

Report to: Executive Member Strategy and External Relationships

Executive Member for Human Resources and Diversity

**Bolton
Council**

Date: 9th July 2008

Report of: Director of Development & Regeneration & Chief Housing and Regeneration Officer

Report No:

Contact Officer: Colette Kelly

Tele No: 8424

Report Title: Neighbourhood Renewal Delivery

Confidential / Non Confidential:
(delete as approp)

Non Confidential

Purpose:

To propose new working arrangements aimed at stepping up neighbourhood renewal delivery in the Borough

Recommendations:

The Executive Members are recommended to approve the organisational and staffing changes proposed in this report, subject to approval by the Executive Member Human Resources and Diversity.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

None

(for use on Exec Rep)

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Background Information

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1** This report sets out proposed staffing changes within the Development and Regeneration Department in order to help us drive forward the agreed aims and core business of the Council, in particular it sets out our partnership arrangement with Bolton at Home in delivering Neighbourhood Renewal.

2. Neighbourhood Renewal

Context

- 2.1** The Community Strategy (Our Vision 2007-17) has been agreed by the Vision Partnership. The main aims are clear:

- “Narrowing the gap” across 6 priority themes;
- Delivering economic prosperity and maximising the local benefit (aligned with the narrowing the gap agenda).

- 2.2** Narrowing the Gap relates to reducing the differences between:

- Bolton and the rest of the country;
- Different parts of Bolton (i.e. between the most and the least affluent areas and the average);
- Local people (individuals and groups).

We have a once in a generation opportunity created through the economic renaissance in Bolton to benefit local residents, particularly the most disadvantaged. In addition to economic prosperity, there is also still much to do in terms of the broader “narrowing the gap” priorities e.g. health, achievement, safer, etc.

- 2.3** Much has been achieved and significant progress made in recent years. Neighbourhood Renewal and regenerating our communities has been a Bolton priority for many years (through Urban Programme, City Challenge, SRB, NRF, Neighbourhood Management). However, we now need to accelerate the pace to ensure that narrowing the gap/neighbourhood renewal becomes the Council’s and the partners’ core business.

- 2.4** As part of the Government’s new performance framework, the council and the Vision Partnership has aligned its performance management to the Community Strategy and the 3 year plan (incorporating the Local Area Agreement). Within this wider framework are included the Neighbourhood Action Plans which will set out the local targets from the Community Strategy, in particular narrowing the gap targets, with a focus on the interventions needed to achieve them.

- 2.5** A key part of this is to ensure, that in areas of deprivation, faster progress in stepping up both the strategic co-ordination of neighbourhood renewal as well as the delivery on the ground. Actions already taken to put in place strong political and managerial leadership of this area includes:

- The inclusion of Neighbourhood Renewal in the Executive Member (Strategy and External relationships) portfolio to help drive this agenda forward;
- A major focus of the Chief Executive's time and effort on the narrowing the gap agenda;
- An EMT Member/Partner Agency champion for each of the Neighbourhood Action Plan Areas;
- The establishment of a new Neighbourhood Renewal Leadership Group, led and chaired by the Chief Executive, and involving appropriate Departmental Directors, Partner agencies and partnership theme leads e.g. health, safety etc. This group incorporates both the narrowing the gap work and also the maximisation of the local benefit in terms of economic renaissance. It will drive the Narrowing the Gap agenda; be responsible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and associated plans; develop and agree the Neighbourhood Action Plans; performance manage the narrowing the gaps, maximising the benefits; support and challenge themes and this will link with the individual LSP theme partnerships;

3. Support for Delivery and Co-ordination of Neighbourhood Renewal

- 3.1** In order to support this work and help drive the neighbourhood renewal agenda forward the leadership, and co-ordination of the neighbourhood renewal strategy has transferred from the Development and Regeneration Department, to the Chief Executive's Department under the management of the Chief Officer for Partnerships and Strategic Projects in order to align the work with the local strategic partnership as neighbourhood renewal is a clear partnership priority. Accordingly, the Neighbourhood Renewal Policy Team and European Partnership/Funding Team, previously located in Development and Regeneration have moved into the Chief Executive's Department.
- 3.2** Work is underway to realign the functions of this central team and to ensure greater support to the delivery arm of Neighbourhood Renewal in our targeted areas, the delivery of neighbourhood renewal remaining within the remit of the Development and Regeneration Department.

4. Proposal – Delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal

- 4.1** The delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal in the 11 targeted NRS areas will continue to be based in the Development and Regeneration Department under the management of the Chief Housing and Regeneration Officer. It is intended that this may be through a partnership based on the neighbourhood management approach. The Neighbourhood Manager (Great Lever/Farnworth) will lead and coordinate the Council's activity in all the NR areas through both existing and new Neighbourhood Managers within target areas; this will require a number of new posts to be funded through Area Based grant.
- 4.2** Bolton at Home has achieved its main purpose of securing significant new funding to bring all council homes up to a decent standard. A major review is pointing to the next step of "Transforming Estates" – a three-pronged approach to:
- Raising the environmental quality of estates
 - Addressing the acute shortage of affordable homes in Bolton
 - Tackling disadvantage on estates – particularly economic deprivation

- 4.3** It has recently undertaken a review of its regeneration functions and is planning new arrangements in respect of delivery. This has provided an excellent opportunity work together to share resources to deliver a more coordinated neighbourhood management approach. It is intended that the central support and delivery arms will all work as part of an integrated and virtual neighbourhood renewal team to ensure development, and acceleration of narrowing the gap. This management structure will work jointly with Bolton at Home in delivering Neighbourhood Renewal in conjunction with the Transforming Estates Programme.
- 4.4** Area based grant will support the neighbourhood renewal work and to help achieve the outcomes in the 3 year plan, together with mainstream and other external resources available via the Council and its partner agencies. Details on the area based grant programme have been considered at a previous meeting of the Executive Member (Strategy and External Relationships).

5. Proposal

- 5.1** The Great Lever / Farnworth Neighbourhood Manager, re-titled Chief Neighbourhood Management Officer, will together with Bolton at Home's Deputy Director of Regeneration lead the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal in the targeted areas through a roll out of the Neighbourhood Management approach. In order to take this forward three additional Neighbourhood Managers will need to be recruited into the Development and Regeneration Department utilising Area Based Grant. Similar posts are being proposed by Bolton at Home and there will be common roles and responsibilities. . All these posts will cover the 11 targeted NRS areas.

A copy of the job description and person specification, based on existing neighbourhood management staffing, is attached at **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**. Confirmation of the grading of this post is awaited. It is proposed to fill these posts as soon as possible.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1** It is recommended that the Executive Member for Strategy and External relationships and the Executive Member for Human Resources and Diversity agree the staffing proposals contained in the report.