

Report to: Executive

Date: 28 July 2011

Report of: Chief Executive

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Bolton Council

Report Title: **Neighbourhood Management and Area Working – Proposed
Devolved Budgets 2011/12 – 2012/13**

Non Confidential:

This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

Purpose:

To set out how the £842,000 available to devolve to Neighbourhood Management and Area Working is allocated.

Recommendations:

The Executive is asked to approve the proposals in the report.

Decision:

**Background Doc(s) –
all enclosed:**

Policy, Performance and Partnerships Review – Proposals for Consultation – Executive Member for Health and Corporate Resources 19 July

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On the 19 July, the Executive Member for Health and Corporate Resources agreed a report setting out savings proposals for the Policy, Performance and Partnerships Division of the Chief Executive's Department. Whilst that report included proposals for the structure and staffing of Neighbourhood Management and Area Working, it was agreed that a separate report would be brought forward to the Executive setting out proposals for how the £842,000 will be devolved and allocated to neighbourhoods and wards.
- 1.2 This report sets out detailed proposals for the Executive to consider including the methodology and framework on how monies should be spent.

2 Neighbourhood Management and Area Working - Proposed Budget Allocations

- 2.1 The Executive will be aware that over recent years the Council has had significant resources available from mainstream budgets, Area Based Grant and other grant funding to devolve to Neighbourhood Management and Area Working. In 2010/11 the total devolved budget was in the region of **£1,379,000** which comprised the following:
- c£450,000 from Neighbourhood Management (when staffing and other committed costs have been removed and following in year ABG reductions).
 - £234,000 Area Based Grant budget to Area Forums (reduced in year from £250,000 due to reductions in ABG).
 - £350,000 mainstream Area Forum budget.
 - £100,000 'Positive Activities for Young People' monies from Children's Services (Reduced in year from £200,000 due to reductions in grant).
 - £200,000 highways budget.
 - £45,000 voluntary sector grants pot.
- 2.2 The total amount available in 2011/12 is **£842,000** which includes:
- **£300,000** from the £500,000 Neighbourhood Management allocation having made a contribution to staffing costs of the new service.
 - **£350,000** from the existing mainstream Area Forum budget.
 - **£192,000** from the mainstream Highways budget which will be devolved to Area Forums to spend on highways.
- 2.3 The proposals have been developed in line with the Council's agreed philosophy and approach to savings and efficiencies, and in particular the following priorities:
- "Minimise the impact on our ability to achieve our main aims of ensuring greater economic prosperity for all and narrowing the gap in outcomes, and particularly those in our most deprived communities"
 - Ensure that wider issues around vulnerability, disadvantage and poverty are at the heart of our decisions and any negative impact is minimised".
- 2.4 Therefore, the following principles underpin the proposals:

- In view of the reductions needed, increase the level of targeting based on the greatest level of need deprivation.
- Develop a clear and agreed framework to guide local decisions by Ward Members in consultation with partners and local people.

2.5 The following allocation framework is proposed:

- **Pot 1 – Targeted Neighbourhood Renewal**
 - Allocate 25% to the existing neighbourhood renewal areas that are within the 15% most deprived areas. Allocate this based on population size to ensure both level of deprivation and the scale of need in the area are taken into account.
 - As many of the target areas don't correlate exactly with ward boundaries, the budget will be allocated to the appropriate ward based on population. For example, the Great Lever target area crosses into Harper Green ward so that proportion must be spent in that part of the Harper Green ward.
- **Pot 2 – Allocation based on wards**
 - Allocate 50% based on relative deprivation across all wards to ensure that deprivation beyond the 11 target areas is taken into account.
 - For the remaining 25% allocate this at a flat rate across all the wards giving each ward £8,125.
- **Pot 3 – Highways**
 - Allocate as a flat rate across all 20 wards giving each ward £9,600.

2.6 **Appendix 1** summarises the proposed allocations based on this methodology. By adopting this approach, it ensures there is an appropriate balance between the need to target resources based on need and deprivation whilst ensuring that all wards have some resource to support the delivery of local projects and priorities.

2.7 This basic methodology is consistent with that used over recent years to guide decisions around how ABG monies have been allocated to neighbourhood renewal target areas and wards more generally.

3 Decision Making

3.1 Whilst Ward Members will be central in shaping priorities and spend within their areas, the following framework is proposed to guide decision making at a local level:

- The monies based on neighbourhood renewal target area (**column 2**) must be spent on activity in the target areas that will help improve outcomes and 'narrow the gap'.
- The budget allocated based on deprivation across all wards (**column 3**) must be spent on activity in the deprived areas of the ward to help improve outcomes and 'narrow the gap'.

- The flat rate allocation (**column 4**) can be spent on local priorities that have a clear benefit to the quality of life for local people in that area.
- In terms of highways (**column 5**), as now, the budgets can be spent on the following:
 - Road and footway repairs
 - Reconstruction of roads and footways
 - Enhancement, repair and provision of street lighting
 - Repairs to adopted back streets
 - Repairs to highway drains
 - Provision of new highway drains
 - Maintenance of road markings
 - Traffic calming
 - Repairs to street furniture - benches, street name plates, highway fences, guard rails and bollards
 - Weed control
 - Overgrown hedgerows
 - Removal of graffiti
 - Works to aid the disabled

3.2 In terms of how decisions will be made, the following framework is proposed:

- **Deprivation monies in neighbourhood renewal areas** - Ward Members will develop proposals that will be brought together into a proposed programme for approval by the Executive Member for Cleaner, Greener, and Safer to approve in the context of the Council's agreed neighbourhood renewal priorities.
- **Deprivation monies in non-neighbourhood renewal areas** - will be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with Ward Members. In normal circumstances, Ward Members will make decisions around spend at a local level with support from Area Coordinators.
- **Flat rate allocation and highways monies** - will be delegated to Ward Members in consultation with the Area Forum.

3.3 This proposed framework will help ensure that decisions are based on local issues shaped by Ward Members whilst ensuring the Council has appropriate oversight, particularly on those issues related to neighbourhood renewal in the most deprived communities.

3 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been completed for the proposals outlined in this report, and is attached at **Appendix 2**. The Equality Impact Assessment looks at the anticipated impacts of the proposal on people from Bolton's diverse communities, and whether any groups are likely to be directly or indirectly differentially affected.

3.2 Due to the nature of the proposals, it is possible that there could be some adverse impact but this will be mitigated by ensuring resources are targeted based on the greatest level of need and deprivation.

4 Recommendations

- 12.1 The Executive is asked to approve the proposals in the report and that the monies are made available from the 1 September 2011.