



**WARDS AFFECTED: RATBY, BAGWORTH & THORNTON**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the progress and impact, arising from the establishment of the temporary Neighbourhood Action Hub in Thornton, and the development of a sustainable community led solutions model.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the work undertaken to date, including the challenges presented, and key achievements.
- 2.2. To note and support the proposed actions for the next development phase, detailed at Appendix 1.
- 2.3. To support the proposals, including the financial arrangements for the implementation of an effective exit strategy

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 Following the presentation of a report to Executive Committee in March 2014, members gave their approval to support a community led solutions model, and the establishment of a temporary Neighbourhood Action Hub, in St Peters Drive, Thornton, for a 12 month period from April 2014.
- 3.2. The overall aim of the project is to improve community cohesion, reduce isolation and increase satisfaction with the local area, and ensure community capacity and confidence is developed to enable work to continue beyond the 12 month period.
- 3.3. **Progress and achievements**
- 3.4. The following reports on progress to date:
- 3.5. Immediately following Executive approval, work began in establishing 19 St Peters Drive as a fit for purpose Community Hub, in order that we could be operational and active within the community as early as possible.
- 3.6. During this early stage, it is important to note that progress was not without incident. We received damage to the property, and a great deal of negativity and hostility from the local residents. It became very clear that the building of trust with the community would take some considerable time, and was unlikely to be straightforward.
- 3.7. Starting from this position, two of our most experienced Community Development workers have led on community engagement, drawing on their

experience built up over 10 years of work, in supporting our very successful community house model. It is important to acknowledge their considerable commitment and expertise in the achievements and progress made to date, given the challenges presented.

- 3.8. The approach to building community trust and confidence, has been through establishing a measured but visible presence within the community, achieved by having a regular presence at the community hub, and ongoing door to door consultation, at least once a week since April 2014.
- 3.9. This enabled the establishment of, and engagement with, a programme of activities, which was delivered from the Community Hub over the Summer holiday period on a weekly basis, and included: craft sessions for young people, adult craft sessions, and family cooking sessions. This enabled further work to expand the reach into the community, and build on levels of trust and engagement.
- 3.10. Alongside this, linkage and relationships have been build with other key stakeholders including: Adult Education (who have supported the delivery of the summer programme), Thornton Primary and Nursery School, the Parish Council, the Supporting Leicestershire Families Team (who are already working with some Thornton families), the Police, Neighbourhood Wardens, LCC Safer Sex Programme, the Childrens Centre, Age UK, and the landlord of the local pub who is keen to offer this as a venue as a meeting place for older residents.
- 3.11. The involvement of these key partners is essential in ensuring the pooling of support, expertise and resources within the locality, and importantly in building the type of community infrastructure needed, to make this a sustainable model. A regular stakeholder briefing has been circulated to a broad range of stakeholders, to keep them up to speed, share the ambition and encourage their involvement.
- 3.12. From August 2014 regular opening times were established for the Community Hub:

Tuesday	9.00am – 2.30pm
Wednesday	9.00am – 2.00pm or 1.30pm – 5.00pm (alternate weeks)
Thursday	9.00am – 2.30pm

Introducing this regularity has helped in embedding a focus for community involvement and action.

- 3.13. Appendix 1 details the planned programme of action for the next quarter, based on community feedback and involvement. This will include specific action to address some of the physical improvements for the neighbourhood. In addition a consultation exercise with the broader community will commence, culminating in a 'Planning for Real' exercise, to begin the process of gaining community ownership for identified longer term priorities.
- 3.14. However, given the initial challenges referred to in paragraph 3.6., whilst progress has accelerated considerably from quarter 2 in 2014/15, it has taken longer than anticipated to reach the current position. It is therefore proposed

that any underspend in budget for 2014/15, is carried forward to 2015/16, to enable the implementation of a fully developed exit strategy during quarter 1 of 2015/16. Given that the work in Thornton is our pilot for testing and establishing a sustainable community led solutions model, and specifically in a rural locality, this is a very important phase of the project. (Please note a full end of project report will be presented to Executive members, detailing specific outcomes, and financial expenditure).

- 3.15. It is further proposed that any resulting underspend arising from the Thornton pilot, could be ring fenced to support the development of a community solutions model in a further locality during 2015/16. However, should this be the case, a separate report will be presented.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (SJE)

- 4.1 The delivery of the proposed action plan and the exit strategy will be met within existing budgets, as set out in the report presented to Executive on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2014. Indeed, year end savings are expected in both capital & revenue budgets, as demonstrated in the table below:

Item	Budget for 2014/15 (£)	Budget to Nov (£)	Actual to Nov (£)	Variance to Nov (£)	Forecast Year – End Variance (£)
Salary	6,730	4,488	1,349	3,139	2,000
Premises	2,961	1,976	281	1,695	1,000
Supplies & Services	6,140	4,101	0	4,101	2,000
Recharges	7,480	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>23,311</b>	<b>10,565</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>8,935</b>	<b>5,000</b>
Capital	15,500	10,340	2,394	7,946	5,000

- 4.2 Any underspend at end of March 2015, will be requested to be carried forward to enable the delivery of the exit strategy for this project during quarter 1 of 2015/16, and if resources allow, the remaining underspends be requested to fund other initiatives. A full end of project report will be therefore subsequently presented to Executive, detailing full capital and revenue expenditure and underspend proposals. It should be noted that no budget provision has been built in 2015/16 at this stage.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (EH)

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report but appropriate agreements should be put in place for funding and delivery.

#### 6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The contents of this report relate to and support the following strategic aims:

- Safer and Healthier Borough
- Strong and distinctive communities
- Cleaner and Greener neighbourhoods

7. CONSULTATION

7.1. The developing arrangements, and action plan have been informed through ongoing engagement and consultation with the local community. The next phase, as outlined at Appendix 1, will include a comprehensive community consultation exercise with the broader community.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It is the Council’s policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

8.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer’s opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

8.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Community expectation that the temporary Community Action Hub and supporting arrangements will become permanent	Develop long term sustainability options through the establishment of a community led solutions model	Sharon Stacey

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 These arrangements are supporting a rural community which is currently feeling isolated from existing services. The ongoing community consultation has helped to inform the developing action plan, with the planned broader community consultation exercise in Quarter 3, informing a community led and owned longer term plan.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications

- Voluntary Sector

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Background papers:None

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