

WEST AREA COMMITTEE - 14 SEPTEMBER 2011

Title of paper:	AREA COMMITTEE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Lianne Taylor Director Neighbourhoods & Communities Loxley House, Nottingham Tel: 0115 87 64713 Lianne.taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	Wards affected: Aspley, Bilborough and Leen Valley
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Imoegen Denton & Heidi May Area Managers North Locality Tel: 0115 915 0276	
Other officers who have provided input:	Steff Webber Interim Area Manager Community Programme Coordinator Tel: 079 8396 0988 steff.webber@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Relevant Council Plan theme(s)		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		
Neighbourhood Nottingham		X
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		
Serving Nottingham Better		X
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
This report advises the committee of revisions to the terms of reference for the role of Area Committee Community Representative.		
Recommendation(s):		
1	The Committee notes the revised terms of reference for the role of Area Committee Community Representative as set out in Appendix 1, and supports a proposal to seek wider representation from local citizens on this committee.	

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The role of the Community Representative on an Area Committee has been designed to bring local people living in the area, into the democratic decision-making process alongside councillors.
- 1.2 Each year the Area Committee should invite nominations from relevant groups and organisations, and appoint up to ten representatives from the area, plus up to three further representatives selected from city-wide groups. Nominations should be attracted from groups active in the area, and there is a need to ensure the Committee reflects the views all sectors of its Community. The revised terms of reference for the role of Area Committee Community Representative also includes guidance on the selection process.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 The revised terms of reference describe the minimum standard that the City Council considers should be applied to those who undertake the role of Area Committee Community Representative and encourages involvement from local citizens in influencing decisions that impact on people who live, work, visit and/or invest in the West area.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 None

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)

- 4.1 This procedural change will not incur additional cost to the Area Committee or to Community Representatives.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)

- 5.1 None

6 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

- 6.1 Joint report of the Corporate Directors of Neighbourhood and Leisure and Community Services to the Area Chairs Panel on 24th June 2004.

7 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

- 7.1 None

APPENDIX 1

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ROLE OF AREA COMMITTEE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

A Community Representative needs to be actively, effectively and consistently engaged in, and with, the local community, and should work in partnership with the Area Committee, Councillors, public and voluntary services and other Community Representatives.

Primary Purpose of the role:

- To help improve services provided by the local authority and other public and voluntary services. This will be achieved by helping the Committee to monitor and evaluate services and suggest improvements if they consistently fail to meet the standards set;
- To improve communication between local people, Councillors and service providers;
- To help the Committee with the allocation of its budget and with the forward planning of services;
- To provide a consultative role on the local impact of policies and service provision and the needs of local people;
- To fairly represent the views of local community organisations and local people across all sections of the community in accordance with the City Council's Equality Policy.

Role Requirements:

- Appointed representatives must be resident in one of the wards served by the Area Committee.
- To fairly and without bias, represent the views of their local community group and others who live or work within the Group's area of concern.
- To regularly attend, and actively participate at Area Committee meetings.
- To be available to attend and participate in thematic area working groups and other initiatives as necessary.
- To work jointly with other community group representatives, organisations, agencies, local authority departments and councillors to help enhance the quality of life of people living and working in the area.
- With the assistance of the City Council's Neighbourhood Management Team, provide comment as necessary, to help champion and support suitable community projects and initiatives - to funding bodies and departments on behalf of local community organisations.
- Help develop projects and initiatives that will promote the priorities of local community and ward action plans.
- To participate in tours and inspections of the Area (organised by the Committee) as required.
- To help bring together the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm of the local community.
- Be respectful of the views of others and act as a model citizen for others to look up to.

Every member of the Area Committee has a part to play in working towards acting as one organisation with the aim of promoting the social, economical, natural and built environment of the Area.

The Selection of Community Representatives

Introduction

Area Committees were introduced with the aim of encouraging greater participation by local people in decision-making and improving service delivery.

The terms of reference for Area Committees gives them important responsibilities which impact on the involvement of Area Committee Community Representatives. This document outlines these terms of reference and sets out the criteria for the selection of Community Representatives and the process for their selection. The Area Committee generally meets bi-monthly although meetings may be called at other times if the need arises.

The Criteria and Process for Selection of Area Committee Community Representatives

An Area Committee Community Representative must be a member of an active community group that currently operates in the area.

Organisations that wish to be appointed to an Area Committee must be properly constituted (i.e. have a constitution/terms of reference, have regular meetings, and operate an Equal Opportunities Policy) and actively engage in working with and for the community.

Community Group Representatives should live in the area in question and agree to abide by the criteria set out in the document "The Role of an Area Committee Community Representative". Those representing citywide organisations are not required to meet the area residency test.

The Community Group that nominates a representative to the Area Committee should have a defined area in which they operate, a purpose and established networks and appropriate processes for passing information between the Committee and the population that they represent.

Representatives will be selected and appointed each civic year in May and will have the opportunity to remain as representatives for successive years without having to seek re-nomination subject to confirmation that they meet the criteria set out in the document "The Role of an Area Committee Community Representative".

One nomination per group will be accepted for a Committee at any given time. Any person from that group may attend a Committee meeting as a temporary substitute for the appointed representative providing they meet the above requirements.

Any member of the public or member(s) of a group may attend the Committee meeting as an observer but will not have a right to speak at the Committee.

Committee Working

This part explains the role of persons at the Committee.

The Chairman of the Committee controls the meeting and will be supported by other Committee Members, the Neighbourhood Manager, the Committee Administrator and appointed Community Representatives or their substitutes. Only City Councillors and appointed Community Representatives or their substitutes may vote at the Committee but only councillors may vote on financial items.

Other persons at the meeting will normally include City Council Officers who have reports before the Committee and invited guests or members of the public. Persons who have a right to speak at the Committee by invitation of the Chairman include other Councillors, Appointed Community Representatives or their substitutes, the Area Manager, the Committee Administrator and Officers of the City Council who have a report on the agenda before the Committee. The public do not normally have a right to speak at the Committee but may be invited to speak by the Chairman.

Area Committee Community Representatives

1. Community Representatives are entitled to speak on any item on the agenda or any matter put forward by the Group they represent at the Committee Chairman's invitation.
2. Normally the Area Committee agenda will contain an item for Community Representatives to highlight issues affecting the community their organisation represents.
3. Community Representatives will be entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travelling and care costs related to attending Committee meetings subject to making receipts available.
4. Community Representatives may submit items for inclusion on the Area Committee agenda and should do so through the Neighbourhood Management Team at least two weeks before the meeting, or at the meeting with the agreement of the Chairman.
5. Community Representatives will be offered City Council training and development relevant to their role and responsibilities in relation to Area Committee and Community Representative working.
6. By prior agreement with the Committee Chairman, Community Representatives may make formal presentations to the Committee on community projects or initiatives relevant to the Area that their Group is sponsoring.
7. If a Representative is deemed to persistently not abide with the role of an Area Committee Community Representative or with the Corporate Policies of Nottingham City Council, or they leave the organisation that nominated them or the nominating organisation ceases to operate, s/he will be required to resign their position as Community Representative on the Area Committee. If the Group is still active it may nominate another Representative from its membership to the Committee.
8. Councillors may choose to invite representatives from other organisations outside their geographical area in order to widen participation from under-represented groups.
9. Councillors will allocate a budget for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by Community Representatives in attending Committee-related business. Reimbursements are administered by the Neighbourhood Management Team.
10. Community Representatives may by prior appointment meet with the Area Manager prior to a Committee meeting to discuss the agenda or other items of concern.
11. Whilst the Council has an expectation that a Community Representative will regularly attend Committee meetings, it equally recognises that representatives may have to miss occasional meetings and will allow for a nominated proxy from the nominating Group to cover periods of absence.
12. Community Representatives must carry out their role with respect and tolerance to the views of others expressed at the Area Committee. If the Community Representative is found to bring the Area Committee or the Community

Representative role into disrepute, s/he may be removed from membership of the Area Committee.

The Recruitment and Selection Process

- Each year Councillors must determine the number of Community Representatives that they wish to represent the community on the Area Committee. This may be based on a set number of places per ward or according to specific priorities or issues in the area. Representation should take account of the diversity of the population resident in the area. Where under-representation exists, city wide groups may be approached for representation on the Committee.
- Each year the Neighbourhood Management team will issue nomination forms to known community organisations operating in the area, inviting them to nominate a representative from their organisation to be an Area Committee Community Representative.
- Neighbourhood Managers will assess completed nomination forms to ensure that the selection criteria is met and will produce a report for area committee detailing nominations received.
- Councillors will decide which of the nominations should be selected for community group representation at area committee meetings, taking into account the population make up of the area or specific issues/priorities in the area.
- Newly appointed Community Representatives will be invited to participate in Induction training as well as occasional area tours/ward walks.
- A review will take place each civic year (by Councillors – advised by officers) to determine what groups are the most appropriate to be represented on the Area Committee
- Where Community Representative nominations are not accepted, a letter explaining why will be signed by the Chair and sent to the nominating organisation, together with details of other opportunities for getting involved in area working.