

**REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
FAILSWORTH & HOLLINWOOD AREA COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
2004/2005**

PURPOSE

To review the work of the Failsworth & Hollinwood Area Committee.

BACKGROUND

This report summarises the work of Area Committee during the municipal year 2004-05 under 5 headings:

- Public Question Time
- Influencing Services
- Using Area Committee budgets to support the community and voluntary sector and other priorities.
- Key achievements.
- Key issues and further actions required

1.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Public question time is the half hour allocated at Area Committee Meetings to receive general questions from the members of public. The figures below aim to give an idea of the main concerns raised at the Area Committee.

The Chart following shows the number of public questions received broken down into the Community Strategy themes.

Community Strategy Theme	Number of questions received
Community Cohesion	3
Learning	
Children and Young People	1
Housing	2
Community Safety	1
Health and Social Care	
Environment and Transport	18
Economy and employment	2
Voluntary Sector	
Arts, Culture and Leisure	2
Miscellaneous	7

The majority of the questions received over this year, as in previous years, were in relation to the local environment, including transport issues. The apparently low figure of Community Safety issues reflects the fact that Public Question Time is usually preceded by the Police update, delivered by the Area Inspector. Residents usually take the opportunity to raise Community Safety issues under this item. The most important issues for local people were in reference to environmental issues. Some of the questions related to specific problems that needed immediate remedy (e.g. grot spots, fly tipping) and some related to long term solutions to improve environmental quality.

Environment and Transport

During the first few months of the municipal year the most important environmental issue was in relation to the memorial inspection programme and the condition of Failsworth and Hollinwood Cemetery. Two of the Area Committee members were involved in the Task and Finish Group related to this matter and were able to provide local people with information on the resulting recommendations;

2.0 INFLUENCING SERVICES

2.1 Commission

A Commission including the team of Area Managers and Area Chairs was set up and to explore how the Area Committees could be improved. Five main issues were identified that required examination in order that recommendations could be made to improve the future role of the Area Committees. These issues were:

Issue 1: To decide on the extent of the delegation and the nature of decision making by Area Committees

Issue 2: To clarify the relationship with the Parish Councils which exist within two parts of the borough

Issue 3: To determine the role co-optees should play in the Area Committees?

Issue 4: To decide on the style of the Area Committee e.g. a local element of the LSP or Council Committee?

Issue 5: To consider the extent to which Area Committees should be strategically focused.

The following actions were carried out:

The Commission examined the arrangements by other Local Authorities in framing delegation arrangements to Area Committees or similar Local Assemblies were examined and the findings disseminated.

Consulted upon future proposals and included:

- The views of the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Commission were sought
- The corporate legal, financial and managerial implications of any delegation proposals were considered

- Public opinion in relation to the proposals was obtained through the co-optees
- The views and recommendations of the Oldham Partnership were also sought.

Produced a report for Cabinet with recommendations on the nature and extent of the delegation and decisions allocated to Area Committees. A brief summary of those recommendations include:

- To give the Area Committee constitutional powers to influence services at a local level
- To support the arrangement of a 'compact' between the Area Committees and Parish Councils
- To keep the current arrangements for co-optees but engage co-optees in sub-groups of the Area Committee
- To retain the Council Committee style of meeting but allow a more informal approach to the proceedings
- For the Area Committee to focus on the Area Action Plans.

The outcome of the Commission can be viewed in a more detailed report at www.oldham.gov.uk/council/decision_recording

2.2 Neighbourhood Solutions

The second part of the Commissions work was to examine the 'New Localism' agenda and report on how problems could be resolved quickly and effectively at the neighbourhood level.

Neighbourhood Solutions is an approach which combines Reassurance Policing (successfully piloted in Failsworth and St. Mary's) and the work of the Community Safety Panels. The Area Managers Team will bring together a number of agencies to act as one team. There will be a neighbourhood problem solving team in each Area Committee area to be called 'Area Action Teams'. Each team will work at a neighbourhood level to seek solutions to local problems to ensure that there is a quick and co-ordinated response from all the relevant agencies.

Area Committees will be integral to this process and based on information they receive from local residents and agencies such as the Police will prioritise the work of the Area Action Teams. Under the 'scheme of delegation' the Area Committee would also be able to help solve issues by directing local services to the area of need or by buying in additional resources using their budgets.

2.3 Work with other partners

The Area Committees have worked with Council Departments and other Agencies to tackle issues raised their meetings:

- Community Safety Panels and Police to resolve crime issues in the area. The main focus has been on reducing the number of reports of youth nuisance.
- Education and Culture, specifically the Youth Service, in setting up youth sub groups across each Area Committee area
- Oldham Partnership. Specifically the Community Cohesion Partnership where the Area Managers were requested to attend meetings of the partnership to report on activities in the areas.

- Linking with Greater Manchester Police Authority to support their role in consulting with members of public.
- Through the Reassurance Policing Pilot in the several wards a good working relationship has been established with the Police and Community Safety Unit which has led to the establishment of a solid problem solving approach
- Effective consultation. The Area Committee involved local residents and licensees in the Open All Hours, Licensing Policy consultation. Comments made at the meeting were incorporated into the final policy. The Area Committee and local residents also commented on the proposed Housing Allocation Policy.
- The Area Committee is working closely with the Police to respond to residents concerns and initiate a Designation Order that will restrict the consumption of alcohol in public places.

Key achievements developed with partners are listed in Section 4 of this report.

3.0 USING THE AREA COMMITTEE BUDGETS TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SECTOR AND OTHER PRIORITIES

The information below is a summary of how the various budgets have been used. The summary confirms that most projects have a strong community cohesion theme. There are also clear links between the projects and the Area Committee priorities and Corporate Plan themes.

The Area Committee has awarded grants throughout the year, a total of 3 grants were made amounting to £12,450.

FAILSWORTH AND HOLLINWOOD AREA COMMITTEE

DELEGATED AND MINOR GRANTS BUDGET 2004 / 05

<u>DELEGATED BUDGET</u>	<i>Delegated Budget</i> £	<u>MINOR GRANTS</u>	<i>Minor Grants</i> £
Budget for the Year 2003 / 04 (including 02/03 b/f)	46,007		9,553
<u>Less:</u> Actual Expenditure to 31st March 2004	-30,432		-1,580
Balance being underspending for the Year Carried Forward	15,575		7,973
<u>Add:</u> Budget for the Year 2004 / 05	16,827		3,850
Total Funds Available 2003/04	32,402		11,823

Actual Expenditure from 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005

	£		
Dean Street Reception	-412	Buckley Belles	-1,000
Xmas Tree in Hollinwood (03/04)	-321	Failsworth Independent	
Spring Planting - Failsworth Pole	-1,041	Methodist Church	-2,500
Supply of Hanging Baskets 2004	-3,080	Failsworth Historical Society	-2,000
<u>Other Expenses:</u>			
Roomhire - August 04	-111.00		
Porters overtime & Equipment hire	-151.00		
Co-Optee Training costs	-150		
	-412.00		
			-5,266

Mediation Northern Ireland

Ward Councillors, Area Managers and Co-optees have participated fully in the mediation Northern Ireland programme. Conflict resolution techniques employed in Northern Ireland have been discussed in an attempt of identifying appropriate methods that could be used in Oldham.

Area Action Plan

An Area Action Plan for each Area Committee was approved. The plan has been put together by the Area Committee. It will help to drive the priorities within the area and influence the work of the new Area Action Teams.

Grant Scheme

The Area Managers on behalf of the Area Committees have succeeded in amalgamating the Minor Grants scheme and grants awarded by the Area Committee whereby all grants will be decided at the Area Committees.

Below is a resume of the specific achievements of ... Area Committee within the Community Strategy headings.

Community Strategy Theme	Action Plan reference	Achievements and influencing Services
Community Cohesion	CC1	Area Committee marketing budget approved out of Delegated Budget
	CC2	GMPA Roadshow supported in October 2004
	CC4	One briefing session held
	CC5	Co-optee induction and development programme initiated. Majority of co-optees have attended, participated and given positive feedback.
	CC6	Multi agency Area Action team is being piloted and protocols being developed
	CC7	The co-optee training events have brought together all the co-optees of all Area Committees. This has helped to create understanding between different areas.
Learning		
Children and Young People	CYP1	Youth Sub Group formed and terms of reference agreed
Housing		
Community Safety	CS6	The Area Committee has resolved that an area wide drinking on the street ban be introduced. Being progressed by the Area Manager and Police
Health and Social Care		

Environment and Transport		
Economy and Employment		
Voluntary Sector		
Arts, Culture and Leisure		

5.0 FUTURE CONSIDERATION

5.1 Scheme of delegation

The Area Managers Team will be working to develop and put into practice the scheme of delegation, linking this to Neighbourhood Solutions. This will give the Area Committee more control over the issues that affect its area

5.2 Neighbourhood Solutions

The newly formed Area Action Teams will need to develop a close working relation and agree with the Area Committees the initial 'hot spot/s' to address in their areas. Actions will be developed to tackle specific problems and the Area Committees will be able to influence the outcomes.

5.3 Co-optee Development

It will be important to further develop Co-opted Members through training programmes so that they have the capacity to play an active role on the Committee. They will need the skills to contribute to the increasing role the Committee will play in local decision making. A number of suggestions for further training are being considered. Examples include Neighbourhood Solutions and the Work of the Local Strategic Partnership.

5.4 Marketing of the Area Committees

Although the Area Committees now feature on the Council's website there is a need to further improve the way Area Committee meetings and their work is promoted.

5.5 Failsworth District Centre Development

Through the Area Committee local people will be kept informed of progress as the development at Failsworth District Centre proceeds. This is an important site for the Borough and particularly for the people of Failsworth. The development will provide a focal point for local people to access services and amenities.

5.6 Hollinwood Junction

Another key development site is the Oldham gateway of Hollinwood Junction. The Area Committee will work closely with the Regeneration Department to look at the long term development proposals.

5.7 Failsworth War Memorial

The Area Committee has assigned a steering group with the task of looking at options for improving the condition of Failsworth War Memorial. The steering group will be reporting back to the Area Committee and a formal public consultation process will take place during Summer 2005. The Area Committee will take a final decision after the consultation feedback has been analysed.

5.8 Area Wide Designation Order to restrict the consumption of alcohol in public places

Working in partnership with Greater Manchester Police, the Area Committee has resolved that a Designation Order that bans drinking on the streets in Failsworth & Hollinwood be put in place. An important role for the Area Committee, with the support of the Police, will be to monitor and assess the impact of the order on the quality of life of local people.

5.9 Housing Market Renewal

As the second phase of the Housing Market Renewal programme awaits formal approval, there is a possibility that the Area Committee will be greatly involved in supporting the consultation process.