

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

3 SEPTEMBER 2009

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION

Regeneration and Transport- Cabinet Member – Councillor Cook

TRANSITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 AND SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND - 6 MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR OCTOBER – MARCH 2009

1. Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with the final progress on the transitional Neighbourhood Renewal programme within the Borough which ended March 2009, the development of Area Partnership priorities for their allocation of Communities Fund, and the Neighbourhood Element (Safer Stronger Communities Fund) programme progress.

2. Recommendations

That the report be noted.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To inform Cabinet of progress made on the Transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Programme and Safer Stronger Communities Fund in 2008/09.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;
- and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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**TRANSITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 AND SAFER
STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND - 6 MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR OCTOBER –
MARCH 2009**

SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on final progress of the transitional Neighbourhood Renewal programme within the Borough which ended March 2009, the development of Area Partnership priorities for their allocation of Communities Fund, and the Neighbourhood Element (Safer Stronger Communities Fund) programme progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the report be noted.

DETAIL

Transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Programme monitoring 2008/9:

1. In November 2007, the government announced 'The Working Neighbourhoods Fund' (WNF) which was created to simplify and refocus local level funding to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise within some of the most disadvantaged communities. This fund, part of the non-ring fenced Area Based Grant (ABG) was seen as the successor to the Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and continues the focus of neighbourhood renewal on these core areas of regeneration.
2. Due to the late announcement of the funding, in February 2008 Cabinet agreed a transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Programme for the financial year 2008/9 of £2,738,703 as part of the exit arrangements for NRF funded projects. The programme aimed to continue those projects evaluated as successful from the last round of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, which were unable to secure alternative funding. It was also agreed the remaining WNF would be referred to as the Communities Fund (CF).
3. Programme monitoring for the transitional NRF took place on a six monthly basis to align the work with the Local Area Agreement, although some Package Leads continued to monitor quarterly on a risk basis.
4. Annex 1 provides a summary of some key achievements within the last six months. Some examples of key achievements and progress to date include:
 - Safer Communities: Licensing have undertaken 171 Test Purchase Attempts for under age sales in the last six months of the year with 8 positive sales as a result.

- Children and Young People: Over 130 Children & Young people have gained accreditation through the Twister Arts project which is double the estimated amount.
 - Environment: Work undertaken in the Portrack and Tilery area by the Waste Education Team, has contributed to a 12% increase in recycling participation levels within the area and a 2% decrease in households using more than one wheelie bin.
 - Housing: Raising the Standard project has issued 58 licences to houses in Multiple Occupation, all of which are in the NRF areas
 - Economic Regeneration and Transport: Overall 297 people have gained employment, 440 people have obtained recognised qualifications and 51 people have started their own business. Seven of the nine key outputs were exceeded.
5. At the end of the financial year 2008/09 and the programme there was a slight underspend of £2,931, which as agreed previously will be rolled into the wider Communities Fund pot.

Thematic Packages	% of total outputs met for the year April 2008 to March 2009
Safer Communities	90% achieved or over achieved for the year
Children and Young People	75% achieved or over achieved for the year
Environment	100% achieved for the year
Housing	67% achieved or over achieved for the year
Economic Regeneration and Transport	78% achieved all of which were over the target

Area Partnership priorities

6. A proportion of the Communities Fund was ring-fenced for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 at Cabinet on 14th April 2008 specifically for the Area Partnerships, who were tasked to prioritise issues within their areas with reference to community views and commission services to be delivered locally to address these priorities. The following total allocations were given to each of the Area Partnerships over the 3 years.
- Central Area Partnership Board - £274,216
 - Eastern Area Partnership Board - £114,359
 - Northern Area Partnership Board - £72,765
 - Western Area Partnership Board - £55,361
7. Over the last six months work has taken place with each of the Area Partnerships to commission services to address their priorities from their allotted money. Further details of the agreed Area Partnership projects to date are attached at Annex 2.

Continuation Progress

8. Thematic Lead Officers and Thematic Partnerships were requested to evaluate the success of their packages and to implement exit strategies or consider alternative funding, for the successful interventions from their packages.
9. Continuation progress for all the Thematic Packages is detailed below:

Safer Communities: All of the projects under this package will be sustained in 2009/10. Although work is still on going for some projects i.e. Harbour to continue after 2009/10.

Children and Young People: The joint commissioning team reviewed on all of the projects. The Children's Trust Management Team discussed the projects and identified that no further funding was available to continue the majority of projects. Some projects have come to a natural end and did not require further funding. The successful projects have been flagged up as best practice under the Youth Provision Review. Teenage pregnancy projects have been picked up under the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy.

Environment: All of the projects under this package will continue in 2009/10. These are Neighbourhood Recycling, NEAT Team and Dog Fouling Enforcement.

Housing: Both the Specialist Independent Advice and Raising the Standard projects in this package will continue in 2009/10.

Economic Regeneration and Transport: Continuation of projects using other sources of funding has been a priority issue for all the organisations delivering projects under this package. Two of the organisations (Newtown Community Resource Centre (SOL) and the Five Lamps Organisation (Business Support in the Community and Guidance, Education and Learning) have been successful as lead providers for the delivery of the Communities Fund. All of the other organisations have been involved in discussions regarding sub contracting of services and advanced talks are currently underway with all three lead providers.

Safer Stronger Communities Fund - Neighbourhood Element

10. Renaissance selected Portrack, Tilery and the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood areas to benefit from the Neighbourhood Element initiative funding. This initiative made funds available to St Ann's Development Board as follows; 2006/7 £412,000, 2007/8 £516,000 2008/9 £412,800, 2009/10 £258,000.

11. Some examples of the key achievements and progress for the last six months between October – March 2009 include:

The St. Ann's Development Board held its first Participatory Budgeting event in March 2009, distributing £21,000 of Neighbourhood Element funding to projects and initiatives which benefit young people aged 11 – 16. The event was developed in conjunction with a group of young people from the Yo Yo magazine and the Willows who assisted the Board in developing a specification and application process. The young people identified a theme for the event and worked with a graphic designer to create branding and publicity for the event held at the ARC on 19th March 2009.

12. 11 projects were short listed and took to the stage in the ARC to sell their projects to over 100 young people from the Portrack and Tilery with Mount Pleasant area. The 7 projects with the highest votes were presented with a cheque by the Chair, Councillor Coleman. These projects were:

- Beat It Project
- Scooter Crew
- Urban Kaos
- Portrack Baptist Church
- Maltby Cricket Club
- AWAY Out
- Vox Centre

13. Feedback from the event has been really positive and a DVD is currently being developed showcasing the event and projects.

14. The Board has joined forces with TFM Radio and the Preventions Unit to create "Beat the Boredom" events at local venues free of charge for young people. The events invite local young people to get involved in positive activities such as MCing and street dancing. It is hoped that these events will be held once a month during the summer. A DVD on the first Beat the Boredom event, which took place in May is available.

15. The Board held a special meeting on 7th May to discuss next steps and future work of the Board. A report will be taken to the Board in August 2009 with recommendations for future working.

16. The Board has submitted an application for £435k to Department for Communities and Local Government for the Inspiring Communities Fund, which is aimed at raising aspirations in children & young people. The fund would, if successful run from Autumn 09 till Mar 2011. A decision is expected in Aug/early Set 09. (Unfortunately notified late August that we were not successful).
17. The Board was successful in applying for £5,000 of Communities for Health funding which it is using to offer discounted fruit and vegetable bags from local community centres along with holding a Play Day event on August 5th 2009. Play Day is a national event ran by Play England which encourages people to take time to do something active. The Board is joining forces with the Corner House Youth Project to hold the event at the Willows and Tilery Primary School. Activities on the day will include, climbing wall, taster sessions in a variety of sports and activities, inflatable Olympics plus much more. The aim of the event is to encourage families to be active together and sign up to sport teams and clubs attending on the day.
18. The Board and supported by Stockton Residents and Community Groups Association has assisted and supported several resident associations and groups in acquiring external funding:
 - Swainby Road Residents have successfully received £5000 Grassroots and £2,000 Eaga Funding
 - Tilery Residents have successfully received £500 from the FIND fund and £5,000 from Grassroots funding to re open the Frank Wiseman Centre
19. The Board co-ordinated a community day at the Frank Wiseman Centre with the help of Volunteers from Aker Solutions, the whole of the centre was re painted, flowers planted in the gardens and weeds and overgrown shrubs removed.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

20. Any financial implications of continuing any of the interventions after March 2009 will have been addressed as budget pressures as part of the respective lead organisation's budget setting exercise for 2009/10.

RISK ASSESSMENT

21. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

22. The report has implications across all of the Sustainable Community Strategy themes as the NRF transitional programme was cross cutting to affect them all.

- Economic Regeneration and Transport
- Safer Communities
- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Adults
- Environment and Housing

Supporting Themes:-

- Stronger Communities
- Older Adults
- Arts Leisure and Culture

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

23. Not applicable

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

24. Not applicable

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Background Papers

No background papers.

Property

No implications in relation to Council property.

Annex 1 – Transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Programme Monitoring – Examples of Key Achievements.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

- Figures from the crime survey have shown that there has been over a 30% reduction in crime over the past 5 years and projects funded through NRF and the transitional NRF have contributed towards this reduction, as well as a 64% reduction in Dwelling burglary over the last year;
- Licensing have undertaken 72 Test Purchase Attempts for under age sales in the last six months of the year with 8 positive sales as a result;
- There were 367 First Time Entrants to the CJS which was a reduction of 19% for the year which was nearly three times better than the target set of 5% reduction for the year.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

- During 2008/2009 over 920 children and young people benefited from projects to promote personal and social development which was nearly six times the estimated figure of 156;
- All of the projects in the package have contributed to a number of key outcomes and priorities within the Children & Young People's Plan 2008-2011;
- The package has successfully engaged with 7 voluntary and community sector organisations and centres, and in many cases empowered children and young people themselves to secure further funding to continue or enhance service provision.

ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT

- The Guidance, Education and Learning project have helped 128 people obtain qualifications, 140 people obtain jobs all of who were previously unemployed and engaged / case loaded 402 people in the last six months;
- The Ground Level project has successfully resulted in 8 people achieving NVQ level one and 2 people achieving NVQ level two in Horticulture;
- Most of the people who took part in the Train to Work project have successfully gone into employment;
- The IDE&A are setting up a 'Northern Regions LAA Learning Event' on behalf of ANEC which will take place in July 2009. Stockton has been recognised as one of the areas that is on track against NI153 (Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods) and has been invited to share our learning and innovative practice with other Councils by leading a session at the event.

ENVIRONMENT

- The NEAT team have attended 85 events which were delivered across all 11 NR areas promoting recycling, including Up Your Street Promotional Events, Community Fun Days/Events and SBC Events;
- The top 10 schools in the Borough with the highest Black Minority Ethnic percentage have been targeted to receive recycling information and awareness sessions from the Waste Education Team. At the end of March, 09 out the 10 schools identified have accepted these sessions, and to date, 13 schools across the whole Borough are now participating in the Council's paper recycling scheme (which includes 10 schools across 7 NR Areas) and three NR schools are participating in the new Plastic and Cardboard scheme;
- 719 stray/handover dogs dealt with during the year which represents a 249% increase on the 2007/8 figure of 206. Although this has resulted in a lower level of enforcement activity it has resulted in the re-homing of these dogs generally away from irresponsible dog owners or those that are unable to look after their dogs.

HOUSING

- In 2005/06 approx 86% of households accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need were from NRF areas. In Q4 of 2008/09 38 out of 99 households accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need were from NRF areas (38%) which is a reduction of 48%;
- A total of 16 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) have now been improved which was the main aim of the project which is above the initial target of 9;
- The satisfaction rate for tenants and landlords' receiving/contacting the service in 2008/09 was 100% which is above the target of 90% set for the year.

CROSS CUTTING

Community Empowerment Network and Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Network

- The establishment of a Voluntary & Community Sector Reference Group. At the request of CEN members the original Communication Group and the Equality Impact Assessment group merged to form a reference group. Volunteers from the Reference Group have developed a Website, developed and agreed the CEN outcomes for 09/10, approved the communication strategy and agreed all EIA's for 09/10. The group will be tasked with testing all material, information and publicity sent out by SRCGA, BME and other agencies on request. The group are currently working on producing publicity to highlight the work of CEN & BME;
- The BME Network has been given £20,000 by Primary Care Trust to award grants to local groups. This funding will support and encourage groups to engage in health related matters, the process will ensure that all groups are able to make their own application from start to finish. Groups will be encouraged to access SRCGA for support in completing applications if needed which will result in groups and individuals being introduced to SRCGA staff and the variety of services provided by the organisation. It is envisaged that this way of working will build relationships between SRCGA staff and BME groups to enable us to work more closely with groups and individuals to improve governance;
- BME Research – "South Asian Women & Physical Activity" The BME network is set to publish (late July) research findings on this topic. This research was commissioned by the PCT to look at why a significant number of South Asian women in Stockton and surrounding areas are not using 'physical activity' services, and to make recommendations as to how services can be, modified, adapted or changed in a way that will make them fully inclusive;
- 95% of the BME groups now have their own bank account and are constituted. These groups are now in a position to apply for funding;
- 5 new groups have joined the BME Network with a further group pending;
- A total of £70k have been accessed for the BME Network constituted groups a further £20k worth of bids are pending.

Voluntary and Community Sector Support Fund

- During the 2008/9 financial year SDAIS dealt with 23,334 new enquiries, recruited and trained 14 volunteers, during October 2008 to March 2009 101 advice surgeries were provided within 5 Stockton neighbourhoods;
- Stockton Residents Community Group Association has supported 60 voluntary sector groups with training, grants, IAG, payroll and accounts and 98 community groups with IAG, grants, capacity building, training & governance. Partnership working with the Professional Services Group delivered a very successful programme of training on all aspects of Governance whilst joint work with the Tees Valley Local Development Agencies has secured a successful Basis II bid from the Lottery;
- The Cornerhouse Youth Project has taken over the lease of Arlington Park which will enhance their overall delivery and the Positive Futures Project.

Annex 2 - Area Partnership Projects

Area Partnership Board	Agreed Priorities
<p>Central Area Partnership Board</p>	<p>The Central Area Partnership agreed to wait until the wider Communities Fund package had been commissioned before going out to tender for services to address their priorities.</p> <p>The Board agreed to fund dedicated Officer time from Stockton Borough Council to provide capacity building work for the Central Area Partnership Board, in terms of driving the Communities Fund agenda on behalf of the Board as all three of the main providers cover the Central Area Partnership.</p> <p>This leaves the Board with £264,216 unallocated to be used in 2009/10 – 2010/12 to address their priorities.</p>
<p>Eastern Area Partnership Board</p>	<p>Some of the Eastern Area Partnership Communities Fund Allocation has been allocated to two projects as follows:</p> <p><u>REACT</u> – Reaching Eastern Area Communities Together will run from December 2008 till December 2009 with a total allocation of £29,998.</p> <p>The Project includes outreach activity specifically targeted at 16 – 21 year olds in the Eastern Area with a structured programme, four tutored sessions and intensive one-to-one support, of employability skills, debt/financial management advice and onward referral to key employability programmes. Young People will have access to positive activities and there is a small discretionary grants programme targeted at employability/economic inclusion.</p> <p>The programme seeks to provide a flow of referrals into e2e and other programmes were appropriate and will not duplicate existing provision. The work will take place out of normal working hours to enable positive engagement of young people who have unstructured/chaotic lifestyles.</p> <p><u>Debt Advice and Support</u> will run from December 2008 till March 2010 with a total project allocation of £29,998.</p> <p>This project aims to produce an effective partnership between three community sector agencies who have considerable experience in the areas of debt management, debt prevention and skills training. These agencies have come together to fill a gap in current service provision.</p> <p>The project provides a package of support for people in debt, including –</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis management by an experienced debt caseworker. • Individual action plans to manage personal debt. • Information and training to improve financial capability, including training on bank accounts, savings, energy efficiency, value for money and debt prevention. • Information and access to the services of Credit Union and Five Lamps to promote financial capability, including access to savings accounts and other resources. <p>This leaves the board with £54,363 unallocated for 2009/10- 2010/11</p>
Northern Area Partnership Board	<p>The Board agreed to support the Billingham Environmental Link Project (BELP). The project commenced on the 1st January 2009 and will continue until March 2011. The project has been allocated all of the Boards Communities Fund allocation.</p> <p>The BELP Project Engagement Officer (EO) will specifically target hard to reach people within the community who need assistance to re-engage with Education, Employment, Healthy Living and or Life Style Development through a specifically developed engagement criteria 'Hooked on Fishing' and will develop a action plan for the individual.</p> <p>The funding will put in place the EO and allow targeted development packages for the individuals to assist individual tailored development and transition into employment.</p> <p>Engagement will be undertaken in line with the protocols established within the nationally recognised Get Hooked On Fishing programme. The BELP project will also introduce a life style development programme that will assist the individual to deconstruct, evaluate and then reconstruct their personal lifestyle and development. This process will give ownership of personal development back to the individual concerned.</p>
Western Area Partnership Board	<p>The Western Area Partnership Baird agreed to support the 'New You Programme' which is led by Tees Credit Union Ltd. The project commenced in late March 2009 and will run until March 2010 when it will be evaluated with the possibility of extending the project for a further year. The project has been allocated £18,000 for the first year.</p> <p>This project is a partnership between Tees Credit Union Ltd, The Five Lamps and Stockton District Advice & Information Service and will provide an access point for residents of the Western Area Partnership to services that will assist them into financial inclusion, improve their health and enable them to access job opportunities.</p> <p>The project provides a package of support for people who are financially excluded, including:</p>

- Individual action plans to manage personal debt, budgeting and healthy living, based on the needs of the client.
- Referral to crises management by experienced debt caseworkers.
- Ongoing support.
- Information and training to improve financial capability, including training on bank accounts, savings, energy efficiency, value for money, debt prevention.
- Access to safe savings facilities and low cost loans if necessary.
- Information and access to training and support from Five Lamps to improve employability.
- Ability to be adaptable to offer outreach services for rural areas and target those areas of greatest need.
- Offer volunteering opportunities for local residents in areas such as cash handling, banking procedures, mentoring and counselling, office procedures and develop their interpersonal and communication skills, all of which will combat social isolation and enhance their employment prospects.

This leaves the Board with £37,361 unallocated to be used in 2010/11 – 2010/12

