



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
All Wards

## **FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:**

**Corporate Directors' Board**  
**Cabinet Briefing**  
**Cabinet**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008**  
**25<sup>th</sup> February 2008**  
**31<sup>st</sup> March 2008**

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### **Ward Community Meetings – Progress Report and Key Decision Areas**

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#### **Report of Corporate Director of Resources**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This report informs Cabinet members of the progress made so far in preparing for ward community meetings.

##### **2. Summary**

- 2.1. On 22 November 2007, the Council formally approved plans to introduce a new system of ward community meetings across the City. The meetings will replace the present bi-monthly cycle of area committees, the last round of which was completed on 7<sup>th</sup> February.
- 2.2. To smooth the transition between area committees and ward community meetings, work has been done to provide or update guidance on a number of practical implementation issues. The work has been informed by responses to a questionnaire circulated to all councillors as well as by discussions with officers in many of the service directorates of the City Council most closely affected and with key external partners, namely, the Police, Primary Care Trust, Fire and Rescue Service and Voluntary Action Leicester.
- 2.3. In addition, the implementation of ward community meetings has also been informed by a highly successful launch event in the afternoon, and again in the early evening, of Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February at the Leicester Tigers Conference Centre, attended by in excess of 220 participants. All the “stakeholders” in the new system were represented at the event, including interested members of the public, and it was an opportunity to both explain the Council's vision for the new arrangements and to consult on ways of working.
- 2.4. This report summarises the outcome of this further work and seeks approval to a range of guidance and advice that will smooth the introduction of the new arrangements from April 2008.

### 3. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that Members:

- a) Agree the vision and guiding principles set out in section 4.
- b) Agree the approach to community engagement set out in section 5 and the guidance in Annex 1.
- c) Agree the guidelines for engaging with front-line service providers set out in section 6.
- d) Agree the approach to the preparation of ward action plans set out in section 8 and Annex 2.
- e) Agree the approach to the use of ward budgets set out in section 9 and the guidance in Annex 3.
- f) Note the possibility in section 10 that some wards may agree to hold joint meetings where there are common issues and priorities.
- g) Agree the links with neighbourhood management described in section 11.
- h) Agree the approach to communications set out in section 12.

### 4. Vision and guiding principles

- 4.1. Ward community meetings offer a framework that will encourage people to get involved in debate about the adequacy and quality of local services and the condition of their local environment. They will provide a focus, led by ward councillors, around which the organisations and agencies responsible for services in each ward can come together in the interests of residents. There will also be opportunities to address other issues.
- 4.2. The vision is of much more than just a series of meetings; rather it is of **a new and flexible way of collaborative working at a local level, leading to services that are better co-ordinated and more sensitive to the needs and circumstances of local communities.**
- 4.3. To achieve this vision, ward community meetings will be:
  - Inclusive, open and accessible to all.
  - Positive, highlighting successes and achievements as well as issues of concern.
  - Focussed on, and structured around the needs and priorities of local communities.
  - Collaborative, with the people responsible for services at a local level sharing their experiences and information and working together with each

other, with ward councillors and with the communities they serve.

- Honest and realistic in their response to people's expectations.
- Effective, acting as a force for change and improvement in the standard of local services and facilities and the overall quality of life in an area.

## 5. Community Partners

- 5.1. One of the key principles underlying the move to ward community meetings is to improve engagement with communities, leading to services that are more responsive to local issues. The November Council report noted that, in addition to a general encouragement to residents to attend, "partners, services and representatives of consultative groups (e.g. tenants groups) and community groups will be invited to attend". It also envisaged that meetings might "co-opt" a number of non-voting members.
- 5.2. Whilst it is now accepted that the term "co-optee" is not appropriate in these circumstances, the principle of a strengthened involvement of the voluntary and community sector remains clear. Guidance has been developed on the role and status of what might be termed "community partners" and on the process by which they might be agreed (**copy attached at Annex 1**). This recommends that wards should actively work towards **building up a defined "network" of community partners**. Together with ward councillors and representatives from the main external partners, notably the Police and Primary Care Trust, they would form a **"panel"** to drive the work of the community meeting forward and to ensure that the views of their respective communities are taken into account.

## 6. Working relationships and contact points with service providers

- 6.1. Discussions have taken place with many of the Council services that have a significant focus on the quality of life in local areas, including: Environmental Services; Regeneration, Highways and Transport; Housing Accommodation and Tenancy Support; Community Services; Young People's Support; Children's Centres; Community Libraries.
- 6.2. Ideally, over time, **each ward should build up an informal network, or "virtual team", of people who have an interest in and responsibility for that particular locality, co-ordinated by the relevant members support officer**. This should ensure that information is available about local services, that consultation takes place about significant developments and that public concerns are addressed in a co-ordinated way.
- 6.3. Where services are managed or structured on an area basis, and particularly where there are local projects or service points, **it should be relatively easy to identify individuals who could act as the lead or contact point for that service area**. This will be more difficult in smaller, City-wide specialist professional or technical service teams that do not have the capacity to support each and every ward meeting without imposing unreasonable demands on their staff. **In those cases, it will be more appropriate for wards to deal with issues thematically or through joint meetings**.

- 6.4. In the first year of their operation, ward community meetings are likely to **focus on environmental or street scene issues**, though not to the exclusion of other matters of concern to local people. In response, the Service Director, Environmental Services, intends to appoint additional staff to support the new arrangements, with the aim of providing information to residents and responding to queries as they arise at meetings themselves.
- 6.5. Discussions have also taken place with the City Division of Leicestershire Constabulary, the Public Health Division of Leicester Primary Care Trust and the Community Safety Support Group of the Fire and Rescue Service. In all cases, there is a keen commitment to work closely with the Council and the local community at a neighbourhood level **in ways that complement and add value to existing action-oriented, co-ordination arrangements (such as Police Joint Action Groups), rather than duplicate them.**
- 6.6. The issues that the new arrangements raise for external partners are in principle much the same as those identified within the City Council. Also, the opportunities and challenges in developing effective working relationships at ward level follow similar lines. Ward community meetings will be able to **build on local operational structures, projects and working arrangements where they exist** (neighbourhood policing teams, community health co-ordinators, healthy living centres, children's centres, community libraries, local fire stations etc). Where this is not feasible, they will be expected to **use themed and joint meetings to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of engagement.**

## **7. Approaches to the organisation of meetings**

- 7.1. The main quarterly community meetings will be in two parts, with the first aimed at sharing information and identifying issues through a process of "managed informality". This will involve initiatives such as information stands, engagement with local people on specific issues, consultations and presentations. The second part of the meeting will be a more formal decision-making section where this is needed.
- 7.2. The transition from what has, in effect, been a programme of one-off area committee meetings to a more structured, focused dialogue between communities and service providers will need to be handled carefully. This applies particularly to arrangements for taking and responding to questions from members of the public about issues that affect them as individuals. Petitions can also be received at the ward community meetings along with appropriate feedback.

## **8. Ward action plans**

- 8.1. The main task for the first cycle of meetings will be to **identify priorities for action within the ward in co-operation with local people.** This will, in part, build on work done in neighbourhood management areas and area committees, where appropriate, and elsewhere. A suggested template for developing an action plan is attached (**at Annex 2**).

- 8.2. Ward action plans will give direction to the work of the community meetings through the year and act as a guide to the use of ward budget allocations. However, **the main focus of the action plan is likely to be on seeking to influence the way in which departments and agencies provide services through their regular or “mainstream” budgets, with the aim of making them more responsive to local needs and circumstances.**
- 8.3. Further work is required to clarify the mechanisms through which issues and ideas that emerge from ward community meetings are fed through the Council’s scrutiny process (and ultimately the Leicester Partnership’s performance management process) into decisions about City-wide service standards and spending priorities

## **9. Ward budgets**

- 9.1. Council has agreed that each ward will have a budget of £10,000 in the first year (2008-09), rising to £15,000 in each of the second and third years. This will be used **primarily to take forward agreed priorities as set out in ward action plans**, perhaps by kick-starting new ideas and initiatives or funding one-off projects and activities that benefit the local community. It will be open to wards to make available **up to one third of their budget (£3,500 in 2008/09 and £5,000 in each of the subsequent two years) as a “community chest” for small grants.**
- 9.2. Guidance on the criteria and application processes relating to each element of the budget has been drafted (**copies attached at Annex 3**).

## **10. The timing and sequence of ward community meetings**

- 10.1. The report to Council proposed a 3-monthly cycle of meetings starting in April. This was seen as a minimum frequency. Individual wards may choose to hold say one further regular meeting each quarter, perhaps to give different areas or neighbourhoods within their wards the opportunity to meet separately. They might also want to deal with particular topics and events or to follow up specific issues in different ways, perhaps as street visits/inspections, or through “task and finish” sub-groups. Where there are common issues affecting adjacent wards, or parts of wards, joint meetings may be appropriate.
- 10.2. A schedule for the first round of meetings for the April to July period is currently being prepared by Democratic Services in consultation with ward councillors and taking account of the officer resources available to support the new arrangements. Some councillors have indicated a wish to start with a joint meeting where cross boundary issues are felt to be significant. In those cases, it will be for the meeting to decide whether it is thought helpful and appropriate to continue in this way in the light of locally agreed ward priorities.

## **11. Lessons from neighbourhood management**

- 11.1. The City now has several years experience of neighbourhood management activity in its most deprived areas, using a variety of approaches. A review of future neighbourhood working is currently taking place. As ward community

meetings roll out across the City, it will be important to **reflect on the lessons that this experience indicates will be crucial to their longer term effectiveness and success**. These include the value of:

- Designing services that are “joined up” at the local level.
- Improving the tailoring, targeting and take-up of services through better local information about local needs and barriers.
- Carrying out positive outreach work to link services with vulnerable people.
- Bringing performance management to the neighbourhood level.
- Producing clear signals of investment in an area through physical improvements to public buildings and spaces.
- Putting real effort into community engagement and fostering inspired residents.

11.2. For the immediate future, revised arrangements for neighbourhood management come into effect at the same time as community meetings. The three continuing schemes (St Matthews/St Marks, Saffron and New Parks) will need to **integrate with their respective ward meetings**. In practice, this means:

- The Neighbourhood Manager will report progress to the ward community meeting.
- Ward action plans will be linked to neighbourhood delivery plans.
- The Neighbourhood Manager will take forward issues raised at ward meetings that relate to the NM area.

11.3. The groundwork already done in the two schemes ending in April (St Peters and Beaumont Leys/Abbey Rise/Stocking Farm) will be **wrapped up into their ward meetings** by, for example:

- Inviting resident representation from neighbourhood boards as part of the process described in section 5 above.
- Taking forward commitments in neighbourhood delivery plans through ward action plans.

## **12. Communications**

12.1. All Councillors have received a questionnaire summarising the new arrangements and seeking their ideas on implementation and many have now responded. Articles aimed at all managers have appeared in the Council’s e-bulletin, SOURCE, and for the workforce as a whole in the internal newsletter, FACE. Discussions with the Police, Primary Care Trust, Fire and Rescue Service and Voluntary Action Leicester have also taken place.

- 12.2. In addition to general media coverage generated by council meetings and the Launch Event, the shift in emphasis from areas to wards will be **covered in the April/May edition of the Council's public newspaper, LINK** (published at the end of March), which will **introduce the concept of ward action plans, invite people to suggest local priorities for action and provide contact points.**
- 12.3. Once underway, individual ward meetings will be expected to use basic communication methods such as posters, leaflets, community websites and local newsletters to advertise their meetings and promote their activities. Local schools, community, neighbourhood and youth centres, libraries and faith centres are obvious venues for publicity. A **common design theme** for all publicity has been prepared for general use.
- 12.4. The Council's Internet and Intranet sites offer significant ongoing opportunities to establish wards as, in effect, a "unit" of communication both with the public and with all the agencies concerned, helping to strengthen ward identities and encourage community involvement. Discussions are taking place with the Communications and IT teams aimed at **streamlining the process of accessing information about community meetings and enabling the public to contribute ideas and express local priorities for action.**

### **13. Next Steps**

The implementation phase will commence with the first ward community meetings on 3 April (Rushey Mead Ward), with remaining meetings being arranged thereafter. Arrangements are also in hand to ensure that 'lessons learned' from these early meetings are integrated into subsequent meetings.

### **14. Financial Implications**

The Revenue Budget Strategy for 2008/09 – 2010/11 for the Resources Department includes funding proposals for Community Meetings. It is proposed that budgets for these Community Meetings, to be used for one off spending, should be £10,000 each in 2008/09, rising to £15,000 in 2009/10 and 2010/11. This gives a total budget of £220,000 in 2008/09 rising to £330,000 in 2009/10 and 2010/11. The level of annual budget from 2011/12 onwards will be reviewed once the Community Meetings have become established.

***Andy Morley, Chief Accountant, ext 297404/***

### **15. Legal Implications**

Legal services have contributed to the terms of reference and how the Ward Community Meetings will operate. There are no further legal implications.

***Peter Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services ext 296302***



## 16. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	yes	Sections 4 and 5
Policy	yes	Whole report
Sustainable and Environmental	no	
Crime and Disorder	yes	Section 6
Human Rights Act	no	
Elderly/People on Low Income	no	

## 17. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Report to Cabinet (October 2007) and Council (November 2007), Ward Community Meetings,  
Strong and Prosperous Communities, DCLG, October 2006  
Labour Manifesto, May 2007

## 18. Consultations

Corporate Directors Board, Services Departments,  
Councillor Draycott

## 19. Report Author

Chris Gale, Temporary Member Services Officer, Democratic Services. Ext 39 8807

<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	N/A
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	Executive (Cabinet)



## Guidance on the Approach to Community Engagement in Ward Community Meetings

### Purpose

1. The report approved by Full Council in November says that, in addition to a general encouragement to residents to attend, “partners, services and representatives of consultative groups (e.g. tenants groups) and community groups will be invited to attend”. The draft terms of reference (Appendix 1) indicated that a community meeting could also involve a number of non-voting members, subject to additional guidance.
2. This note suggests how wards can achieve a strong involvement from local voluntary and community organisations in their community meetings and ongoing activities. It considers the question of the possible role and status of voluntary and community sector (VCS) representatives and how they might be identified and encouraged to get involved.

### Role and Status of Community Representatives

3. Ward community meetings will be constituted as committees of the Council, whose membership comprises the councillors for each ward. As such, **formal decision taking will be the responsibility of councillors. When recommendations to Cabinet about the use of ward budgets are made, the views of ward councillors will need to be reported.**
4. There are a number of potential advantages, both to the effectiveness of ward community meetings and in terms of encouraging a positive and collaborative relationship with the local community, **in identifying a small number of local people who are willing to work alongside ward councillors on a regular basis.** That work could include:
  - acting as a two-way link between local residents and the Council and its partners in terms of the flow of information, local experience of services, ideas and practical suggestions for change.
  - getting involved in developing and/or commenting on key documents such as the ward action plan.
  - getting involved in the process of service performance monitoring and scrutiny.
  - chairing/managing the informal part of ward meetings in the absence of a councillor and seeking to establish the consensus view of the meeting where necessary.

- convening and managing sub-groups, “patch” walks and other events on behalf of councillors in between formal meetings, perhaps to take forward specific topics or tasks.
5. These advantages could be realised to some extent simply by relying on the contributions of members of local voluntary and community organisations, and interested individual residents, at and possibly between meetings. However, this is likely to be informal, ad hoc, unreliable, unclear and patchy in its extent.
  6. This paper therefore recommends that wards **should actively work towards building up a network of community partners**. Together with ward councillors and representatives from the main external partners, notably the Police and Primary Care Trust, they would form a panel to drive the work of the community meeting forward and to ensure that the views of their respective communities are taken into account.
  7. It is important to be clear about the status of community partners in relation not only to councillors themselves but also to other members of the public attending in an individual capacity. It is therefore recommended that **community partners should be asked to agree to certain rights and responsibilities relating to partnership working** and to follow normal procedures for dealing with potential conflicts of interest. Like all partners, they would be encouraged to work together in support of shared objectives and priorities rather than just the pursuit of individual agendas.
  8. In return, **community partners could expect:**
    - to receive all agenda papers and minutes as a matter of course.
    - to be consulted about priorities for action within the ward and about guidelines for the allocation of ward budgets.
    - to be reimbursed reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their role, for example, travel and childcare costs.

#### Identifying Community Partners

9. Community partners should be able to **demonstrate some accountability** back into the community. Unlike formal partnership structures, such as those in place in some neighbourhood management areas, it is not thought appropriate at this very early stage in the development of community meetings to contemplate selecting or electing community partners as individuals in their own right. Rather, it is **proposed** that the opportunity to get involved in this way is offered to established, properly **constituted** groups and organisations, i.e. having an agreed set of rules about membership, the appointment of a committee and/or officers, the auditing of annual accounts and (usually) the operation of a bank account.
10. The organisations most relevant to the work of ward community meetings will be those whose objectives and activities **directly relate to the quality of life for people living in any part of the ward**, excluding single issue campaign groups, party political organisations and groups that are engaged exclusively

in religious activities. Examples of the sorts of organisation whose work is likely to be concerned with community quality of life are as follows:

- Area Forums
  - Area Youth Forums
  - Residents Associations
  - Tenants and Leaseholder Associations (both Council and Housing Associations)
  - Community Associations (general community associations, as opposed to the current 6 City Council Tenant Community Associations)
  - Local regeneration partnerships
  - Neighbourhood Management Boards
  - Neighbourhood Watch Street Committees
  - Ethnic Groups
  - Faith Groups involved in wider community activity
  - Environmental Groups
  - Patient and Public Involvement Forums (soon to be replaced with Local Involvement Networks concerning health and social care services)
11. There are significant differences from one ward to another – indeed from one neighbourhood to another – in **the extent and capacity of the organised voluntary and community sector**. Some wards, particularly those with recent experience of regeneration and community development activity, will already have a thriving voluntary and community sector with many established organisations; others will have a patchy history of activity and few established organisations. Development work to encourage new groups or to support and reinvigorate existing groups may already be happening, or could in future be identified as a local priority in some ward action plans. For these reasons, it would not be appropriate to set a fixed target number of community partners, although practicalities would suggest that there needs to be guidance on a maximum number.
12. One of the key themes running through the Council's proposals for ward community meetings is that of local discretion to reflect local needs and circumstances. Consistent with that theme, it is recommended that **individual wards should be free to decide for themselves** how they will approach the need to engage constructively with their local communities whilst being **encouraged to work towards the goal of a network of community partners within a guideline range of 4 – 6 individuals in each ward (exceptions to this range can be made with the approval of Cabinet)**. This means that **the nature and pace of engagement, and the precise number of community partners that is deemed appropriate**, may vary from ward to ward.
13. Whatever process is adopted for identifying community partners, it must follow the principles of being fair, unbiased, representative of communities in the ward and transparent to ensure respect for the system and for the people themselves. The following approach is recommended:

- Wards use their first meeting to make people aware of the idea and opportunity, by circulating this guidance for community groups to consider and reflect on.
  - At the second meeting, organisations that meet the criteria in paragraphs 9 and 10 can respond by expressing their interest in putting forward a representative from among their membership to become a community partner, having agreed to adhere to guidance on the role and responsibilities that the position would entail.
  - Expressions of interest are reported to and considered at the third community meeting. Formal approval would be the responsibility of ward councillors, who could choose to exercise this role in consultation with the wider public by putting names to the full meeting for endorsement through a show of hands.
  - To help ensure close working relations and avoid duplication of effort, it is recommended that wards **should give priority to nominations from area forums, area youth forums, neighbourhood management boards (see para 14) and the tenant and leaseholder forums proposed for Council housing areas.**
14. On March 3rd, Cabinet will consider changes to current neighbourhood management arrangements for 2008/09. To ensure close working with ward community meetings and to build on the valuable experience of neighbourhood working so far it is recommended that:
- The three continuing neighbourhood management schemes, i.e. St. Matthews and St. Marks (split into two separate arrangements), Saffron and New Parks, should liaise closely with their respective ward community meetings, with the Manager reporting progress on a regular basis to each meeting.
  - The groundwork established by the two schemes that are to be transferred, i.e. St Peters and Beaumont Leys/Abbey Rise/Stocking Farm will be “wrapped up” into their respective ward community meetings through the ward action plans, with the opportunity for resident members of the current boards to be considered as community partners.

In Braunstone, where New Deal for Communities funding continues until 2010/11, ward councillors are already in discussion with the Braunstone Community Association about how they might operate the ward community meeting in a collaborative way.

March 2008



Call us on **Leicester 0116 252 [insert phone no]** if you would like to have this document in another language or format.

**Draft template 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2007**

## **[name] Ward Action Plan 2008-09** **[Five] Priorities for [name] Ward**

This is our ward community plan for 2008-9. It describes the insert number – five or fewer] priorities that the ward community meeting has decided it wants to achieve by [date]. These priorities were agreed at the ward community meeting on [date]. If we achieve these priorities we will know that [name] Ward Community Meeting has been successful in 2008-09.

This may not seem like many priorities. But by choosing a small number we will make sure we concentrate our work on the things we know are important and achievable. If we do achieve them before the end of the year – or we find we can't achieve them – we will chose further priorities through discussion with local people.

In some cases, the priority will not be able to be completely solved in one year. If so, the Ward Action Plan should say what it aims to do **towards** solving the problem by the end of the year, in a way that measures that progress.

Throughout the year council officers will monitor whether the agreed action is taking place. At the end of the year the ward meeting will be given an annual report on all of the priorities agreed and whether the action has taken place and been successful. This will help the ward community meeting plan its priorities for the following year.

**Priority code** (Ward) 2009 / 1

### **What is the problem?**

Description of problem
------------------------

**How do we know it's a problem?**

Measureable evidence

**What action will be taken by March 2009?**

Action

Who will we ask to take action?

**How will we measure success?**

Measures

**Progress on [date]**

This box will be updated for each ward community meeting.

**Priority code** (Ward) 2009 / 2

*[Repeat boxes as for priority 1. Up to 5 priorities]*





Phone us on Leicester [insert phone no] if you would like to have this document in another language or format.

Draft template 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008

## Guide to the Ward Action Plan budget

This budget is to help to fulfil the actions agreed in the Ward Action Plans.

The Ward Community Meeting will use this budget to commission new or additional services to fulfil one or more of the priority actions in the plan. The services can be provided by statutory organisations (including the council itself), the voluntary or community sector or by a private sector organisation.

There is no lower or upper limit to the amount of expenditure that can be proposed for the Ward Action Plan budget. However, you need to bear in mind that the Ward Community Meeting may be less likely to support proposals that, if agreed to, would take up a large proportion of the current budget. This is because they are likely to want to support as wide a range of proposals as possible.

### 1. What can be funded by Ward Action Plan Budgets?

**The Ward Action Plan Budget is for one off activities that contribute to one or more priorities in the Ward Action Plan.**

However, the Ward Action Plan budget **cannot** be used to fund –

- Proposals for which the costs would have to be met from the budget for more than one financial year
- staffing, except temporary staff who have been appointed using the Council's Recruitment and Selection procedure, or bought-in services provided by outside organisations, such as consultants or specialists.
- payments to members of the Ward Community Meeting except travel, care costs or out of pocket expenses
- the buying of land or buildings, or refurbishing buildings, outside the Council's own strategies and plans for property management. However, repairs and redecorating can be funded.
- investing money
- recoverable VAT
- any liability arising out of illegality or negligence
- any form of gambling
- political activity or exclusively religious activity

- spending which has already occurred or is committed, unless previously recommended by the Ward Community Meeting and agreed by the Cabinet.

## 2. Who can put forward a proposal for spending the Ward Action Plan Budget?

The Ward Community Meeting will consider proposals made by individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations, statutory agencies, and partnerships. These proposals can range from ideas put forward on the spur of the moment for example at meetings, to fully worked up 'bids'. If people put forward ideas at meetings, the members of the Ward Community Meeting will ask officers to investigate the idea in more detail, discuss it with the person who made the proposal and fill in a proposal form.

## 3. How can I make a proposal?

There are two ways to make a proposal-

### You can make a proposal by speaking at a Ward Community Meeting

If you make a suggestion at a meeting for spending Ward Action Plan money, you will be asked for further details about your idea. You might be asked to fill in a Ward Action Plan Budget Proposal Form yourself – especially if you are speaking on behalf of a group or organisation that would carry out the proposal. Alternatively, a Council officer will be asked by the Ward Community meeting to get further information and fill out a form.

Please note that although you can make a proposal at a Ward Community Meeting, Councillors will not be able to make a decision about it at that meeting because we need time to consider it and get more information and advice if necessary before a recommendation to cabinet is agreed at the next Ward Community meeting.

*You can fill out an Ward Action Plan Budget Proposal Form and send it to the Council*

***There is further information at the end of this guide on where you can get help on making a proposal and where to send it. As well as completing the form, please attach supporting information if you can. Please make sure you make it clear how your proposal fits in with Ward Action Plan priorities.***

## 4. When should I make a proposal?

The earlier you make a proposal the better – especially if it's for something that has to take place at a certain time – for example an event. If you would like a decision about your proposal at a certain Ward Community Meeting you must submit your proposal **at least ten working days before the meeting**.

Councillors will try to reach a decision in time for that meeting – but there may be some cases where they can't – for example when we still need to get information or advice.

## 5. What happens when I have made a proposal?

**Step 1** We may contact you to ask for more information.

**Step 2** The Ward Community Meeting may discuss the proposal at the meeting. But they will not make a decision about the proposal at the same meeting at which the proposal is first presented. This is because we have to allow time to get more information if needed, and to get advice before making the decision.

**Step 3** We will put the proposal on the agenda for a future Ward Community Meeting, and the Chair will announce at that meeting whether or not they will recommend to the Council's Cabinet that it should be supported.

To make this recommendation, the Ward Community Meeting must be quorate. This means -

[Insert wcm quoracy rules]

**Step 4** If the Ward Community Meeting agrees to support the proposal, we will then send it to the council's cabinet for a final decision. This may be the Cabinet or a senior officer who has delegated powers to make spending decisions on the council's behalf.

**Step 5** If the Ward Community Meeting or the council **do not** agree to the proposal, we will write to the person who proposed it and the person or group who are going to deliver it (they will often be the same) to explain why the proposal was rejected. This explanation will also be given at a Ward Community Meeting and included in the record of that meeting.

If the Ward Community Meeting and the council **do** agree to the proposal, and the project is to be delivered by someone other than the council, we will send a letter to them to confirm the decision. This letter will also say what the conditions of payment are, and the group will be asked to return a signed statement to agree to the conditions of payment. This exchange of letters creates a contract with the Council.

There are two conditions of payment –

- the group must agree to the council monitoring the project against the outcome set out in response to question 5 on the Ward Action Plan Budget Proposal Form; and
- the council will only pay the delivery agency when it receives invoices, copies of bank statements that show the invoices have been paid, and other evidence that goods or services have been delivered. In exceptional circumstances we may provide some funding in advance if the group is unable to find the money in advance themselves.

**Step 6** A council officer will monitor progress on carrying out the project and will report on progress to the Ward Community Meeting when requested. The officer will monitor the project against the response to question 5 on the Ward Action Plan Budget Proposal Form.

## 6. Where can I get further information?

Contact us to get help and advice on completing the form, to get copies of this guide or the form in another language or format, or to send in a completed form.

**Phone** Leicester [insert phone no]

**Email** [community.meetings@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:community.meetings@leicester.gov.uk)

**Address** Member Support team  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall  
Leicester City Council  
LEICESTER  
LE1 9BG

**Website** [insert website address – to be set up]

## 7. More help

You can get more help on making proposals, finding other sources of funding or drawing up a constitution from Voluntary Action Leicester –

**Phone** 0116 257 5020. Someone will be staffing the helpline on Mondays -Thursdays from 1pm - 5pm. At other times you can leave a message on voicemail.

**Email** [info@voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk](mailto:info@voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk)

Please address your email to 'Org Dev Helpline'

**Address** Voluntary Action Leicester  
Active Community Centre  
9 Newarke Street  
Leicester  
LE1 5SN

**Website** [voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk](http://voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk)

# Ward Action Plan Budget Proposal Form

- *Please read the Guide to the Ward Action Plan Budget before you fill in this form.*
- *Fill in Section 1: Budget Proposal.*
- *If you are proposing to deliver the project yourself, please also fill in Section 2: Delivery agency.*
- *We can help you fill in the form or do it for you – our contact details are at the end of the Guide to Ward Action Plan Budget.*
- *Continue or separate sheets if you need to, or expand the boxes if you are filling in the form electronically.*

## **Section 1: Budget Proposal**

1. Name of Ward

2. Title of proposal

3. Name of group or person making the proposal

4. Which priority or priorities in the Ward Action Plan does your proposal support?  
(Add further rows or continue on a separate sheet if needed).

Priority number and priority description (taken from the Ward Action Plan)	



8. Have you tried to get funding for this project from anywhere else, either in the Council or from another organisation? If so, please give details

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9. Who proposed the project? Please provide contact details.

Name of contact person	
Your position in organisation or group	
Name of organisation or group	
Address	
Phone number	Email



**Section 2: Delivery agency (this could be a single person, group of people or a group or organisation)**

10. Who will deliver the project? Please provide contact details.

Name of contact person	
Your position in organisation or group	
Name of organisation or group	
Address	
Phone number	Email

11. Declaration

I have read the *Guide to the Ward Action Plan Budget* and I accept the arrangements described in that guide. I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true. I will inform the council immediately if any of the information I have given on the form changes.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

## Guide to the Ward Community Fund



Each ward has a Ward Community Fund from which grants will be made by the Ward Community Meeting. A key part of the quality of a local area has to do with the level of community activity that takes place. For example, community activity can help to support people in need, and provide a wealth of leisure activities that improve the quality of life for local people.

There is no lower or upper limit to the amount of expenditure that can be proposed for the Ward Community Fund. However, you need to bear in mind that committees may be less likely to support proposals that, if agreed to, would take up a large proportion of the current budget. This is because they are likely to want to support as wide a range of proposals as possible.

### 1. What can be funded by the Ward Community Fund?

**The Ward Community Fund is for small one off activities or work to improve the quality of life of people who live in the ward.**

However, the Ward Community Fund **cannot** be used for–

- projects where the costs would have to be met from the budget for more than one financial year
- staffing, except temporary staff who have been appointed using the Council's Recruitment and Selection procedure, or bought-in services provided by outside organisations, such as consultants or specialists.
- payments to members of the Ward Community Meeting except travel, care costs or out of pocket expenses
- the buying of land or buildings, or refurbishing buildings, outside the Council's own strategies and plans for property management. However, repairs and redecorating can be funded.
- investing money
- recoverable VAT
- any liability arising out of illegality or negligence
- any form of gambling
- political activity or exclusively religious activity
- spending which has already occurred or is committed, unless previously recommended by the Ward Community Meeting and agreed by the Cabinet.

## 2. Who can put forward a Ward Community Fund proposal?

The Ward Community Meeting will consider proposals made by individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations, statutory agencies, and partnerships. These proposals can range from ideas put forward on the spur of the moment for example at meetings, to fully worked up 'bids'. If people put forward ideas at meetings, the members of the Ward Community Meeting will ask officers to investigate the idea in more detail, discuss it with the person who made the proposal and fill in a proposal form.

## 3. How can I make a proposal?

There are two ways to make a proposal-

### You can make a proposal by speaking at a Ward Community Meeting

If you make a suggestion at a meeting for spending Ward Community Fund money, you will be asked for further details about your idea. You might be asked to fill in a Ward Community Fund Proposal form yourself – especially if you are speaking on behalf of a group or organisation that would carry out the proposal. Alternatively, a Council officer will be asked by the Ward Community meeting to get further information and fill out a form for the meeting.

Please note that although you can make a proposal at a Ward Community Meeting, Councillors will not be able to make a decision about it at that meeting because we need time to consider it and get more information and advice if necessary before a decision is made at the next Ward Community Meeting.

*You can fill out an Ward Community Fund Proposal Form and send it to the Council*

***There is further information at the end of this guide on where you can get help on making a proposal and where to send it. As well as completing the form, please attach supporting information if you can.***

## 4. When should I make a proposal?

The earlier you make a proposal the better – especially if it's for something that has to take place at a certain time – for example an event. If you would like a decision about your proposal at a certain Ward Community Meeting you must submit your proposal ***at least ten working days before the meeting.***

Councillors will try to reach a decision in time for that meeting – but there may be some cases where they can't – for example when we still need to get information or advice.

## 6. What happens when I have made a proposal?

**Step 1** We may contact you to ask for more information.

**Step 2** The Ward Community Meeting may discuss the proposal at the meeting. But they will not make a decision about the proposal at the same meeting at which the proposal is first presented. This is because we have to allow time to get more information if needed, and to get advice before making the decision.

**Step 3** We will put the proposal on the agenda for a future Ward Community Meeting, and the Chair will announce at that meeting whether or not they will recommend to the Council's Cabinet that it should be supported.

To make this decision, the Ward Community Meeting must be quorate. This means -

[Insert wcm quoracy rules]

**Step 4** If the Ward Community Meeting agrees to support the proposal, we will then send it to the council's cabinet for a final decision. This may be the Cabinet or a senior officer who has delegated powers to make spending decisions on the council's behalf.

**Step 5** If the Ward Community meeting or the council **do not** agree to the proposal, we will write to the person who proposed it and the person or group who are going to deliver it (they will often be the same) to explain why the proposal was rejected. This explanation will also be given at a Ward Community Meeting and included in the record of that meeting.

If the Ward Community Meeting and the council **do** agree to the proposal, and the project is to be delivered by someone other than the council, we will send a letter to them to confirm the decision. This letter will also say what the conditions of payment are, and the group will be asked to return a signed statement to agree to the conditions of payment. This exchange of letters creates a contract with the Council.

There are two conditions of payment –

- the group must agree to the council monitoring the project against the outcome set out in response to question 2 on the Ward Community Fund Proposal Form; and
- the council will only pay the delivery agency when it receives invoices, copies of bank statements that show the invoices have been paid, and other evidence that goods or services have been delivered. In exceptional circumstances we may provide some

funding in advance if the group is unable to find the money in advance themselves.

**Step 6** A council officer will monitor progress on carrying out the project and will report on progress to the Ward Community Meeting when requested. The officer will monitor the project against the response to question 3 on the Ward Community Fund Proposal Form, which asks ... *who will benefit, when will they benefit, and how will we know when the proposal has been successful?*

## 6. Where can I get further information?

Contact us to get help and advice on completing the form, to get copies of this guide or the form in another language or format, or to send in a completed form.

**Phone** Leicester [\[insert phone no\]](#)

**Email** [community.meetings@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:community.meetings@leicester.gov.uk)

**Address** Member Support team  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall  
Leicester City Council  
LEICESTER  
LE1 9BG

**Website** [\[insert website address – to be set up\]](#)

## 7. More help

You can get more help on making proposals, finding other sources of funding or drawing up a constitution from Voluntary Action Leicester –

**Phone** 0116 257 5020. Someone will be staffing the helpline on Mondays - Thursdays from 1pm - 5pm. At other times you can leave a message on voicemail.

**Email** [info@voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk](mailto:info@voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk)

Please address your email to 'Org Dev Helpline'

**Address** Voluntary Action Leicester  
Active Community Centre  
9 Newarke Street  
Leicester  
LE1 5SN

**Website** [voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk](http://voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk)

# Ward Community Fund Proposal Form

- *Please read the Guide to the Ward Community Fund before you fill in this form.*
- *Fill in Section 1: Budget Proposal.*
- *If you are proposing to deliver the project yourself, please also fill in Section 2: Delivery agency.*
- *We can help you fill in the form or do it for you – our contact details are at the end of the Guide to Ward Community Fund.*
- *Continue or separate sheets if you need to, or expand the boxes if you are filling in the form electronically.*

## **Section 1: Budget Proposal**

1. Name of Ward

2. Title of proposal

3. Name of group or person making the proposal

4. Short description of proposal. Please include information on **how the money will be spent, the geographical area covered by the proposal, who will benefit, when they will benefit, and how we will know when the proposal has been successful.**

It is important that your answer to this question is clear, because we will only pay the costs when we can see evidence that the outcomes you describe here have been achieved. You can provide further details in your supporting information if you want to.

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5. Have you provided supporting information?  Tick if yes

6. What is the total cost to the Ward Community Meeting? £

7. How have you estimated or calculated the cost? Please show each item of expenditure and say whether it is an estimate or an actual cost.

Item	Cost £	Estimate or actual cost?
<b>Total</b>		

8. Have you tried to get funding for this project from anywhere else, either in the Council or from another organisation? If so, please give details

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9. Who proposed the project? Please provide contact details.

Name of contact person	
Your position in organisation or group	
Name of organisation or group	
Address	
Phone number	Email



**Section 2: Delivery agency (this could be a single person, group of people or a group or organisation)**

10. Who will deliver the project? Please provide contact details.

Name of contact person	
Your position in organisation or group	
Name of organisation or group	
Address	
Phone number	Email

11. Declaration

I have read the *Guide to Ward Community Fund* and I accept the arrangements described in that guide. I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true. I will inform the council immediately if any of the information I have given on the form changes.

Name	
Signature	
Date	