areas (south and inner west) in early 2006. The South review will help produce the delivery plan for the SSCF Neighbourhood Element. The first part of the review is similar to an inspection, and produces a self assessment. This will enable a comparison of the two areas. It is hoped that the resulting implementation plan will be the first draft of the neighbourhood delivery plan.

The NM team have the operational capacity to influence and co-ordinate the activities of service departments where possible, but do not manage or deliver services. The capacity of the NM team is therefore influenced by the extent to which their agenda is coterminous with that of partners.

As mentioned above, the team is relatively small when compared with the large number of areas, issues and partners that it has to consult, act upon and work with in the delivery of the NM agenda. While partnership working arrangements through the area executive forums and various operational bodies is developing, the team lack the capacity to engage all communities.

Links between neighbourhood management and Gateshead Strategic Partnership (both Board and thematic groups) are described as “effective”. The area executive forums are one strand of the LSP, the other being the thematic groups. Area plans are based on the thematic outcomes and were approved by the LSP. For the latter, they provide an important mechanism in which to customise the Community Strategy to local issues. Reporting goes through the area executives back to the LSP Board. There is presently an examination of how the LSP theme plans can be more area orientated, since it was felt that the area plans were feeding into the themes. The area plans are being updated for March 2006 and will be fed into the revised Community Strategy.

NRF is used to fund the neighbourhood management team. They have close working arrangements with the LSP team, and obviously tend to work with the same partners through the many different forums. For Gateshead Strategic Partnership, the NM team and Empower Gateshead are an important mechanism to consult with the local community and provide an infrastructure for joined-up working at operational and neighbourhood levels. One example is that of the partnership working arrangements being developed by Youth Offending Team.

Formal decision-making for area and neighbourhood plans goes through the Council’s Cabinet. Any major changes require reports to cabinet. The area plans and problem solving as an approach have been through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) in 2005. They examined the process of how the area plans were produced and the nature of their content. Problem solving was different in that the OSC was examining the Council’s problem solving arrangements, using NM’s arrangements as an example.

Impact on community capacity

Interim results from the 2005 Residents Survey indicate that residents feel they are more involved in Council decision making and are consulted on issues that affect them, compared with 2002 (see below). While it is impossible to attribute this directly to the neighbourhood management arrangements, stakeholders are of the general opinion that it has changed people’s thinking and developed mechanisms that give residents more opportunities for engagement.

Table 2: Percentage of residents which agree that the Council (as a % of respondents):

	2005	2002
Is easy to contact when needed	67.0	80.7
Consults residents on issues which affect them	48.1	41.0
Listens to residents views	43.9	37.0
Responds to complaints promptly	36.1	37.0
Allows residents to participate in decision making	38.4	31.0
Provides information which is easy to understand	69.2	77.0

The greater sensitivity to community issues through consultation is leading to certain issues being identified, which would not otherwise have been fed-back to service providers. An important example of this is the community's concern with not having a GP practice in one particular area, which was fed back to the PCT. This is an issue that would not have been identified without neighbourhood management. Residents also influenced Gateshead Housing Company's Anti-social Behaviour Strategy. This was developed with tenant involvement from the start of the process, rather than being consulted after important decisions had been made. A review has recently occurred that involved tenants. For GHC, these developments are changing the community's perception of service providers, resulting in far greater interaction.

There is no other evidence to indicate improvements in the capacity of residents to hold service providers accountable, particularly given the lack of resident representation at area executive forums. Neighbourhood plans are intended to feed into the area plans, but only a small minority of neighbourhoods presently have these plans in place. Participatory democratic mechanisms are thus lacking in the neighbourhood management arrangements at this level.

Impact on mainstream service providers' behaviour in improved services

There is a need to differentiate between operational and strategic changes in neighbourhood management arrangements. At a strategic level there have been certain changes to corporate policies. The Police, PCT and Gateshead Housing Company have set-up area structures, while children and young peoples' service also has an area structure, while parts of environmental services are working through these arrangements. Thematic plans are being made more area orientated at the LSP.

In terms of corporate practices, community consultation through the neighbourhood management team was viewed by one stakeholder as leading to a change in people's perception towards working at a neighbourhood scale. An example of this is Gateshead Housing Company introducing a service standard for anti-social behaviour and an out of hours service. This is being funded through mainstream funds and has been rolled-out across the borough, although there is no re-allocation of funding between neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood management has not started to re-allocate or re-shape mainstream provision in a major way. Many stakeholders are of the opinion that providers are joining-up services at the operational level through the various operational groups. Relationships between partners are maturing through these operational groups. This maturity recognises that there are a number of "our problems", which can sometimes mean partners moving beyond their own

priorities. The NM team was described by one stakeholder as being “pivotal” in developing this maturity. The main attributes of this operational joining-up have been:

- “Getting people around the table”
- Sharing information
- Identifying common interrelated issues
- Agreeing priorities for neighbourhoods
- Joining up individual actions, as part of a service remit, to address particular issues

At an operational level this indicates that there is to a limited extent a degree of re-shaping resources to respond to particular issues, but this should not be overstated. Such joining-up has been most evident in services around anti-social behaviour, environmental anti-social behaviour, crime and broader environmental issues. There are many examples at operational levels through the problem solving and tasking and co-ordination groups where partnership working is taking place (e.g. Operational Blizzard involved the Police working with the NM team and other partners such as GHC).

Impact on neighbourhoods

There is no specific data available on the impact of neighbourhood management on neighbourhoods and the progress towards achieving outcome targets. Nonetheless, it is possible to briefly examine some of the project activities outlined above on neighbourhoods:

- *Sunderland road north* – The neighbourhood officer assisted with Gateshead Housing Company, private landlords and housing associations to find alternative accommodation for residents.
- *Operation Goldfinch-Nest estate* – Land was cleared. A large range of residents were engaged, allowing key partners to gather a wealth of information on issues and aspirations. A plan is to be developed from this for the estate, and the data also contributes to the North Felling Neighbourhood Plan.
- *Saltwell* – A large number of residents were engaged for the neighbourhood plan. Greater funds have been allocated for lamp posts and upgrading of existing lighting through the problem solving group. The Police also conducted surveillance and subsequent raids on properties.
- *Millennium House* – The centre offers important support to the local community.
- *Regeneration* – Local young people are using the facilities and there has been no vandalism to the property.
- *Morton Green, Harlow Green* – Levels of anti-social behaviour were reduced and there was a decrease in damage to the building. Local young people are using the facilities and there has been no vandalism to the property.
- *High Lanes Estate* – There has been a reduction in anti social behaviour, graffiti and vandalism.

- *Neighbourhood planning in schools* – There has been greater community involvement in housing development. Children are making an input into housing development. Information has gone into the housing market renewal neighbourhood action plan process.

(vi) Conclusions

Gateshead has a strategic intention of moving from borough-wide structures to working through areas and neighbourhoods. In terms of actual progress, the NM team has undertaken extensive community consultation, with the development of neighbourhood plans being a key aspect of this progress. However, the NM team has limited capacity, thus progress towards developing neighbourhood plans is conditioned by a lack of broader support.

At an operational level there is evidence of greater joining-up of different service providers as relationships develop and shared issues are identified. Interview comments indicate that many partners have found the present neighbourhood management arrangements to be effective particularly in terms of bringing disparate partners and activities together to a “develop a more mature relationship that can address cross cutting issues”, such as the link between anti-social behaviour, detrimental environmental conditions, and young people. To a certain extent this joining-up involves the re-shaping of services to respond to particular issues, mostly around crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues. This does not however represent a major re-shaping of services.

There is an important distinction to be made between this operational joining-up and strategic activities. Whilst changes to corporate policies and practices have been evident (with the Police, GHC and PCT moving to area structures), neighbourhood management has not started to re-allocate or re-shape mainstream provision in a major way, nor has there been major strategic joining-up through area forums.

It is important at this point to make a distinction between some models of neighbourhood management and the arrangements in Gateshead. Present strategic arrangements within Gateshead are focused on area working, through the area forums, rather than the type of neighbourhood management that is being developed through Pathfinders and other Councils, focused on neighbourhoods with more direct resident/provider interaction, although Gateshead's approach to the SSCF Neighbourhood Element will lead to a different model which is closer to the NRU Pathfinder model.

The NM team has the power to influence and co-ordinate rather than manage services; their capacity is therefore contingent on the extent to which partners wish to work through a neighbourhood agenda. There are no formal neighbourhood structures in place, while area forums have no involvement from the community and voluntary sector, since membership is restricted to mainstream services. There is presently no evidence on the extent to which neighbourhood plans will influence area plans, nor does every neighbourhood have a plan. Within the Council there has been no substantial devolution of services to areas or neighbourhoods. Service departments and partners have no stated targets or actions for area and neighbourhood working within the area plans.

This suggests that arrangements in Gateshead are closer to traditional ‘area co-ordination’ rather than neighbourhood management. Within this context it is very difficult to judge the effectiveness of neighbourhood management in achieving objectives, when these objectives are focused on broader ‘areas’ rather than ‘neighbourhoods’. Indeed, the Council's Peer Review Self Assessment (2005) “recognises that an area that needs further development is

Neighbourhood Management”. However, one must not forget that there are major organisational challenges to mainstream services working through the neighbourhood scale, along with a tension between targeting poor areas versus general provision across a borough.

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Ian Stevenson	NM team leader	Gateshead Council
John Robson	Chief Executive's Office	Gateshead Council
Deborah McKenna	Neighbourhood officer	Gateshead Council
Allan Curry	Chief Superintendent	Police
John Hooker	Liaison officer	PCT
Siobhan O'Neill	Co-ordinator	Empower Gateshead
Maggie Atkinson	Group Director Learning and children's services	Gateshead Council
Deborah Ewart	Neighbourhood relations manager	Gateshead Housing Company
Steve Bramwell	Group Director Community bases services	Gateshead Council
David Andrew	Area co-ordinator	Gateshead Council
Gary Carr	Area co-ordinator	Gateshead Council

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

- Area Action plan West. (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.
- Area Action plan Inner West. (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.
- Area Action plan South. (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.
- Area Action plan Central. (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.
- Area Action plan East. (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.
- Gateshead Community Strategy. Gateshead Strategic Partnership.
- Geographical Best Value Review of Birtley (2004)
- Peer Review Self Assessment (2005) Gateshead Council. Gateshead: Gateshead Council.

Case Study D:

Neighbourhood Management in Doncaster

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of a brief evaluation of the Doncaster neighbourhood management initiative. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by Dr Crispian Fuller from the National Evaluation team for the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

Aims and objectives of the initiative

Neighbourhood management arrangements in Doncaster stem from a process started by the Mayor, Martin Winter, from 2002. A White Paper, 'Making a difference in your neighbourhood', was published by the Mayor following extensive consultation. This set out the plans for how services would be provided through a neighbourhood management model, which has subsequently been implemented, as described in the next section. The White Paper states that neighbourhood management is:

"a way to bring communities and statutory organisations together but also a practical tool to deliver our Borough Strategy, our vision for Doncaster and our Transformational goals in every neighbourhood".

Amongst stakeholders there is a general level of consensus that the broad aims of neighbourhood management are to improve services, along with an acknowledgement and acceptance that services are developed and delivered better at a neighbourhood level. At this scale it is possible to develop joined-up partnership working approaches that address complex and interrelated issues.

The borough community strategy, Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Council's corporate plan are important driving forces in the developing neighbourhood management arrangements. The borough strategy provides the overarching strategic context. Actions occur through the main strategic themes:

- Children and Young People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Healthier Communities and Supporting Vulnerable People
- Sustainable Communities

There are also a set of strategic priorities:

- Tackling deprivation
- Achieving world class skills
- Improving skills and access to new technology
- Achieving an urban and rural renaissance
- Community participation in democracy
- Environmental sustainability
- Fastest growing economy in the North of England

Of importance in the borough strategy is the emphasis placed on translating strategic themes to the neighbourhood level, and ensuring that services are tailored “to meet the specific needs of an area” (Doncaster Strategic Partnership, 2005: p.28). Of particular importance with respect to neighbourhood renewal is the focus on developing community participation in democracy. The borough strategy aims to ensure that partners support citizens in participating in decision-making processes, particularly amongst young people.

Following on from the borough strategy, new neighbourhood management structures also reflect the three thematic LAA blocks (at the time of writing):

- Strong, safer, sustainable communities
- Children, young people and schools
- Healthier communities and vulnerable people

The priorities identified within the borough strategy, as well as those identified in the corporate plan and LAA, inform service and neighbourhood plans which each area is developing. Neighbourhood managers are presently going through the process of identifying their priorities for the purpose of developing service and neighbourhood plans. Where there are presently neighbourhood plans in place these are now being adapted around the new arrangements.

A strong focus is placed on getting partners to develop and sign-up to key outcome targets. Certain stakeholders note that an important priority is to improve rather than provide extra services. The most important partner in neighbourhood management is the Police and they have as a main priority the implementation of neighbourhood policing, based upon the

strategic priorities of listening to what communities require while also “helping them to help themselves”. The focus for South Yorkshire Police is being proactive in addressing underlying causal processes through joined-up partnership working with other service providers and communities, alongside developing the capacity of communities to address issues.

(iii) The Areas and Neighbourhoods

Doncaster is a complex and broad borough. There is an urban conurbation at the centre which is situated within a much larger area that comprises heterogeneous communities. There are both affluent and very deprived areas within the borough. The centre is particularly deprived and has a New Deal for Communities partnership, while outlying areas have pockets of significant affluence. Important characteristics of the areas are outlined below:

Table 6: Housing Tenure in Doncaster

Neighbourhoods	Households	Population	Owner occupied: Owns outright (%)	Owner occupied: Owns with a mortgage or loan (%)	Rented from: Council (%)	Rented from: Private landlord or letting agency (%)	Rented from: Other (%)
Greater Adwick	7526	18630	25.66	36.05	27.08	5.26	9.85
Armthorpe	11541	28010	32.78	49.71	10.68	3.19	3.86
Greater Askern	4434	11000	30.82	37.39	19.55	7.19	8.02
Thorne and Moorends	7330	17930	31.29	35.64	21.94	5.10	6.37
Balby and Hexthorpe	9109	21440	24.72	39.42	18.62	9.05	7.34
Bentley	9375	22080	27.83	38.77	20.26	7.00	6.26
Edlington and Sprotbrough	10646	26150	32.52	44.30	14.14	4.65	4.29
Bessacarr and Cantley	10976	26790	36.89	44.95	11.01	2.64	4.57
Town Centre	2667	5860	24.52	32.95	2.24	29.55	18.61
Hyde Park and Belle Vue	4736	10080	25.69	33.53	19.99	13.20	9.91
Conisbrough	6547	15780	25.32	33.30	30.79	4.14	6.14
Hatfield and Stainforth	7641	18920	28.04	38.56	23.12	4.82	5.57
Intake and Wheatley	7719	18400	26.61	34.91	28.89	3.10	5.58
Mexborough	7503	17750	26.76	35.79	25.43	5.79	6.55
Rossington	5268	13300	26.53	42.81	21.66	3.70	6.97
Bawtry and Tickhill	5680	13350	37.36	44.22	8.24	4.27	8.15
Area							
North	21335	51710	27.18	36.85	22.34	6.27	7.86
West	24696	59680	28.91	38.86	21.89	4.86	5.45
South	21924	53440	34.24	43.89	12.72	3.33	6.12
East	26512	64860	31.11	42.77	17.47	4.21	5.07
Urban Centre	24231	55780	25.86	36.67	20.79	10.21	8.56

Table 7: Worklessness and Ethnicity in Doncaster

Neighbourhoods	Total Claimants/ 1000 Working Age Pop.	White (%)	Mixed (%)	Asian or Asian British (%)	British or Black British (%)	Chinese (%)	Other Ethnic Group (%)
Greater Adwick	33.72	99.19	0.40	0.25	0.10	0.04	0.02
Armthorpe	16.16	98.16	0.61	0.69	0.39	0.10	0.05
Greater Askern	25.03	98.98	0.36	0.44	0.08	0.07	0.06
Thorne and Moorends	28.06	99.15	0.39	0.27	0.08	0.07	0.03
Balby and Hexthorpe	43.60	95.89	1.04	1.85	0.87	0.26	0.10
Bentley	32.85	98.30	0.56	0.32	0.74	0.06	0.01
Edlington and Sprotbrough	21.23	98.90	0.38	0.29	0.14	0.27	0.02
Bessacarr and Cantley	15.97	96.19	0.74	2.02	0.28	0.52	0.24
Town Centre	70.49	89.59	1.41	6.16	2.05	0.51	0.28
Hyde Park and Belle Vue	64.96	89.37	1.18	7.37	1.44	0.52	0.12
Conisbrough	29.12	99.05	0.35	0.26	0.23	0.08	0.04
Hatfield and Stainforth	34.73	98.96	0.40	0.39	0.06	0.12	0.07
Intake and Wheatley	37.73	96.46	1.00	1.61	0.70	0.12	0.11
Mexborough	29.52	99.10	0.30	0.34	0.10	0.14	0.02
Rossington	27.34	98.94	0.53	0.29	0.17	0.05	0.02
Bawtry and Tickhill	13.97	98.67	0.57	0.40	0.05	0.18	0.13
Area							
North	26.89	98.79	0.46	0.32	0.35	0.06	0.02
West	25.74	98.66	0.49	0.49	0.21	0.10	0.05
South	18.29	97.57	0.64	1.14	0.19	0.31	0.16
East	24.53	99.00	0.35	0.30	0.15	0.18	0.03
Urban Centre	48.79	94.25	1.09	3.22	1.04	0.29	0.12

Deprived areas within the borough face broad issues that tend to have a localised dimension. These broad issues include crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues, along with health and worklessness issues in inner city and ex-mining communities. Certain communities have serious drugs problems, while other neighbourhoods face problems around excluded pupils from schools. In the most deprived areas there are major issues around access to services. Small ex-mining communities that rate poorly in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation face the challenge of attracting external funding and delivering good services when there is no external funding. It is hoped that neighbourhood management will highlight many rural issues in the area, particularly around social exclusion, crime and the local economy. Outlying areas tend to highlight transport as an important issue, while fear of crime is important in more affluent areas.

In rural areas there are many parish councils with various stakeholder interests, presenting a more complex partnership working environment, but also opportunities in terms of developing the capacity of communities to engage in the delivery of services to address local issues.

Therefore, Doncaster can be characterised as a large and diverse borough, with multiple communities of interest, identity and income. Areas and neighbourhoods tend to face a complex range of issues which will generic in particular instances (e.g. crime), often derive from localised causal processes.

(iv) The Delivery Process

Neighbourhood management arrangements

The development and implementation of neighbourhood management arrangements in Doncaster has occurred over a relatively short period of time. The commitment to joining-up services in the Mayor's White Paper led to the creation of 'Community First' later in 2003. This is the Council's operational mechanism for delivering a range of services within neighbourhoods, mainly to provide 'cleaner streets and safer neighbourhoods' and includes the following services:

- Grounds Maintenance, Grass Cutting, Arboriculture and Horticulture
- Parks & Play Equipment
- Public Rights of Way
- FLAG (Fighting Litter, Abandoned cars and Graffiti)
- Waste Collection Service
- Street Cleansing
- Recycling, Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Pest Control, Dog Wardens
- Public Conveniences
- Community Safety – through Community Safety Wardens
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams

NRF funded projects in three neighbourhoods were used to pilot this approach of neighbourhood management. This was followed from the beginning of 2005 by a substantial restructuring within the Council to a more neighbourhood management-oriented structure. The intention is that this will assist the Council in becoming more clearly customer focused, by delivering more joined up services that are more responsive to local concerns. An increasing range of services are delivered through area and neighbourhood arrangements.

The restructured council now has six main directorates as follows, with the first directorate being the one largely responsible for the delivery of services on an area basis:

- Neighbourhoods, Communities and Children's Services (NCCS)
- Policy, Partnerships and Governance (including strategy, research, performance management)

- Organisational Development and Culture (including corporate services and customer services)
- Education Standards (leading educational strategy and inspection)
- Development (planning, development and transport)
- Managing Director

Within the '**Neighbourhoods, Communities and Children's Services**' directorate there are five '*area managers*', each responsible for one of five areas that cover the whole borough. Above these managers are three '*Community Directors*' who have a matrix of responsibilities. Each one is responsible for two areas (including the town centre):

1. Outer urban (and town centre)
2. North and west
3. East and south

Each community director is also responsible for one of the three LAA themes (at time of writing) across the borough at a strategic level:

- Stronger, safer, sustainable communities
- Children, young people and schools
- Healthier communities and vulnerable people

Within each of the five areas, there are also a number of neighbourhoods (usually up to three), with each having a *neighbourhood manager* and a *neighbourhood delivery team*. There is a total of 15 neighbourhoods, plus the town centre. The identification of these neighbourhoods is based on "natural communities", along with consideration of other forms of intelligence, such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

Each neighbourhood manager is responsible for the delivery of all council services within that neighbourhood, whether their team provides it directly (the 'community first' services) or whether it is a borough-wide service. The neighbourhood manager is therefore the "hub for all activity within that community". They can also seek support from other neighbourhood managers in the area if they have little expertise around a particular issue (e.g. a manager with responsibility for environmental services can seek support from a manager with youth service responsibilities when dealing with youth issues).

Neighbourhood managers also each have borough-wide 'lead responsibility' for leading one policy activity within the LAA thematic blocks, with examples including horticulture, community safety, looked after children and youth services. There is an expectation that neighbourhood managers will develop actions for their particular theme both in their neighbourhood and across the borough, and advise and support each of the other 14 neighbourhood managers. This is part of the matrix management approach being developed in the Council.

The Council is at an early stage in this process. Many stakeholders believe that the approach will require a change in the mindset of certain officers who have not worked through such arrangements before. The Council has a clear plan in place to facilitate this change. A recent series of values workshops delivered to every member of staff launched a new set of council values. Training for the new leadership team is underway and new teams are investing in team building.

The next stage for the Council is to restructure to the neighbourhood those services that have not yet been affected, such as highways. The Council is reviewing ways to allocate the highways maintenance budget, giving each neighbourhood an allocation so that they will have direct responsibility for what is happening in their neighbourhoods, rather than key community issues being inferred by professionals. The Council has to tread a tentative path in this process as this could be perceived as a challenge to transport professionals, but also because of the need to ensure that resources are directed at the main priorities from the Local Transport Plan which often conflicts with local priorities.

Performance management monitoring and reporting has now been centralised. This has reduced the burden placed on neighbourhood management teams and is allowing them to concentrate on service delivery, joining-up and engaging communities. The corporate centre (in this case the Policy, Partnerships and Governance Directorate) is working with area teams to develop new monitoring arrangements that suit local issues, rather than being imposed on area teams.

Given that neighbourhood management in Doncaster involves a number of mainstream service departments, working through structures that are relatively new, it is very difficult to provide a total **operating cost**, or to separate out the additional cost of moving to a neighbourhood management structure. With respect to operational systems and procedures, these are still being configured, but this is unsurprising given the short time span in which the new structures have been in place.

Engagement of partners

There are a broad number of **partners** involved with neighbourhood management in Doncaster, although partners tend to vary in the degree to which they are involved. Engagement occurs at the strategic level through the area service planning process and at an operational level through various mechanisms (such as local service teams, which have thematic groups below them).

The South Yorkshire Police are significant partners through the neighbourhood policing approach and are working closely with the council to roll out this approach. It is a strategic objective of the South Yorkshire Police to implement neighbourhood policing. An important aspect of this is to develop the capacity for “communities to help themselves”. Doncaster MBC and the Police operate joint Safer Neighbourhood Teams in each area which have responsibility for reducing crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, whilst at the same time helping to develop community ownership of issues and capacity to address these issues. A strong focus is thus being placed on addressing causal processes. The requirement to work with communities and address issues relating to crime, community safety and anti-social behaviour, such as quality of life issues, requires extensive partnership working with a range of partners. One example of this is the co-location in the Council’s area offices of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Involvement from the three PCTs in Doncaster (East, West and Central) has been difficult, in part because they are currently focused on restructuring. Indeed, others partners believe the PCTs to be the most inward looking of the organisations within Doncaster.

A number of other agencies are involved with neighbourhood management, including regeneration bodies (e.g. New Deal for Communities), a wide range of voluntary and community agencies, GPs and schools in each of the communities. It is important to note that Doncaster has a long tradition of working with the voluntary and community sector. Three voluntary and community organisations undertake recycling and curb-side collections. One of these has recently won a Council contract for waste collection. It is also recognised that neighbourhood management provides an opportunity to engage local businesses and the economic development process more broadly. The one example of this is in the South area where engagement is taking place with the airport authorities to ensure that citizens are engaged before major decisions are made.

The Doncaster Strategic Partnership provides the overarching strategic context for partnership working in the area with thematic partnerships working below this body. The LSP provides a mechanism for the Council to engage other bodies, such as the LSC and Job Centre Plus, although they have much lower levels of participation in neighbourhood management arrangements.

Neighbourhood management activities

In terms of actual **activities**, one should not underestimate the extent there has been both strategic and operational change at Doncaster MBC. Neighbourhood management at Doncaster MBC involves considerable devolution of activity and decision-making powers to areas and neighbourhoods. This covers important policy areas such as community safety, environments, children, young people and health.

During 2005 there was a period of bedding-down of structures, systems and procedures, alongside extensive delivery of services and greater joining-up at the neighbourhood scale. There have been extensive joining-up of service delivery activities across the Borough on an operational day-to-day basis, too many to permit an in-depth analysis in this report, but some examples are explored in this section which were highlighted by area and neighbourhood managers as illustrative examples. It is important to note that these activities relate to a whole range of service activities, but it must also be remembered that certain services, such as children and young people and Social Services, have only recently reconfigured to neighbourhood management arrangements.

- A multi-agency community cohesion approach was developed in consultation with the local community leaders following a particular incident that had the potential to produce community tensions between different groups. This was an important initiative which demonstrated to local agencies the ability and effectiveness of working in partnership to resolve a potentially major incident.
- In another instance inspectors identified racial harassment and bullying at a school. The neighbourhood manager brought together the councillor, youth and asylum seekers officers, the Police, SureStart and Community First officers to address the problem. The neighbourhood manager was able to identify this as a community issue since it was occurring outside of the school. Covert operations were enacted in the relevant areas and the Youth Service was involved in developing diversionary activities. An enrichment day has also been developed at the school because it was not undertaking any activities. The

programme has been expanded to include all schools in the neighbourhood area. This is an example of joined-up action to address an issue, with strong community involvement, and without the need for additional resources.

- Joining-up different service providers within the context of community engagement is obviously an important activity. There are 'Making a Difference' weeks that involve multi-agency activities in one particular neighbourhood. The focus is on getting the community involved in council activities, but leaving a tangible outcome for them to maintain. As the Mayor argues:

"It is everyone's responsibility to keep their areas clean. This is our chance to turn our communities into clean, safer places to live and work. We have to get tough on those who have no respect for Doncaster and we are determined to create an environment where it's socially unacceptable to drop litter, spray graffiti on walls or vandalise public facilities" (Doncaster e-News, December, 2005).

- The programme is put together through community consultation. It involves a range of activities that start with a community walk to see the nature of issues and improvements that have been made in an area, and culminate in a specific improvement. Activities include clearing a particular area, building improvements and putting-up fencing. A recent event in Mexborough town centre involved litter picking, street cleaning, pruning trees and removing illegal posters. Mexborough Community Partnership was involved in litter picking. In another example children designed a skate/BMX park in Edlington, which was subsequently built during the 'Making a Difference' week, and formally opened at the Fete on the Saturday. Events at the end of the week are an opportunity for partner organisations (e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Teams) to consult the community, and publicise issues (such as giving away energy saving lights) and services.
- A range of other environment-based activities has also taken place. One example is Operation Deep Cleanse initiatives, which occur periodically, and involve the community cleaning-up a particular area. There are also many community litter-picks.
- There is a 'junior wardens' scheme in one area involving young people working with wardens. The aim of this is to build a sense of citizenship amongst young people and for them to make a difference to their community, particularly around environmental issues.

There has been **extensive consultation with communities** as part of the community development and neighbourhood renewal agendas. Present engagement is occurring as NM teams develop service and neighbourhood plans. Community forums have been in place for sometime and are consulted as part of the neighbourhood management process. The focus in some areas has therefore been on building upon, rather than replicating previous consultations. However, there is recognition of the need to move beyond community forums, as these can be constituted by the usual suspects.

NM teams use a variety of mechanisms in which to consult the community, such as attending community meetings, inviting community bodies to meetings, surveys and focus groups. Area support teams are being located in every area office with the purpose of assisting in the process of community and service provider engagement. Their work will assist in the neighbourhood planning process. This occurs in a context where it is recognised that consulting local communities once more could start to produce the kind of 'consultation overkill' that reduces the faith of communities in service providers (i.e. that will raise questions about why changes have not taken place following previous consultation).

There is community consultation presently taking place around the adaptation of existing neighbourhood plans and the development of service and neighbourhood plans. The Council is aiming to undertake far greater community consultation during the next service planning round, using methods such as Planning for Real. There is a Council service – Comments, Compliments and Complaints – which provides a great deal of information on the issues facing areas. This information is matched with data from partners, particularly the Police.

Certain stakeholders note that day-to-day informal discussions with residents about issues in their areas and what they would like to see done, are being used as a “hook” in which to establish more in-depth discussions around what they would like to see happen. This is then fed into the neighbourhood plans. In one neighbourhood, for example, the community are concerned about traffic issues, such as speeding. The neighbourhood manager is using this as an opportunity to develop a town centre plan in which a range of activities can be developed.

Some areas are working towards developing joint arrangements with other partners around community consultation to ensure there is not duplication and a consistent approach can be developed. This is taking place within the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Where consultations are taking place around developing interventions to address particular issues, it is often the case that neighbourhood surveys are used to gauge the breadth of opinion, followed by focus groups that seek to understand causal processes.

In other areas it has been a case of the Council developing greater levels of co-operation with prominent voluntary and community sector bodies that are heavily involved in regeneration and have extensive local plans. Some managers recognise that in these particular instances it is important to work closely with well-established community partnerships, perhaps with the latter taking lead. In contrast, where there are presently few community organisations NM teams are using the neighbourhood planning process to engage key stakeholders such as parish councils, and getting services to work with these bodies.

Use of evidence to shape decisions

With respect to evidence in shaping decisions and priorities, neighbourhood management in Doncaster is very much focused on broader measurement arrangements, such as the IMD 2004, and local intelligence. Through the use of broader mechanisms the Council are aware of what broad types of interventions are required in particular areas. The actual form and function of individual actions is informed by local intelligence which is able to provide evidence on ‘why’ certain activities are occurring. A significant component of this is provided through engaging communities and the exchange of information between service providers.

This makes an important contribution to neighbourhood management activities, including the activities of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. There is a lot of geographical information, such as graffiti incidences, that supports neighbourhood management activities in partnership with the Police. The Council and partners have made progress against fly-tippers and graffiti through this intelligence-led approach. There is a team dedicated to tackling fly-tipping for the borough that undertake work in consultation with the neighbourhood management team. The latter will also go out to see how they can prevent further offences based on the work of the Flytipping Team.

Neighbourhood plans are also presently being developed through consultation with communities and service providers. These will shape the nature of service delivery as providers seek to respond to local issues and demands. They are informed by the strategic themes and priorities of the borough strategy, Doncaster MBC corporate plan and LAA.

Key issues

There is a range of **issues affecting delivery**. With respect to helping factors, support from local partners is very important in the developing neighbourhood management arrangements, particularly through the Local Area Agreement. The most active partner is the Police, but other partners such as the Probation Service are becoming more involved. It was noted that considerable levels of trust and a ‘can do’ attitude were developing in the new arrangements as relationships between partners mature.

There is a large degree of enthusiasm and support from Council managers and officers who believe that neighbourhood management is the correct way to deliver services. This is particularly evident amongst the Community First team (with responsibility for environmental services) which have worked through neighbourhood manager arrangements over a longer period of time. The Mayor is also cited by partners as a key figure who is fully committed to neighbourhood management.

There has also been an influx of new people which is described as “refreshing”, this includes the Managing Director who is not from local government. These people have “come in without a biased myopic view”.

One stakeholder made the comment that moving managers to areas develops a “my patch” psychology, with managers feeling responsible and empowered to address local issues. Co-location of neighbourhood managers with different responsibilities makes it possible for managers to access a broad range of services. This is not to suggest that all employees are on-board with these arrangements, particularly amongst those professions working within highly bounded cognitions and values. It will take time for new perceptions, values and cultures to develop amongst these professions. Nevertheless, there has not been significant resistance to the major restructuring of the Council. Indeed, many interviewees were surprised that the restructuring process had gone so well, with no major problems arising.

All area and neighbourhood managers are employed at chief officer grade, with individual managers responsible for large numbers of officers (c.250 employees). They are an important force in joining-up services and this demonstrates the level of commitment from the Council to neighbourhood management. They have the “authority and clout” to bring people together, mobilise resources, access service information, and influence service delivery. It is now possible for neighbourhood managers to ask questions of other service areas, in the previous structure they would not have been able or comfortable with undertaking such a course of action. These types of issues would have been conducted at the centre where they were not aware of local needs and issues.

It should also be stressed that the Neighbourhood Management teams include former Education and Social Services functions. This is a significant change that brings services within communities and emphasises the significance of the change taking place within Doncaster MBC. Communities now have access to social workers and education welfare officers through their local NM team.

In terms of potential hindrances in the delivery process, it is too early to say if this model will prove to be more expensive to deliver services, although as yet there are no significant concerns around resourcing the new arrangements. New roles and responsibilities for neighbourhood managers require knowing the details of service delivery and processes. This is a major reorientation for particular individuals.

With new roles and responsibilities there is a need for detailed service delivery systems and procedures. Some stakeholders raise concerns that these have not developed at the same pace as the new structures. Other stakeholders note that a lot of initial work was undertaken to ensure that officers are aware of where to go for access to services. No significant difficulties have yet to be encountered, partly because managers and officers have tended to “just do it” without a process map.

There is also the potential for problems arising from the loss of tangible and tacit knowledge that is embedded with personnel that have left the Council and which has not been catalogued in the rush to implement neighbourhood management. Nonetheless, the corporate centre is looking at this issue as part of new knowledge management arrangements, but it will be a considerable task to align all the systems and procedures of the previous services.

Restructuring a large organisation from a centralised to decentralised structure, makes accommodation an issue. Community buildings that were previously used have been demolished or are derelict. Other major barriers include ensuring there are suitable telecommunications links. Certain area teams are yet to move out to their area.

Neighbourhood management in rural areas brings challenges in terms of developing active citizenship and ensuring citizens have access to services, such as being able to attend evening meetings.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

There are **effective structures to engage communities** in Doncaster. The Council is aware that the failure of neighbourhood management in the past was because it was structured in such a way that only the ‘usual suspects’ were engaged, resulting in a lack of community representation. Neighbourhood management structures now provide a mechanism in which officers on the ground are able to engage communities and act upon their priorities over a suitable time scale. It was also previously the case that where neighbourhood plans exist they were snapshots at a particular point in time, with no one officer having responsibility for responding to identified issues. Suitable structures and devolved decision-making responsibility are now in place to respond to neighbourhood plans where they exist, and community issues.

High visibility of council officers, wardens and the Police (including PCSOs) on the street and a presence through neighbourhood offices mean that there is a large amount of intelligence gathered from the general public, rather than reliance on consulting an unrepresentative group of ‘usual suspects’. The information is making an important contribution to the operational and strategic priorities and activities of the Council and its partners. As mentioned previously, the Council is also deploying a range of consultation mechanisms that differ by their suitability to particular communities.

In the past, councillors have not been kept as well informed as they could be in relation to what is happening in their Wards. The work being undertaken by neighbourhood managers is leading to far greater engagement and involvement of councillors in the developing neighbourhood management arrangements, which will increase as they are consulted for the service and neighbourhood plans. Regular meetings are undertaken with members to ensure they are kept up to date, are aware when their requests have been addressed, or when it has

not been possible to solve their issues. Members are also able to get an up-date of present actions for their area, rather than by borough. This is argued to have been a factor in getting members to support the new arrangements.

With respect to **engagement with providers**, neighbourhood managers meet through area meetings and broadly across the borough for their particular thematic responsibility. Many stakeholders consider these arrangements to be robust. Local Service Delivery Teams are in place for all service providers to meet around operational and problem solving issues, while other mechanisms such as joint action groups are in place. These bodies are providing formalised contexts in which greater joining-up is developing.

Stakeholders do not generally believe that **NM teams** is hindered by a lack of resources, competencies or decision-making powers. There are now a large number of neighbourhood managers addressing local issues, with a significant number of council services operating through neighbourhood management arrangements. The matrix form of organisation permits the devolution of decision-making powers and enhances the capacity for neighbourhood managers to take responsibility for local issues and address these through holistic partnership working.

The organisational flexibility arising from the matrix structure permits greater **innovation and learning**, especially when compared with the previous siloed structures. Team meetings for area and neighbourhood managers are in place to promote learning between different themes and areas. As one would expect, there is a steep learning curve for those professionals within the Council that have not previously worked at a neighbourhood level. Innovation is facilitated by the decision-making power of neighbourhood management to bring different service providers together to address local issues, rather than being restricted to a borough-wide policy focus and lacking the power to bring services together.

There are clear and concise links between **neighbourhood management and city-wide partnerships and structures**. The community strategy, Doncaster MBC corporate plan and LAA all inform the operational activities of neighbourhood management. It has been a case of bringing together higher level strategic objectives with local issues and needs. While the borough strategy is thematic it permits the flexibility to address local issues. City-wide priorities will be reflected in the developing service and neighbourhood plans.

Impact on community capacity

The new neighbourhood management arrangements are efforts to develop the capacity of communities to influence service providers. They are at the beginning of this process as communities are consulted for the service and neighbourhood plans, and efforts are made to develop the capacity of communities. Service plans will reflect community priorities and be robust in terms of being plans for tackling these priorities. This represents in part indirect community involvement in deliberative decision-making.

The Council is more directly responsive and accountable to communities in Doncaster. The matrix neighbourhood management model provides the opportunity for more resources and greater flexibility to address local concerns, particularly compared with the constraints of the previous siloed system. Working at the “front line” ensures that communities have closer contact with the Council through day-to-day interaction, but also through the many forms of consultation that occurs. This represents the direct day-to-day accountability of service providers to local communities as service providers address local issues.

In one area, for example, concrete planters have been removed following consultation with communities, who highlighted their concern at these being used to deposit litter (and particularly drugs litter). In one area the Police undertook surveys of local residents, followed by representative focus groups, with the purpose of “drilling down into that community to understand what the issues were”. This led to a dispersal order, but it was important to first consult the community about this proposal. The Council also has a customer service centre. There is one number for all queries, with the respective officer having responsibility for addressing this issue and feeding back to the customer.

NM teams are seeking to develop the capacity of communities to hold service providers to account and have an important role in decision-making. It is believed that neighbourhood management arrangements can support the gradual evolution of the voluntary and community sector to a similar position of that of the three voluntary and community organisations that undertake services for the Council. Action is centred on support for new and existing voluntary and community sector partnership mechanisms. Progress takes time as some areas lack community capacity, while other areas are characterised by the ‘usual suspects’. The Council is obviously also in the process of restructuring the organisation, with many systems and procedures still bedding down. Greater involvement is expected in the next service planning round.

While neighbourhood management teams are making concerted efforts to engage communities, the voluntary and community sector have raised some concerns with respect to the level of involvement for the sector thus far.

Impact on mainstream service providers’ behaviour in improved services

One must not underestimate the extent to which change is occurring at Doncaster MBC. A significant range of services now work through neighbourhood management arrangements, representing a considerable **re-allocation and re-shaping of mainstream resources**. For many stakeholders there has been an effective deployment of services, resources and decision-making powers to the “frontline”, with “better links between all services” which mean that neighbourhood managers can address local issues.

Already at this early stage the re-alignment of services and budgets is believed to be creating greater flexibility in which to address local issues. Devolved neighbourhood units have been able to start building relationships with local communities, which is considered a “powerful” tool in making services more responsive to local requirements. Efficiency gains are being produced as the most important “customer” issues are dealt with through a much faster localised and empowered mechanism. Within this context, neighbourhood managers believe they have growing responsibility and accountability to local communities.

With the exception of the Police and Probation Service, no other partners at this time are significantly re-allocating and re-shaping services to neighbourhoods. It is possible that PCTs will in future be aligned with NM boundaries as part of the changes relating to commissioning a patient-led NHS. Partners are displaying greater sensitivity to the neighbourhood management arrangements of the Council. The impetus for this is coming from the success the Council has experienced and its desire to embed neighbourhood management. The Council is working extensively with partners to base the service delivery mechanism within a multi-agency approach that works through neighbourhood management arrangements. The intention is to “deliver a holistic service for communities”.

The Police display a firm commitment to neighbourhood policing, with evidence of the re-allocation and re-shaping of services. The Safer Neighbourhood (SN) Teams have restructured so that they match neighbourhood management boundaries. Inspectors and Area Managers have responsibility for each of the areas, and they are located within the areas. The team are constituted by a sergeant, two PCs, two PCSOs, two or three wardens, a team leader, and some 'impact wardens'. The PCT work to the three broad boundaries identified within Doncaster, but there is little evidence of substantial restructuring along neighbourhood management boundaries. The Probation Service is looking to change their boundaries.

Doncaster Strategic Partnership has moved to a commissioning framework in which allocations have moved from a thematic basis to one that is based on tackling holistic problems within an area. For example, rather than just tackling youth nuisance thematically, action at an area level also looks to provide support to the elderly and vulnerable sections of the community. The multi-agency and geographical approach permits this form of approach, whereas previously actions would have been undertaken unilaterally and through a single theme.

There are many instances of greater **joining-up** of services, but mainly at an operational level. Evidence for strategic-level joining-up at area levels is not clear, although Doncaster Strategic Partnership, the community strategy, and to a lesser extent the LAA, provide a broader context in which inter-organisational relations occur.

The Police are undoubtedly a significant partner in the greater joining-up of services at area and neighbourhood scales. There are regular area wide briefings for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. The Police are co-locating with NM teams in certain areas, with joint meetings and the sharing of intelligence, along with the ability of each partner to signpost citizens to relevant services. This represents growing recognition by partners that resources can be better deployed through co-location.

The close relationship developing between Doncaster MBC and the Police is evident in other ways. They have tended not to charge each other for particular services, such as the use of council buildings by the Police or council officers attending Police problem solving meetings. These close relations through day-to-day interactions mean that it is possible to quickly address local issues.

The inspectors are working with the NM team to develop neighbourhood plans under the crime theme. The aim is to have joined-up outcome targets and priorities. The impetus is coming from the understanding that issues are holistic and interrelated (e.g. a lack of diversionary activities and truancy can lead to young people committing anti-social behaviour, which can have an impact on the health of vulnerable sections of the community).

Each area will have a joint action group that will have membership from all relevant partners, with the purpose of addressing crime and disorder, and will meet monthly. There is presently one group established in the centre which is looking at developing actions to reduce crime and disorder in one estate where there is a process of redevelopment taking place (Kingsway). There are also safer estate meetings that are managed by sergeants with local partners and the community. These are concerned with problem solving around operational day-to-day issues.

Beyond the development of specific bodies for greater joining-up there are a range of joined-up operational activities, too many to explore in this report, which have been facilitated by Doncaster MBC 'areas' having a single budget. Various examples are explored below that are

examples of particular aspects of joining-up, by theme and form, and which have been cited by neighbourhood managers as instances of greater joining-up:

- The Council worked with the South Yorkshire Police, British Transport Police and utilities over the summer to address graffiti. Through the multi-agency approach a team of 'taggers' were identified that have caused £20,000 worth of damage. They were subsequently prosecuted.
- An external agency providing activities for troubled young people contacted the neighbourhood manager after a young person refused to leave their premises. With the multi-service and agency links that have developed with the present structures it was possible for the neighbourhood manager to consult co-located colleagues with a Social Services background. Advice and support from other agencies, including the Police and Youth Service Team, was passed onto the external agency.
- The multi-agency approach of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams has made progress in tackling anti-social behaviour in the central area, along with undertaking extensive consultation with local communities around what action is to be undertaken and what diversionary activity is to be put in place with the section 30 (Dispersal) orders. This activity involved a number of partners, including youth services, Youth Offending Team, ward members, voluntary bodies and the Army. The success of this is believed to be because it was implemented with consultation with the community.
- Neighbourhood management arrangements across the borough have been able to address young people and broader community issues through direct engagement, followed by a multi-agency provision approach (involving various bodies from the Police to Groundwork). Intelligence gathered in one area by wardens that have developed relations with young people led to the development of a BMX park. The focus was placed on getting young people involved in the design process, and helping in the build, through a multi-agency approach. This has not only produced the tangible benefit of a BMX park and diversionary activity, but has helped in the process of developing strong relations with young people.
- There are examples where greater thinking is taking place around how developments will affect communities, involving NM teams being proactive in the decision-making process, rather than reacting to external stimuli. An important example of this is a recent team meeting in the south where there were early discussions around ensuring that citizens influence and benefit from a new road to the airport. A link road is being proposed that will potentially cut-off another road. The NM team are to consult with the community about what to do with the area, perhaps around recreation facilities, and using Section 106 money. Neighbourhood management arrangements permit links to be made between the airport and local community. The area manager is able to attend the corporate management group and talks with the strategy director about major developments and how that can benefit local communities. This epitomises a developing organisational culture that involves neighbourhood managers taking responsibility for what happens in an area and ensuring communities are involved from the beginning; as opposed to earlier situations where communities were engaged after decisions had been made, or they had to independently organise themselves before these decisions had been taken.
- Health workers wanted to hold a mothers and toddlers event but could not afford the rent on a Council property. The neighbourhood manager decided not to charge rent for three months. While this is not a significant event it is an example of the opportunities that are

provided through local decision-making power and a reduction in previous bureaucratic systems and procedures that would have delayed such a decision.

Impact on the neighbourhood

Given the short life of the present neighbourhood management arrangements in Doncaster it is too early to infer change from outcome data.

(vi) Conclusions

The transition to new neighbourhood management arrangements involves a considerable range of services at Doncaster MBC and this represents a sizeable devolution of decision-making powers, competencies and resources to the area and neighbourhood scales, over a relatively short period of time. Indeed, bedding down of structures, systems and procedures are still taking place and, as such, it is too early to fully judge the effectiveness of present arrangements in achieving objectives, particularly with respect to outcomes. The restructuring process to date is largely fulfilling its policy objectives, with no major problems arising as services are reshaped and reallocated from borough to area and neighbourhood arrangements. Nonetheless, some stakeholders do raise concerns around new systems and procedures keeping pace with this restructuring process. It will be important for these to be robust so that managers can fully exploit the opportunities presented by neighbourhood management, along with being able to manage national policy and broader organisational changes.

There is evidence of greater operational joining-up of partners at the neighbourhood scale, working through developing partnership working mechanisms, and producing a variety of activities. Although the borough community strategy and LAA are said to inform the developing service and neighbourhood plans, joining-up at the strategic level is less clear. It can be argued that stronger and coherent strategic partnership working mechanisms need to be put in place at area levels, and that links between city-wide and area arrangements should be more robust. In a related context, the role of the voluntary and community sector at both operational and strategic levels is also unclear at this present time.

Success with the process to date at Doncaster MBC has been influenced by a variety of factors. The Mayor has been an important force in instigating change, while partners such as the Police have supported the movement to neighbourhood management, and Doncaster MBC staff have been fully committed to the process, despite the significant level of organisational upheaval. A greater level of responsibility is developing amongst neighbourhood managers who are being supported by the devolution of decision-making powers, competencies and resources. Developing partnership working arrangements have benefited from growing trust between partners. New personnel have also supported neighbourhood management arrangements.

There have been no major hindering factors but finding accommodation in areas is an issue as council buildings can be unsuitable. Other stakeholders are concerned at the loss of tangible and tacit knowledge as personnel have left the Council. These are not considerable constraints at this time but there is the potential for issues to arise in the future as implementation progresses. The two main potential issues are involvement from major partners (such as the PCTs, Job Centre Plus and LSC) that will have a considerable role in joined-up working to achieve outcome targets in the borough strategy (e.g. tackling deprivation); and the various problems that can arise with matrix organisational arrangements,

such as the over-complexity of multiple lines of responsibility, disparate decision power centres and the pressures placed on personnel working through complicated arrangements. Developing neighbourhood management arrangements at Doncaster MBC will need to address these issues in a proactive manner.

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Helen Briggs	Community Director	Doncaster MBC
Adrian Moran	Chief Inspector (Partnerships)	South Yorkshire Police
Julie Warren	Assistant Director Drugs & Substance Misuse	Doncaster West PCT
Jane Perry	Area manager – North	Doncaster MBC
Glenys Wall	Area manager – South	Doncaster MBC
Pat Higgs	Area manager – East	Doncaster MBC
Gail Newton	Area manager – Outer urban	Doncaster MBC
Ajman Ali	Neighbourhood manager – South	Doncaster MBC
Alan Cunningham	Neighbourhood manager – East	Doncaster MBC
Andy Woodhall	Neighbourhood manager – North	Doncaster MBC
Dave Ridge	Neighbourhood manager – Outer urban	Doncaster MBC
Trevor Heptinstall	Neighbourhood manager – West	Doncaster MBC
ASKED TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS	Community Development Officer	–

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

- Doncaster Strategic Partnership (2005) Shaping our future Doncaster. Doncaster: Doncaster Strategic Partnership
- Office of Mayor Winter (2002) Making a difference in your neighbourhood. Doncaster: DMBC.
- Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (2005) Best Value Performance Plan. Doncaster: DMBC.
- Doncaster Strategic Partnership (2005) Annual Report. Doncaster: Doncaster Strategic Partnership.

Case Study E:

Neighbourhood Management in Haringey

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of a brief evaluation of the Haringey neighbourhood management initiative. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by Joanna Howard and Marilyn Taylor from the National Evaluation team for the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

The aim of Neighbourhood Management (NM) in the London Borough of Haringey is to provide a service that is driven by local needs, rather than the needs of organisations, to build trust with residents and to work with other organisations in providing services locally. In this way the Council aims to bring services and residents together to drive change at local level with dedicated neighbourhood managers acting as ‘enablers and brokers’.

There are currently Neighbourhood Managers in 8 areas of the Borough: Broadwater Farm, Bruce Grove, Green Lanes, Noel Park, Northumberland Park, Seven Sisters (New Deal for Communities Programme), West Green, and White Hart Lane. This report will focus on the **Green Lanes** area as an illustration of how it is being delivered in Haringey.

The NM approach was chosen by the council as a means of involving the community and joining up services in a way that would address and reduce inequalities in the Borough. It would additionally join up and coordinate the NRF priority areas and the NDC and SRB programme areas.

In Green Lanes which has no NDC or SRB programmes, a Strategy Group was set up which was tasked with the responsibility of developing a local neighbourhood plan for the area addressing the key priorities with a focus on a range of environmental safety and planning issues, and consultation with the public on issues that directly impact on the area.

The rationale for adopting an NM approach was to find holistic solutions to complex local problems, including balancing the economic development of Green Lanes and the concerns of local residents. In particular, the approach aimed to introduce deliberation and consensus-seeking between business and resident representatives. A neighbourhood strategy was considered to be a way of tapping into the rich local cultural diversity and working with multiple stakeholders to deal with both short and long term issues, from collecting trade waste to lobbying for change in legislation with regard to licensing.

There is a strong commitment to community development in the NM approach throughout Haringey. One respondent highlighted this element as central to NM: 'Our job is to build people's capacity to challenge and understand, make them more articulate, so people are learning what the levers are for change'.

(iii) The Neighbourhood

Haringey is an outer London borough with levels of deprivation that are the 10th most extensive in England. Almost half the population is from various black and minority ethnic communities (BME) and the borough also has the highest 'other white' population in the UK with many refugees and asylum seekers. An estimated 193 languages are spoken across the Borough. Haringey Council and its neighbourhood renewal strategy focus regeneration investment in the east of the borough where social, economic and racial disadvantage are concentrated in order to close the gap in quality of life between the east and the more affluent west. According to the Office for National Statistics 2004 mid-year population estimates, Haringey's population now stands at 224,300. The housing tenure is predominantly privately owned, with a high proportion of private rented accommodation especially HMOs.

Within Haringey, this study focuses on one of the eight neighbourhood management areas – that of Green Lanes. The Green Lanes area includes Harringay and part of St Ann's wards, with an estimated population of around 7000 households/ 30,000 residents, although it is difficult to establish an accurate number of residents due to the high turnover of population and the rapid conversion of houses into new HMOs. Green Lanes receives neither NRF nor SRB funding, as it falls between targeted deprived areas in the Borough. It is an area that has experienced economic decline and some violent crime related to the drugs industry. It has a high proportion of Greek, Turkish and Kurdish immigrant population, and more recently an increasing number of Polish, Russian and Ukrainian residents. The main road of Green Lanes is an important centre for economic activity with a predominantly Greek and Turkish trader profile.

In the early 1990s, trade in Green Lanes suffered a decline, which was reversed at the end of the decade when new traders moved in but this also brought tensions between residents and traders over waste and traffic management. A divide opened up between people who lived and worked in the area, particularly over the 24-hour culture. The needs of residents and traders were in conflict, and required some kind of intervention to help find a way of balancing these needs to mutual satisfaction. The issues of greatest concern when NM was introduced in early 2003 were; trade waste, traffic, violent crime, licensing of clubs and drugs-related crime. Green Lanes was also struggling with a poor image, perceived as dirty and dangerous because of these crime and grime issues. Local public services were not sufficiently joined-up, and residents complained of a lack of response from the council to the issues they raised at their Area Assembly. Opportunities include a vibrant and proactive resident community, and a local authority that is open to listening to and working with local groups.

(iv) The Delivery Process

Haringey Council and its LSP partners demonstrated their commitment to Neighbourhood Management (NM) early in the decade, by introducing NM as a core component of their Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (2002-12). The rationale was that NM would create a borough-wide infrastructure that would coordinate and manage the separate projects funded through NR and SRB, in particular the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme in Seven Sisters and the two SRB projects in Northumberland Park and West Green. A Neighbourhood Manager was seconded in early 2001 to set up the NDC, and turn around the failing SRB projects, as well as setting up the NM department within the council.

Initially, NM operated out of Environmental Services at the Council, which was appropriate for their mutual focus on physical/visible improvements in the neighbourhood. It has now moved into the Chief Executive's Service to provide a corporate focus. NM currently operates in 8 'neighbourhoods' which were identified as priority areas for NRF funding. The NM service is responsible for the seven Area Assemblies (each covering 2-4 wards) and in April 2006 it is expected that NM will be rolled out to cover the whole Borough, working in these 7 areas which have an average population of some 30,000 people. Each of the 7 NM areas will have a manager and a community/project worker, depending on local priorities. It is expected that the Council will assign area project officers from youth services, employment and environment to work at this level (according to local needs and priorities), resulting in combined area teams from different disciplines, joining up plans and resources at the area level from their council departments, along with the partner agencies. They will also link into the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

In Green Lanes, the introduction of Neighbourhood Management can be traced back to an incident in November 2002 of gang-related violence stemming from a shooting in a social club, which resulted in the death of an innocent bystander, and a street battle between rival gang members. This incident led to a local outcry about the lack of effective policing and regulation of private clubs in Green Lanes. Haringey Council and the Metropolitan Police held two public meetings to discuss the event and local concerns. More than 80 people, including local residents and their representatives, traders and voluntary groups, attended these meetings. This was the first attempt in Green Lanes to bring the community together with service providers to discuss their concerns. It led to a more permanent arrangement: in November 2003, a working group was set up to bring together key stakeholders in the area, i.e. police, local ward councillors, local traders, local representatives from residents' associations and officers from the council departments to work together to develop a strategy for the Green Lanes area. Two executive members from the Council with portfolios of Crime and Community Safety and Social Services and Health, were delegated to lead the process, and the MP for Tottenham also gave his full endorsement.

The NM approach – as described above – had already been discussed and endorsed within Haringey Council, and was seen as the most appropriate way of dealing with the complex local issues in the Green Lanes area.

The working group became the Green Lanes Strategy Group (GLSG), which is chaired by the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety, who is also a ward councillor in the area. The Group agreed to focus on a range of environmental safety and planning issues: licensing, planning, environmental health and housing, waste management, traffic management, grime and crime, consultation and resources. In the early stages when the group was being set up, meetings were attended by directors of council departments, and by

the Police Commander. The group is currently regularly attended by area-level service providers, and on average 3-4 of the 6 ward councillors, including the Chair.

NM in Haringey has functioned on minimal funding. Neighbourhood Renewal monies pay for a Borough-wide coordinator of NM, the salaries of local NMs and a £22,000 pot of money to be spent by each NM area annually. In the case of Green Lanes, there is 50% mainstream funding and 50% NRF monies to pay for one person to cover 2 NM areas. Neighbourhood Management in Green Lanes therefore depends almost entirely on influence and negotiation with key service providers.

The Group works to an action plan which is organised under headings which reflect their agreed focus and objectives. Group activities and issues raised are fed into the Area Assemblies. The Green Lanes NM area covers Harringay ward and part of St Ann's, and so feeds into the St Ann's and Harringay Area Assembly. Area Assemblies now have a budget of £50,000 for local projects. This budget was the source of funding for the NM project of hanging baskets and new trees in Green Lanes.

Key activities of NM in Green Lanes:

Quick wins

A lot of the activities supported by NM in Green Lanes can be seen as quick wins, to demonstrate that NM and the Council are listening to local concerns, and as a quick injection of local pride in the neighbourhood.

- The railway bridge at Green Lanes is an eyesore which has been brought up repeatedly at Area Assemblies, but about which nothing has been done. NM in Green Lanes has successfully pulled in funding from the SRB project in Finsbury Park to improve this gateway into Green Lanes by re-landscaping adjoining embankments and station entrance, changing the layout to deter graffiti, pigeon proofing and 'branding' to give the bridge a positive local image. Works were due to start in November 2005.
- Hanging baskets and new trees were introduced along Green Lanes in 2005, funded from the Area Assembly 'Making the Difference' budget.
- 'Harringay Passage' was a source of frustration for local residents, as it was rendered almost inaccessible due to the lack of maintenance and of persistent dog fouling. There were also issues around dumping, graffiti and general safety. It has now been cleaned up and improved lighting has been provided. It is maintained through partnership work between the Council and the GLSG (funded by Haringey Council). It is an on-going project of partnership between residents, schools, the GLSG and the Council.
- Christmas lights were put up for the first time through collaboration between the Council and the Traders' Association, and contributions from the latter.

Pilot/demonstration projects to improve local services

In 2003, the Group negotiated a new approach to trade waste collection in Green Lanes with Haringey Council and the contractors, and piloted a twice-daily waste collection service for businesses and flats above shops. The group insisted that the new approach had to be communicated to traders and residents in Turkish, Kurdish and Greek. This was extremely successful and has now been rolled out in the Borough.

This service is delivered by the Council through contractors, but is made more effective through the GLSG, which tries to keep residents and traders informed about the service, and also of opportunities for recycling. This community networking is an important aspect of the service because of the diversity of languages spoken by traders which the Council is not always able to accommodate, and because of the transience of some sectors of the resident population. Any changes in the waste collection service need to be communicated by word of mouth through local social and professional networks.

Community involvement

The Strategy Group brings residents, police and traders together who often have conflicting views on a given issue e.g. parking, traffic calming, waste management, and also to overcome the growing divide between people living versus people working in the area. It has reconnected the community with service providers, as the former (business and residents) had 'given up on working with the Council'.

Service providers meet other local stakeholders – in particular residents and traders at the GLSG who provide them with information and feedback that they would not otherwise get. For instance, a new shopping complex has opened in Green Lanes. The developer was invited to talk to the GLSG, which acted as a consultation forum, and alerted the developers to local concerns such as the signage for the complex which was unattractive and over-dominating for local tastes. Through the Group, service providers and the developer have been able to work together to pre-empt potential problems such as shop-lifting.

There are a number of individuals in the Group who through their constituencies represent hundreds of people. The Chair and the Secretary of the Harringay Traders' Association regularly attend the Group. The Association represents around 200 local shops and keeps them in touch with discussions and issues through regular emails and meetings. Three residential areas are represented through a delegate from their Residents' Associations, who also attend meetings with their constituents to feed back discussions from the Group, and pick up issues that need to be taken to the next Group meeting.

Green Lanes Strategy Group meets once a month and brings frontline workers, local residents and traders, representatives from voluntary organisations together with more strategic players to discuss local issues. Issues are discussed and monitored against the action plan.

What works:

- The GLSG is a valuable forum for bringing local stakeholders together and building personal relationships of trust. The local police sergeant and the street wardens attend the GLSG every month, and share information that 'doesn't get fed up through the system otherwise'. The majority of interviewees mentioned that they could 'call up X and tell them about a problem' since getting to know them at the Group, which for the service providers 'makes my job easier' and for the residents means that they can contact someone who will make something happen. These increased levels of networking and trust reduce transaction costs, and get quicker results.
- The GLSG is seen as a strategic forum which allows local stakeholders to look at the bigger picture and debate complex issues with people from diverse backgrounds and interests. This was seen as an essential attribute of the group – one respondent was concerned that the group should not focus on non-strategic local issues once the bigger issues disappear, and that the group should only exist because of need and not get used by the public sector as a focus group on whatever issue comes along.

- The GLSG has enabled and channelled the activism of community change agents.
- Neighbourhood Management has been a means of managing the interface between the many and diverse local groups. The Manager is universally recognised as a very good networker and enabler – ‘he can make the connections we need’.
- A key channel for the Group’s influence has been their chair who is an Executive Member of the Council.

Barriers:

- The transient population – the partnership gets a message across to people and then new people move in who need to be reached e.g. on when and where to put out their rubbish. Communications and good networking are therefore essential, for word to get around the diverse ethnic and cultural groups in the neighbourhood.
- One respondent felt that the institutional culture change necessary for neighbourhood working had not yet happened in Haringey Council, which ‘has been very centrally driven’.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

Capacity of Board to be inclusive and make decisions

The Group has demonstrated its capacity to make mature and strategic decisions through processes of deliberation around local issues where individuals have opposed views on preferred outcomes (e.g. traffic). Members of the Group are all engaged and committed to the work, and attend the meetings to exchange ideas and information. The Chair plays a crucial role in facilitating discussion and managing difference.

The Group is strong and effective because there has been continuity of membership which has enabled good understanding to develop between stakeholders, and a better understanding of the constraints faced by the public sector. There is a clear understanding of how working together allows individual stakeholders to achieve their goals more easily, as one respondent puts it: ‘I can help them tick their boxes, but achieve what I want at the same time’.

Effectiveness of structures to engage community (including BME groups) and providers

Haringey is a Beacon Council for community engagement. NM in Green Lanes in particular has been very effective in involving and retaining the participation of residents’ associations, traders and voluntary groups. The Chair and the chair of the Traders’ Association are from minority ethnic communities and are both extremely committed to engaging with and representing BME residents and traders. At the last Area Assembly in Harringay and St Ann’s, as a pilot there was simultaneous translation into Greek and Turkish, with a view to rolling this out across the Borough.

The strong community engagement and the maturity of their participation are central to the success of NM in Green Lanes. In this area, there are active and vociferous groups with conflicting priorities; for example residents' associations and the traders, who have different requirements and concerns over issues such as waste collection and traffic control. Solutions that work for one group may not work for another, and may also be problematic for service providers. Since the Strategy Group was set up in 2003, such issues have been discussed and some solutions have been piloted and mainstreamed, which is a good indicator of the maturity of the Group and of the effectiveness of the Manager and the Chair to bring in and sustain the participation of such diverse stakeholders.

Operational capacity of Manager, team, and office/systems

The Manager has been crucial to the success of NM in Green Lanes. He is variously described by respondents as having 'fantastic political skills' and being 'a fantastic networker', 'seems to know everyone', and can find the right person in the right organisation to get something done. He attends meetings of all the local groups, and knows the people and the issues of each. He is therefore trusted and seen as independent, even though he is a Council employee.

However, the SG has been effective despite the limited administrative support, and the heavy demands on the Manager. The Manager has been working in two areas as Town Centre Manager, but with the introduction of the borough wide NM service in April 2006 he will be responsible for the two wards of Harringay and St Ann's that correspond with the area covered by the Area Assembly. Green Lanes forms the boundary between these 2 wards, and while the population covered will be no less than with the existing arrangement, there is a greater logic and coherence to working with these bordering wards which have natural linkages between them. The Manager will also be given support staff and a leverage budget which will increase his operational capacity.

Capacity of partnership to learn and innovate

The Group has a high capacity to learn and innovate because it is well attended by a diverse group of stakeholders with different interests, backgrounds and training, who are interested in finding common solutions to complex issues. They regularly invite people in to inform the Group on relevant issues (e.g. the developer of the new shopping complex). They are not intimidated by problems that are met with an initial 'no can do' from the council, and are tenacious in finding alternatives. This owes a lot to the hard work and good connections of the Manager and of the dedication, skills and strategic links of the Chair.

Effectiveness of linkages to city-wide partnerships and structures

Linkages into the Council are very effective, via the executive member who chairs the Group, and also the good attendance of the other ward councillors – 3-4 of the 6 ward councillors attend regularly. One respondent described the relationship with the Council in terms of a community partnership: 'when the council wants to introduce a new scheme here, they come to the Strategy Group first and introduce the team leaders to us, then there's lots of dialogue and we make it work, because we all want the same things'.

The Council's Area Assembly in the Green Lanes area has 'calmed – before it was very abusive and now its more cooperative' – which can be attributed to the work of the GLSG in discussing and deliberating over issues, and taking well thought out proposals along to the

Area Assemblies. There is a synergetic relationship between the two forums. In the Group, there are detailed discussions on policy and operational issues for the area. A consensus is reached, and the decision is fed into the Area Assembly, where decisions are ratified. If the Assembly raises further issues, the discussion goes back to the Group to be thrashed out again. Neighbourhood Management in this context is seen to strengthen democratic processes.

The linkages into the LSP are poor. No respondent mentioned this body as of particular relevance to them, even though, as one respondent noted, ‘we are mirroring what the LSP is supposed to be about’. However, there are very good linkages and relationships with the Council and bilaterally with the Police, which appear to be sufficient in terms of getting high level commitment and connections to strategic players who can provide support when necessary.

Impact on community capacity

NM in Green Lanes has been community driven from the outset. The participation of representatives of Residents Associations, traders and voluntary organisations in the Group is very strong. It is worth noting that the agenda of the Group meetings is set by members, not by the NM or by the Council.

The GLSG is seen as a strategic forum which allows local stakeholders to look at the bigger picture and debate complex issues with people from diverse backgrounds and interests. This was seen as an essential attribute of the group – one respondent was concerned that the group should not focus on non-strategic local issues once the bigger issues disappear, and that the group should only exist because of need and not get used by the public sector as a focus group on whatever issue comes along.

From the perspective of public sector respondents, NM is working well in providing a forum for people to get together and developing their skills:

‘It does work. It’s very resource intensive and it takes a long time. It’s about empowering people by giving them the information that we [senior level Service Providers] have, the opportunity to see the bigger picture’.

In the case of Green Lanes, the Neighbourhood Manager’s priority has not been capacity building, as there was already significant local organisational capacity. Rather, it has been to find ways to tap into this strength, and channel it. In other areas of the Borough, there is a greater need for capacity building, which is reflected in the different priorities and activities of the other Neighbourhood Managers. One respondent described NM in Green Lanes as a process which has enabled the activism of ‘community change agents’. Generally, it seems that NM has been successful in supporting and channelling the existing community capacity for a more focused and deliberative approach to tackling local issues. This approach has been key for bringing different voices and competing priorities to the table where people listen to the perspectives of other members of the Group and strive to arrive at a consensus. In the words of one respondent; *‘if you don’t know each other, you might hate [each other], but when you know you start to understand ... this has achieved a lot as before each think about things from their own perspective, but now we can have different ways of thinking’.*

Impact on mainstream service providers' behaviour in improved services

Examples of changes to mainstream services are set out below:

Changed corporate policies and practices

- Environmental Services has worked closely with NM, and now 'we always start by going to NM to get the community involved'. Environmental officers use the knowledge that they can access through NM to identify areas and people on the ground to liaise with.
- The Police have set up a surgery for Turkish and Kurdish residents and Turkish/Kurdish police officers. This has been developed through their work with the GLSG.
- The Council now engage with the Traders' Association, and work with Town Centre Managers in some parts of the Borough.

Re-shaped mainstream service

- Waste collection in Green Lanes was changed from an inadequate wheelie bin service to a twice daily timed collection which has dramatically improved the service and its impact.

Joining up of services

- The GLSG is about a holistic and inclusive approach where residents and traders sit alongside service providers, and everyone 'does their bit'. The GLSG according to one respondent 'extends the capacity of each constituent group'. At Borough level however, there is some scepticism about how joined up the Neighbourhood Management Service is.

Improved access to increase take-up of a service.

- Increasing numbers of traders have signed legal agreements with the contractors responsible for collecting trade waste.
- A respondent felt that there was a greater rate of residents reporting on crime due to their increased confidence in the Police and that their concern will be responded to. The GLSG has promoted Crimestoppers, which has also contributed.

According to a public sector respondent, *'It's important to develop good relations with NM because they have all sorts of knowledge that challenge and inform my services. They also have contacts with local groups that make our work much easier'*.

Impact on the neighbourhood

Quantitative data was not available for this report, but all respondents remarked on how Green Lanes is transformed, how it used to be grimy, full of litter and now it is tidy and there are more flowers and trees.

Some of the impacts are about morale and pride in the neighbourhood. The introduction of hanging baskets for instance is reported as 'about lifting the spirits'.

Another important impact is that of promoting greater mutual tolerance between residents, traders and service providers. A respondent described the process as promoting 'a community that communicates and works together, that's what the Strategy Group is achieving'. This has

meant overcoming negative stereotypes of local traders, and disillusionment with public service providers which weren't perceived to be delivering.

The improvements in Green Lanes which have given it a cleaner, safer image, have also had an impact on the local economy. A new commercial centre has just opened, with high-street traders, which is seen as complementary to the commercial activities of the traditional Green Lanes traders where cafes and restaurants are abundant. There is a greater optimism amongst traders, and also greater assurance that people's perceptions have changed and they are not all seen as money launderers and criminals.

(vi) Conclusions

The Green Lanes NM initiative has been successful in achieving its short and mid-term objectives. Its long-term objectives have to do for example with influencing legislation, which is challenging for a neighbourhood partnership to achieve, but is a good indicator of the levels of commitment and confidence of the Green Lanes Strategy Group.

There is a good level of integration of councillors in NM, and effective linkages between the Strategy Group and the Council's Area Assemblies. This link is further enhanced by the Group's direct link into the Council Executive through their Chair. NM in Green Lanes is perceived to be strengthening local democratic practices.

Both the Manager and the Chair have played a crucial role in brokering the relationship between traders, residents and service providers. Getting these groups together is seen as a huge achievement, particularly since it has been sustained over 3 years now.

It is also important to acknowledge the role of the person in charge of NM at borough level. She was brought in at a time when SRB money was failing to deliver or to engage local people, and with an NDC Partnership providing large sums of money to one neighbourhood in the Borough. Haringey Council's senior level commitment to NM has been very important to the success of the initiative, together with the energy and community development approach of the Head of Neighbourhood Management in the Borough. Together they have created space for bottom-up processes to grow and begin to flourish.

NM will be rolled out across the Borough in April 2006. Each area will have an Area Assembly, a dedicated neighbourhood manager, an administrator, a community worker and two other officers, probably youth or unemployment and environmental issues. Each will have a pump-priming budget. There will also be a Street Scene link officer. Councillors will be fully integrated into the process.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that NM has evolved in different areas in different ways, according to local processes and the different configurations of stakeholders, priorities and existing funding sources. There is an awareness at borough level of how this organic approach has been important for building relationships at local level, and that while attempting to roll out NM across the borough, the identity of each area partnership should be retained. How NM emerges in each neighbourhood is partly to do with the available funding, and partly to do with the history of the area; circumstances that have created a particular configuration of relationships and issues. There are therefore different expectations for each area, as they do not join NM at the same starting point, but with different community capacities and local needs. Some require a focus on capacity-building while other areas already have a good number of active and representative groups.

There is some uncertainty still about how to join up the Area Assemblies with the NM partnerships. There is room for both forums, as they serve different purposes and have different capacities. What is helpful in the case of Green Lanes is that ward councillors are actively engaged in both forums, and so the interface between representative democratic processes and more bottom-up participatory initiatives such as NM is made easier. As one respondent comments: ‘with neighbourhood management, we have to ask: are we working in parallel or is neighbourhood management part of the whole?’

The proposed areas for NM when it is rolled out are big; they will match the 7 areas of the Assemblies which cover 3-4 wards and populations of around 30,000. This will make community involvement more challenging, but NM is linking up with Sure Start and each partnership will have a community worker as well as a neighbourhood manager.

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
1. Zena Brabazon	Head of Neighbourhood Management	Haringey Borough Council
2. Dasos Maliotis	Neighbourhood Manager, Green Lanes and Bruce Grove	Haringey Borough Council
3. Beverley Taylor	Street Scene and Environment Business Unit	Haringey Borough Council
4. Rob Chau	Secretary	Harringay Traders Association
5. Ali Smith	Resident	Gardens Residents Association
6. Sergeant Ian Pyles	Police Sergeant	Green Lanes Police
7. Councillor Nilgun Canver	Executive Member Crime and Community Safety	St Ann's Ward, Haringey Council
8. Paul McKay	Resident	Living Streets
9. Ahmet Ustunsumeli	Trader	
10. Shifa Mustafa	Assistant Director of Planning	Haringey Borough Council
11. Sean Sweeney	Community Safety Unit	Haringey Borough Council

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

- Narrowing the gap: 2002-2012 Haringey Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Haringey Strategic Partnership.
- Green Lanes Neighbourhood Strategy 2003-2007, Haringey Council.
- Getting Closer to Communities: Haringey Green Lanes case study, IDEa knowledge website.
- Green Lanes Strategy Group Newsletter, Issues 1 and 2.

Case Study F:

Neighbourhood Management in Salford

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of a brief evaluation of the Salford neighbourhood management initiative. The evaluation is seeking to:

- Understand how the initiative began, its objectives, and how it operates;
- Identify and explore the issues that have affected its development and performance;
- Assess its effectiveness and impact, where possible; and
- Understand what lessons we can learn.

The report has been prepared by Richard Meegan from the National Evaluation team for the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU).

The research undertaken to prepare this report included interviews with a range of stakeholders, listed in Annex A, and a desk review of relevant documents. We would like to thank all those people who helped or contributed to this report in any way.

(ii) Aims, Objectives & Rationale

Salford's current neighbourhood management model can be traced back to the City Council's attempts to embed the Community Strategy it introduced in the mid-1990s into its operations. By the end of the 1990s, nine Community Committees had been established across the city with Neighbourhood Coordinators feeding back concerns and issues over service delivery at neighbourhood level to the centre. This initial approach formed the basis for the current neighbourhood management model that was introduced from early 2004, following a Cabinet decision in the previous November.

The rationale for the model is political recognition of the need to join-up service delivery through partnership working at area/neighbourhood level. Neighbourhood management was a priority in the Cabinet Workplan for 2004/5 and has featured strongly in the last two Best Value Performance Plans. The City Council's most recent (2005) Self Assessment document for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment exercise stresses that neighbourhood management is seen as both a mechanism for service delivery and as "a means of engagement with our customers" (*From Vision to Reality: Salford City Council's Self Assessment 2005; p. 9*).

For the Council, neighbourhood management is "...now the established way for the city council and its partners to:

- Engage effectively with local communities.
- Meet the needs of communities and improve neighbourhoods.
- Close the gap between the best and worst performing areas."

"This way of working allows us to demonstrate many of the requirements under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, in particular those associated with community engagement. It is fundamental to delivering the Best Value Review of Community Engagement Action Plan. Furthermore, it is an important tool in delivering the national outcomes for the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund and for our Local Public Service Agreements." (*Report on Community Action Plans to Partners In Salford Board Meeting 27 October 2005*; p.1)

(iii) The areas and neighbourhoods

The Salford Model: an area-based approach

Salford's neighbourhood management model is a city-wide initiative 'rolled out' across eight Community Committee Areas that are combinations of either two or three wards (see Figure on page 3) and range in population size from around 14,000 (Worsley and Boothstown) to nearly 39,000 (Swinton).

As Table 1 indicates, the Community Committee areas vary economically and socially from prosperous suburban areas (Worsley and Boothstown and Swinton South) to disadvantaged inner-city (Ordsall and Langworthy and parts of Salford East) and outer areas (Little Hulton). Eccles contains a significant proportion of the city's Black and Minority Ethnic population, especially of Yemeni origin. The Broughton Park area in Kersal, East Salford houses the largest Orthodox Jewish communities outside London.

For purposes of this report, and after consultation with the Neighbourhood Management central team, it was decided to focus on Ordsall and Langworthy to illustrate selectively the operation of Salford's model at area level. With a population of around 23,000 it provides a marked contrast in economic and social characteristics. Salford Quays with the Lowry Centre and private housing and leisure developments contrasts with the remainder of Ordsall and Langworthy. The growing prosperity of Salford Quays is set against a backcloth of decline in Ordsall overall linked to the collapse of employment in the docks (Ordsall being the city's fourth most disadvantaged ward) and Langworthy (the city's sixth most disadvantaged ward). Salford Quays now employs over 13,000 people, nearly four times the number employed by the docks at their height (at 3,500 people). Private sector housing market growth in Salford Quays also contrasts with the social housing estates of the rest of Ordsall and significant housing market decline and abandonment in Langworthy. With its high presence of pre-1919 two-up two-down terraced housing, Langworthy contains the highest proportion of unfit private sector dwellings in the city.

In the 1990s Ordsall had an Estate Action programme that, in many ways, provided a catalyst for neighbourhood working and the area as a whole is now host to a number of regeneration initiatives to which neighbourhood management needs to relate.

The area contains:

- the (1995-2006) SRB5 programme for Seedley and Langworthy;
- the Chapel Street redevelopment.

It also falls within the boundaries of:

- the Manchester Salford Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder; and
- the Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company (URC).

The area is experiencing unprecedented change with the continued expansion of Salford Quays and the redevelopments promoted in the Seedley Langworthy SRB and Chapel Street areas. The Central Salford URC is about to embark on its redevelopment plans and the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder will introduce a mix of housing demolition, modernisation and new build in the area. The area will also need to contend with the ending of SRB5 funding in Seedley and Langworthy in March 2006, when the area, as one interview expressed it, will pass from the “intensive care of the SRB programme” to the “General Practice care of Neighbourhood Management”.

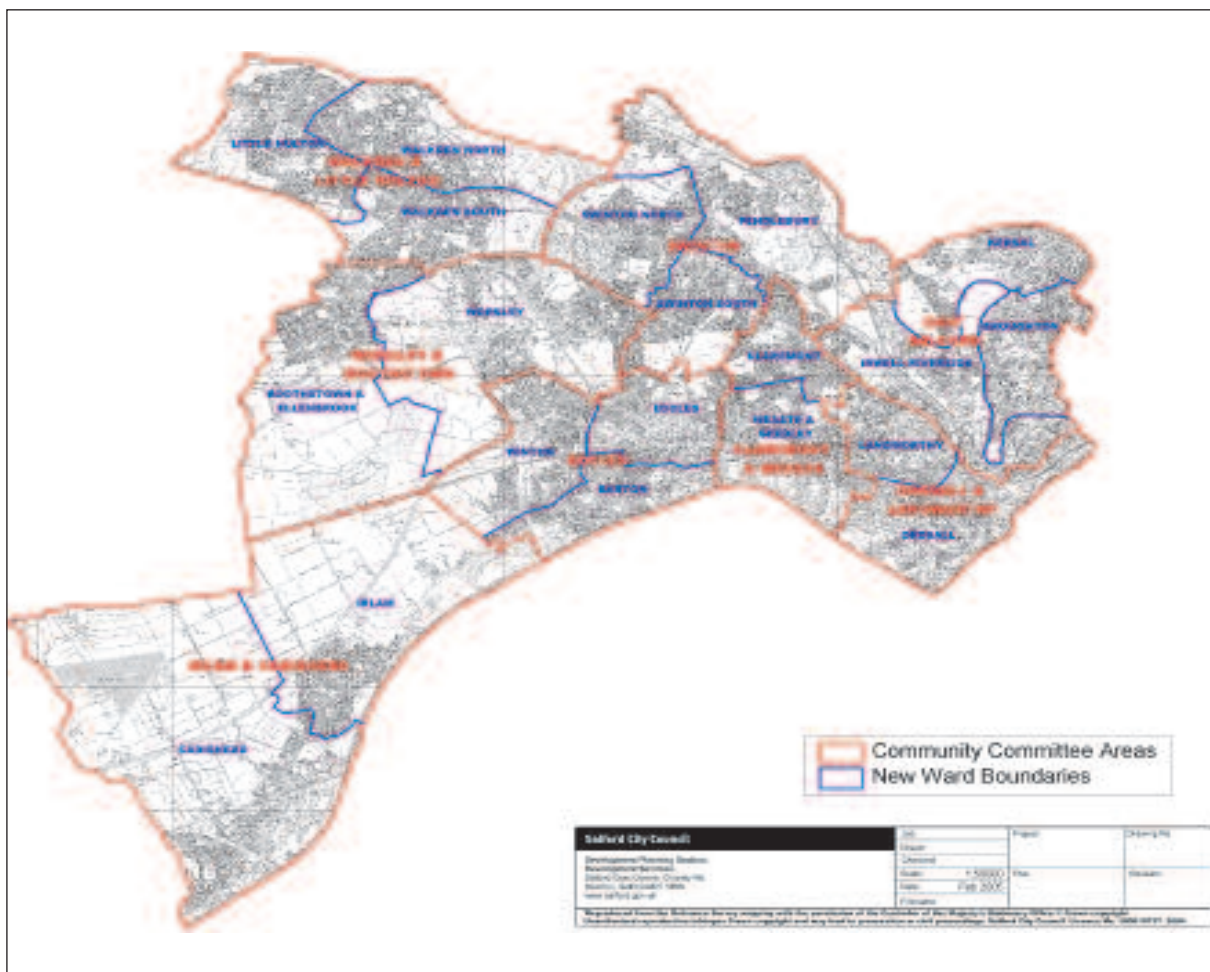


Table 1: Salford's Community Committee/ Neighbourhood Management Areas		
Neighbourhood Management Area	Population	Key characteristics
Claremont and Weaste	22,130	<p>2 wards: Claremont and Weaste & Seedley</p> <p>Historically a residential area</p> <p>'Green' – Buile Hill, Lightoaks and Oakwood Parks</p> <p>Conservation area in part of Irlam o' th' Height</p> <p>6 councillors: 6 Lib Dem</p>
Eccles	34,599	<p>3 wards: Barton, Winton and Eccles</p> <p>Centred on Eccles, the historic market town and bounded by the Manchester Ship Canal (to the south) and the M60 motorway and Barton aerodrome (to the west)</p> <p>Main shopping areas in Eccles town centre, Monkton village and along the Liverpool road. Includes some of the most deprived areas outside central Salford.</p> <p>9 councillors: 8 Labour, 1 Lib Dem</p>
Irlam and Cadishead	19,125	<p>2 wards: Irlam and Cadishead, two villages with substantial agricultural land, on the south-western side of Salford bordering Trafford and Warrington boroughs</p> <p>Bounded by Chat Moss and the Manchester Ship Canal and focused on the Liverpool Road gateway into Salford</p> <p>6 councillors: 6 Labour</p>
Ordsall and Langworthy	22,789	<p>2 wards: Ordsall and Langworthy, the southern part of Salford's inner-city bordered by the Manchester Ship Canal on two sides Includes the new housing and leisure developments in Salford Quays and, in Ordsall and Stowell, large social housing estates. Langworthy is largely private terraced housing, which is in the process of significant regeneration using SRB5 and other funds. It has won a number of awards for good regeneration practice in Pendleton with social housing (local authority owned high rise blocks) and Salford Shopping Precinct. Most of the area is within Central Salford URC.</p> <p>6 councillors: 6 Labour</p>
Salford East	27,802	<p>3 wards: Broughton, Irwell Riverside and Kersal covering Broughton and Blackfriars, Charlestown and Kersal.</p> <p>Broughton and Blackfriars main regeneration areas (including a SRB2 programme and current developments around the Chapel Street employment and business corridor)</p> <p>Broughton Park area in Kersal houses the largest Orthodox Jewish community outside London and the area also has significant BME and asylum seeking communities. Salford University is a major employer, landlord and resource in the area.</p> <p>Most of the area is within Central Salford URC.</p> <p>9 councillors: 9 Labour</p>
Swinton	38,581	<p>3 wards: Swinton North, Swinton South and Pendlebury</p> <p>Largely suburban residential area, relatively prosperous (Swinton South) but with pockets of disadvantage (around the Valley, Poets and Clifton estates in Swinton North and Pendlebury)</p> <p>Commercial and retail centres in Swinton Centre alongside main Civic Offices for Salford City Council</p> <p>Retailing, offices and light industry along A666 and Wardley Industrial Estate and Irwall Valley main industrial areas</p> <p>9 councillors: 9 Labour</p>

Table 1: Salford's Community Committee/ Neighbourhood Management Areas (continued)		
Neighbourhood Management Area	Population	Key characteristics
Walkeden and Little Hulton	37,136	3 wards – Little Hulton, Walkeden North and Walkden South – to the north west of the city Little Hulton experienced economic decline and increase in social and housing problems and has had SRB3, Capital Challenge and a Policing Priority Area. Walkden more stable community with good transport links, a major shopping centre, industrial developments and mixed housing tenure 9 councillors: 6 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 vacancy
Worsley and Boothstown	13,941	2 wards – Worsley and Boothstown & Ellenbrook – on the western edge of the city bordered by the East Lancashire Road to the north and the Bridgewater Canal to the south Stable residential area with growing middle-aged population - most prosperous area in city – high economic activity and lowest unemployment rates. Significant heritage and conservation potential. Agricultural and open land in Boothstown (part of city's 'green belt') 6 councillors: 6 Conservative
TOTAL	216,103	20 wards 60 councillors: 44 Labour, 8 Conservative, 7 Lib Dem, 1 vacancy

(iv) The Delivery Process

Key players and structures

Neighbourhood management in Salford is local authority-led under the aegis of Partners IN Salford, the city's Local Strategic Partnership (Box 1).

Box 1: Local Authority Led Neighbourhood Management in Salford

"Partners IN Salford, the local strategic partnership, is committed to delivering effective services for all our citizens. Discussions between community committees, elected members and officers of Salford City Council, Greater Manchester Police and Salford Primary Care Trust have led to a decision to work together to deliver effective neighbourhood management in Salford.

"The statutory partners intend to work together to respond to the needs of local communities, through the established community committees. It is recognised that partners are moving at different paces from each other but they believe that by working in partnership in neighbourhoods, they can deliver more effective and responsive services to the community. The statutory partners recognise the contribution of community and voluntary organisations, and welcome their participation and support in working in neighbourhoods."

Introduction to 'Neighbourhood Management IN Salford Protocols' agreed November 2004

It is a model based on strong political leadership from the City Council with a Lead Member having joint responsibility for Service Development and Neighbourhood Management and chairing a Cabinet sub-committee to oversee activity.

It is a federal model, coordinated centrally and delivered, as already noted, across eight areas and its operation is guided by a set of protocols that clearly set out the roles of the different elements of the overall structure and also what is expected of the individuals involved.

Central coordination is provided by a small team based in the Council's Community Services Directorate. The team is led by the Assistant Director of Community Services (with joint responsibility for Neighbourhood Management and Cohesion) and the Neighbourhood Management Coordinator.

The Assistant Director, a former Salford Divisional Commander for Greater Manchester Police well versed in the latter's shift towards neighbourhood policing, took up post in October 2004. He is responsible for translating strategic-level commitment to neighbourhood management into activity on the ground and has direct access to other senior officers across the City Council's Directorates and senior politicians (meeting fortnightly with the Leader of the Council and now regularly with the Lead Member with neighbourhood management responsibility). An important part of the job to date has been the "selling" of neighbourhood management to politicians and officers within the Council and to officers in partner agencies.

The Neighbourhood Management Coordinator supports the Assistant Director and coordinates activity across the Neighbourhood Management areas. This coordination role involves building relationships between Council service departments and partner agencies, providing training for the Neighbourhood Management Teams and supporting the Neighbourhood Managers and youth, health and community development workers and others involved in the programme.

The Assistant Director and Neighbourhood Management Coordinator meet fortnightly with the Neighbourhood Managers to discuss progress and issues arising and together convene and report to a Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group.

The Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group (NMIG) meets quarterly and currently comprises senior-level representatives from:

- the City Council (Chief Executive's, Children's Services, Community Services, Customer Services, Environment, Housing and Planning and Personnel and Performance);
- Contour Housing (one of two lead Registered Social Landlords);
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services;
- Greater Manchester Police;
- Manchester Methodist Housing Association (the other lead Registered Social Landlord);
- New Prospect Housing (the local authority's Arms Length Management Organisation for its housing)
- Salford Community Leisure (a Community Benefit Society delivering leisure services previously provided by the local authority);
- Salford PCT (Public Health); and
- Urban Vision (a joint venture between the local authority, the property and infrastructure consultancy, Capita Symonds and the support services company, Morrison plc to provide highways maintenance, engineering and highway design, landscape design and property management, development and building control and architectural design services).

The NMIG's responsibility is to:

- monitor the delivery of Neighbourhood Management across the city;
- provide interdepartmental and interagency leadership to address any issues of concern around implementation identified by Executive Groups, Neighbourhood Management teams and Community Committees (see below);
- ensure that service plans across the partner agencies complement and do not conflict with priorities identified at a local level;
- ensure that there is a degree of consistency across the city in the implementation of Neighbourhood Management, particularly around the development of Community Action Plans and presentation of monitoring information; and
- liaise with the sub-committee of the Cabinet overseeing implementation to ensure issues are being dealt with both at a senior officer and member level.

Members of NMIG are expected to:

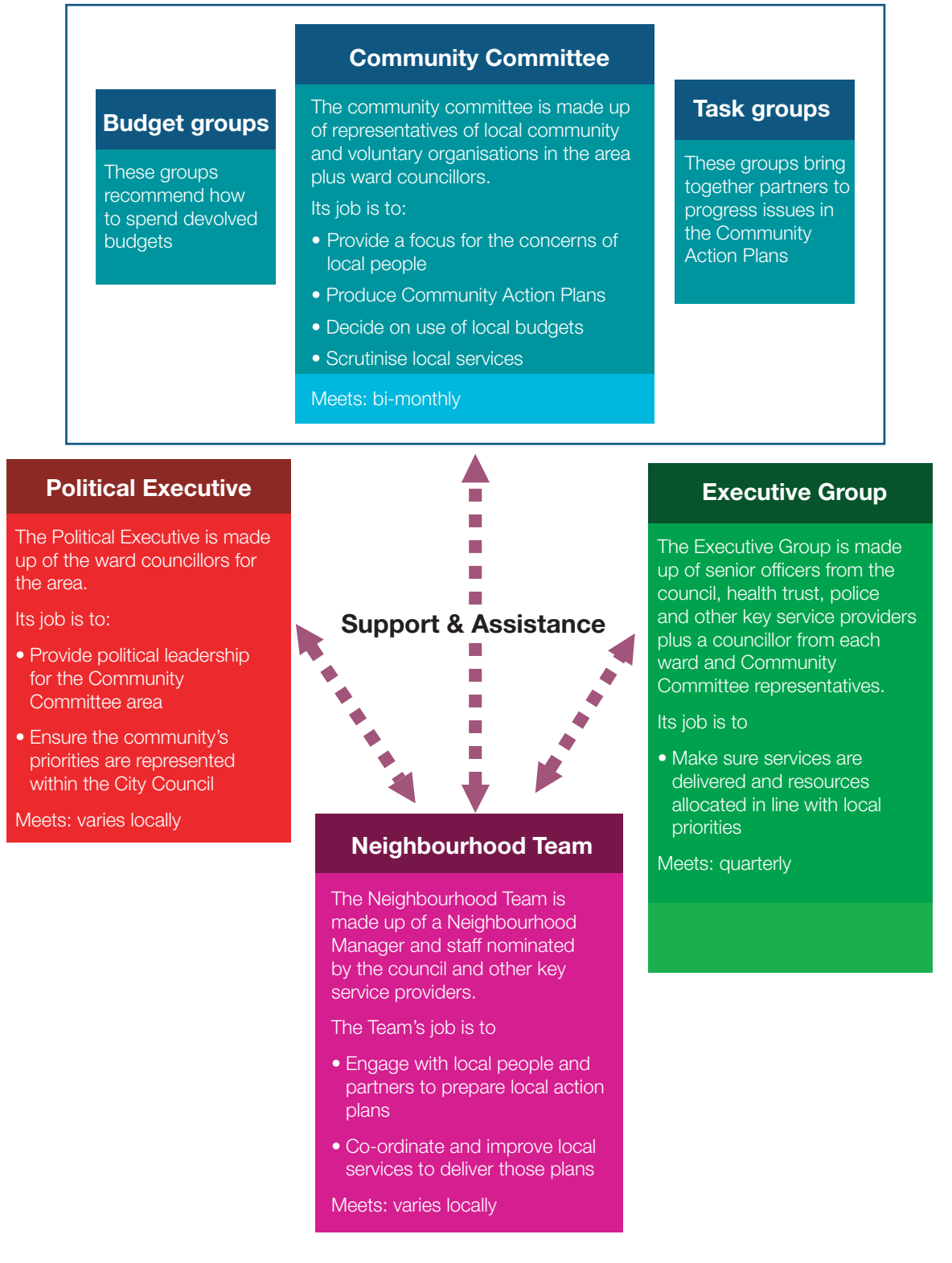
- receive update reports from the Neighbourhood Management Coordinator on the implementation of Neighbourhood Management across the city;
- consider areas of under-performance or non-achievement of targets set at both city-wide and local levels and review Neighbourhood Management structures or procedures to help to improve performance;
- request Executive Groups and Neighbourhood Management teams to undertake work to improve performance in such areas;
- receive reports of issues of concern emanating from Executive Groups, Neighbourhood Management teams and/or Community Committees and consider solutions across the partner agencies; and
- promote partnership working within their agency and externally to contribute to the success of Neighbourhood Management.

Each of the eight Neighbourhood Management areas has the basic structure set out in the Figure overleaf, namely:

- a Community Committee (with a Budget Group and various Task Groups);
- a Political Executive;
- an Executive Group;
- a Neighbourhood Team led by a Neighbourhood Manager; and
- an Area Coordinator (not shown in the Figure).

Figure 1: How Neighbourhood Management works in Salford

There are eight neighbourhoods in Salford. Each has the neighbourhood management structure set out here.



Community Committees meet bi-monthly and are made up of representatives from local voluntary and community organisations and ward councillors. Chaired by nominees from the voluntary and community sector, the Community Committees are expected to:

- act as a forum for local people to discuss local concerns and issues;
- produce Community Action Plans;
- spend their devolved budgets; and
- scrutinise local services.

The Community Committees have Budget Groups who make recommendations (formally agreed by the elected members) on the devolved budget currently set at £2.20 per head of population (meaning that Ordsall and Langworthy, for example, handles a devolved annual budget of some £50,000). The Community Committees also have ad hoc Task Groups to track issues highlighted in the Community Action Plans that they produce.

The Community Action Plans are produced annually by the Community Committees with the help of Neighbourhood Managers and their teams and contain locally defined priorities and concerns that are currently not directly addressed by mainstream services. These priorities and concerns are translated in the Community Action Plans into objectives with proposed actions accompanied by identified lead agencies, funding sources, outcomes, milestones and targets with timescales.

The Political Executives are made up of the councillors representing the wards that make up the Neighbourhood Management areas (six councillors in Ordsall and Langworthy's case). They:

- provide political leadership for the Community Committee areas and represent community views and interests in the City Council;
- promote partnership working to deliver neighbourhood management;
- facilitate community-led solutions to neighbourhood problems; and
- agree Community Committee spending decisions (as required by legislation).

Executive Groups (initially called Delivery Partnership Meetings) meet quarterly and are made up of senior officers from the Council, PCT, police and other key service providers alongside a nominated councillor from each ward and representatives of the Community Committee (in Ordsall and Langworthy's case the Chair and Deputy Chair). The Executive Groups aim to:

- provide interdepartmental and interagency leadership in delivering local services in line with agreed community and public service priorities;
- ensure that there is an overall plan for their areas bringing together the various strategies and activities that impact on them; and
- monitor delivery of services locally and ensure that reports on the effectiveness of service delivery are produced for both residents and service deliverers.

Neighbourhood Teams are made up of staff nominated by the Council and other key service providers. The full-time core staff are nominated by the Council and comprise a Neighbourhood Manager, Administrative Officer and Community Development Worker. Neighbourhood Managers lead and coordinate the team and are the key staff responsible for neighbourhood management in their areas. They:

- act as lead officers for, and provide support to Executive Groups, Political Executives and Community Committees in their areas;
- ensure the production, monitoring and implementation of Community Action Plans for their areas; and
- lead and coordinate the work of the officers nominated by partner agencies to the Neighbourhood Teams.

Five of the current Neighbourhood Managers had previously been Neighbourhood Coordinators in the previous structure (including the Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Manager) and thus provide a degree of continuity in neighbourhood management expertise and activity. Neighbourhood Managers have to balance day-to-day (often 'firefighting') management of the neighbourhood with more strategic planning. They also need to be able to work with the different service providers and be able to act as a "critical friend"/ advocate for these at, for example, Executive Group meetings. Good negotiating and communications skills are essential. They are line managed by the Neighbourhood Management Co-ordinator who in turn reports to the Assistant Director with responsibility for Neighbourhood Management and are responsible to their area's Community Committee and have to liaise with their Political Executives and Executive Groups. They are ultimately held to account for progress on the Community Action Plans in their areas.

A key feature of the Neighbourhood Teams is the coordinating roles performed by the Neighbourhood Managers who do not line manage the Team members nominated by either other Council directorates or service providers other than the City Council. The protocols are clear on the responsibility of council directorates and partner agencies employing staff in the neighbourhood teams. These partners are expected to:

- nominate representatives to each of eight Neighbourhood Teams and select nominees they feel can most appropriately represent the organisation based on their resources and the needs of each locality and Neighbourhood Team;
- empower their staff within Neighbourhood Teams to fully engage with other team members to ensure services are responsive to the concerns of local people as expressed through Community Committees and Members;
- support team members by providing the resources needed to fulfil their role, including time and information;
- ensure that there is sufficiently developed communication within their organisation to listen to Neighbourhood Team members and be willing to change their mainstream practices and priorities to accommodate locally identified issues;
- see the Neighbourhood Management process as a client and through their team members respond to the issues being identified locally and be willing to adapt services to meet local needs;

- ensure that service plans reflect the importance accorded to partnership working at the local level;
- ensure resources committed to Neighbourhood Management are on-going, including maintaining and replacing staff on teams as necessary;
- respond to the training needs of their staff as identified within the Neighbourhood Teams and meet these through mainstream funding; and
- respond to the training needs identified through partnership working on particular issues.

The protocols also set out how the Neighbourhood Teams are expected to operate with:

- working methods and management systems developed between Teams and the Partners;
- Neighbourhood Managers ensuring that team members have an understanding of the aims of Neighbourhood Management and their particular roles that will be supported by, and enhance their contributions to, their own Partnership agency;
- the Implementation Group developing a set of competencies for members of Teams and for the Teams themselves, in negotiation with the Partners involved;
- Neighbourhood Managers and team members identifying the skills needed to deliver their contribution to Neighbourhood Management and the required training and development being provided within Partnership agencies and Neighbourhood Teams, where most appropriate;
- Neighbourhood Teams building on existing practice of assembling theme-based groups for short term action and add the influencing of Community Action Plans in the longer term;
- Neighbourhood Managers ensuring that Community Action Plans are understood by team members who in turn will relate these to Partners to influence mainstream service delivery; and
- Neighbourhood Teams through their Neighbourhood Managers being accountable for their work to their Community Committees and Executive Groups.

The protocols make it clear that staff on the Neighbourhood Teams need to be able to:

- lead and take part in task groups;
- lead on and contribute to the drafting and monitoring of Community Action Plans;
- consult with the public around the themes in Community Action Plans; and
- provide a conduit within their own partner agency through which issues identified locally will be channelled.

Staff from the partner organisations working for Neighbourhood Teams also need to have:

- an understanding of neighbourhood management and partnership working;

- the right professional and communication skills;
- the resources (time and knowledge) to do the job.

It is also expected that the performance management of staff should include their contribution to delivering Neighbourhood Management as well as their roles in delivering their agency's priorities and service plans. The importance of neighbourhood team working should be recognised in career development and there should be opportunities for Team members within agencies to share their experience and good practice with each other.

The Neighbourhood Teams vary slightly in size and composition across the areas according to local circumstances but all are multi-agency and have, as already noted, a core full-time staff employed by the City Council. Ordsall and Langworthy's team currently has 32 members (one of the largest teams). In addition to the Neighbourhood Manager, Community Development Worker and Administrative Assistant employed by the City Council it includes:

Children and Young People

- an Early Years officer from the City Council
- two officers from the City Council's Youth Service
- the coordinator of the SPARKY/SAYO (young people's) projects from the City Council

Crime and Community Safety

- a neighbourhood sergeant from Greater Manchester police;
- the Neighbourhood Warden Supervisor for Salford First and Seedley and Langworthy
- an officer from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services

Education, heritage and culture

- an officer from Libraries at the City Council
- two officers from Heritage Services at the City Council

Environment

- an officer from Environment Directorate at the City Council
- an officer from Urban Vision (formerly Development Services at the City Council)

Health

- a Health Improvement Officer and two Community Health Development Workers from Salford PCT;

Housing

- five officers responsible for Housing Market Renewal from the city Council;
- a housing manager and two tenant participation officers from New Prospect Housing, the housing ALMO

Regeneration

- two regeneration managers from the Seedley and Langworthy SRB5 programme
- an officer for the Chapel Street regeneration programme

Sports Development

- a Sports Development officer from the City Council;

Voluntary and Community Sector

- a representative of the Seedley and Langworthy Development Trust
- a Community Network Officer (for the Salford Community Network) from Salford Council for Voluntary Services.

The Teams have autonomy in deciding how they operate. In Ordsall and Langworthy, for example, the Team has chosen to meet and work in theme-based project groups rather than as a single Team.

Area Co-ordinators support the neighbourhood managers at a more senior level in the shape of Chief Officers, deputy Chief Officers, or Heads of Service from across the Council's Directorates. They are expected to support the Neighbourhood Managers and Neighbourhood Management Teams in their areas and to give strategic leadership to the Community Committees and Executive Groups. They are also expected to work with their counterparts in partner agencies to promote Neighbourhood Management and to tackle issues that hinder neighbourhood management and community engagement within the City Council (including raising the issues with the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group).

The Area Coordinator for Ordsall and Langworthy is the City Council's Strategic Director for Housing and Planning who has long connection with Ordsall having been involved in the Estate Action programme of the 1990s and is an enthusiastic supporter of neighbourhood management.

Funding

Neighbourhood Management currently costs the Council approximately £1.5 million annually (with the devolved area budgets of £2.20 per head of population accounting for just under a third of the total). In the current financial year, £115,000 comes from NRF funding, a figure that is set to increase to £461,000 in each of the next two financial years.

These costs do not take into account the costs incurred by the mainstream council staff or partner agencies.

Local institutional context and history of Neighbourhood Management in Salford

It was stressed by a number of interviewees that Neighbourhood Management in Salford is very much a local creation evolving, as already noted, from attempts in the 1990s to embed the first Community Strategy into the Council's service delivery. The Community Committee Areas have been brought into the new structure and the participation of service providers in the Executive Groups and Neighbourhood Management teams and Implementation Group

reflect what a number of interviewees described as Salford's relatively well developed "partnership ethos". There was a prototype Strategic Partnership in place in the area in the early 1990s before their statutory introduction in 2001 and a number of interviewees from service providers commented on what they felt was a relatively high degree of willingness on the part of agencies to work together compared to other areas with which they were familiar. It was also argued that the relative stability of local politics and strong political commitment to neighbourhood management have also influenced its development locally. Co-terminous boundaries of Greater Manchester Police, Salford PCT and City Council have helped all to arrange services in neighbourhoods that share boundaries, even if resources mean staff have to cover more than one neighbourhood.

Key activities

The last two years have been taken up with getting the new structures in place, training and development, producing two rounds of Community Action Plans (with the second involving a major change in format) and project activity on the ground. The central team has also been involved in an ongoing 'marketing' programme, selling the new model and arrangements to politicians and to service providers both inside and outside the Council.

Getting some of the new elements of the structure and notably the Executive Groups fully up and running took time and longer in some areas than others. In Ordsall and Langworthy, for example, the process of securing Community Committee nominations for representatives to the Executive Group introduced some delay with the Group only having its first meeting in July 2005. Other areas experienced similar delays but these were overcome and the structures are now fully operational in all the areas.

Training is ongoing but all the Teams have had initial development training. A substantial training programme will run from February to July 2006 aimed at developing further the skills, knowledge and competencies of neighbourhood team members and strategy and policy staff from all agencies, and elected members. The programme is being developed with Oldham MBC and funded by ODPM.

Two sets of Community Action Plans have been produced and a notable achievement of the last year has been the revamping of the Plans into a common format organised around the principal themes of the Community Plan. The new Plans, produced in the autumn of 2005, are now much more coherently and directly integrated into the planning processes of the Strategic Partnership and its constituent Strategic Delivery Partnerships than before (see Section 5 below).

Table 2 gives a flavour of the activities that have been pursued across the Neighbourhood Management Areas by (Community Plan) theme. They cover all themes but, reflecting local priorities, with more emphasis on crime and community safety, community engagement, health and general liveability issues than economic development. They are Community Action Plan activities and as such are additional to mainstream service delivery.

A number of activities stand out across the areas:

- in health, the focus on healthy living programmes;
- anti-social behaviour intervention in community safety;

- library-based reading groups and IT courses in education;
- Community Newsletters and support for new and existing community groups (including BME and faith groups in some areas) in community development;
- support for groups working with young people and sports development and activity-related intervention in the children and young people theme;
- street clean-ups and environmental improvements in parks in the environmental theme.

Table 2: Activities undertaken in Salford's Neighbourhood Management Areas, 2004-5

Theme	Activity
Health: "A Healthy City"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy cooking courses (including ones specially designed for men and asylum seekers/ refugees). • Healthy living programmes for older people. • Health walks. • Bike riding. • "Weaning and beyond" sessions. • Dance groups for teenagers. • Improved access to fruit and vegetables. • Fall Prevention/ Healthy Communities pilots. • Courses for people recovering from mental illness. • Courses for people with learning disabilities through music and art based activities.
Crime and Community Safety: "A Safe City"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBOs. • Burglary initiatives. • Cameras for collection of evidence of criminality and anti-social behaviour. • CCTV. • Police mountain bikes and unmarked police vehicles. • Work with asylum seekers who have been victims of hate crime. • Policing initiatives for crime and anti-social behaviour 'hot spots'. • Initiatives aimed at under-age drinking. • Diversionary sports activities for young people. • Additional policing. • Neighbourhood wardens. • School-based police officers. • Deployment of Police Community Support Officers. • Security fencing. • Barriers to prevent off-road biking. • Home Watch groups supported. • Community fire education (for older people) and fire risk assessments. • Education programme for overseas students about theft of mobile phones and laptops. • Operations to control anti-social use of quad bikes. • Bogus caller training and free burglary reduction kits for older residents.

Table 2: Activities undertaken in Salford's Neighbourhood Management Areas, 2004-5 (continued)

Theme	Activity
Education, leisure and culture: "A Learning and Creative City"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT courses (for all age groups). • Reading groups (for all ages) and "story times" for young children. • Outreach educational opportunities. • Adult Learning Centres. • Links with Learn Direct. • Community arts Officers and arts programmes. • Festivals. • Women only swimming classes. • Support for personal educational activities. • Sport Coaching education.
Children and Young People: "City Where Children and Young People Are Valued"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for playgroups, day nurseries, out-of-school clubs, crèches, holiday play schemes and child minders. • Sports and dance groups working with young people. • Anti-bullying initiatives. • Childcare provision. • Youth forums. • Floodlit multi-sports arena. • BMX/skate park. • Youth Web page. • Detached youth workers. • Truancy sweeps. • Children's Focus Group.
Social inclusion/ community engagement and development: "An Inclusive City"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Newsletters. • Support for new community groups including BME and faith communities and elderly people. • Ongoing support for existing groups. • Community forums. • VE/VJ celebrations. • Community café. • Community rooms. • Cultural health awareness day for Asian community. • Improved communications between police and the Orthodox Jewish community. • Portakabin for use as a community facility. • Luncheon clubs for elderly residents. • Directories of local community groups and activities.
Economic development: "An Economically Prosperous City"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial advice and money management. • Local employment initiatives. • Business support. • Business security grants. • Business breakfasts. • Construction skills courses for unemployed residents. • Site development.

Table 2: Activities undertaken in Salford's Neighbourhood Management Areas, 2004-5 (continued)

Theme	Activity
Environment/ quality of life: "A City That's Good to Live In"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street facelift and clearance schemes. • Park clean-ups and improvements to recreational facilities. • Children's play areas. • Boulders in parks to prevent unauthorised vehicle access. • Award winning "In bloom" initiatives. • Support for Ranger service. • Bulb planting and flowerbeds. • Refurbishment of cycle path. • Responsive removal of graffiti/ fly-tipping. • Community woodland development. • Conversion of derelict open space into community space/gardens. • Restoration of park bandstand. • Demolition and development of shopping precinct. • Demolition of surplus properties. • Traffic calming schemes.

Source: Community Action Plans, 2006

Evidence for shaping decisions and priorities and monitoring progress

Decisions and prioritisation are integral to the planning process for the Community Action Plans, which are demonstrably bringing together a combination of community knowledge and information (around issues and concerns) and professional knowledge of "what works" in particular themes and interventions. The planning process also appears to be building and consolidating knowledge of the effectiveness of previous interventions in the areas.

The Plans have a section that asks for "evidence of what works" in relation to the proposed objectives and actions. The nature and availability of this evidence vary by theme and action but the requirement to provide this evidence where available clearly reflects the desire to base activity on a (developing) evidence base. The latest Ordsall and Langworthy Community Action Plan provides a good example of the evidence-base being deployed. In the health actions, for example, there are references to academic papers, research publications and renewal.net policy guidance documents. In the community safety and children and young people's themes there are references to evidence, drawn from professional and community knowledge, of the impact of proposed interventions on behaviour locally and from elsewhere. The evidence base for the inclusion and environmental themes are notably less developed but there is clearly future potential for including the growing evidence base on building 'social capital' in the academic literature on community development and local evidence of the impact of community development activity in the areas themselves.

The Action Planning process appears to be producing a strong evidence base, even though it is still in a relatively early stage of development. As one member of the Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Team argued, the Teams are made up of service providers working "at the coal face" who can "see all the angles" of initiatives and are able to assess whether these are working and the reasons why. The Team brings together individuals with professional expertise in a wide range of disciplines and policy areas. There may still be issues about how evidence is consolidated and shared and how progress is monitored and outputs linked to strategic-level outcomes at city-level but the evidence base appears to be in place and growing.

Key issues arising

It is recognised by all involved that the Neighbourhood Management model is still in its formative stages and that further ‘tweaking’ of it can be expected. There is a genuine openness to critical debate amongst officers and politicians on how the model is developing and how it could be developed. Some of the issues for debate relate to:

- the geography of the model (balancing area and neighbourhood);
- balancing representative and participatory democracy;
- Community Action Plans and service delivery;
- the devolution of budgets and services;
- scrutiny and performance management;
- the role of Area Coordinators;
- the difficulties facing multi-agency Neighbourhood Teams.

Area versus neighbourhood

The model is area rather than neighbourhood based in terms of the organisational structure and devolved budget. This was a deliberate political/ administrative decision based on what was felt to be the most appropriate and viable spatial scale for service delivery whilst recognising that the areas would contain, some more than others, different communities (of both geography and interest). The areas are a bureaucratic/ administrative construct. Resource constraints militate against replicating the model at neighbourhood level.

The Community Committee discussion group in Ordsall and Langworthy revealed differences of opinion on the issue. One view was that the Ordsall and Langworthy area was a classic example of the artificial grouping together of two very different areas/ communities. Historically there has been little movement and interaction between the areas and this had been reflected in the attendance at some of the public meetings in different parts of the area. From this perspective, the location of the Neighbourhood Office in Ordsall was ‘disenfranchising’ Langworthy residents. Smaller neighbourhood/estate based structures would be better (which as acknowledged by another member of the group was currently being provided in Langworthy’s case by the SRB programme). Others recognised the artificiality of the area definition, but argued that it had the benefit of widening the horizons of residents in both wards to initiatives and funding streams operating across the areas and outside them.

A potential benefit of area-based structures might be to help break down parochialism and negative community divisions. In this context, for example, the Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Manger saw the involvement of young people from Langworthy in an Ordsall-based youth project as being a very positive development.

The Community Committee in Ordsall and Langworthy has also tried to minimise the potential for division by splitting its devolved budget evenly between the two wards.

The Areas also have discretion in how they relate to neighbourhoods within them and some have set up neighbourhood/community forums. In Ordsall and Langworthy, for example, the Pendleton Community Forum has been set up not only to facilitate the Pendleton Masterplan but also to act in the future as a Langworthy equivalent of the already existing Ordsall Service and Development Group. The Seedley-Langworthy SRB programme is also an intra-area programme that is neighbourhood-focused and operates as such but with representatives involved in the Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Management Team. Neighbourhood level initiatives are integrated in this way into the area structure.

NRF already is, and the Neighbourhood Element of the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund will be, targeted at neighbourhood-level within Community Committee Areas in Central and West Salford. This funding requires a neighbourhood focus in the areas covered and underlines the need for the neighbourhood management model to be able to operate sensitively in relation to intra-area differences. Neighbourhood management in the areas covered by NRF and SSCF both requires and helps to develop a neighbourhood focus.

The model is thus, in a sense, an administrative compromise between central and fully devolved neighbourhood management with the areas representing a management shift closer to neighbourhoods and operating with neighbourhood foci as appropriate.

Balancing representative and participatory democracy

In terms of governance, the Salford neighbourhood management model differs from that typical of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders in that each area has three inter-related groups – a Community Committee, Political Executive and Executive Group – rather than a single Neighbourhood Management Partnership Board. The Executive Groups come closest to the Pathfinder Board model, bringing together community representatives, councillors and representatives of partner agencies to oversee service delivery and resource allocation in their areas.

The Salford model deliberately separates the Political Executives and Community Committees from the Executive Groups and this separation underlines the representative and participatory democracy inherent in the partnership model. The Political Executives are there to provide political leadership and a political ‘voice’ in the Council (in Ordsall and Langworthy “we’ve got six votes in Council”). A councillor from each ward is also nominated to sit on the Executive Group. The Community Committees are not full-blown examples of participatory democracy because they are not exclusively voluntary and community sector forums. They also include ward councillors not least because councillors are needed formally to approve decisions on the devolved budgets. It is recognised that councillors should not dominate the Committees and this is reflected in the chairing of the Committees, with all of them now chaired by community representatives. The balance between representative and participatory democracy is a sensitive one but needs to be handled without, as one interviewee expressed it, ‘fudging’ the statutory responsibilities of elected members.

Neighbourhood management is seen by the political administration as being about community engagement and the potential it offers for politicians to develop a new community leadership role. The fact that the model is city-wide with area structures including Political Executives and Community Committees means that all councillors are now engaged in some form in neighbourhood management. Political leadership is important for persuading council members of the importance of neighbourhood management and for minimising its use, in the words of one interviewee, as a “political football”. Training is seen as important in this (with, for example, neighbourhood management featuring on the agenda of a November

2005 residential weekend for members). While neighbourhood management does appear to have cross-party support and 'backbench' councillors do appear to be engaging positively with it, it is recognised that training and development activities are required to maintain momentum.

It is also recognised that the initiative involves the building of a new relationship with communities, some of which are deeply mistrustful of the Council. Again training and development (including "learning by doing") is seen as important. This needs to be both 'co-learning' and community-based. In relation to the latter, for example, there has been some training of community representatives involved in the Community Committee Budget Groups. In terms of future development, training in the chairing of meetings was one suggestion in a discussion group and the drawing up of protocols for Community Committee meetings – which can sometimes, in one interviewee's words, get a bit "aerated" – another.

The Ordsall and Langworthy Community Committee discussion group emphasised the degree to which the Community Committees are still feeling out their relationships with other elements of the structure. There was a feeling that while the Committee had not been sufficiently challenging and proactive in its relation to the Executive Group, this situation was changing. The recent introduction of 'Action Sheets' for submission to the Executive Group was seen as a positive development in this context. What was also seen as being positive was the space that the Committee meetings offered for community representatives to debate their concerns – "60 percent of the time it's people like us talking" – and this community space for debate needs to be protected on the Committee agenda.

Community Action Plans and service delivery

The Community Action Plans are the drivers of neighbourhood management but concern has been raised about their focus on local priorities and actions that are additional to mainstream service provision. A recent Discussion Paper on Neighbourhood Management by the Deputy Director of the Environment Services Directorate argues that this is a weakness in the Community Action Planning process not least because partners will inevitably be judged on their success in meeting the aspirational needs expressed in the Plans rather than in relation to their basic community support services. The needs identified in the Community Action Plans, from this perspective, need to be based on an 'informed choice' that takes into account whole service provision. The suggestion is for service providers to contribute to Community Charters that set out service standards irrespective of area. The Council has piloted this in the past with relation to its own services and is moving in this direction with its 'Think Customer' approach. These Community Charters can then be supplemented by Neighbourhood (Area) Charters reflecting the local needs and aspirations identified in the Community Action Plans.

How far can/should budgets and service delivery be devolved?

The Council has been exploring the potential for participatory budgeting (in collaboration with the local voluntary and community sector organisation, Community Pride) for some time and appears to be moving towards the further devolution of budgets to Community Committee areas, with Community Committees taking on a commissioning role in relation to services. The issue here is whether this devolution endangers service standards, works against city-wide strategies and undermines the economies of scale provided by some centralised service provision against a backcloth of limited resources. Careful consideration is needed of what services can be devolved and what services are more effectively delivered centrally albeit with increased neighbourhood influence and feedback ("informed choice").

Scrutiny and performance management

There appears to be a potential for confusion over where responsibility for scrutiny and performance lies. The Community Committees are expected to scrutinise services in their areas and to produce the Community Action Plans against which performance is monitored. To complicate the picture, the Executive Group in Ordsall and Langworthy has decided to take on a scrutiny role – which mirrors the situation in the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders where scrutiny and performance management are the responsibilities of the Partnership Boards. The Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group is also reviewing progress in the eight areas. There is an argument for having scrutiny and performance management diffused across the structure but there would still appear to be a need for greater clarity on where ultimate responsibility for it rests.

The Deputy Director of the Environment's Discussion Paper referred to above picks up on this issue and suggests that, in each area, scrutiny and performance management should be given to a Local Public Service Board that would replace the Executive Group and be linked directly to the Community Committee. The paper does not, however, address the issue of scrutiny across the neighbourhood management areas at city level.

The whole area of monitoring and evaluation and performance management does require development. The need to build in a reporting mechanism back to the Strategic Partnership in relation to progress (by area and theme) on the Community Action Plans has been recognised and a six-monthly cycle proposed. Linking neighbourhood management to the City Council's newly introduced 'balanced scorecard' performance management and its neighbourhood information management system would also appear to be a priority. The Assistant Director for Neighbourhood Management has made contact with the Council's Customer and Support Services IT division to explore the potential for using its IT-based information services particularly in relation to the Council's 'Think Customer Initiative' (introduced in 2004 with the aim of placing customers at the heart of both front-line and back-office service design and delivery). There is also scope for making use of the Council's Citizen's Panel and a variant of the recent 'Big Listening' citizen survey carried out by MORI in performance management (which is to be used to measure two of the recently agreed LPSA2 targets relating to community cohesion). Tapping into evaluations carried out by partner agencies like, for example, the recently started two-year evaluation of the PCT's Health Improvement Programme would also be beneficial.

The Performance Management Framework being used by the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders could also be gainfully used.

The performance management work could also feed into communications work, which also appears to need developing. This is important for both community engagement and positioning neighbourhood management in strategic policy. Some Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders are now producing 'glossy' Annual Reviews of activity (a good example is in the Hattersley Pathfinder), which draw together the year's achievements for public consumption.

Neighbourhood Managers and Area Coordinators

The NRU has pointed to the possible confusion between the roles of the Neighbourhood Manager and Area Coordinator and the danger of the Area Coordinator role usurping some of the powers that Neighbourhood Managers need. It is recognised that the effectiveness of the Area Coordinator role has varied across the areas but the general view remains that Area Coordinators still have an important role to play, especially in what are still the relatively early stages of the new model in getting the neighbourhood management message across to senior officers in the Council and other partner agencies and addressing any 'blockages'. In Ordsall and Langworthy, which, as already noted, has an enthusiastic and highly committed Area Coordinator with a longstanding involvement in the area, the experience had been a positive one. Community Committee members appreciated the involvement of the senior officer, with one praising the Coordinator's help in finding continuation funding for a community group. The Neighbourhood Manager felt that the two roles were complementary and were working well while the Area Coordinator noted how his involvement was being modified as the Neighbourhood Team established itself. In future, the role of Area Coordinator might be less needed but at this stage of development of the initiative it does still seem an important one.

Neighbourhood Teams

The interviews and Neighbourhood Team discussion group raised the issue of the conflict that can occur when nationally set targets conflict with locally defined priorities and actions. This is particularly important for what were described as "highly disciplined" organisations like the police and to some extent PCTs. The Teams are aware of the need to negotiate this issue when it arises but acknowledged the frustration it produces for both service deliverers and community representatives. The scope for a degree of local 'sensitising' of central targets needs to be explored.

Linked to this issue of targets is the fact that the officers in the Neighbourhood Teams (and multi-agency teams in general) are ultimately managed by their agencies. This is a challenge for Neighbourhood Managers who need to be able to sensitively co-ordinate team activity. It calls for good communication and interpersonal skills but, importantly, in Salford's case this coordination role is backed up, and made easier by a set of protocols on the roles and responsibilities of team members that all agencies – and their nominated officers – have signed up to. There is thus an open commitment at the outset to partnership working and procedures for dealing with breakdowns in it.

An issue that came up strongly in the Team discussion group was the impact of short-term project funding both in terms of building community capacity and staff retention. The regular interruptions in community capacity building and constant turnover of staff and subsequent loss of professional expertise as short-term funding programmes came to an end were seen as serious hindrances to securing sustainable communities. This is, of course, a more general problem associated with community development activity but perhaps this is counterbalanced now by the fact that neighbourhood management heightens the visibility of the problem and the developing integration of Community Action Plans with those of the Strategic Development Partnerships underlines the issue at strategic level.

(v) Evidence of Results

Capacity for sustainable renewal

The Salford model has only been running in its current guise for less than two years but already appears to be demonstrating significant capacity for delivery and sustainable renewal. It has:

- strong political backing and leadership (from the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member jointly responsible for Service Delivery and Neighbourhood Management);
- strong leadership and support from the centre in the shape of a senior Council Officer (the Assistant Director for Community Services) and a dedicated Neighbourhood Management Coordinator with administrative backup;
- an overall body responsible for coordination and monitoring progress (the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group);
- all elements of the organisational structure now in place in all areas (albeit some more quickly than others);
- built on community engagement through the Community Committees (which predate the current model) and developed links with hard-to-reach groups including BME and faith communities;
- devolved budgets to Community Committees;
- Involved a good range of service providers across the structures, with key service providers – notably the police, fire and rescue services and PCT – ensuring that their areas of operation are coterminous with Neighbourhood Management Area boundaries
- strong leadership at area level from Neighbourhood Managers and Neighbourhood Teams with good representation from key service providers;
- a strong and strengthening planning process centred on Community Action Plans and now linked more clearly and firmly to city-wide strategic planning linked to the Community Plan;
- learning and development built into its process at all levels (from training in the Neighbourhood Management Teams and the regular progress meetings of the Neighbourhood Managers and the central administrative team to the debates at the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group and at political level).

Its capacity for delivery and sustainable renewal is also reinforced by its strengthening links with the Local Strategic Partnership, Partners IN Salford. A significant development in the past year has been the production of the Community Action Plans to a common format with activities and priorities directly related to the seven Community Plan Themes. These themes are championed at Strategic Partnership level by seven Strategic Delivery Partnerships and have been adapted, in turn, as 'Pledges' for action by the City Council (Table 3).¹

¹ The Strategic Partnership is currently reviewing its structures and the way it operates to fit in with the national emphasis on performance and delivery and demonstrable impact of policy on disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The need to ensure that Local Area Agreements are developed effectively is also a factor behind the review. The seven themes will remain but changes to the number and composition of Strategic Delivery Partnerships appear likely.

The Community Action Plans for 2006 were produced in the autumn of 2005 and have been collected together in CD-ROM format for distribution to partners in the Strategic Partnership. The CD-ROM contains individual Community Action Plans and a separate collation of priorities and proposed actions from across the Action Plans by individual Community Plan themes for the benefit of the Strategic Development Partnerships. The Action Plans are accompanied by a formal request from the Assistant Director with responsibility for Neighbourhood Management for all partners to consider how they are going to respond to, and support the priorities and proposed actions across the themes and in the individual Neighbourhood Management Areas. Partners are each asked to nominate a lead officer to manage the process of addressing the local priorities set out in the plans and to give feedback to allow the process to be improved. The Assistant Director presented the Action Plans to the Board Meeting of Partners IN Salford In October 2005 and got its full support. He also presented the plans to the City Council's Strategic Directors in October and to the Cabinet in December 2005 and again received full support. Partners have until the end of March 2006 to respond.

Table 3: Community Plan Themes

Community Plan Theme	Aim	Strategic Delivery Partnership	Salford City Council Pledges
A healthy city	Improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities	Healthy City Forum	Improving health in Salford
A safe city	Reduce crime and disorder and improve the sense of community safety	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	Reducing crime in Salford
A learning and creative city	Raise education and skill levels, and develop and promote opportunities for cultural and leisure enhancement	Lifelong Learning Partnership (pending review that might see it merge with the Economic Development Forum)	Encouraging learning, leisure and creativity in Salford
A city where children and young people are valued	Invest and focus our efforts into services, activities and opportunities that will support children and young people and help enable them to achieve their full potential	Children and Young People's Partnership (formerly Children's Services Planning Forum)	Investing in young people in Salford
An inclusive city with stronger communities	Tackle poverty and social inequalities and increase the involvement of local people and communities with the future of the city	Social Inclusion Forum	Promoting inclusion in Salford
An economically prosperous city	Tackle poverty and social inequalities and increase the involvement of local people and communities with the future of the city	Economic Development Forum	Creating prosperity in Salford
A city that's good to live in	Protect and improve the environment and provide access to decent, affordable homes which meet the needs of local people	Living Environment Forum (under which the recently formed Strategic Housing Partnership sits)	Enhancing life in Salford

In terms of sustainability, there would appear to be strong and continuing support for Neighbourhood Management from the Strategic Partnership. It clearly contributes to the Strategic Partnership's over-arching objective to secure the delivery of responsive, joined-up local services and for its commitment to concentrate more on reaching disadvantaged groups. The potential importance of this contribution has also been reinforced by the recently commissioned (2005) Scenario Planning exercise, which drew out a number of imperatives and a preferred scenario for the future development of the city in which Neighbourhood Management clearly has an important role to play. Neighbourhood management contributes directly to increasing community engagement, which is one of the seven imperatives identified as needing to be addressed by the city regardless of any scenario. It also contributes to one of the two identified drivers for the preferred scenario, namely the need to accommodate to a shift towards a service delivery model in which the citizen/ customer is seen as a key partner to the Council.

Neighbourhood Management is also important in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and its thematic and geographical priorities (in the latter case through the Neighbourhood Management Areas in the prioritised areas of Central Salford, which includes Ordsall and Langworthy – and pockets of disadvantage in Salford West). This has been recognised in NRF allocations and it has recently been agreed that Neighbourhood Management is to continue to receive a share of the NRF budget top-sliced by the Partnership's to reflect its strategic priorities. Funding of £461,000 has been allocated for each of the financial years, 2006/7 and 2007/8, which will help to maintain the Neighbourhood Management model at its current level of operation. Additional funding will be required, however, if it is to be further extended.

Impact on community capacity

The Neighbourhood Management process appears to have made a significant contribution to developing community capacity through its community engagement structures and activity. Community Committees have been given a devolved budget and have also been supported with training and development (for example, in the training courses for members of Budget Groups). Neighbourhood Managers provide support and work closely with them in the preparation of Community Action Plans. The structures – notably in the Community Committees and Executive Groups and links between them – do appear to have improved the capacity of community groups to hold service providers to account through both consultation and involvement in deliberative decision-making. A good example of the latter is the involvement of members of the Community Committee in Claremont and Weaste in regular meetings with the local Hospitals Trust to discuss developments at the local hospital. The Community Committee members were also directly involved in the selection process for a preferred bidder for a major hospital development programme.

Support for some voluntary groups has also given them a greater involvement in the delivery of services (most notably around parks maintenance) although this area of community capacity building, as elsewhere, remains generally under-developed. For one member of the Neighbourhood Team discussion group, the issue was one of the time – and associated funding – needed to build the community capacity that would allow direct involvement in service delivery.

Support for existing community groups has been secured through the Community Action Plans and new groups, including groups representing BME and faith communities have been formed. It is significant that the Assistant Director for Neighbourhood Management also has responsibility for Community Cohesion and there is a clear and growing synergy between

these two areas of responsibility. There has been important work, for example, in engaging with the Yemeni communities (there being at least three identifiable 'communities') in Eccles, Orthodox Jewish groups in Broughton (Salford East) and asylum seekers in Claremont Weaste.

While it is recognised that the engagement of young people needs to be developed (perhaps through the proposed appointment of a Children's Champion and perhaps the local replication of the city-wide Youth Bank), there are good examples of efforts to consult with young people and to engage them in decision-making. In Irlam and Cadishead, young people have been involved in the development of a Master plan for Princes Park. The plan included a BMX bicycle/ Skate Park that was opened in July this year and is well used and vandal free to date – reflecting, it could be credibly argued, local young people taking ownership of the project.

The Neighbourhood Management Team in Irlam and Cadishead also worked successfully with community groups and service providers to address the social isolation of older people. It also worked with community groups (Birse Civils and the Friends of Princes Park) in a project to remove and restore a derelict steam locomotive (a neglected piece of local heritage) and to relocate it as a public artwork on the Cadishead by-pass.

Links with the Strategic Partnership have also helped to develop community capacity through the latter's Good Practice IN Community Involvement Project that has run for the last three years. Project officers have worked with Neighbourhood Management Teams to support community engagement in the development of the Community Action Plans. The Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Manager, for example, has worked with the project team and Housing Market Renewal officers to secure community involvement/ consultation in the Pendleton Masterplanning process. Community representatives have been involved in the selection of preferred investors/ developers, the development of a community forum and branding exercises for the developments. Support has also been given to black and minority ethnic community groups in the area.

Community development is an integral part of the work of the Neighbourhood Team and is reflected in Team membership. In Ordsall and Langworthy, for example, the Team includes generic, health-related and sports-related community development workers alongside tenant participation officers from the local ALMO.

Impact on mainstream service providers' behaviour in improved services

There is good evidence of the way in which key service providers are changing their behaviour as a result of their involvement in neighbourhood management. For some, of course, neighbourhood management offers clear advantages for meeting the requirements of changed corporate policies, notably the shift to neighbourhood policing by the police, neighbourhood-focused hazard prevention and community safety activity by the fire and rescue service and the PCT's neighbourhood-based health inequalities programmes. All of these providers have ensured that their areas of operation fit the geography of neighbourhood management:

- Greater Manchester Police changed its operational structure in the spring of 2004 with the force's twelve divisions (including a newly created Manchester Metropolitan Division) moving to a 'unitary structure' in which existing sub-divisions were replaced by

neighbourhood-based 'Areas' with Neighbourhood Inspectors responsible for policing within them. The Salford division has five areas. Two of these each cover one neighbourhood management area and the other three each cover two areas;

- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue has restructured its operations, moving from three Territorial Commands to eleven smaller Borough Commands that align with Greater Manchester's ten local authorities (Manchester, because of workload considerations has two Borough Commands). Salford is one such Command (housing the Brigade's Headquarters in Swinton) with five fire stations. Officers from these stations are attached to individual Neighbourhood Management Areas and Teams;
- Salford, unlike some cities, has a single PCT serving it, which is divided into four operational areas, each taking in roughly two Neighbourhood Management Areas. PCT involvement in Neighbourhood Management is principally through its four Health Improvement Teams (each made up of an Health Improvement Officer, Health-related Community Development Worker and, following a successful NRF-funded pilot, a Health Improvement Trainee). Three of these teams are allocated to the three Neighbourhood Management Areas with the greatest health inequalities and needs (Salford East, Odsall and Langworthy and Claremont and Weaste) and the fourth team covers the other five Neighbourhood Management Areas.

In the case of the police, for example, it was stressed in interview that the force had made significant investments in the neighbourhood structures and that the experience to date had been very encouraging. In Ordsall and Langworthy, the Neighbourhood Inspector is convinced that neighbourhood-level working has increased the effectiveness of policing and community safety activity and that partnership working is developing very positively in the neighbourhood management model. A recent example was the response of the neighbourhood team to residents' concerns over the anti-social use of quad bikes. A multi-agency working group was quickly formed to address the problem.

The PCT, as already noted, has attached its Health Improvement Teams to the Neighbourhood Management Teams to provide the locality-base for its Health Improvement Programme. This is a new way of delivering mainstream services and allows it to weave its Health Action Plans into the Community Action Plans. Its involvement has also allowed it to pilot new activities and partnership working (for example, an anti-bullying initiative in Eccles, a parenting project in Swinton and a financial inclusion initiative in Ordsall and Langworthy). Another innovation, piloted through neighbourhood management, has been the recruitment of Health Improvement Trainees. These trainees, all recruited locally, work with the Health Improvement Officers to develop health-related projects that contribute towards Health Action Plans. Projects to date have included, for example, cycling, health walks and cookery courses. The trainee based in Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Team is developing an emotional well-being project that involves the production of a directory of local activities, classes and clubs concerned with building self-confidence. She is also setting up exercise classes and organising health walks. The PCT regards the health trainees' programme as one of the early successes of neighbourhood management.

The Council has also changed the way in which it works in relation to Neighbourhood Management, which was introduced alongside a review of governance that saw the creation of a new Children's Services Directorate, the amalgamation of Housing and Planning into a new Directorate and the creation of a Community, Health and Social Care Directorate. The latter (set up formally in September 2005) houses Neighbourhood Management alongside

Community Cohesion, Culture and Leisure, Sports and Adult Social Care – all services that have officers actively involved in the neighbourhood management teams (and revealed in the activities listed in Table 1 above).

Other Council Directorates have attached officers to the Neighbourhood Management Teams and are increasingly working through them.

The Environment Directorate has just created three new Assistant Director posts and one of these is currently focused solely on the role of Environment Services in Neighbourhood Management. Middle managers have attended interactive workshops with Neighbourhood Managers and some are attached directly to the Neighbourhood Management Teams. The Deputy Director sits on the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group. Service delivery directly affected by priorities raised in Community Action Plans includes increased street cleansing frequencies, the 'Parks for People' Strategy and actions to address under-age drinking. These responses have been delivered through flexibilities in service provision and/or additional funding. The Directorate also operates grounds maintenance through its "Green Directory". Communities have been given a say, subject to the retention of minimum standards, in how the annual £5.5 million budget for grounds maintenance is spent. The shift from a 5 to 4 day refuse collection service was influenced by community views and communities can now manage local clean-up budgets. In its current review of Street Cleansing Services, the Directorate is proposing to set up dedicated teams in the Neighbourhood Management Areas. Neighbourhood Managers, in consultation with the Directorate, will be able to direct the teams to areas of need without the Directorate retaining control of the city-wide three-week cleaning frequency (thus addressing the issue raised above about the need to maintain city-wide standards of delivery and economies of scale in a situation of devolved service delivery).

Housing and Planning was in the process of amalgamation and working on a new housing strategy when neighbourhood management was introduced. This work has resulted in the formation of a Strategic Housing Partnership and the development of a new housing strategy, which is likely to involve a combination of ALMO provision in East Salford, PFI-modernisation of tower blocks in Central Salford and the management of the remaining housing stock in West Salford by local housing companies. The Housing and Planning Directorate is committed to building this strategy on the Neighbourhood Management structure and housing officers are actively involved in both the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group and Neighbourhood Teams. The involvement to date has largely been in terms of process and mapping the geography of the housing strategy onto the geography of Neighbourhood Management but plans are already being influenced by this involvement with, for example, health concerns being translated into plans for incentives for smoke-free homes and built in contractor requirements that workers do not smoke cigarettes in or around homes and generally respect residents' health. Development in housing for older people are also reflecting neighbourhood concerns about the isolation of older people. These issues are known centrally but are being positively reinforced and geographically focussed by involvement in neighbourhood management. There is 'officer buy-in' to neighbourhood management across Housing and Planning and the only barrier, as one interviewee expressed it, is "reconfiguring our resources to get the changed emphasis" and "while it will be some time before we make best use of these resources we know where we're heading".

The Ordsall and Langworthy area provides a not untypical vignette of changes in service delivery. The Neighbourhood Team discussion group recognised that it was still early days for evidence of significant mainstreaming but was agreed that there was much more joint working between agencies than was the case “ten years ago” and that there was good evidence of agencies working differently:

- the Pendleton Masterplan has been developed in association with the Neighbourhood Management Team and the newly established Langworthy Community Forum and these structures are providing a readily accessible testing-ground for housing market renewal initiatives;
- there are examples of jointly-funded posts (by Sure Start and Children’s Services) and joining up of services (with police, community development and housing officers working together on anti-social behaviour and police, sports and community development officers working on youth development activities);
- there are examples of changed corporate policies and practices in the shape of the Neighbourhood Police and Health Improvement Teams (which also involves some re-allocation and re-shaping of mainstream resources);
- there has been some re-shaping of mainstream services involved in responsive removal of graffiti and fly-tipping;
- there are examples of improved service access in the shape of the agencies co-located in the Neighbourhood Office, the extension of the local library service, IT training in Salford Lads Club and the introduction of Salford Local Link for job opportunities; and
- there has been increased community engagement in the shape of the new Community Café, the new Community Rooms in the Neighbourhood Office and general community development activity in the area including support given to black and minority ethnic community groups.

Impact on the neighbourhood

It is difficult to measure the impact of neighbourhood management across the areas. Besides the usual problem of attribution, there is also the issue of data availability. The City Council has a relatively sophisticated Neighbourhood Information Management System with three components:

- An **Early Warning System** that tracks, on a quarterly basis, a set of indicators (household turnover and vacancy, housing benefit, house prices, domestic burglary, vehicle crime and juvenile nuisance) at postcode level to highlight neighbourhood change and neighbourhoods experiencing, or at risk of decline;
- A **Performance Monitoring System** that tracks progress at city level against national Floor Targets using the Council’s Best Value monitoring system for quarterly reporting to the Strategic Partnership; and
- The **Salford Annual Baseline Review** that brings together a wide range of information on housing, community safety, the economy, health, education and road safety at national, regional, city and ward level.

Of these, the most useful for measuring neighbourhood change across the areas is the Annual Baseline Review principally because it covers a wider range of information than the Early Warning System (including, notably, health and education) and has ward level data. The latest review, however, is for 2004 and the latest data in it are for 2003 – before the current neighbourhood management model was introduced.

The Baseline Review is being updated and outcome data will become available in due course. The challenge remains, however, to relate these data to the outputs and activities reported in the Community Action Plans. As argued in Section 4 above, there does seem to be a need for a more consistent monitoring and evaluation/ performance management process at area level that links to the city-level equivalent at Strategic Partnership level.

(vi) Conclusions

Key Messages

The stated objectives of Salford's neighbourhood management initiative are first, to engage effectively with communities, secondly to meet the needs of communities and improve neighbourhoods and thirdly to close the gap between the best and worst performing areas. Given the time it has been operating and the long-term nature of the social and economic problems facing the worst performing neighbourhoods it is too soon to judge the initiative's success in achieving the third objective even if suitable outcome data were available. It could be said, however, that the initiative is heading in the right direction for achieving that objective because of its relative success in achieving the first two objectives. It has engaged with communities through the Community Committees, however uncomfortable that this has sometimes been in some areas for both politicians and community organisations. It has also gone a long way in meeting the needs of communities through its evolving Community Action Planning process and it is not difficult to see how neighbourhoods have been improved by the activities of the Neighbourhood Management Teams across the different work themes.

The neighbourhood management structures have been put in place in just under two years with key partner agencies all coming on board and there is growing evidence in the Community Committee areas of key service providers adapting their behaviour to neighbourhood management.

Some of the key factors influencing this success have been:

- strong political leadership;
- senior officer 'buy-in' at strategic level within the Council and across partner agencies;
- a local institutional context conducive to partnership working;
- a clear delivery structure with agreed protocols for how it operates and for the roles and responsibilities of agencies and individuals involved in it;
- community engagement through the Community Committees and community development work in the Neighbourhood Teams;
- community groups working with neighbourhood management teams on projects;

- councillors involved across the delivery structure to encourage and sustain a new community leadership role;
- central coordination and senior-level representation within the Council;
- strong leadership at area level from Neighbourhood Managers and Neighbourhood Teams with good representation from key service providers and individual officers increasingly seeing involvement as “part of the day job” and not an “add-on”;
- a strong planning process centred on Community Action Plans;
- learning and development built into the neighbourhood management process at all levels.

The Salford model of neighbourhood management provides a number of important lessons for local authorities considering an area-based, district level approach.

In terms of roll-out, there are various relevant issues and lessons. The initiative has been rolled out city-wide from the outset with the same neighbourhood management structure in each of the eight Community Committee areas. The reason for the area-based approach was largely financial. It was decided that it would not be possible adequately to service a large number of neighbourhood areas across the city and that the area approach provided an administrative compromise that would still allow neighbourhood foci within the areas by the Neighbourhood Teams. Neighbourhood management has to be affordable and sustainable if it is to be rolled out.

The area approach does need to be sensitive, however, to the existence of different geographical communities (and communities of interest) within the area boundaries and needs to have the structures and management ability to defuse the tensions and develop the synergies that these intra-area differences bring. The model needs to be able to provide the appropriate management and management support to address this issue.

Community Action Plans are where neighbourhood foci can be developed but it is important to ensure that the local priorities and actions expressed in them genuinely reflect “informed choices” in relation to whole service provision. One suggestion being considered in Salford is for service providers to contribute to Community Charters setting out service standards irrespective of area supplemented by Neighbourhood (Area) Charters that reflect the local needs and aspirations identified in the Community Action Plans.

Neighbourhood management in Salford is – and is seen as – a developmental process. The Council has been interested in the concept of participatory budgeting and appears to be moving towards the further devolution of budgets to Community Committee areas, with Community Committees taking on a commissioning role in relation to services. Careful consideration is needed of what services can be devolved without endangering service standards, working against city-wide strategies and undermining the economies of scale provided by some centrally administered service provision.

The Neighbourhood Managers and Neighbourhood Teams are at the “coal face” of service change and it is important that they are involved in the sharing of good practice and experience in discussions on developing the model.

It is also important to build scrutiny and performance management into the neighbourhood management structure. One suggestion currently being considered in Salford is that this role should be devolved, in each area, to a Local Public Service Board linked directly to the Community Committee. There does appear to be a need to clarify responsibility for scrutiny and performance management and the processes involved. The Community Action Plans now provide a solid foundation. The sustainability of neighbourhood management is partly reliant on links with Local Strategic Partnerships and these links need to include a reporting mechanism on progress on the Community Action Plans. Links also need to be made with performance management systems within the local authority and evaluations being carried out by partner agencies of their neighbourhood management activities. Greater use could be made of citizen surveys. Performance management could feed into communications activity, which needs to be developed.

Annex

Research Interviewees

We would like to thank the following people who were interviewed in the preparation of this report:

Name	Job Title	Organisation
INTERVIEWS		
Alison Fletcher	T/Chief Superintendent	Greater Manchester Police
Janice Lowndes		Salford PCT
Keith Mann	Councillor Lead Member for Service Development/ Neighbourhood Management	Cadishead Cabinet Salford City Council
Diana Martin	Neighbourhood Management Coordinator	Community and Social Services Directorate, Salford City Council
Ross Spanner	Neighbourhood Manager	Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Management Area, Salford City Council
Jean Rollinson	Assistant Director Community Housing Services	Housing and Planning Directorate, Salford City Council
Malcolm Sykes	Strategic Director of Housing and Planning Area Coordinator	Housing and Planning Directorate, Salford City Council Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Management Area
Dave Tinker	Deputy Director of Environment	Environment Services Directorate, Salford City Council
Brian Wroe	Assistant Director	Neighbourhood Management and Community Cohesion Community and Social Services Directorate, Salford City Council

Name	Job Title	Organisation
DISCUSSION GROUPS		
Ordsall and Langworthy Community Committee		
12 members		
Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Management Team		
Steve Cheshire	Sergeant	Greater Manchester Police
Anne Godding	Coordinator	SAYO/SPARKY
Ian Johnson		Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services
Iris Kennedy	Children's Development Officer	Children's Services, Salford City Council
Brendan Keville	Tenant Participation Officer	New Prospect Housing Limited
Deborah McDonald	Options Delivery Team	Housing and Planning Directorate, Salford City Council
John Mills	Team Member	SRB5 Programme, Seedley and Langworthy, Salford City Council
Suzanne Rigg	Community Development Worker	Ordsall and Langworthy, Salford City Council
Patrick Sullivan	Officer	Youth Service, Salford City Council
Samantha Tindale	Housing Manager	Salford South, New Prospect Housing Limited
Chris Whitefield	Options Delivery Team	Housing and Planning Directorate, Salford City Council
Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Political Executive		
Peter Dobbs	Councillor Member	Ordsall Ward Ordsall and Langworthy Political Executive, Salford City Council
Gina Loveday	Councillor Member	Langworthy Ward Ordsall and Langworthy Political Executive, Salford City Council
Robert Pell	Neighbourhood Inspector	Salford Central Greater Manchester Police
Andrew Salmon	Councillor Chair	Langworthy Ward Ordsall and Langworthy Political Executive, Salford City Council
Malcolm Sykes	Strategic Director of Housing and Planning Area Coordinator	Housing and Planning Directorate, Salford City Council Ordsall and Langworthy Neighbourhood Management Area, Salford City Council
John Warmisham	Councillor Member	Langworthy Ward Ordsall and Langworthy Political Executive, Salford City Council

Key Background Documents

The following key documents were used in the preparation of this report, in addition to numerous local documents collated in each neighbourhood:

A Review of the Operation, Impact and Future Focus of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in Salford: A Final Report to Partners in Salford and Salford City Council, ECOTEC (August 2005)

Community Action Plans 2005/6 for all eight Neighbourhood Management Areas including Ordsall and Langworthy Community Action Plan 2006, Ordsall and Langworthy

Community Plan 2001-2006, Salford Partnership (2001)

Community Pride Initiative; Impact Report 2002-2005, Community Pride, Manchester

Creating a great place to live IN Salford: A guide to Salford Strategic Housing Partnership, Partners IN Salford (2004)

From Vision to Reality: Salford City Council's Self Assessment 2005, Salford City Council

Improvement Plan 2005-06, Partners IN Salford (2005)

Improving people's lives IN Salford – Community Plan Update, Partners IN Salford (2003)

Making the Future Happen IN Salford 2004-2006, Salford Strategic Housing PARTNERSHIP, Partners IN Salford (2004)

Making the Vision Real: Our Community Plan for Salford 2006-2016, Partners IN Salford (2005)

Minutes of Meetings of the Neighbourhood Management Implementation Group, Salford City Council (2004/2005)

Neighbourhood Management – A Discussion Paper: “Neighbourhood Management – Policy to Practice”, *Dave Tinker, Deputy Director of Environment, Environment Services Directorate, Salford City Council (2005)*

Neighbourhood Management Team, Salford City Council (2005)

Regenerating a Great City: Salford's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Salford Partnership (2002)

Salford Annual Baseline Review, Salford City Council (2005)

Scenarios for Salford: A Report for Partners IN Salford, Henley Centre (2005)

The map and organisational diagram were supplied by Salford City Council.