

**JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRANSITIONAL BOARD 30<sup>TH</sup> MAY  
2008**

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**Transitional Community Area Board Scrutiny Task  
Group**

**Interim Report – May 30 2008**

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To update the JOSTB on the work of its Community Area Board/Partnership Scrutiny Task Group.

**BACKGROUND**

2. A network of Community Area Boards and Partnerships was the innovative approach to local governance which underpinned the bid for One Council.
3. The Community Area Partnerships are proposed to act as the voice of the community, with the Boards considering, resolving or determining community priorities, services and concerns.
4. The importance of delivering this vision has been reflected in the transitional structure. The Community Leadership & Governance Project is one of the 4 transitional workstreams, and has broken into the following 7 sub-projects:
  - Wiltshire Assembly and other Partnerships
  - **Community Boards and Community Area Partnerships**
  - Delegation to Town and Parish Councils
  - Member Roles, Elections, Induction and Training
  - Constitution and Schemes of Delegation
  - Boundary Review
  - Parishing of Salisbury City
5. The Community Boards are planned to be operational by May 2009, as reported to the Implementation Executive in March 2008.
6. A 'development phase' will define the period until May 09, during which pilots will take place in the following areas:

Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Malmesbury, Wootton Bassett,  
Salisbury City, Amesbury, Tisbury, Tidworth, Pewsey, Trowbridge,  
Warminster

7. The pilots will give an opportunity to develop community engagement events such as the 'State of Area Debate', whilst also providing evidence around resources, service involvement and constitutional requirements.

## **FINDINGS**

8. The task group has established that the 10 managers for the pilot areas are now in post. These officers completed a 3 day induction in the week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> May and have now commenced the testing phase.
9. The project is currently on schedule according to the timetable reported to the IE in March. However, the project has now reached a key milestone as the planning and preparation makes way for testing.

## **RISKS**

10. The timescales are extremely challenging. By March 2009 the project team will have had to evaluate what has worked well in the testing and development phase. Following this assessment the new arrangements will be reviewed and rolled out across the county for May 2009. The aim is to have a level of consistency, whilst also reflecting the individuality of the community area; the task group recognises because of the time restrictions this is a significant project risk.
11. The success of the Boards and Partnerships is partly dependant on the areas developing engaging agendas which capture public interest. Key to this is the role of front line services and how these can better align themselves to become accountable to the Community Boards. The task group learnt that the Youth Development Service has already begun to respond to the new governance structures. However, the task group was also told that other service areas have been less positive and the members recognise that the cultural change required to delegate responsibility to the Boards is a risk which will require senior support to overcome.
12. The third major concern for the task group was the relationship between Partnership and Board. For example members feared that the Partnership could become a talking shop without careful management. To respond to this risk the task group members have already begun to attend Partnership meetings across the county as well as a special meeting of the Wiltshire forum of Community Area Partnerships. This will provide evidence on what works well at Partnership level and what is less successful, which the members can feed into the project team.
13. Lastly, the role of the Cabinet Member on the Community Boards is still to be finalised and the task group identified this as key project risk.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

14. The Community Area Board/Partnership Project is now entering an important phase. The models and principles that supported the unitary bid are to be tested within the pilot communities of Wiltshire.
15. The task group is keen to continue its work. Acting in more of a policy development role, the group would provide the project officers with a venue to bring new ideas and to highlight progress.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

16.
  - A) The JOSTB to note the report
  - B) That the task group is asked to continue its scrutiny of the development of the new model for community governance.