REPORT FOR DECISION

Bury COUNCIL

DECISION OF:	Council
DATE:	**16 May 2012**
SUBJECT:	**Review – Township Forums**
REPORT FROM:	**Councillor Sandra Walmsley** **Executive Member - Communities**
CONTACT OFFICER:	**David Fowler – Head of Communities** **Cindy Lowthian – Communities Manager**
TYPE OF DECISION:	**COUNCIL**
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	Following the decision to create the Township Forum initiative, a detailed Operating Framework was adopted by the Executive on 22 August 2011. This included a proposal to review the Forums before the end of the municipal year 2011/12. At the meeting of Council on 28 March 2012, Interim findings from the review were presented. It was resolved that a report incorporating final recommendations from the review be presented at the 16 May 2012 meeting of Council. This would allow the first cycle of Township Forum meetings (up until the end of March 2012) to run their course and all consultation responses to be analysed and included (consultation closed 23 March 2012). This report incorporates full conclusions from the review of the Township Forum initiative.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	**Option 1 (Recommended)** 1. Receive findings from the review of the Township Forums 2. Agree recommendations outlined in the report. 3. Agree revisions to the Operating Framework for the Township Forums (revised framework

	attached as Appendix B) **Option 2 (Not Recommended)** 1. Reject any or all of the recommendations outlined in the report
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	The value of the Township Forums is recognised in major public consultation exercises – for example budget setting and the Plan for Change. The Township Forums will continue to operate within existing budget levels – this report does not propose any increase / decrease to these levels. Improving the information available in respect of grants, and streamlining the application process (whilst maintaining key controls) should enhance take up from the Community.
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	There are no additional resource implications.
Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes. An Equality Analysis has been undertaken and it concluded that the review is largely positive by aiming to enhance the operation of the Township Forums for all residents in the borough.
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes
Wards Affected:	All
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS   **DIRECTOR: RUTH FAIRHURST**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	
		Interim Report presented 28	

1.0   BACKGROUND

1.1   On 28 March 2012, Council received a report presenting interim findings of a review of the Township Forum initiative. The report set out the overall context and purpose for the review, along with interim findings. It explained how, at their meeting on 22 August 2011, Executive agreed a review should take place before the end of the municipal year 2011/12. This would allow any amendments required as a result of changing national legislation, particularly the Localism Act 2011, to be made. The final review would also allow learning from the first cycle of meetings (running up until end of March 2012) to be taken into account to help further enhance the operation of the Township Forums.

1.2   The interim report explained how, at the Ordinary meeting of Council in December 2011, it was resolved that the review should also incorporate ways in which the Township Forums can play a role in influencing future investment of "*the resources that are available, and are likely to be available in the future, through various income sources including Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990*" through provisions in the Localism Act and Local Community Plan.

1.3   The interim report identified a number of key themes emerging from the review to date. It was agreed that these should be considered as part of the final review report. They include:

- Exploring opportunities to promote the initiative and encourage people to become involved
- Clarifying role and requirements of the Advisory Group
- Issues relating to room lay out (for meetings) and acoustic arrangements for some venues

1.4   This report presents full review findings and recommendations. In addition to the themes identified above, it also includes:

- A progress update for each Township Forum (Appendix A)
- Analysis of consultation responses (full copies of consultation responses are available in the Members Room)
- Recommendations including proposed amendments to the Township Forum Operating Framework (Appendix B refers)
- Details of the Council's current community grant funding schemes and recommendations relating to the future administration of these schemes
- Implications of the Localism Act 2011 for the Township Forums

2.0   TOWNSHIP FORUM PROGRESS UPDATE (see Appendix A)

2.1   The Operating Framework for the Township Forum initiative includes a commitment from the Council to **"accept an annual report prepared by each Forum on local issues for consideration by Council".** The interim report presented to Council on 28 March 2012 included a local progress report for each of the Township Forums. Council were advised that it is still early days for the Township Forums (each having undergone just four meetings), but progress is being made. This progress report has been updated and is included in Appendix A.

2.2   It shows Advisory Groups have now been established in each area. Work has also been undertaken with local residents and stakeholders to inform the development of Township Area Plans.   These plans will identify an agreed set of local priorities for each Township Forum area and are crucial in galvanising the partnership approach at the heart of the Township Forum initiative. The actions and outcomes within the Township Plans will be monitored and managed in line with Bury Council's Performance Management Framework. Regular reports will be provided for Township Forums to enable them to effectively manage progress towards outcomes.

2.3   It is anticipated that the annual progress update presented to Council next year will be more comprehensive; the Township Forums will have had more time to become established and each will have their Township Forum plan agreed.

3.0   CONSULTATION

3.1   To inform the review, consultation was carried out using an online survey to gauge opinion on Township Forum meetings and wider aspects of the initiative including:

- Objectives contained within the Operating Framework
- Membership of the Advisory Groups
- Frequency of Township Forum Meetings
- Venues
- Agendas
- Township Forum Funding Streams

This survey was launched on 16 February 2012 for five weeks, closing on 23 March 2012 after the last round of Township Forum meetings for the 2011/12 municipal year (Bury East was the last Forum to meet on 21 March 2012). It was widely publicised including use of the Council's website, press release, through Township Forum Co-ordinators, Bury Third Sector Newsletter and contact with key stakeholders including Councillors, Advisory Group members and attendees of the Forums.   The opportunity to respond to the consultation was also promoted through the most recent round of Township Forum meetings.

3.2   As part of the consultation process a number of drop in sessions were held at public venues in each of the six Township areas. Each session was informal and took approximately two hours. Members of the public were encouraged to share their views on any positive improvements that could further enhance the operation of the Township Forums. Those whom attended were invited to complete paper copies of the survey questionnaire.

3.3   On 24 February 2012 a meeting, chaired by the Executive Member for Communities, was also held with Chairs and Co-ordinators of the Township Forums.

3.4   In total, 185 survey responses were received including a mixture of online returns, emails and letters. Feedback has been received across the six Township Forum areas. The largest response was from Prestwich (30%) and the smallest from Bury West (10%).   Responses were received from all areas of involvement in the Township Forums; attendees/other formed the largest group of respondents (73%) followed by Advisory Group members (17%) and Councillors (11%).

3.5   These responses have been analysed; a copy of consultation responses are available in the Members Room. Key messages, including recommendations are detailed below.

- **Objectives of the Township Forums**
  Respondents were asked to prioritise the importance of the different objectives of the Township Forums (outlined in the Operating Framework). Respondents state 'championing the area by raising issues of concern with the Council and other organisations and influence how services are delivered' and 'engaging with communities' are the most important.

  Implications
  This indicates a need to continue to explore innovative ways to raise the profile of the Township Forums, including how we can continue to encourage people to become involved. The Survey invited views on how they could assist us in doing this. Many of the comments received relate to the need to continue to advertise and promote the Township Forums. Comments include promoting the Forums through use of leaflets, posters, local press and targeted emails.

3.6   Recommendations

I. Each Township Forum should explore different methods of engaging members of the public in their work e.g. format of meetings, workshop discussion groups, questionnaires, press releases and use of Council and partner websites.

II. Before each meeting of the Township Forum, the Township Forum Co-ordinators will produce electronic 'posters' (using existing templates available) summarising information about the meetings (what has happened since the last meeting and what is on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting). This will be included on the webpage for each Township Forum. (Each Township Forum will have the flexibility to assess the usefulness of this approach for them and whether to continue with this over the coming municipal year).

III. Review Township Forum Web-pages to ensure content is relevant, user friendly and up to date.

IV. Twitter: Prior to each Township Forum meeting for the forthcoming municipal year, a tweet to be issued to remind people of the meeting

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- **Township Forum Advisory Group**
  62% of respondents believe that Township Forum Advisory Groups are representative of their local community. Those respondents who answered 'no' were asked why they answered in this way and ideas for expanding involvement. Comments include the need to promote understanding of the role of Advisory Groups, consideration to broadening representation to active members of the community who aren't members of established groups, and challenges associated with getting people involved in meetings.
  Implications: Further clarity needed on role and requirements of the Advisory Group.

3.7 Recommendations

   I. Include a 'description' of Advisory Group members on the Township Forum WebPages which includes details of the organisation they represent and the role they play on the Township Forum.

   II. Amend the Township Forum Operating Framework to include the following:

"Advisory Group members who do not attend up to two consecutive meetings of the Township Forum and do not send their apologies, will be removed from the Advisory Group and their place offered to other groups in accordance with appointment procedures laid down in the Operating Framework"

"Where Advisory Group members do not attend more than two consecutive meetings but do send their apologies – it will be at the discretion of the Chair (of the Township Forum) to decide if they can remain on the Advisory Group"

   III. Review the wording of the Operating Framework to clarify the role of Advisory Group members and the role of Councillors on the Township Forums – refer to amended Operating Framework in Appendix B

- **Meetings (frequency, time of meetings, room layout, venue, agenda format including public question time)**

The majority of respondents are happy with the frequency of Township Forum meetings (91%).There was more of a mixed response in relation to room lay out; 65% of respondents did not wish to make any comments about room layout, but most of those who did, indicate that they favour a less formal room lay out with round table discussions. We have also received a number of comments around the need to improve acoustics at some venues.

Respondents were asked if they are happy with the current choice of venue for the Township Forum meetings. The majority (85%) stated that they are happy. Comments received from those respondents who answered 'no' include consideration to moving the meetings to different venues including community buildings, church halls and other neighbourhood venues. Other comments included the need to consider public transport links when planning meetings.

Respondents were asked if they are happy with the start time of the Township Forum meetings. The majority (65%) were happy with the current arrangements. Of those who were less satisfied the majority would prefer a mixture of afternoons and evenings. The majority of respondents were also satisfied with the amount of time allocated at Township Forum meetings for public question time (85%) and current format of agendas (80%). Those who were less satisfied were invited to share their comments; again these were mixed; some saying the time allocated should be flexible depending upon issues and the numbers attending meetings.

Comments on the agenda include moving the order of the agenda to include 'local issues' earlier in the meetings, more focus on the Township Plans and local issues, less presentations/formalised reports, more community driven items and 'good news' summaries for each area (to include local events).

Implications
Indicates that it may be beneficial for each Township Forum to explore alternative ways to lay out rooms to create a more informal environment for some meetings. Also indicates that we need to consider acoustic arrangements for some venues. Chairs should use their discretion to address some of the other issues identified.

3.8 Recommendations

I. The Operating Framework has been amended to emphasise the local discretion each Chair can use in the way their meetings are organised and run (See Appendix B).

- **Influencing decisions/contribution of residents to the work of the Forums**

  Respondents were invited to make suggestions on how Township Forums could contribute to decisions that affect local communities. The majority of these emphasise the importance of improved publicity and communication to encourage people to become involved and more active citizens. Other comments included issues relating to funding powers of the Township Forums and their decision making powers. The importance of officer attendance at the meetings to explain particular issues was also highlighted.

  We also invited respondents to share their views on the contribution they could make to their local communities. The vast number of these talked about 'people getting more involved' be this by joining residents groups, being more aware of the people in their community, being more vigilant, attending Township Forum meetings and having their say.

  Implications: As stated earlier in this report, we need to explore opportunities to develop the way we communicate and engage with the public to promote the Township Forums and encourage them to become involved. Also indicates it may be useful to reaffirm the Council's position regarding officer attendance at Township Forum meetings. Issues around decision making and resources are explored below.

3.9 Recommendations

Recommendations relating to promotion of Township forums are outlined above.

I. The following message to be refreshed to Chief Officers across the council: "where adequate notice is given that a Township Forum meeting requires the attendance of an officer at a meeting, it is expected this request be fulfilled. However, it is not expected that services, by default, send officer representatives to each and every meeting of the Township Forums".

- **Meeting of Township Forum Chairs**
  Township Forum Chairs were invited to share their views on the Forums at a meeting held on 24 February 2012. Overall, they were generally happy with progress made. They also shared a number of suggestions to further enhance the

forums. These are similar to the issues already highlighted above. They include exploring how we can further promote the Township Forums, the need to explore opportunities to influence Section 106 funding and the need to explore the implications of the Localism Act 2011.

4.0 SECTION 106 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

4.1 A report outlining how Section 106 obligations operate in Bury was shared at a meeting of the Planning Control Committee on 18 October 2011. This report shows how Section 106 obligations are legal contracts between the Local Planning Authority and the developer and are essential to allow the granting of planning permission in certain circumstances. Obligations often involve the payment of financial contributions, for example a range of "green infrastructure" facilities, public art, compensation for loss of employment land and affordable housing. Section 106 obligations may also include non-financial obligations such as provision of on-site artwork, affordable housing or the transfer of land. It must be noted however that the scope of these obligations is limited by legislation and must reasonably relate to the development for which Planning permission is granted.

4.2 The Government has also introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy, which is intended to replace Section 106 obligations for pooled infrastructure contributions. The Planning Committee Report referred to above states "Following the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy, or after 1 April 2014 (whichever is the sooner), further restrictions will be in place on funding of infrastructure through Section 106 obligations. The Council is therefore taking steps to prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy in advance of 1 April 2014".

4.3 Recommendations

There are potential opportunities to involve Township Forums in influencing prioritisation of Section 106 funds in respect of green infrastructure and public art, but this is constrained by the legal limitations contained in the obligations, as the spend must reasonably relate to the development subject to the grant of planning permission. It is proposed that:

I. The Executive Director (Environment and Development Services) considers (in addition to other key plans and strategies) the agreed priorities contained within each Township Forum plan, when drawing up proposals for Section 106 funding schemes for Green infrastructure or Public Art.

II. The Ward Councillors shall continue to be consulted on proposed Section 106 Funding Schemes for Green infrastructure or Public Art, seeking their views before they are finalised.

III. The Executive Director (Environment and Development Services) will (where given reasonable notice), make reasonable efforts to support requests for representatives to attend Township Forum meetings to discuss Section 106 scheme proposals

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5.0 COMMUNITY FUND, SMALL GRANTS FUND AND COMMUNTIY FIRST

5.1 **Community Fund:** The Council has allocated £1,000 per ward each year to support the work of voluntary and community groups. The application funding decisions are made by the relevant ward Councillors. Individual grants to the **"ward" fund** are available for a maximum of £250. Additionally, a borough-wide

allocation of £13,000 is available for **"cross-ward"** applications from third sector organisations, with a maximum individual grant of £750.   Examples of the type of activities funded through this scheme include environmental projects, community clean up days, job clubs, community art activities, community group equipment and community health and wellbeing projects.

5.2   **Small Grants Fund:** The Council has an annual allocation of £84,100 for the Small Grants Fund.   The current funding priority is to encourage and support grass-root community activity. This means small, community-based and locally controlled groups that manage themselves, encourage active participation from volunteers, and have minimal cash reserves and limited access to funding support. Examples of the type of activities funded through this scheme include local youth projects, community sports equipment, environmental projects and community facilities.

5.3   **Community First:** Cabinet Office has recently introduced this £80m government funded programme aimed at helping communities come together through new and existing community groups, to identify their strengths and local priorities, plan for their future and become more resilient. Funding covering the next 4 years became available from October 2011 and will be administered nationally by the **Community Development Foundation** (CDF).

5.4   Within Bury, the four wards of East, Moorside, Radcliffe East and Radcliffe West are eligible for funding under this programme; each will receive £33,910 over four years.

5.5   In order to qualify for funding each eligible ward needs to establish a Community First Panel, made up of 4-8 local people. The Panel will work with their community to produce a Community First Plan and recommend projects/activities to be funded in their ward. The Council recognises the importance of helping communities to help themselves.   On 31st January 2012 the Programme Manager facilitated a meeting with representatives from all four wards to discuss Community First and agree a way forward so that these areas don't miss the opportunity to access the funding that is available. As a result of this meeting a Community Panel has been established for each of the four wards, terms of reference have been agreed for the Panels and Panel Partners have registered their Panels with the CDF.

5.6   A detailed breakdown of voluntary and community groups allocated funds through the Community Fund and Small Grants Fund during the 2011/12 municipal year is available in the Members Room.

5.7   **Implications for Township Forums**

The Township Forum Survey invites views on the funding processes for these grants to community/voluntary groups. We have received 80 comments in relation to this question (some responses included more than one comment). Many of the comments received recognise that promotion and awareness of the process is important; they acknowledge the valuable role the Township Forums play in helping to promote grant funding opportunities. Some respondents have also suggested a more formalised feedback loop should be built into the process via Township Forum meetings so individuals are aware of activity in their local community. Comments have also been received about improving the administration process for processing grant applications.

> **5.8   Recommendations**
>
>   I. Review grant funding application forms to simplify (where possible).
>
> II. Include information about the Township Forums in the 'offer letters' sent to successful applicants.
>
> III. Review information available on the different grant funding pots on the Council's website ensuring it is accessible and user friendly.
>
> IV. Amend the Operating Framework to emphasise the role of Councillors in promoting the various funding streams available to constituted community groups (see Appendix B).
>
>   V. Ensure Press Releases are issued for each successful funding allocation (to help promote the schemes).
>
> VI. Rename the available Council funding streams to better distinguish between them.
>
> VII. Re-affirm that a Grant funding update report should be shared at each Township Forum meeting.

LOCALISM ACT 2011

The Act was introduced with the aim of devolving greater powers to local areas and community organisations. Key elements of the Act are summarised below. It is important to note that many of the provisions contained within the Act are dependent on detailed regulations which have yet to be produced.

5.8 **Right to Challenge (regulations expected 30 May 2012)**

5.9 The Government aims to encourage new ways to deliver and design local services through harnessing the potential of "social enterprises and community groups to provide high-quality services at good value, and deliver services with and through them." The Localism Act gives these groups, parish councils and local authority employees the right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service. The local authority must consider and respond to this challenge; and where it accepts it, run a procurement exercise for the service in which the challenging organisation can bid.

5.10 **Neighbourhood Planning (in force 06/04/12, further regulations expected later in the year)**

5.11 The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan. The intention is to support communities to come together through a local parish council or neighbourhood forum and say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go – and what they should look like. Local communities will be able to use neighbourhood planning to grant full or outline planning permission in areas where they most want to see new homes and businesses; the aim is to make it easier and quicker for development to go ahead.   Provided a neighbourhood development plan or order is in line with national planning policy, with the strategic vision for the wider area set by the local authority, and with other legal requirements, local people will be able to vote on it in a referendum. If the plan is approved by a majority of those who vote, then the local authority will bring it into force.

5.12 As part of neighbourhood planning, the Act gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community want through a Community Right to Build. They may wish to build new homes, businesses, shops, playgrounds or meeting halls. A community organisation, formed by members of the local community, will be able to bring forward development proposals which, providing they meet minimum criteria and can demonstrate local support through a referendum, will be able to go ahead without requiring a separate traditional planning application.

5.13 **Community right to bid - assets of community value (regulations expected 25/07/12)**

5.14 The Localism Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value which have been nominated by the local community. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act then gives community groups time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market. The proposal is aimed at helping local communities "keep much-loved sites in public use and part of local life"

5.15 **Implications for Township forums**

The proposed rights outlined above are primarily aimed at community groups, voluntary groups and parish councils. However, the Township Forums will still have an important role to play in signposting interested local groups to information, guidance and contact officers within the Council (as these are developed).

It is also important to note that many of the provisions contained within the Act are dependent on detailed regulations which have yet to be produced. As these are published, any implications for the Township Forums will be explored.

6.0 Other Proposed Amendments (tweaks) to the Operating Framework

6.1 In reviewing the Operating Framework, it is recommended that further tweaks (to wording) are made to further enhance the operation of the Township Forums.

6.2 Recommendation

- Insert numbering to the Operating Framework (for ease of reference)
- Insert "to the Advisory Group" after bullet point 3 in 1.2 of the Operating Framework (to clarify this relates to the Advisory Group)
- Insert 'role and requirements of Advisory Group' in 1.2 of the Operating Framework (as a heading)
- Insert 'health' in addition to social, economic and environmental wellbeing (in section 3.0 (the overall purpose of the Township Forums)
- Insert 'to the Advisory Group' in section 5.4 (to clarify this relates to the Advisory Group)

> - Change 'Council' to 'Chief Executive' in section 9.3 (to ensure additional or special meetings of the Township Forum that may need to be called can be done quite quickly and do not have to wait for a meeting of Council)
> - Change section 15.1 (number 9) to "Overview and Scrutiny Committee" to reflect the recent changes to Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.2   The Township forums have undergone four cycles of meetings in the 2011/12 municipal year.   Although it is still early days for the initiative, this review has highlighted the positive progress made to date.   This includes work undertaken with local residents and stakeholders to inform the development of Township Area Plans.   These plans will identify an agreed set of local priorities for each Township Forum and are crucial in galvanising the partnership approach at the heart of the Township Forum initiative.   The comprehensive consultation exercise undertaken as part of this review has helped to identify proposed revisions to the Operating Framework (See Appendix B).   If agreed, these revisions should help further enhance the operation of the forums.

List of Background Papers:-
Executive, 22 August 2011. Report from Head of Communities "Township Forums."
Planning Control Committee, 18 October 2011.   Report from Development Manager "Section 106 Obligations".
Ordinary Council meeting, 14 December 2011 "Township Forums and Resource Allocation Mechanisms" (notes of meeting containing resolution)
Council, 28 March 2012, Interim Review – Township forums, Report from Councillor Walmsley, Executive Member – Communities
A Plain English Guide to the Localism Act – Communities and Local Government

Contact Details:
David Fowler, Head of Communities, Bury Council. Chief Executives Department, Town Hall, Knowsley Street. Telephone (0161) 253 6356. d.w.fowler@bury.gov.uk.
Cindy Lowthian, Communities Manager, Bury Council. Chief Executives Department, Town Hall, Knowsley Street. Telephone (0161) 2535121. C.Lowthian@bury.gov.uk

Appendix A

TOWNSHIP FORUM - PROGRESS UPDATE

Bury Council's Township Forums have undergone 4 cycles of meetings so far in the 2011/12 municipal year. The Forums have convened over the following timescales:

- September 2011
- November 2011
- January/February 2012
- March 2012

The first task of the Township Forums was to encourage applications from key community organisations to have representation on the Township Forum Advisory Groups. Each Township Forum also designated a place for a young person aged 16-24 year old.

The Township Forums in Bury West and Ramsbottom, Tottington & North Manor have yet to secure youth representation on their Advisory Groups. Presentations have been completed by Township Coordinators at Colleges within the borough to promote the forums to young people and encourage participation.

The number of Advisory Group applications received has varied in each area. In Bury East and Radcliffe the applications far outweighed the number of places available but in Ramsbottom, Tottington & North Manor only four places were filled in the first round of voting.

The Advisory Group members have provided a really positive dimension to the forums with their local expertise playing a key role in the formation of the Township Area Plans. In some areas attendance of Advisory Group members at meetings has been varied (an issue taken into consideration as part of the review – see recommendation 3.7 in main report).

Following the establishment of the Advisory Groups the key focus of the forums has been to identify the key priorities for the area and develop the work programme that would deliver on our objectives over the first 12 months.

At the January and February meetings a series of workshops took place giving local residents the chance to give their views and input to identify 4 or 5 key realistic and achievable priorities to be included in their Township Area Plan.

The groups discussed a range of themes including Health, Perceptions of Crime, Worklessness, Educational Attainment and Regeneration. The latest local intelligence was made available to attendees and each group was asked to give their views on issues within their area.

The discussions were both interactive and informative allowing residents, Elected Members and partner organisations to identify new projects to help achieve the goals for each key priority. Feedback from the workshops and the first draft of the plans were presented at the March meetings. Discussions have taken place with key stakeholders to finalise the priorities for inclusion in the final draft.

The next step will be to establish a series of thematic working groups made up of key stakeholders who play a leading role in the delivery of projects linked to each priority. Each group will be chaired by an Advisory Group member and will meet bi-monthly to monitor agreed milestones on projects and drive forward delivery of agreed outcomes.

Appendix A – Progress Update

TOWNSHIP	MEETING 1	MEETING 2	MEETING 3	MEETING 4	Township Area Plan Status
Bury East	1. Advisory Group Election 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Township Forum Presentation 4. Waste Management Presentation 5. Plan for Change	1. Draft programme of savings 2. LDF Core Strategy 3. Healthy Futures Consultation 4. Formulating Area Plan Presentation	1. Area Profile Presentation 2. Round Table Discussions and Feedback Session	1. Township Area Plan Draft Presentation 2. Partnership Tasking Meeting Update 3. Backing Young Bury– Update	Roundtable discussions held 08/02/12. Initial draft being developed through Township Co-ordinator. A Working Group is being established comprising of Advisory Group members and Councillors to select priorities for the final draft. Update was shared at the Township Forum meeting on 21/03/12. Emerging themes for the Bury East Township Plan include: • Employment & Worklessness • Promoting Health & Wellbeing • Learning Opportunities/Educational achievement • Community Cohesion/Integration • Community Safety/Perceptions of Crime
RTNM	1. Advisory Group Election 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Township Forum Presentation	1. Draft programme of savings 2. LDF Core Strategy 3. Healthy Futures Consultation	1. Nomination for Vice Chair 2. Area Profile Presentation 3. Round Table Discussions & Feedback	1. Police Update 2. Township Area Plan Draft Presentation 3. BARDOC Presentation	Roundtable discussions held 19/01/12. Initial draft being developed through Township Co-ordinator. A Working Group is being established comprising of Advisory Group members and Councillors to select priorities for the final draft. Update was shared at Township Forum meeting on 08/03/12. Emerging themes for RTNM include: • Employment/Training/Worklessness

	4. Waste Management Presentation 5. Plan for Change	4. Watling Street Affetside 20mph Speed Limit 5. Township Coordinator Update/Plans	Session		• Community Safety • Rural Issues/Outlying Areas • Township Forum involvement • Community Cohesion/Integration • Promoting Heath & wellbeing
Radcliffe	1. Announcements of Advisory Group Appointments 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Waste Management Presentation 4. Plan for change 5. Priority Setting	1. Nomination of Chair 2. Advisory Group Appointments 3. Draft Programmes of Savings 4. LDF – Core Strategy 5. Healthy Futures	1. Welcome from new Chair 2. Round Table Discussions & Feedback Session	1. Radcliffe Township Area Plan 2. BARDOC Presentation 3. The PORTAS Review	It was agreed at the meeting on the 29/02/12 that Radcliffe Township Forum adopt the draft Radcliffe Township Area Plan as a working document and that any further ideas/comments on the draft Plan be forwarded to the Township Co-ordinator. Emerging themes include: • Apprenticeships for young people • Get Radcliffe active • Promote Radcliffe • Anti-social behaviour, prevention/intervention • Making Radcliffe Safer Campaign • Increase volunteering • Town Centre regeneration • Ensure children are 'school ready'

		Consultation			
		6. Consultation on Secondary School			
		7. Area Plans			
Bury West	1. Advisory Group Election 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Township Forum Presentation 4. Waste Management Presentation 5. Plan for Change	1. Draft Programme of Savings 2. LDF – Core Strategy 3. Healthy Futures Consultation 4. Formulating Area Plans	1. Update on Elton High School Plans 2. Youth Club Development (ROC) 3. Formulating Bury West Area Plan	1. Section 106 Funding 2. Highways Update 3. Township Area Plan Update	A draft plan has been developed. This will be considered at the next meting. This is because at the meeting on 15/03/12 – at the point of decision (for this plan) – the meeting was not quorate. Emerging themes for Bury West include: • Facilities for young people • Reducing anti-social behaviour – prevention and intervention • Apprenticeships for young people • Increase volunteering • Ensure children are school ready
	1. Advisory	1. Appointment	1. Breast,	1. BARDOC	At the Township forum meeting on the

Whitefield & Unsworth	Group Election 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Township Forum Presentation 4. Waste Management Presentation 5. Plan for Change 6. Next Steps/Priority Setting	of Advisory Group Members 2. Plan for Change – Consultation Feedback 3. Healthy Futures consultation 4. LDF – Core strategy 5. Police Update 6. Formulating Area Plans	Bowel and Lung cancer awareness 2. Formulating Area Plans 3. Police Updates 4. Community Funding Update	Presentation 2. Township Area Plan Presentation 3. Police Update	13th March it was agreed that the Township Area Plan for Whitefield be adopted as a working plan for the area and that regular feedback on actions be presented to the Township Forum. Emerging themes for Whitefield & Unsworth are: • Effective use of community space • Public transport and access to key services such as health, shops and employment • Support key events in parks and the local area and provide meaningful activities for young people • Narrow the equality gaps in relation to health and wellbeing, educational attainment and employment (especially in relation to getting young people into employment).
	1. Advisory Group Election 2. Nominations for Chair 3. Township	1. Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair 2. Draft Programme of Savings	1. Advisory Group Membership 2. CCTV in Prestwich	1. Section 106 Funding 2. Car Parking in Prestwich	At the township Forum held 5th March 2012 it was agreed that the Prestwich Township Area Plan be adopted as a working document and that any additions or amendments to the document be forwarded to the Township co-ordinator. Emerging

Prestwich	Forum Presentation 4. Waste Management Presentation 5. Plan for Change	3. LDF – Core Strategy 4. Healthy futures Consultation 5. Area Planning 6. Police Update	3. Police Update 4. St Mary's Park Festival 5. Formulating Area Plans	Centre 3. PORTAS Pilot 4. Prestwich Life Website 5. Police Update 6. Area Plans	themes include: • Reducing health inequalities between wards and the rest of the borough – including priorities such as tooth decay, obesity and increasing activity • Educational Attainment – including ensuring children are "school ready" • Promote opportunities for apprenticeships and young people's employment • Town Centre Regeneration – (support Portas bid and support for businesses) • Support key events to promote Prestwich in a positive way

Appendix B – Operating Framework

Appendix B

(Proposed amendments are <u>underlined</u>)

Township Forum Operating Framework

1.0 **This document sets out the Operating Framework for Township Forums in Bury. The Framework outlines a minimum operating standard for each Forum, whilst allowing for local variations in running meetings that best suit local areas. For example, they may wish to consider alternative room layouts to create a more informal environment for some meetings, or hold workshop style discussions at other meetings. Chairs will also wish to use their discretion in agreeing venues for meetings, timing of meetings, agenda items, number of formal presentations and how they involve local communities in the development of Township Plans.**

1.1 It also recognizes the framework may evolve as a result of the requirement to implement legislative changes.

1.2 The Operating Framework covers the following areas:

- The Constitution of the Township Forums

- Operating arrangements and underlying principles

- Membership and procedures for election of co-opted members **(to the Advisory Group)**

- **Role and responsibilities of Advisory Group**

- Rules of procedure

2.0 Constitution

2.1 There shall be six Township Forums representing the different parts of the borough as follows:

Bury East – Moorside, Redvales, East.

Bury West – Elton, Church.

Prestwich – St. Mary's, Sedgley, Holyrood.

Radcliffe - Radcliffe North, Radcliffe West, Radcliffe East.

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Ramsbottom, Tottington & North Manor.

Whitefield & Unsworth – Pilkington Park, Besses, Unsworth.

3.0 Operating arrangements

In order to ensure the efficient conduct and transparency of Township Forums, all Township Forum meetings must follow this agreed operating framework when conducting business.

The overall purpose of the Township Forums is to promote better outcomes for the social, **health**, economic, and environmental well being of the area by:

3.1 Engaging with communities and advising the Council on the implications for the area of its objectives, plans and policies (this should be a two way process to enable the views of the local community to feed into the Council and to enable the Council to communicate with local residents. The Forums should become the hosts of citizen engagement).

3.2 Partnership working across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors at the local level.

3.3 Championing the area by raising issues of concern to residents and businesses with the Council and other organisations, to influence how services are delivered in the area.

3.4 Fostering good community relations between people of different ages, and ethnic and social backgrounds, both within the area and across the Borough.

3.5 Taking decisions about funding or other resources delegated to them by the Council as appropriate.

3.6 Consulting on matters affecting the local community and expressing a view on matters affecting more than one area.

3.7 Agree and monitor progress through a set of priorities for each Township Forum (Community planning).

4.0 Membership of Township Forums

4.1 All elected members (Councillors) for the wards comprising the respective area will be the core members of the Township Forum.

4.2 Core members will be asked to attend all Forum meetings.

Appendix B – Operating Framework

4.3   Each Forum may appoint advisory members who are co-opted members of the forum to contribute and speak on relevant issues.

4.4   The advisory group can be made up of representatives from voluntary and community groups and partner organisations with an interest in the area.

4.5   Each Township Forum will designate a place on the advisory group for young person (16-24 year old).

4.6   Advisory group members do not have voting rights.

5.0   Role and requirements of Advisory Group

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to improve the range of knowledge and expertise on the Township Forum and provide an inclusive approach to improving the outcomes for each area.

5.1   **Advisory group members are required to:-**

- § **Attend all or most of the Township Forum meetings**
- § **Once selected to the Advisory Group, members will provide a brief description of the group/organisation that they represent (to be included on the Township Forum Webpages)**
- § **Actively promote the Township Forum to help increase the number of people attending the meetings and engaging in their work**
- § **Use their networks to communicate important issues and the work of the Township Forum**
- § **Provide support, challenge and play a key role in projects and initiatives to improve the Township area as outlined in the Township Area Plan**
- § **Provide information to the Township Co-ordinator on activities or events that their group/organisation are actively supporting so they can be cascaded to the whole of the Township Forum**
- § **Provide updates (as required) to the Township Forum on the work of their group including any funding awarded to support this work**
- § **Provide a link with similar groups/organisations in their area and the Township Forum**

5.2   Members of the Advisory Group will be selected by the core members of the Township Forum.

5.3   Members of the Advisory Group may be from partner bodies such as Police, NHS Bury, and Fire & rescue Service, Six Town Housing, Probation service, Chamber of Commerce and B3SDA. This will be in

addition to members representing constituted local groups or identified "communities of interest".

5.4 Co-opted members to the **Advisory Group** will serve for a 2 year period from the date of the Council's Annual meeting in the year of their election. There is no limit to the number of terms a co-opted member can serve and they can be nominated again after their 2 year term is completed.

6.0 Rules for co-option of members (to the Advisory Group)

The following rules will apply when co-opting members to the Township Forum Advisory Group

6.1 Each Township Forum may appoint up to 9 members to its Advisory Group.

6.2 Members must be from constituted groups and represent the body/organisation to which they belong. If the nomination is subsequently withdrawn by the nominating body or the body ceases to exist, then they will be considered to have stood down from office as a Co-opted member and their place should be considered vacant.

6.3 Represent a group with an interest in the area or a recognised "community of interest".

6.4 Not hold the office of Councillor or Member of Parliament or be a council employee whom is in a politically restricted post.

7.0 Selection procedure for Advisory Group

7.1 Nominations for Township Forum Advisory Group members will be invited for prospective Co-optees. Vacancies resulting from the expiry of the 2 year term of office of co-optees will be publicised at the last meeting of their term of office to ensure these can be filled at the following meeting.

7.2 The "nomination" forms will require:

- a brief personal profile of the nominee;

- when the nomination is on behalf of an organisation, a brief profile of the organisation, and confirmation that the nominee is its approved choice;

- a summary of what the nominee thinks s/he can bring to the role of Co-opted Member; and

- positive confirmation that the nominee is aware of the requirements for co-option and agrees to conform to them.

7.3   Only core members (councillors) on the Township Forum will be eligible to vote on the selection of co-opted members. In doing so Schedule 12 – Part VI - Paragraph 39 of the Local Government Act 1972 applies. This states "all questions coming or arising before a local authority shall be decided by a majority of the members of the authority present and voting thereon at a meeting of the authority."

7.4   The election will be administered by Democratic Service Officers present at the meeting.

7.5   The following process will be followed:

a. The Core members will determine how many nominees are to be appointed and will ensure that the Advisory Group reflects the demographic make up of the area. For example Youth members.

b. Members will receive a copy of all application forms prior to the Township Forum meeting.

c. Members will be advised of the maximum votes "for" that they may cast equivalent to the number of vacant places.

d. At the end of the voting, the officer administering the election will verify the votes and compile a summary of the votes cast. They will advise the Councillors of the number of votes cast for each prospective co-opted member.

e. The nominees will be appointed to the Advisory Group in the order of the number of votes recorded, provided that no nominee shall be appointed if they secure fewer than 50% of the potential available positive votes. For this purpose the potentially available positive votes shall be reckoned as the number of Councillors present and eligible to vote.

f. In the event of a tied vote for the last place available the voting procedure will be repeated for the 'tied' nominees only. If an agreement is reached from this vote that candidate will be elected.

g. If the second round of voting for 'tied' places ends in a further tie, the Chair may defer any further voting to the next meeting.

h. At this point the elected co-opted members will be asked to sign up to the Code of Conduct before they assume their place on the Forum.

7.6 Any candidate who is unsuccessful in a selection process is entitled to re-apply for selection, which can be within the same Municipal Year. However, any re-application must be supported by a newly completed and signed nomination form.

8.0 Role of a Councillor

Councillor's representing the Township Forum are required to:-

- § **Attend all or most of the Township Forum Meetings**
- § **Actively promote the Township Forum to increase the number of people attending the meetings**
- § **Use their networks to communicate important issues and the work of the Township Forum**
- § **Play a key role in projects and initiatives to improve the Township area as outlined in the Township Area Plan**
- § **Actively promote the various funding streams available to constituted community groups**

9.0 Rules of procedure

9.1 Township Forums will operate under the Council's Code of Conduct.

9.2 All Township Forums will meet six times per annum. Meetings will be arranged by Democratic Services.

9.3 Additional or special meetings of the Township Forum may be called at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

9.4 Meetings of the Township Forum will normally be held in the evening and will normally commence at 7.00pm. There will be a designated public forum time at the beginning of each meeting where members of the public can ask questions to the Forum.

9.5 Township Forum meetings will not be held during the period prior to the local Council Elections. Individual Township Forum meetings may also be deferred in the event of a Council- by-election.

10.0 Advisory Group Member -attendance

10.1 **Advisory Group members who do not attend up to two consecutive meetings of the Township Forum and do not send their apologies will be removed from the Advisory Group and their place offered to other groups in accordance with appointment procedures laid down in the Operating Framework.**

10.2 Where Advisory Group members do not attend more than two consecutive meetings but do send their apologies – it will be at the discretion of the Chair (of the Township Forum) to decide if they can remain on the Advisory Group.

11.0 Chair and Vice - Chair

11.1 Each Township Forum shall appoint a Chair and Vice Chair at its first meeting of the municipal year and at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee if a vacancy occurs during the year. This could be a core member or an advisory member. Only the core members of the forum can vote to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair.

11.2 If the Chair elected is an advisory group member then the vice chair appointed must be a Councillor. In the event where a casting vote is required then it is the Councillor vice-chair that has the casting vote.

11.3 In the event of an advisory group member being in the chair covering a Councillor Chair, the core members present must select a Councillor vice chair who will have the casting vote.

12.0 Agenda

12.1 Whilst the agenda of the Township Forums will vary due to respective local priorities, each agenda will be based upon the principle of including the following items:-

> 1. Declarations of interest
> 2. Public Forum
> 3. Grant funding update
> 4. Partnership and public consultation issues
> 5. Progress on delivering priorities outlined in community plans
> 6. Local issues

12.2 Township Forum Chairs, with the support of Council Officers will be responsible for setting the agenda.

12.3 No literature will be permitted to be distributed at the Township Forum without the prior consent of the Chair.

13.0 Decision making

13.1 Township Forums are appointed to ensure improved service delivery and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision making. Forums do not have budgets of their own and have not been given any specific delegated powers at this stage. However, Forums will need to prioritise actions for the area and from time to time give their views on decisions that service agencies need to make.

13.2 Where this is needed, only core members of the Forum will be able to vote.

13.3 Township Forums will comply with the Access to Information Rules set out in the Council Constitution.

14.0 Venues

14.1 In compiling proposals for meetings of Township Forums the Chairs and supporting officers will seek potential venues which:

- The residents of the area will see as part of their areas;
- Are located to give convenient access to people who want to attend the meetings;
- Are accessible to all potential users

15.0 Relationship with the Council

15.1 The Council has a distinct role in promoting the effectiveness of Township Forums. In the light of this commitment the Council will:

1. Be impartial in its dealings with Township Forums

2. Provide administrative and officer support - including meeting arrangements and minute taking.

3. Encourage attendance.

4. Accept an annual report prepared by each Forum on local issues for consideration by Council.

5. Refer appropriate policy matters to Township Forums.

6. As part of the work programmes of the Scrutiny Commissions and the Executive consider any appropriate recommendations from Township Forums

7. Provide advice and guidance as required by the Forum.

8. The Township Forums are entitled to request the Leader to attend a meeting to discuss the work of the Executive. Any such request should be made through the Chair.

9. Township Forums can refer any relevant matter to the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**