

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	28 July 2005
Subject:	Neighbourhood Renewal
Responsible Officer:	Anna Robinson
Contact Officer:	Anna Robinson, 0208 420 9442
Portfolio Holder:	Communications, Partnership and HR
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

Cabinet is asked to

1. Approve, in principle, the establishment of a Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA) in Wealdstone, and to note that an NRA business plan will be developed for consideration at October Cabinet
2. Approve the commencement of a consultation process with local groups, residents, Ward Councillors, the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel and other stakeholders on the proposal
3. Note that work is ongoing to evaluate the priority needs of other neighbourhoods in the Borough and that this will be reported to October Cabinet

Reason for report

The Harrow Vitality Profiles highlight the need for concentrated effort in Wealdstone to address priority needs, housing condition and town centre regeneration.

There is a wide range of ongoing initiatives in the Wealdstone area, by statutory, voluntary sector and community organisations, which can be made more effective if coordinated at neighbourhood level.

This proposal meets the objectives of Harrow's draft Community Engagement

Strategy and the CPA 2005 requirement for community engagement at neighbourhood level.

Benefits

Neighbourhood Renewal provides a platform for building strong and cohesive communities and places residents and Ward Councillors at the centre of the process. A central element of neighbourhood renewal is the skewing of mainstream resources by statutory organisations into the neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood renewal has been demonstrated to improve quality of life in communities through

- ◆ Better management of the local environment
- ◆ Increasing community safety
- ◆ Improving the housing stock
- ◆ Working with young people
- ◆ Encouraging employment opportunities

Cost of Proposals

The costs of establishing a neighbourhood renewal area vary but typically include the establishment of a locally-based neighbourhood team, with, as a minimum, a neighbourhood manager and community development worker. Such costs are balanced against the benefits of coordinated services across all agencies and higher levels of mainstream funding.

A business plan specific to the needs of Wealdstone will be produced for Cabinet consideration in October 2005.

Risks

No significant risks in developing the business case.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The community needs in Wealdstone as demonstrated by the Vitality Profiles may not be addressed effectively.

The 2005 CPA requirement for neighbourhood engagement and Government good practice guidance on neighbourhood renewal may not be delivered.

Section 2: Report

2.1 The Governments National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, launched in 2001, has the aim that within 10 to 20 years, no one should be seriously

disadvantaged by where they live. The overarching objectives of the strategy are to help create sustainable communities where people want to live not leave, and, to help groups within the community who may also be disadvantaged, because of their ethnicity for example

2.2 Government evidence indicates that neighbourhood governance helps secure improvements in public services. As a consequence they want to see neighbourhood management arrangements being adopted far more widely but have recognised that there can be 'no one size fits all'. In order to expedite the move towards neighbourhood working the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) from 2005 will assess how Councils are involving users and neighbourhoods. A paper by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) advises that it is Governments intention that neighbourhood governance should be integrated with and supportive of the Council's role as the democratically elected institution in that area. Local councillors are seen as being at the heart of the new arrangements.

2.3 Priority Areas in Harrow

The 2001 census *indices of deprivation* rank each London Borough according to a basket of deprivation indicators. These correlate closely with the local information fed into the Harrow Vitality Profiles. Both sets of data confirm Wealdstone as the Harrow ward with the greatest need for regeneration, closely followed by Greenhill and Roxbourne, as shown in the table below.

Harrow Indices of Deprivation, (2001 Census), Most Deprived Wards

Ward	Rank within London 1=most deprived 624= least deprived
Greenhill	350 (1)
Wealdstone	355
Roxbourne	366
Marlborough	393
Edgware	405
Kenton East	410
Headstone North	612 (2)

(1) Greenhill includes crime statistics for Harrow town centre which are significantly higher, as would be expected, than in all wards. This artificially skews Greenhill ward into a lower position than Wealdstone
 (2) Headstone North is the least deprived ward in Harrow

Elements of regeneration have already commenced in Wealdstone through a town centre vitality and transport study, and the regeneration of the Byron recreation area and linked sites will begin shortly.

Vitality indicators for Wealdstone show:

- ◆ In terms of the health of the population in this area, Wealdstone has the lowest average life expectancy in the borough, and the highest rates of circulatory disease and deaths from cancer in the Borough.
- ◆ There is a concentration of households who are in receipt of a low income (annual gross income of less than £10,000 a year), or who are in receipt of Council Tax Benefit. Within the Wealdstone ward over 1 in 5 households are claiming this benefit.
- ◆ The area has been highlighted as being the area in the Borough where residents are in the greatest housing need. It has the highest concentrations of households living in temporary accommodation and 13% of households placed into private rented accommodation through the Councils Finders Fee initiative are also located within this area. At the current time 36 (25%) of the Councils 147 registered Houses in Multiple Occupation are located within this area
- ◆ Wealdstone has the highest percentage of terraced properties in the Borough. The Private Sector House Condition survey, 2001, notes that Wealdstone has an older stock profile, with 34% of dwellings having been constructed pre-1919 (compared to 12% in the Borough as a whole). This predominance of older dwellings also means that the average repair costs in this area are the highest in the borough. The condition of the housing stock is one of the poorest in the borough, while average incomes are second lowest.

Average cost of repair by area	Wealdstone	Harrow	England
Repair & replacement	£3,700	£1,941	£1,830
Urgent repairs	£1,951	£904	£1,280
Comprehensive repairs	£4,953	£3,009	£3,420
Standardised repairs	£44	£17	£17

- ◆ The ethnicity of the area is in line with the overall Borough figures; however within this there can be seen to be higher concentrations of residents with white Irish origins, and with black origins. In particular the black Caribbean and black African populations have increased considerably between 1991 and 2001 and both are now double the borough average in Wealdstone.

2.4 Cabinet is being asked to give in-principle approval to a proposal to develop a neighbourhood renewal area in Wealdstone. If approved, a business plan will be produced in partnership with other statutory and voluntary sector organizations for consideration by Cabinet in October 2005. This work would also include analysis of the key issues in the other areas of highest deprivation in Harrow and would make proposals on approaches to improving quality of life in these areas.

2.5 Consultation

Consultation with residents, ward councillors, community groups, Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel and other stakeholders will be undertaken

2.6 Financial Implications

All work involved in producing a business plan can be contained within existing budgets.

2.7 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications at this stage.

2.8 Equalities Impact

Neighbourhood renewal provides a means of addressing equality and diversity issues more effectively with additional resources for capacity building and involving hard to reach groups.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendix 1. Briefing Paper on Neighbourhood Renewal