

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee

Date of Committee 29th November 2006

Report Title Succession Proposal for the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods Team

Summary The report outlines succession proposals for the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods team. The Committee are being asked to refer the proposals for the continuation of this initiative beyond March 2006 for consideration by Cabinet. The proposal outlines a widening of both the geographical and functional areas in which the team currently operates within the Borough. The project will continue to operate, through its Partnership Board, comprising representatives from Warwickshire County Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Primary Care Trust, Warwickshire Police, Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership and the voluntary sector.

For further information please contact Nick Robinson
Neighbourhood Initiatives
Tel. 024 7635 4804
nickrobinson@warwickshire.gov.uk

Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? Yes/No

Background Papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

Other Committees Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee
27th July 2005

Local Member(s)
(With brief comments, if appropriate)

Other Elected Members Councillor Mrs J Tandy, Chair of BSN – supports the recommendation

Cabinet Member
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with
appropriate Cabinet Member)

Councillor P Fowler)
Councillor C Saint) for information

Chief Executive

.....

Legal

D Carter - nothing to add to the report
I Marriott - nothing further to add

Finance

D Clarke - agreed

Other Chief Officers

.....

District Councils

.....

Health Authority

.....

Police

.....

Other Bodies/Individuals

.....

FINAL DECISION

YES/NO (If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

Further consideration by
this Committee

.....

To Council

.....

To Cabinet

If referred by Area Committee, a report will be
submitted to next available Cabinet meeting.

To an O & S Committee

.....

To an Area Committee

.....

Further Consultation

.....

**Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee -
29th November 2006**

**Succession Proposal for the Building Sustainable
Neighbourhoods Team**

**Report of the Strategic Director for
Environment and Economy**

Recommendation

That the Committee refers the proposed succession proposal for the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods initiative for consideration by Cabinet.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods (BSN) initiative is a community based regeneration initiative operating within the Warwickshire part of the Coventry and Nuneaton Regeneration Zone. The project is a partnership initiative, encompassing local statutory, voluntary and community groups in the area, which has been funded until this financial year exclusively from external funding sources, primarily Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and the European Community European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). To date, since its launch in 2003, the project has assisted over 100 community projects in the Nuneaton and Bedworth area, hitting, and in many instances exceeding, all expenditure and output targets agreed with the primary funders. The project has to date secured in excess of £3 million of external funding to be spent within Nuneaton and Bedworth and has been noted by both AWM and Government office for the West Midlands (GOWM) as an example of best practice in project delivery.
- 1.2 A report 'Regeneration Zone: Key Projects Update' was presented to, and endorsed by, the Area Committee in July 2005. The report noted that funding for the project would end in 2006/7 and asked Members to give their continued support to the programme and to the development of a succession strategy. The report also committed to returning to the Committee with a proposal for succession to the project in the current financial year. The following outlines that proposal.
- 1.3 The revenue funding secured to support the project through AWM and ERDF was scheduled to cease in the current financial year with all staff contracts terminating on 31st December 2006. Towards the end of 2005, however, the project was successful in securing further capital funding of £785k to be spent by

31st March 2007. Additional revenue funding was therefore sought through the County's mainstream budget and the project was successful in securing £125k additional revenue funding in the County's 2006/7 budget for Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods (BSN) and regeneration feasibility studies. This has allowed staff contracts to be extended until 31st March 2007. There is, however, pressure to determine the future of staff within the team.

- 1.4 Given the urgent need to secure the longer term future for the BSN team, it was thought prudent to bring this report to the Area Committee, prior to any report going before Cabinet.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The project has been highly successful in developing local partnerships with statutory, voluntary and community groups to deliver small scale neighbourhood initiatives with positive outcomes for the local community. The most recent evaluation report on the project, covering the period to the end of 2005/6, found that around 99% of those involved in projects supported by BSN who responded to evaluation questionnaires stated that the project had been 'beneficial' to them. Approximately 65% indicated that they felt the projects had been 'very beneficial'. A copy of the briefing note entitled 'Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods – June 2006' is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 To establish what demand there was in the area for a BSN succession project, a survey was circulated to 298 community and voluntary groups and other stakeholders in the early part of 2006. A copy of the resultant briefing note is attached with this report as **Appendix B**, 56 completed questionnaires were returned, a 19% response rate. The survey indicated overwhelming support among respondents for the continuation of the project beyond its scheduled completion date. 84% of respondents wanted to see the project extended only 2% were not in favour. Feedback from the survey has been used to help formulate the proposals now put forward.

3. Outline Proposal

- 3.1 To date, AWM funding restrictions have meant that the project has only operated in a limited area of the Borough (approximately half) as defined by the boundaries of the Coventry and Warwickshire Regeneration Zone. ERDF funding was restricted still further, in that it could only be funded in a very small area of Bedworth Heath and part of Camp Hill. Furthermore, the nature of the outputs to which the project was contractually committed has also meant that worthy projects within the defined area of operation could not be supported because they did not satisfy the criteria for that support.
- 3.2 With the ending of both the initial ERDF and AWM core funding this financial year, these restrictions will also end, thereby presenting the opportunity to extend the scope of the service to areas and groups who have not previously directly benefited from BSN support. In particular, the project would look to work in areas of deprivation within the Borough (e.g. Grove Farm, Galley Common, Haunchwood, parts of Stockingford, Ash Green) that were previously ineligible for BSN support, and remove restrictions on the nature and scope of projects

eligible such that the team are able to work on a wider variety of community based initiatives that might be brought forward.

3.3. Building on the success to date, the proposal is to extend the project to create a 'Neighbourhoods Initiative' programme within the context of the County Council's overall approach to neighbourhood development and customer access. Commencing from 1st April 2007 the programme would focus on three primary areas of work:-

- (I) 'Planning Ahead'.
- (II) Green space development.
- (III) 'Neighbourhood Centres'.

It is expected that the project will make a significant contribution to the Local Area Agreement (LAA) outputs and outcomes related to these areas, working in partnership with a range of Directorate Services at Warwickshire County Council (WCC), across several functions at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC), with the Primary Care Trust (PCT), the Police, CVS and the Volunteer Centre.

3.4 'Planning Ahead': BSN staff will deliver intensive support to the management committees of volunteer managed community facilities to:-

- (i) Develop and deliver long-term financial and marketing plans designed to ensure the future sustainability of the facility.
- (ii) Establish and deliver 'people plans' for the management and deployment of staff and volunteers in support of those plans.
- (iii) Develop the infrastructure of and secure equipment for the facility to enable new or enhanced services to be offered.
- (iv) Promote partnership initiatives between management committees to share resources and reduce operating costs.

In addition, BSN staff would work closely with other voluntary and statutory providers, (including Nuneaton and Bedworth CVS and the Volunteer Centre) to deliver expertise on matters such as governance, training, funding and volunteer recruitment not considered core to the BSN service. The project will complement the 'First Steps' programme and plans for the development of the CVS training function, and link in with other support offered by the Voluntary Sector.

3.5 Green Space Development: BSN staff will seek to promote and develop local community groups seeking to improve their local environment, particularly through the improvement of 'green spaces' in their neighbourhoods. Efforts will be made to establish 'Friends' groups that will take some 'ownership' and responsibility for the on-going guardianship of such areas. Support would be

offered in project management, design and contract management, community consultation, and accessing funding. Again, BSN staff would also seek to access expertise offered by other Voluntary and Statutory sector organisations, as appropriate. The development of such 'green spaces' that are owned or managed by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will give the opportunity to further develop the highly successful relationship that has been developed with the Borough Council's Parks and Countryside team and with the relevant teams in WCC that has resulted in the delivery of a number of different environmental schemes in the area. It is also thought likely that such projects will present opportunities to promote healthier lifestyles and/or the recycling of waste and use of more sustainable materials and resources, helping to meet both WCC and PCT targets in these areas. Every effort will be made to exploit these opportunities in continuing partnerships with the Healthy Living Network, the Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust and WCC's Sustainability Unit as appropriate.

3.6 Building on various joint WCC/NBBC partnership initiatives already completed or in progress (e.g. Abbey Green, Queens Road, Neighbourhood Retail Business Support Package), the project will look to strengthen and develop local 'Neighbourhoods Centres' within the community, again in continuing partnership with both the County's and the Borough Council's Regeneration team. Such 'Centres' are likely to be diverse and varied in both size and appearance but would typically share a number of features:-

- (i) Located centrally within a recognised 'community'.
- (ii) Likely to have some retail or other business presence.
- (iii) An area experiencing high levels of footfall.
- (iv) Likely to be the location of some form of community facility and/or be the focal point within a community for social, health and recreational activity.
- (v) Likely to be the centre of public transport provision for the area.
- (iv) Likely to have some green space provision.

3.7 In conjunction with the local community and a wide range of partners from the Voluntary and Statutory Sectors, BSN would seek to:-

- (i) Offer business support to local retailers and small businesses in the area.
- (ii) Seek to improve the quality of business premises through the provision of a grant scheme.
- (iii) Seek to improve public safety and access.
- (iv) Enhance the quality of green space and other open spaces in the public realm.

- (v) Encourage the take up of vacant premises in the area, look to establish local community enterprises offering new services (e.g. community cafes, fruit and veg schemes), encourage statutory and other agencies to establish bases within the centralised bases within the centres.
- 3.8 BSN will continue to operate through its Partnership Board which includes representatives from WCC, NBBC, PCT, Warwickshire Police, CSWP, CVS and other voluntary sector groups. Approval will, however, be sought from the Management Board for the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Manager to participate in future Board meetings in an advisory capacity to ensure the effective promotion of BSN activity within the wider community partnership, neighbourhood development and customer access agenda. Projects would continue to be assessed through the Board as previously but the assessment process could be adjusted to ensure that projects supported would contribute towards the achievement of outcomes defined under the LAA or the County's Corporate Business plan.
- 3.8 The team will retain the emphasis on sustainability that is currently core to its operation. All support offered will continue to press the need to ensure long-term stability for any initiative pursued.
- 3.9 The project will continue to adopt a community partnership approach. Projects supported will be expected to emanate from the Community itself and community participation in the delivery of such projects will be strongly encouraged.

4. Resourcing

- 4.1 The proposal will not require the commitment of any resource under the control of the Area Committee to support the proposed infrastructure of the project.
- 4.2 The existing BSN team would be retained within the succession plan, subject to continued funding availability. Additional resource would be identified from within existing Environment and Economy staff on an as needed basis to support individual projects.
- 4.3 External funding to support the revenue costs of the project is being sought through Advantage West Midlands, the European Regional Development Fund, and the Big Lottery 'Reaching Communities' fund. If confirmed, this, together with the continuation of core WCC funding for the project, would secure the future of the existing team.
- 4.4 WCC Capital funding of £100k has been allocated during 2006/7 for 'Environmental Improvements in Priority Neighbourhoods' and has proved valuable in leveraging other funding from external sources. Capital Funding for the 'Neighbourhoods Centres' initiative will be sought from Advantage West Midlands. It is anticipated that the recent AWM concept of 'porous boundaries' for the Regeneration Zone area, together with BSN's track record of delivery on AWM funded capital schemes, will mean that capital funding for neighbourhoods adjacent to the Regeneration Zone will be forthcoming as part of an overall

package of support for the area. A potential opportunity to draw down some additional ERDF under-spend is also being explored.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods initiative has been a clear success in developing a model for neighbourhood delivery during its initial period of operation. The continuation of the project, operating in a wider geographical area, will enable the programme to reach a wider group of beneficiaries in Nuneaton and Bedworth and continue to build on the success achieved to date.

JOHN DEEGAN
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy
Shire Hall
Warwick

14th November 2006

**Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee -
29th November 2006**

**Succession Proposal for the Building Sustainable
Neighbourhoods Team**

Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods – June 2006

Introduction

Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods (BSN) is a community regeneration initiative based in Nuneaton and Bedworth. It involves working with communities on a range of projects to improve opportunities for training and employment, establish community enterprises, develop or improve local neighbourhood centres and to provide capacity building for local groups. The variety and scope of projects supported is therefore quite extensive but a broad distinction can be made between 'training' related projects and 'other projects'.

An evaluation form reflecting that distinction has been designed to capture feedback on the overall effectiveness of the initiative and beneficiaries are encouraged to complete the form as part of the project delivery.

Response Rate

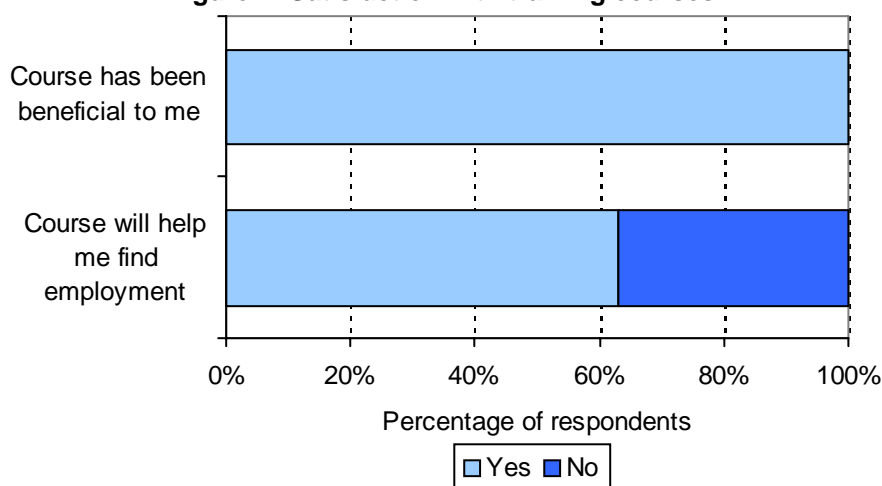
This briefing note provides an updated summary of the responses from the 110 respondents who have completed an evaluation form. The results include completed forms from the first two waves of evaluation, along with the wave 3 results, which covers respondents who participated in the following projects:

- Car-go-bus Minibus Driver Training (Training Course)
- Home-Start: Relate Basic Counselling Skills (Training Course)
- Whittleford Park Environmental Master Plan (Other Project)

Results - Training courses

- To date, we have received 42 feedback forms from respondents who have attended a training course supported by Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods.
- All respondents attending a training course stated that the course was beneficial to them. This included 57% of respondents who stated that the course was 'very beneficial' to them, and 43% who said the course was 'fairly beneficial' to them.
- 11% of respondents thought that the course would 'definitely' help them find a job, 52% thought it would 'probably' help them find a job, 24% thought it would 'probably not' help them find a job, and the remaining 13% didn't know.

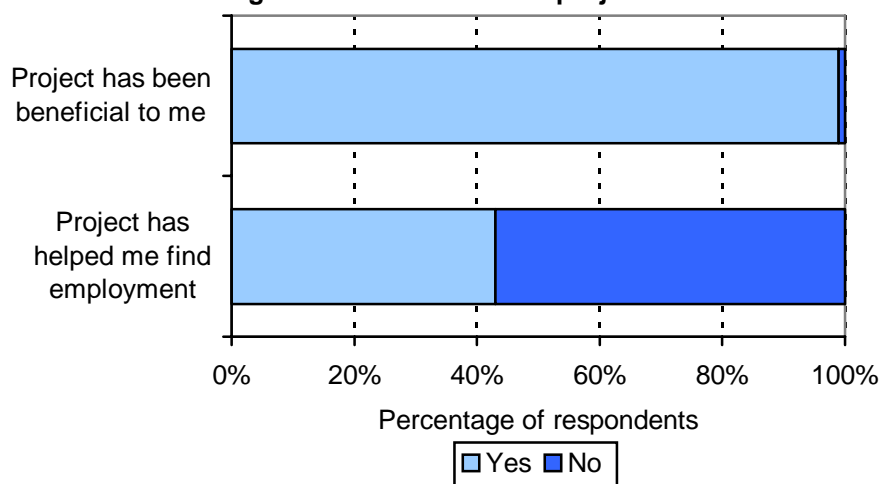
Figure 1: Satisfaction with training courses



Results – Other Projects

- So far, we have received 68 feedback forms from respondents who have been involved in a project supported by Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods.
- 99% of respondents believed that their project was beneficial to them, including 69% who thought that the project was ‘very beneficial’ to them. Only 1%, one respondent, believed that the project did not benefit them.
- 29 respondents (43% of respondents) said that the project they had completed had helped them into employment.
- Of those that hadn’t yet found employment, nearly three-quarters (74%) said that the course would definitely or probably help them find work in the future.

Figure 2: Satisfaction with projects



We will continue to monitor the success of the training courses and projects managed by the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods team, to ensure that customers are happy with the services provided.

Further Information

For further information on Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods evaluation form results, please use the contact details below.

Contact: David Gardiner

Phone: 01926 418049

E-mail: davidgardiner@warwickshire.gov.uk



www.warwickshire.gov.uk/research

Appendix B of Agenda No

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee - 29th November 2006

Succession Proposal for the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods Team

Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods – Succession Survey

Introduction

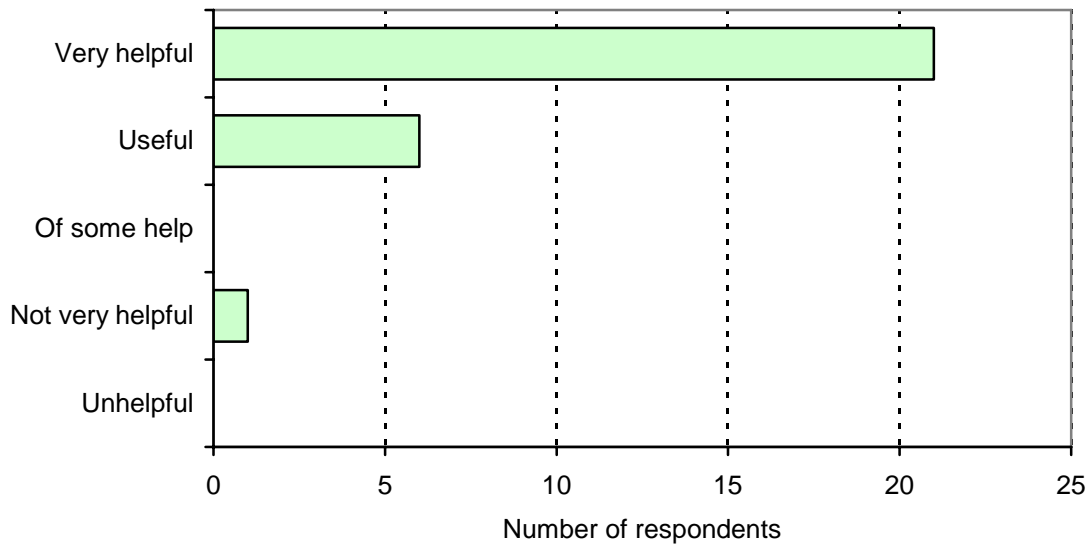
Set up in 2003, Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods (BSN) is a community regeneration initiative in Nuneaton and Bedworth. It aims to work with local people developing projects and encouraging community participation in the economic regeneration of their local neighbourhoods. Operating within the Warwickshire part of the Coventry-Nuneaton Regeneration Zone, the project has attracted in excess of £3m of external funding to date and has supported around 100 community based projects.

The initiative is now in it's final year of funding and it is important to establish if there is a continuing need for a project like Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods in the future, and, if so, what should it look like. In order to assess this need, a questionnaire was distributed to 298 organisations and groups. Not all of these groups have had support from BSN in the past, but it was considered important to get a range of responses from groups who have used the service, and potential users in the future.

Key Findings

- In total, 56 completed questionnaires were returned, representing a 19% response rate. Nearly one in three respondents (32%) have received support from BSN, nearly one-half (45%) have not received support from BSN, and the remaining respondents (23%) were local Councillors or officers of a statutory partner organisation.
- Three-quarters of respondents, 75%, said that the support BSN has offered them has been 'very helpful', whilst a further 21% said that the help was 'useful'. Figure 1 shows the overall level of support that respondents have received.

Figure 1: Helpfulness of support received from BSN



- Respondents were asked whether they thought it would be beneficial to their group and other community and voluntary groups in the area to have a support structure similar to BSN. The majority of respondents, 84%, were in favour of a support function, 2% were not in favour, and 14% didn't know.
- 17 out of the 18 respondents who had received support from BSN, thought that a support structure similar to BSN was required in their area.
- Only one respondent was negative in their opinion of BSN, their reasoning was that BSN duplicated work done by the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), and that some advice they had received from BSN had proved inaccurate.

- Respondents were then given a list of ten areas of potential support that could be given, and asked how beneficial they thought each area was to them, the results are shown in Figure 2. It appears that respondents would find 'direct funding for projects' and 'assistance in accessing other funding' the most useful types of support, whilst it appears 'advice and support on employing staff' is considered the least useful.

Figure 2: Percentage of respondents who would find the following support beneficial

	Very beneficial	Fairly beneficial	Could be beneficial	Unlikely to be beneficial	Not beneficial
Support with Planning future activities (Business Planning)	33%	20%	36%	7%	4%
Support with identifying volunteering roles and opportunities	24%	22%	49%	2%	2%
Direct funding for projects	90%	8%	2%	0%	0%
Assistance in accessing other funding	67%	22%	8%	0%	2%
Support with managing and delivering projects	37%	20%	35%	7%	2%
Support with managing project finances	33%	18%	33%	9%	7%
Support with consultation or establishing need	37%	30%	28%	2%	2%
Establishing partnerships and networks	34%	23%	40%	2%	0%
Signposting within the County and Borough Council, and other statutory/support orgs	40%	27%	31%	0%	2%
Advice / support on employing staff	20%	20%	29%	11%	20%

- Other areas that respondents mentioned are general support and advice when establishing a new service or extending a current service, and advice and support in promoting a service.
- Finally, respondents were asked what type of projects they are likely to be involved in over the next 5 years; the results are shown in Figure 3. Respondents appear to be planning to get involved in all of the project areas over the next 5 years, especially 'developing or attracting new services / activities for the local community'.

Figure 3: Number of respondents planning to be involved in the following projects



- Many respondents mentioned more specific details about projects they are planning to be involved with, these have been passed on to the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods team for consideration.

Further Information

Contact: David Gardiner

Phone: 01926 418049

E-mail: davidgardiner@warwickshire.gov.uk



www.warwickshire.gov.uk/research