

**Subject:** Neighbourhood Forums – Putting Communities First

**Status:** For Publication

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**Report to:**

**Date:**

Policy Overview & Scrutiny

5<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Cabinet

15<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Governance Working Group

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009

Council

24<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Standards Committee

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009

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**Report of:**

Chief Executive

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**Portfolio**

**Holder:**

Neighbourhoods and Communities

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**Key Decision:** Yes

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency



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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The report provides a framework for the delivery of Neighbourhood Management and delivery of Neighbourhood Plans throughout Rossendale and seeks the agreement of the Council to enact the changes.
- 1.2 Any changes to the present Neighbourhood Forum arrangements should be seen in the context of enabling the development of Neighbourhood Plans. Any change to the present arrangements will be reviewed after 12 months to allow flexibility to be developed or even revert back to the present process.

**2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.
- Delivering Quality Services to Customers
  - Delivering Regeneration across the Borough

- Keeping Our Borough Clean and Green
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit
- Improving health and well being across the Borough
- Well Managed Council

### **3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS**

All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- 3.1 Not to implement changes to the present Neighbourhood Forum arrangements could severely affect the Council's ability to deliver better outcomes for local people within a focus on strengthening the role of elected members as community champions.
- 3.2 The risk of not implementing the proposal could impact on the Council's ability to attract new and emerging funding as the focus is on allocating resources to authorities that demonstrate strong leadership in developing partnership working with communities and service providers.
- 3.3 Not to implement could affect the Council's ability to improve its overall performance; achieve key internal and external efficiency targets; sustain improved performance standards in localities.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The organisational restructure focused on the principle that Rossendale's approach to Neighbourhood Management needed to be broadened across the Council and its partners.
- 4.2 The Council's key priorities moving into 'Phase Three of the improvement Journey' is to champion the borough and its people through strong community leadership, engagement and partnership working at a local level.
- 4.3 The Rossendale Partnership has developed a Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2018 and the Council has adopted their Corporate Plan 2008 - 2011. These are two key strategic documents for Rossendale. They contain a vision; outcomes and a view of what Rossendale will look and feel like when we get to 2018.
- 4.4 Both strategies will not achieve their vision until the challenging outcomes are translated into service delivery at a local level. Development of 'Place Shaping' Neighbourhood Plans are therefore key to their success.
- 4.5 Rossendale's heritage is unique and its people have a distinctively strong sense of connection to the area in which they live. This strong sense of belonging to place and the different social, economic, health and wellbeing challenges each community faces will be for the newly shaped Neighbourhood Forums to articulate in their Neighbourhood Plan. As significantly it will be for the Neighbourhood Forum to ensure the challenges and aspirations of the

community are delivered through the Plan. A standard agenda item on the Neighbourhood Forum would be to discuss how collectively the members can tackle the priorities identified in the Plan.

- 4.6 This approach clearly requires a change in the way the Council and its partners work to enable residents and communities to play a full and active part in shaping their communities.
- 4.7 It is important that Neighbourhood Management is not seen as just a forum meeting that takes place four times a year. It is about the ongoing excellent partnership work carried out to improve service delivery in our communities. There has been a lot achieved which we need to capture and carry forward.
- 4.8 A view widely expressed is that Neighbourhood Forums are presently seen as a Council function where partners and the community are *invited* to attend. Public attendance is varied across the forums. The issues raised are often the same eg highways, dog fouling, blocked drains and crime and disorder. A key principle of the review is to explore the development of a Neighbourhood Forum that is inclusive, where all members are seen as playing an equal and active part.
- 4.9 Some underlying principles of the review are to increase inclusiveness through:
- Sharing power with the community
  - Reinforcing the place shaping and community leadership role of elected members
  - Community engagement and reducing inequalities where they exist (Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA overarching themes)
  - Neighbourhood Forums being integrated in to the Rossendale Partnership, Rossendale's Local Strategic Partnership.
  - Having clear reporting links to Council/Rossendale Partnership through elected members
  - Introducing Neighbourhood Management i.e. more locally focused partnership delivery, as a strategic response to local conditions and issues
  - Utilising Neighbourhood Plans as ongoing strategic and operational documents
  - Responding to key partnership documents: Police, Health, Greenvale Homes and the Borough and County Councils
  - Developing the principle of targeted partnership working around local issues and concerns and aligning these arrangements to the Neighbourhood Forum
  - Achieve a broad consensus of views on new ways of working whilst retaining the diverse characteristics of each township.

## **5. Council's Constitution and Neighbourhood Forum Operational Framework**

To enable the Neighbourhood Forums to function as a partner under the framework of the Rossendale Partnership amendments to the Council's Constitution and the development of a 'Neighbourhood Forum Operational Framework' would be required. In considering any proposals to amend the Council's Constitution consideration should be had to the following key principles:

- 5.1 The adoption by the Rossendale Partnership Executive of the new partnership structure (see appendix 1) and new terms of reference have facilitated the opportunity for the Neighbourhood Forums to function as a true partner under the framework of the Rossendale Partnership.
- 5.2 A Local Strategic Partnership, in our case the Rossendale Partnership is a non-statutory voluntary partnership made up of bodies / organisations such as the Police, Councils, PCT, Greenvale Homes, business and community and voluntary groups retaining strategic and operational autonomy.
- 5.3 The LSP has no legal decision-making powers. Any decisions it makes must be adopted by the local authorities and/or other LSP partners before they have any legal force.
- 5.4 These service providers will continue to make decisions that relate to their own areas of activity unless they explicitly delegate this to the Rossendale Partnership which incorporates the Executive, Theme Groups and Neighbourhood Forums.
- 5.5 No judgement of the Neighbourhood Forum can be expected to override the business planning process of an individual organisation. Rather, decisions made by the Forum are intended to influence partners, who will use their best endeavours to promote the development and delivery of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.6 The Neighbourhood Forum will have a clear role in influencing the way in which partners plan and allocate short medium and long term resources to meet local priorities identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and through debate at Neighbourhood Forum meetings.
- 5.7 Responsibility for procedural issues of the Neighbourhood Forum will remain vested in the Borough Council with an agreed 'Constitutional Article 8' (see appendix 3) that will sit within the Council's Constitution, formally laying out the procedural issues.

5.8 It is proposed to have a three way membership of the refreshed Neighbourhood Forum:

1. **Elected Members** for each ward within the defined Neighbourhood Forum areas. Along with Rossendale Council this would include the County and Town Councils.
2. **Representative from organisations based in an area.** Such as tenants/residents/community/youth/faith/ business/. These will be determined locally through an open and transparent process with clear guidance and criteria.
3. **Appropriate local service providers.** These would be determined by an assessment of local conditions and could include the councils, police, health, Greenvale homes, leisure trust, schools & children centres, community network etc.

5.9 To ensure the Neighbourhood Forums have an holistic picture of the services and functions that operate within their area a number of 'Support Functions' will be utilised either through a form of virtual networking or invite to attend meetings when appropriate. Some of these will include:

- Adult Social Care/Help Direct
- Regeneration
- Highways and transport
- Environment
- Young People's Services

- There will be **up to** equal membership defined by the number of Councillors in a given Neighbourhood Forum ie
  - 9 Councillors – 9 Service Providers – 9 individuals representing Community Groups
  - 11 Councillors – 11 Service Providers – 11 individuals representing Community Groups
- There will be a process (clear and transparent) by which organisations and groups can join the forum.

5.10 The membership of the Neighbourhood Forums will meet as a discreet business group four times per annum. The group's initial focus will be on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for their area. Thereafter they will monitor progress and challenge underperformance against agreed outcomes and targets set out within the Action / Delivery Plan of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.11 Special themed 'Open Meetings' will take place in each Neighbourhood Forum area or borough wide. The meetings will allow any member of the public to raise any issue.

5.12 Consultation with partners (see appendix 2) has identified a genuine enthusiasm, commitment and support for the proposed refresh of Neighbourhood Forums, but it would assist with their workforce planning if they had to commit resources across three forums not four.

To accommodate these views would require a review of the Neighbourhood Forum boundaries and a list of options for consideration are detailed below:

### **OPTION 1 (No Change)**

1. **Haslingden with Edenfield Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Eden – Greenfield – Helmshore and Worsley, 11 Rossendale Elected Members & 1 County Councillor
2. **Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Cribden – Goodshaw – Hareholme – Longholme – Whitewell, 13 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor
3. **Bacup Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Greensclough – Irwell- Stacksteads, 8 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor
4. **Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Facit & Shawforth – Healey & Whitworth, 4 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor + 1 Town Councillor

### **OPTION 2**

1. **Haslingden with Edenfield Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Eden – Greenfield – Helmshore and Worsley, 11 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor
  - **No Change from option 1**
2. **Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards: Cribden – Goodshaw – Hareholme – Longholme, 10 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor.
  - **Whitewell removed**
3. **Bacup with Whitewell Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards Whitewell - Greensclough – Stacksteads. 8 Rossendale Elected Members.
  - **Whitewell included and Irwell removed**
4. **Irwell with Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards Irwell - Facit & Shawforth – Healey & Whitworth, 7 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor + 1 Town Councillor
  - **Irwell included**

### **OPTION 3**

1. **Rossendale East Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards Eden – Greenfield – Helmshore and Worsley, 11 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor
  - **No change from option 1**
2. **Rossendale Central Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards Cribden – Goodshaw – Hareholme – Longholme – Whitewell, 13 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor
  - **No Change from option 1**
3. **Rossendale West Neighbourhood Forum:** Wards Greensclough – Irwell - Stacksteads - Facit & Shawforth – Healey & Whitworth, 12 Rossendale Elected Members + 1 County Councillor + 1 Town Councillor
  - **An amalgamation of Whitworth and Bacup Neighbourhood Forums**

#### **COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

#### **6. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

6.1 Any financial implications will be met from existing Council budgets.

#### **7. INTERIM HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

7.1 Full Council will need to satisfy itself that governance arrangements are in place to cover all activities of the Forums and in particular expenditure decisions of the Neighbourhood Forum Working Groups.

#### **8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)**

8.1 No HR impact

#### **9. CONCLUSION**

9.1 These proposals will support elected members in their role as place shapers and civic leaders by placing them at the heart of a Neighbourhood Forum, focussed on collectively developing the community they represent.

9.2 A robust review of the present arrangements will re-affirm Rossendale Partnership's commitment to empowering residents to work with Elected Members and partners to ensure that local services are effectively focussed on local need.

- 9.3 Arriving at locally agreed solutions through the development of local Neighbourhood Plans will contribute to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Council's Corporate Plan and the strategies and plans of our partners.
- 9.4 Integration of neighbourhood planning within the overarching Local Strategic Partnership framework will influence and shape the Council's and other partner's strategic plans and the allocation of resources to identified priorities.
- 9.5 The proposals set out here represent a clear determination by Elected Members and the Rossendale Partnership to work more effectively with local people to shape service delivery. Most importantly it will allow Elected Members and partners to benefit from local people's experience of what they do and their aspirations for their community.

## **10. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 10.1 That Full Council recommends the Neighbourhood Forum boundaries remain in their present form as identified at Option 1 in section 5.12.
- 10.2 That membership of the refreshed Neighbourhood Forum's are extended as outlined at 5.8 and that it meets four times a year as a business group to develop and oversee the delivery of Neighbourhood Plans.
- 10.3 That two community meetings are held per year allowing all members of the public to attend to discuss any emerging policies and what their priorities are for the area.
- 10.4 That Full Council accept the amendments to the Constitution as detailed in Article 8 (see appendix 3) and adopt the terms of reference at appendix 4.
- 10.5 If changes are required following consultation with Standards Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009 a revised report will be submitted to August 2009 Council meeting.
- 10.6 That any amendments to the Neighbourhood Forum arrangements be reviewed after 12 months to allow them to be developed or even revert back to their present arrangements.

## 11. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

11.1 This process of reviewing the Neighbourhood Forum arrangements is led by the portfolio holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities and overseen by a Neighbourhood Management Working Group comprising of cross party elected members and senior managers.

11.2 Consultation has been carried out with the following groups/organisations:

- Rossendale Partnership Executive
- Neighbourhoods Working Group
- Maden Family and Children Centre
- Greenvale Homes
- Lancashire Constabulary – Pennine Division
- Rossendale Council's Executive Team
- Policy Overview and Scrutiny
- LCC (Lancashire Locals)
- Primary Care Trust
- Shadow portfolio holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities
- Leader of the Labour Group
- All four Neighbourhood Forums
- Whitworth Town Council
- Burnley, Pendle Rossendale CVS
- Community Groups and Organisations including:
  - Positive Start
  - Irwell Vale and Lumb
  - Bacup Consortium
  - Civic Trust
  - REAL
  - Haslingden Community Link
  - Edgeside District Partnership
  - Family Centre
  - Credit Unions
  - Horse and Bamboo
  - PEER
  - Alf's Black belt Academy

## 12. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Yes

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes

## 13. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

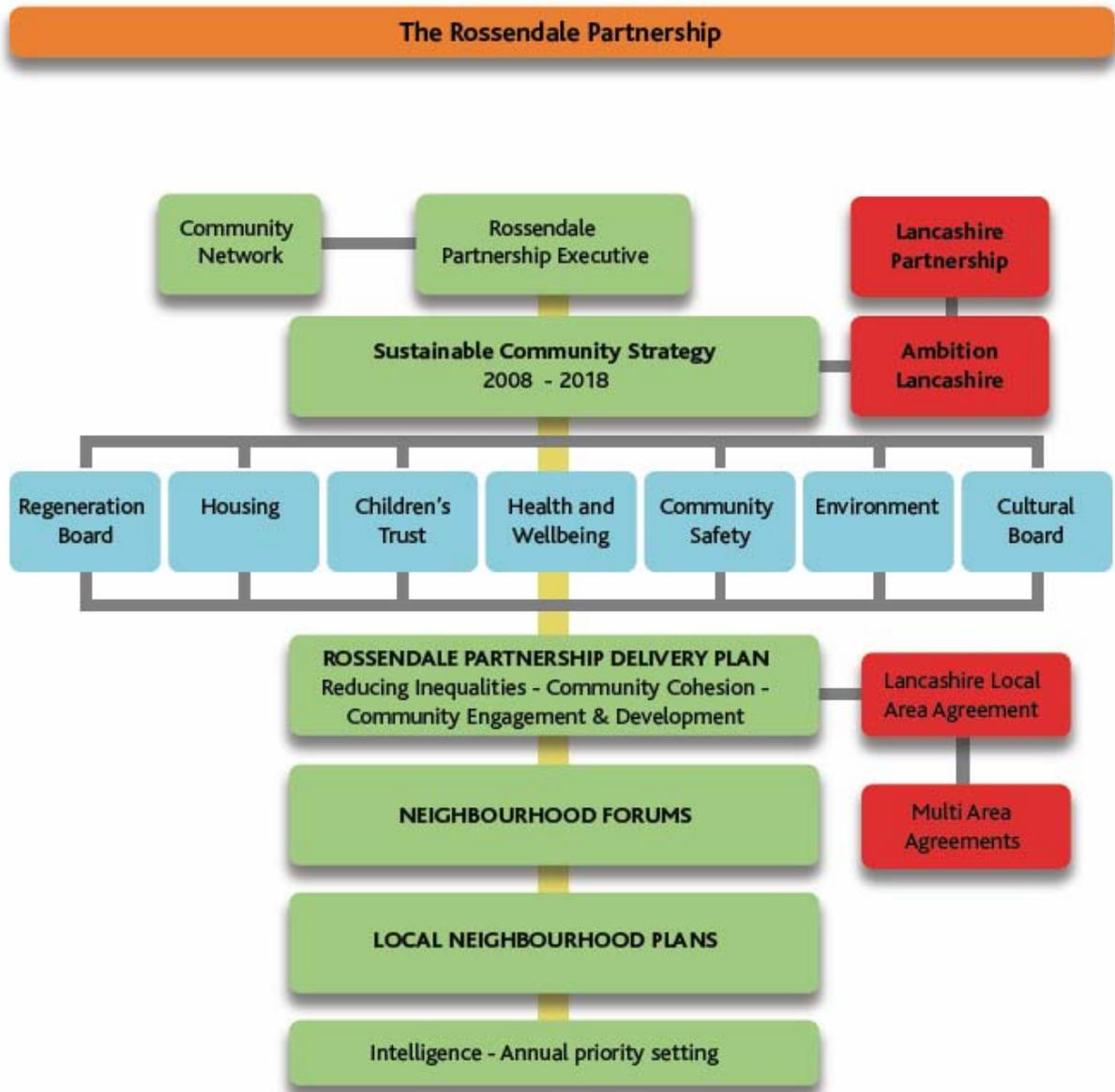
Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

<b>Contact Officer</b>	
Name	Mike Riley
Position	Communities Manager
Service / Team	Communities
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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Rossendale Partnership Structure	Appendix 1
Views expressed by partner organisations	Appendix 2
Article 8	Appendix 3
Terms of Reference	Appendix 4

# APPENDIX 1



## APPENDIX 2



**Lancashire  
Constabulary**

police and communities together

Rossendale Police Station,  
Bacup Road,  
Waterfoot  
BB4 7JA

15<sup>th</sup> January 2009

**RE: Neighbourhood Management in Rossendale**

Dear Mike

One of the key areas for the borough over the next 10 years will be the delivery of its Sustainable Communities Strategy. More importantly when I talk about delivery I mean the challenge we as partners have in order to translate strategy into local service delivery with clear and robust channels of accountability.

Local Police are now are working from 4 operating centres in the Rossendale Valley. These are, Haslingden, Rawtenstall Bacup and Whitworth which are served by locally based and led community teams, whilst our response officers have a borough wide remit and are based at Waterfoot. This month will see Rossendale MAPS(Multi Agency Problem Solving ) Team sited at out new building in Waterfoot and the opportunity to address through intelligence led problem solving across the borough is both exciting and needed.

Effective Neighbourhood Management in Rossendale is the key to success and will provide a strong and accountable framework for the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and other relevant targets. In order to achieve this it would be helpful if Rossendale Council review the working of its Neighbourhood Forums both in terms of number, function and membership.

Capacity for the police and other partners is an issue. A move to 3 forums based around our existing community based team locations would be excellent and it would undoubtedly ensure a more responsive, effective and focused contribution.

One size does not fit all. Areas have their own local needs and partners need to be able to identify them and respond to them quickly and effectively. The production of neighbourhood plans and the necessity for partners to work to those plans is an effective delivery method. The roll of elected members as drivers and contributors will be essential within the framework.

In conclusion having read the Rossendale Council's proposals around Neighbourhood Management I am fully support of it and believe that it will enhance service delivery across this borough. It fits snugly with local policing and local accountability. The time for change is right.



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Date: 22 January 2009

Mr Michael Riley  
Communities Manager  
Rossendale Borough Council  
Stubbylee Hall  
Stubbylee  
Bacup  
OL13 0DE

Dear Mike

### **Neighbourhood Management**

Thanks for letting us have sight of the Neighbourhood Management proposals for Rossendale. NHS East Lancashire is committed to working with the Borough Council, the LSP and other key stakeholders in improving health and wellbeing of the local population.

We are all too aware that there are pockets of deprivation that need focused attention – as these tend to be the areas whose population experiences worst health outcomes and lower levels of life expectancy. This is, of course, while continuing to meet the needs of our whole population.

We have a range of staff working at a neighbourhood/area level in addition to those employed in front line delivery as well as those providing advice and liaison services. These include: Neighbourhood Health workers and Health Trainers. We are therefore supportive of work that looks geographically as well as thematically. In addition the proposal seems to allow for increased work with local communities, the voluntary/community and faith sector as well as other local stakeholders. This will be important in fulfilling community empowerment objectives.

Your proposals have prompted us to consider the demands that are arising from developing neighbourhood management and other area arrangements across East Lancashire.

We are not yet fully sighted of other LSP/Borough Council plans and therefore can't with certainty say how practically we will link in with the forums. However, we are considering this and will support the proposal to the extent of our capacity.

 Yours sincerely

**Janet Tonge**  
**Community Network Director**

cc: David Peat  
Dr Ellis Friedman  
Tim Mansfield  
Sue Harvey  
Bob Huntbach



People • Homes • Communities  
Part of the Trans-Pennine Housing Group

11<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Mike Riley  
Rossendale Borough Council  
Stubbylee Hall  
Bacup  
OL13 0DE

Green Vale Court, New Hall Hey, Rawtenstall,  
Rossendale, Lancashire, BB4 6HR

This matter is being dealt with by Lynn Hurrell

E Mail: [lynn.hurrell@greenvalehomes.co.uk](mailto:lynn.hurrell@greenvalehomes.co.uk)  
Telephone: (01706) 836321

Hi Mike

I would on behalf of Green Vale like to offer our support to the direction Rossendale Borough is taking in respect of the Neighbourhood Management agenda.

As you know we have recently introduced Green Vale Area Panels which meet quarterly to look at issues of our residents and their neighbourhoods. These are held in the East and West of Rossendale on a quarterly basis. However I feel there are many areas in which we can work together to tackle the wider neighbourhood agenda within the valley. I feel this review offers a framework of how we can work together on delivering services to customers. It should be an effective way to coordinating responses to wider communities' issues.

The production of neighbourhood plans with multi agency 'buy in' will serve as a 'driver' for change and commitment and will be essential in order for the framework to be effective.

I feel positive that we can work together on a joint framework that focuses on target driven activity for the delivery of services to meet the needs of its communities.

To conclude, I am fully supportive of Rossendale Borough Council's proposals around Neighbourhood Management and believe that it should enhance delivery of services across this borough.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Hurrell  
Executive Director – Asset Management



**Registered Office:** Green Vale Homes Limited, Green Vale Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale. BB4 6HR



**Executive Director:** Lynn Hurrell **Web:** [www.greenvalehomes.co.uk](http://www.greenvalehomes.co.uk)

**VAT No:** 875 1847 85 **Registered in England and Wales Registered No:** 30035R

## Appendix 3

# ARTICLE 8 – REGULATORY COMMITTEES, NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

## 1.0 Regulatory Committees

The Council will appoint:

- A Development Control Committee of up to nine Members to be responsible for dealing with planning applications and related matters.

No Member may serve on the Development Control Committee as a Member or Substitute Member who has not been agreed by the Chief Executive to be competent by training or qualification to take part in the Committee's work.

- A Licensing Committee of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 Members to have responsibility for licensing and associated regulatory matters.

No Member may serve on the Licensing Committee as a Member or Substitute Member who has not been agreed by the Chief Executive to be competent by training or qualification to take part in the Committee's work.

## 2.0 Neighbourhood Forums

The Council may appoint Neighbourhood Forums as it sees fit, if it is satisfied that to do so will ensure improved service delivery in the context of best value and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision making.

## 3.0 Form and Composition

The Council will appoint the Neighbourhood Forums as set out in the first column of the table below, composed as set out in the second column of that table and with the terms of reference and operational framework set out in (b) below

Name of Neighbourhood Forum	Composition
	<p>For all Neighbourhood Forums political balance is not necessary amongst the Council Members as all Members are from the Wards within the Forum area</p> <p>Membership of each Forum to include one County Councillor.</p> <p>Membership of Whitworth Forum to include one Whitworth Town Councillor</p> <p>Representatives from organisations based in the area and local service providers. Such representation to be determined by each Neighbourhood Forum.</p>
Bacup	<p>All Members from the following Wards: Greensclough, Irwell, Stacksteads</p>
Haslingden, Helmshore and Edenfield	<p>All Members from the following Wards: Eden, Greenfield, Helmshore and Worsley</p>
Rawtenstall	<p>All Members from the following Wards: Cribden, Goodshaw, Hareholme, Longholme, and Whitewell</p>
Whitworth	<p>All Members from the following wards: Facit and Shawforth Healey and Whitworth</p>

#### 4.0 Substitutions

With the exception of Councillors, all Neighbourhood Forum members may appoint a substitute to attend in their absence. That substitute should be from the same organisation/group and from a level in the organisation that will have autonomy to make informed decisions.

## **5.0 Chairman**

The Chair of the Neighbourhood Forum will be a Rossendale Borough Council Member appointed from within the Neighbourhood Forum boundary area and shall be elected annually by Rossendale Council.

## **6.0 Resignations**

The resignation of any position must be in writing to the Portfolio Holder, Communities and Neighbourhoods.

## **7.0 Attendance**

Any Neighbourhood Forum member not attending four consecutive scheduled meetings will be requested to confirm the reason for non-attendance to the Chairman which will be reported to the next meeting of the forum.

## **8.0 Role of the Neighbourhood Forum members:**

- Jointly agree priorities for the local area to be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Encourage applications for grant funding.
- Contribute to the development of the Neighbourhood Forum agenda
- Provide regular updates from their organisation/group - sharing information and best practice.
- Take back comments / views of the Neighbourhood Forum and feed into consultations and policy changes.
- Contribute to debates at Neighbourhood Forum meetings to help identify a collective solution to identified priorities.
- Commit resources to local projects where appropriate.
- Jointly monitor the implementation of the Local Community Plan via regular monitoring reports
- Help 'unblock' complex issues where progress is not being made
- Refer any complex issues to the relevant Rossendale Partnership theme group or its Executive.

## **9.0 Meeting Frequency and administration**

9.1 All Neighbourhood Forums will hold four business meetings per annum which are not open to the public and will not fall within the Access to Information Procedure Rules. The Council will take responsibility for organising, convening and recording the meetings. Additional twice yearly open public forum meetings will be held to provide an opportunity for any member of the public to discuss any issue affecting their area or the borough and these will comply with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

9.2 Special meetings called by the Neighbourhood Forum may be convened following agreement between the Neighbourhood Forum Chair, Portfolio Holder, Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Chief Executive.

- 9.3 Meetings of the Neighbourhood Forum will be held in the evening and will normally commence at 18.00.
- 9.4 Neighbourhood Forum meetings will not be held during the purdah period prior to the Local, County, National and European elections. Individual forum meetings may also be deferred in the event of unavoidable events such as a bi-election.

## **10.0 Agenda**

- 10.1 Whilst the Agenda of each Neighbourhood Forum will vary due to respective local priorities, each Agenda will be based upon the principle of including the following items:-
- Feedback from the Rossendale Partnership Executive, theme groups and operational delivery agencies such as the Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) team on issues of local relevance.
  - Partnership and public consultation issues
  - Progress on delivering the agreed outcomes and targets set out within the Neighbourhood Action Plan and any emerging priorities.
  - Grant allocation and feedback
  - Community Cohesion
- 10.2 The Agenda for the Neighbourhood Forum will be the responsibility of the Area Manager in consultation with the Chair.
- 10.3 No literature will be permitted to be distributed at the Neighbourhood Forum without the prior consent of the Chair.

## **11.0 Relationship with Rossendale Borough Council**

- 11.1 Rossendale Borough Council may establish Neighbourhood Forums as it deems appropriate if it is satisfied that to do so will ensure improved service delivery in the context of more efficient, transparent and accountable decision-making.
- 11.2 The Forums are a three-way partnerships between the Council, the community and locally-appointed service providers with the responsibility for procedural issues vested in the Council.
- 11.3 Whilst the Neighbourhood Forum is a partnership within the Rossendale Partnership structure the Council has a distinct role in promoting the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Forum.
- 11.4 In the light of this commitment, the Council will:-
- Be impartial in its dealings with the Neighbourhood Forum;

- Provide administrative and officer support - including meeting arrangements and minute taking;
- Encourage attendance;
- Accept an annual report prepared by each Neighbourhood Forum on local issues for consideration by Council;
- Refer appropriate policy matters to the Neighbourhood Forum;
- As part of the work programmes of Scrutiny and Cabinet consider any appropriate reports from the Neighbourhood Forum;
- Take account of the Neighbourhood Forum annual reports at the Council Cabinet and Senior Management Team annual away day.
- Provide advice and guidance as required by the Forum; and
- Ensure that a Senior Officer of the Council is available to support each Neighbourhood Forum.

11.5 The Chair of the Neighbourhood Forum's will submit a collective 'Annual Report' to Council

## **12.0 Relationship with the Neighbourhood Forums and the Local Strategic Partnership (Rossendale Partnership)**

12.1 The Chair of the Neighbourhood Forum's will submit a collective 'Annual Report' to the Rossendale Partnership Executive

12.2 Neighbourhood Forum minutes will be circulated to the members of the Rossendale Partnership Executive.

12.3 Neighbourhood Forum minutes will formally note if members have an action to refer an issue to their organisation.

12.4 Neighbourhood Forum Chairs to raise any knotty issues with the appropriate organisation, thematic partnership chair or portfolio holder.

12.5 The Rossendale Partnership Executive to have standing agenda item – Knotty Issues arising at Neighbourhood Forum meetings.

12.6 The Rossendale Partnership Executive will act as the 'un-blocker' where knotty issues at a Neighbourhood Forum level need a greater strategic input. The Neighbourhood Forum Chair will refer any operational issues to supporting delivery teams for example the Multi Agency Problem Solving team or Police And Community Together (PACT), who intern will refer any knotty issues back to the Neighbourhood Forum.

12.7 Community organisations/groups who are members of the Neighbourhood Forum will have 'Feedback from the Neighbourhood Forum' as a standard item on their community agenda. And they will provide copies of their minutes to the Neighbourhood Forum.

### **13.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Arrangements**

13.1 The following monitoring and evaluation arrangements will apply:-

- That each Neighbourhood Forum drafts an Annual Report for consideration by the Council and Rossendale Partnership.
- One year from the launch of the new arrangement they will undergo a review and evaluation with a report to be submitted to Cabinet.

### **14.0 Declaration of Interest**

It is essential that any member of the Neighbourhood Forum declares an interest in any agenda item from which they or the organisation they represent or any organisation to which they belong, might make a financial, commercial or personal gain as a result of the partnership business.

This interest should be declared prior to the item being considered and the relevant member(s) should take no part in the discussion of the item and vacate the room, if the matter is a personal and prejudicial interest.

Elected Members must adhere to the Code of Conduct in relation to interests and seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting, wherever possible.

### **15.0 Decision Making**

There are no Executive Powers delegated to the Neighbourhood Forums.

No decision of the Neighbourhood Forum can be expected to override decisions of individual organisations. Rather, decisions made by the Forum are intended to influence partners, who will use their best endeavours to promote the partnerships decisions.

In line with the principle of the Rossendale Partnership's terms of reference the Neighbourhood Forums will seek to take decisions by consensus where possible.

Where normal healthy debate develops into conflict such as to threaten the operation of the Forum, the Chair will defer the matter to the Rossendale Partnership's Executive where it will be discussed by senior officers or Chief Executives from the relevant organisations with a view to seeking a resolution.

Occasionally there may be urgent items that require a decision outside the normal cycle of meetings. In such circumstances decision making authority is

delegated to the Chief Executive of Rossendale Borough Council (as Accountable body representative) in consultation with the Chair of the Forum and the appropriate sector representatives, dependent upon the issue.

## **16.0 Neighbourhood Forum Grants**

16.1 Neighbourhood Forums allocate grants to external organisations who can demonstrate that the use of the funding assists in delivering on the Council's Corporate Objectives and those of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), The Rossendale Partnership.

The Council aims for its Neighbourhood Forum funding processes to be open, fair and transparent. The Neighbourhood Forum Funding Policy offers a framework for determining grant applications. Grants allocated by Rossendale Borough Council will be allocated and determined in accordance with the Neighbourhood Forum Funding Policy which states:

- That the Forum delegates authority to consider and allocate council grants to a Working Group of three Rossendale Borough Council Members and a witness from the community voluntary sector.
- The Council retains the right to refuse funding to any organisation who it feels does not meet the criteria set out within the policy, any organisation which it feels may bring the Council or the Neighbourhood Forum into disrepute or any organisation which it believes has been involved in any racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory practices.
- The Council, when producing its end of year accounts will also publish details of all grants given by the Forums in that year, which organisations received the funding and for what purpose.

## Appendix 4

### TERMS OF REFERENCE – NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

Also refer to Article 8 of the Council’s Constitution for the Operational Framework of the Neighbourhood Forums.

1. To appoint representatives from organisations based in the area and core partner bodies
2. To influence partners to promote the development and delivery of a Neighbourhood Action Plan.
3. To influence the way in which partners plan and allocate short medium and long term resources to meet local priorities identified in the Neighbourhood Action Plan
4. To ensure that all partners work together to deliver joint actions to help achieve the shared vision as set out in Rossendale’s Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and Neighbourhood Action Plans.
5. To encourage applications for grant funding.
6. To receive regular updates from organisations/groups - sharing information and best practice.
7. To receive and monitor implementation of Neighbourhood Action Plans
8. To make representations and recommendations to the Cabinet, Council or Committees, the relevant Rossendale Partnership Theme Group or the Rossendale Partnership Executive or other relevant organisation in respect of neighbourhood matters.
9. To receive reports from the Rossendale Partnership Executive, theme groups and operational delivery agencies such as the Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) team on issues of local relevance.
10. To consider partnership and public consultation issues.
11. To set up a Working Group of three Borough Council Members which has delegated authority to consider and allocate Neighbourhood Forum grants received from the Council. A member of the community voluntary sector to be in attendance as an observer at the meetings.
12. To consider feedback from Neighbourhood Forum grant recipients.
13. To discuss Community Cohesion.

14. To prepare an Annual Report to be submitted to Full Council and the Rossendale Partnership Executive.
15. To consider policy matters, as appropriate for the purpose of consultation.
16. To discuss any matter affecting the area covered by the Neighbourhood Forum.
17. To promote the interests of the neighbourhood and assist the area's residents, businesses and community groups in meeting their needs and aspirations for the neighbourhood.
18. To act as a consultation mechanism in respect of issues affecting the neighbourhood and its residents.
19. To invite organisations/groups to Neighbourhood Forum meetings, as appropriate.
20. To deal with issues relating to Christmas Lights:-
  - To be consulted by the Borough Council on its expenditure for the provision of Christmas Lights.
  - To decide on the Christmas Lights displays within the Neighbourhood Forum area, specifically:
    - To seek opportunities for contributions from local businesses, and other forms of sponsorship.
    - Short Term Strategy and Action Plan for lighting arrangements in the Neighbourhood Forum area.
    - Longer Term Strategy and Action Plan which seeks to provide improved Christmas lighting in the Neighbourhood Forum area.
    - To be consulted on all matters relating to placement of lights, switch-on events, including promotion of the events, the format of the switch-ons, to agree the date of switch-ons, consultation with schools.
    - To monitor and allocate spend for the allocated budget for Christmas Lights for the Neighbourhood Forum Area.
    - To deal with any other matters in relation to Christmas Lights for the Neighbourhood Forum Area