

## CITY OF PLYMOUTH

**Subject:** Localities and Neighbourhood Working Review  
**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 13 September 2011  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Jordan  
**CMT Member:** Director for Community Services  
**Author:** Nick McMahon, Localities Officer  
**Contact:** Tel: 01752 304335  
e-mail:nick.mcmahon@plymouth.gov.uk

**Ref:** NJM

**Key Decision:** No

**Part:** 1

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### **Executive Summary:**

The introduction of a Locality Working model was agreed by Council on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010, and introduced in June 2010. The Council agreed to review Locality working, one year on from its introduction.

The Overview & Scrutiny Management Board set up a Task and Finish Group to carry out this review. The Group met in July 2011 and its findings are set out in a report. These findings were considered by the Management Board on 27 July 2011.

This report makes recommendations to Cabinet arising from the review.

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### **Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014:**

Locality working helps to meet City and Council priorities, in particular:  
*Raising Aspiration* – promoting Plymouth and encouraging people to aim higher and take pride; *Reducing inequalities* – taking targeted actions to reduce inequality gaps; *Value for Communities* – working together to maximise resources to benefit communities, achieving efficiency through transforming our service delivery and support arrangements, and our support to customers.  
Performance on responding to issues raised at neighbourhood meetings is a level 2 performance indicator.

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land**

Recommendations in this report can be met from within existing budgets.

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**Other Implications: Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion**

An Equalities Impact Assessment for Locality working is being updated.

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**Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:**

That recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14 and 15 of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board on Localities and Neighbourhood Working are agreed subject to the comments in section 3 of this report.

That recommendations 2, 6,9,10 and 13 of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board on Localities and Neighbourhood Working, subject to the comments in section 3 of this report, are recommended to full council.

Reasons: the recommendations review the evidence available to the Management Board and are considered a sensible way forward.

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**Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:**

Not to respond to the conclusions of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board would ignore the evidence identified by the review, fail to learn from the process and be a missed opportunity to deliver improvements.

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**Background papers:**

Overview & Scrutiny Management Board Task and Finish Group Report, July 2011: 'Localities and Neighbourhood Working Review'

Report to Cabinet, 19 January 2010: 'Locality Working'

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**Sign off:**

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Originating SMT Member: Peter Aley, Assistant Director, Safer Communities											

### 3.0 Response to Recommendations

- 3.1 The recommended responses to the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board's recommendations are outlined below.

**Task and Finish Group Recommendation (R)1** *Locality and Neighbourhood Working should be renamed Neighbourhood Working*

**Accept** (work undertaken by Strategic Housing in priority neighbourhoods to continue to be known as 'Neighbourhood Management').

**R2** *Locality Teams as set up as part of Locality and Neighbourhood Working arrangements in February 2010 should be discontinued. A member of the Council's Senior Management Team (SMT) should be nominated for each Ward within the city, with designated duties with respect to support for Ward Councillors and Neighbourhood Working. The Lead Ward Councillor decision should be rescinded*

**Accept**, subject to SMT Members' role being to support and guide NLOs and not overlap their role.

**R3** *Best practice protocols regarding neighbourhood meeting arrangements should be produced and shared amongst Neighbourhood Liaison Officers and newly designated SMT members with a view to promoting, implementing and monitoring consistent high quality arrangements*

**Accept**, and this to include flexibility over meetings to allow joint Neighbourhood meetings up to ward level (only) if agreed locally

**R4** *The role and identity of members should be included in publicity regarding neighbourhood meetings*

**Accept**

**R5** *Neighbourhood Liaison Officer (NLO) roles should be reviewed to ensure that skill sets of individuals match the demands of the job. Specific training needs analysis should be carried out to ensure training and development is available where needed. Line managers of NLOs should include the role within the NLO's personal objectives, and seek feedback from Members at appraisal. NLO's and their line managers should ensure that the role is integral to, rather than in addition to their work programme, and that adequate support is available to assist them in the role.*

**Accept**

**R6** *Revised arrangements should be commended to Plymouth 2020 partnership and, subject to agreement be publicised and briefed to relevant stakeholders from all agencies and to residents.*

**Accept**

*R7 Analysis of repeat issues in Neighbourhoods, and of complaints should be undertaken to ensure that the necessary learning is taking place. This practice should be included in best practice protocols for Neighbourhood Working*

**Accept**

*R8 A review is undertaken by the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel and a report submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with respect to the role of community infrastructure and community anchor organisations in supporting Neighbourhood working*

**Accept, and combine with R12**

*R9 The Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board takes responsibility for ensuring that Neighbourhood level interaction takes place with key health agencies*

**Accept**, subject to Health and Wellbeing Board arrangements being confirmed.

*R10 Plans are put in place to adopt the proposed boundary changes set out in the overview report (see Appendix A and Figure I attached to this report).*

**Accept**

*R11 Neighbourhood Profiles are reviewed and updated in line with the findings and recommendations of this review*

**Accept**

*R12 A review is undertaken of communication methods around Neighbourhood working, with recommendations back to the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel*

**Accept, and combine with R8**

*R13 The Constitution be updated to reflect revised member and officer accountability arrangements for Neighbourhoods and Wards*

**Accept**

*R14 A review of these arrangements is carried out as a Task and Finish Group in July 2012.*

**Accept**, however it is suggested the review is held later to allow a full 12 months of implementation under the new arrangements.

*The Management Board also requested that in order to better inform the next review, the cost in officer time attributed to localities working between now and then should be recorded.*

## **Accept**

### **4.0 Conclusions**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report provide a positive way forward for Neighbourhood Working in Plymouth, consistent with the Government's Localism agenda.
  
- 4.2 The review's findings endorse the principles of working at neighbourhood level both to engage communities and to encourage joint working between services and communities to tackle issues. As expected, with the benefit of experience, some changes to the current model are proposed. These include changes to some Neighbourhood boundaries to fit with Ward boundaries, discontinuation of Locality Teams, and a strengthened role for the Council's Senior Management Team. This together with further work on communications and the role of the community and voluntary sectors in the process, can enhance the evolution of Neighbourhood Working in Plymouth.