

**Area Review Consultation  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007  
Elizabethan Suite**

**1. Process issues**

- Criteria must be inclusive
- How will co-opted members be selected – competences,
- Process could disenfranchise and marginalise community organisations
- Co-opted members feed back relevant issues /information to their membership – communication/information network
- Minimum of 6 business meetings per year with additional single issue meetings when required
- Some issues, e.g., Metrolink, LIFT development need borough-wide meetings
- Changes to strengthen the strategic role of the Area Boards and co-opted members and the bottom up approach is welcome. How this approach coalesces with the top down approach is critical in ensuring and developing involvement at a local level.
- Key role of Area Co-ordinator – close working relationship
- Develop Team W&U approach
- Consultation will be amended
- What are the issues in each area: How to tackle them
- Need to improve strategic planning
- Like the idea of sub groups to tackle issues and inform LAP
- Improve briefings
- Steer debate through information
- Subgroups could act as Scrutiny panels
- Need a flow chart of process/decision making
- Concerned about the number of meetings and the resources to support them
- Should be a system of picking up on borough wide issues and feeding them into scrutiny for example illegal parking
- Need more teeth, power, clout
- Presentations to the Area Board should be area specific and in plain English/ no acronyms
- The start time should remain at 19.00
- Frequency should remain the same
- Need to get the co-opted mix right - they should be selected on the basis that they represent a particular group, rather than a particular agenda.
- If co-opted members fail to attend meetings they should be taken off the membership of the Local Area Partnership
- Agreed this aspect of the meeting should be retained – but with the following comments:
- Provide opportunity to ask questions in writing for people who aren't comfortable asking questions in a public meeting.

- Don't necessarily need to discuss all questions on the night - written answers can be provided following the meeting.
- People sometimes raise issues at Area Board because they can't get through on 253 5353 and don't have access to e-mail / website. Make it easier to raise problems through other means and people won't need to bring the more trivial issues to public question time – allowing more time for more complex issues that do require open discussion.
- Have two open forums (as in Bury West) one near the beginning of the meeting and one at the end to allow people to pick up on any issues raised during the meeting.
- People should always get a written reply if they can't get an answer to a question at the meeting.
- It is difficult to have a round table discussion at a public meeting – difficulty of combining public question time with a task / business orientated local area partnership meeting. Sub-groups are a possible way around this
- Group felt that the current 6 a year is right – quarterly is too infrequent.
- Area Board meetings often go on too long - there should be a limit on the number and length of presentations, which should be tailored to the audience.

## **2. Communication**

- More detailed information on the proposed Local Area Partnership Board model is needed.
- Is this being driven by the Government's White Paper, and if so, why are other councils responding differently?
- Area Boards successful concept : Do not want them changed
- Further meetings / briefings needed to explain the role of Area Partnerships in terms of needs assessment and addressing the needs identified.

## **3. Reflected in the Report to Executive on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2007**

- The public can now contribute to all items on the agenda - not just open forum. The public needs to be allowed to respond and contribute to presentations and issues.
- Is this change for the sake of it
- Elected member should chair the meeting
- Collective issues need to be dealt with in an open forum
- Need community involvement and action – part of building community spirit
- Need to include local businesses and traders
- Feel new system will silence people's voice
- To be seen as a true partner, members of the LAP should have voting rights

#### **4. Additional Comments**

- Have an annual co-opted away day / Team building
- Vice chair – no consensus as to whether they should be an elected member or a community member
- Co-opted members need to meet as a group - both in area and across the borough – to team build and to share and understand the considerable experience and expertise they bring collectively.
- Original idea for Area Boards included devolved budgets – what happened to this idea. Area Boards need teeth and resources to be effective