# BANKSIDE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

## SCOPING PAPER –SOCIAL/COMMUNITY SERVICES

This paper seeks to address the issue of social/community services within the Bankside Neighbour Plan core area and extended areas.  It is important that the scope of the paper is not limited to the actual BNP core area a) because it will not provide a true picture of services available  b) there is the commitment to provide updates to groups and local residents in the extended area, so that they are engaged in what is happening in Bankside and how it relates to them and c) there is the option to extend the Plan in due course d) not all services can be on your doorstep e.g  new leisure centre at Elephant and Castle; part of the Forum's discussion should focus which services need to be and which it is reasonable to travel to and what distance?

## Context

While the Localism Bill 2011 has provided the right for communities to influence the future of the places where they live through a Neighbourhood Forum or Parish Council, the focus on 'place' has been on the agenda for a long time.

L.B. Southwark published 'Southwark 2016' in May 2006 providing a vision for all the people who live, learn, work and have fun in the borough.   The document promoted community cohesion defined as working towards a society with:

- Common vision

- Sense of belonging

- Diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, faiths and cultures valued

- Similar life opportunities for all

- Strong positive relationships in the workplace, schools and wider community


It sought to deliver change through 'promoting talents and aspirations within our community, encouraging mutual respect and tolerance and contribute to safe, healthy and fulfilling lives for all citizens'.   Three key objectives and priorities within them were identified to provide an integrated framework to help link plans and actions together, as follows:

| Objectives | Priorities |
|---|---|
| Improving individual life chances | For Southwark's people to:<br><br>Achieve economic well-being<br><br>Achieve their educational potential<br><br>Be healthy<br><br>Be safe<br><br>Enjoy cultural and leisure opportunities<br><br>Value diversity and be active citizens |
| Making the borough a better place for people | A place that has:<br><br>Localities of mixed communities<br><br>Sustainable use of resources<br><br>More and better homes<br><br>A vibrant economy<br><br>A liveable public realm |
| Delivering quality public services | With public services that are:<br><br>Accessible and integrated<br><br>Customer focused<br><br>Efficient and modern |

Local voluntary and community organizations have used these priorities to guide their own strategic planning since 2006 and are addressing the identified priority areas through delivery of relevant programmes and activities.

In March 2010, the Government introduced the concept of 'Total Place' representing a whole area approach to public services. This initiative sought to include:

- Freedoms from central performance and financial controls

- Freedoms and incentives for local collaboration

- Freedoms to invest in prevention; and

- Freedoms to drive growth

'Total Change' set out initiatives that would change the relationship between Government and places. Pilot projects were set up across the country and the Leadership Centre for local government produced a practitioner's guide to doing things differently.

New Coalition Government, new initiative - the Localism Bill which provides rights and powers for **communities** in setting the agenda to change/protect their local area in order to deliver positive outcomes for all citizens, as ably set out in the Southwark 2016 document. Clearly they need to work with other partners to achieve change but 'the community' is in the driving seat, possibly for the first time, and this may impact on the nature of those partnerships. My understanding of the proposed structure for the Bankside Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates this change:

# Community

## Neighbourhood Plan Forum

### Officers Group

## What Are The Things That Are Going Right?

**Good Foundations in place**

There is a will/commitment from various local stakeholders in the area to the provision of quality community/social services to local people.   The commitment to support and delivery of these services extends to the local authority, businesses, cultural institutions etc.  Solid foundations are in place.

There is a track record of partnership working to meet local needs.

**Committed organizations delivering community/social services in the area**

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2007 Neighbourhood Programme research concluded that '*a physical meeting place is important in attracting local residents.  Equally no-one joins a group to have a bad time: meetings need not be boring: trips, events and celebrations bring people together.*'

In this regard the area, with some exceptions, is reasonably well served, with further improvements in process, in respect of community facilities, cultural institutions, open spaces, specialist services, places of worship etc.

The area has a track record of trips, events and celebrations – the question is does everybody know about them?  There are a range of well-used services operating throughout the NP area.

- Local organizations also have strategies in place to deal with:

- Improving facilities

- Diversifying funding streams to compensate for reduced public funding

- Reshaping services and forming partnerships to deal with the impact of the personalization agenda, the implementation of the Health & Social Care legislation once agreed, introduction of universal benefits etc.

They also have a track record of bringing additional funding into the area to support delivery of quality services.

**Education & Health**

The area has two large hospitals in close proximity and a further hospital accessible via local transport links.   There are GP practices but unclear whether they are able to meet existing and projected local needs.

The area has a number of good primary schools.   Are they able to meet existing and projected numbers of children coming into the area?   Do the schools have additional capacity?  Is there the potential to extend sites to accommodate more children?   Is there any sense of whether new families coming into

the area over a period of time will want to access state schools?   What is the position regarding private schools in the area?   What is the situation around local state secondary schools?

**Employment for Local People**

The Employ SE1 initiative was established as a means to employ local people in local jobs.   Are we all signed up to this?  Are we using it?  Has it had a positive impact on local unemployment?  Is there evidence that local people are employed in the construction of developments in the area and in the jobs they are creating? Is Employ SE1 communicating with local training providers the skills required for vacant posts passed on to them?   Is this another example of solid foundations in place but further consideration required to maximize the benefit to local people?

The draft SDP plan listed local facilities.  I will bring copies to the Forum meeting.   A brief scan highlights that some of this information is inaccurate and out of date.   What it does list are areas where there may be a space/facility that is currently serving a very small group of people that might be opened up to a wider group e.g. play areas on estates.

## What Are the Things That Are Not Working So Well?

I believe there is a genuine commitment from all local stakeholders to work in partnership to meet the community/social service needs of residents in the Bankside and extended areas. What is lacking is the structure in which this can be achieved in a way that ensures that local needs drive our individual agendas and that our shared knowledge, skills and resources are harnessed to maximize our combined impact on the area.   Does this new mechanism offer opportunity for a different approach?  Can we achieve a structure that is sustainable into the future and that can absorb future new local and government initiatives as opposed to feeling the need to rethink and start again?

BRF's SPD response identified gaps in community/social activities as follows:

- Sports facilities – including those that offer field, track outdoor and indoor facilities

- Appropriate housing for older people no longer able to cope in their existing accommodation

- Structured play areas

- Places for young people to meet/other youth faciliites

- Under 5s facilities

- Transport to facilitate the independence of our older residents

- Street population

Has sufficient thought been given to dual use of facilities?

## What Is Needed In Terms of Additional Information/Data?

There are possible issues around **consultation with local people:**

- Local people can  lack  confidence  in our ability to use information given to bring about the changes that area important to them; they are asked to participate in various consultations on various issues but often receive no feedback/see no evidence of action taken as a result of their contributions.   Neither do they receive an explanation as to why their proposals/suggestions cannot be implemented.

- A more recent piece of research carried out by Joseph Rowntree focusing on white working-class views of neighbourhood, cohesion and change (2011) suggests that *many residents felt they were a forgotten community and had been ignored by policy-makers at local and national level.  The sense of disconnection was due to neighbourhood change but also the impact of immigration; many had not come across the term 'community cohesion' and did not connect it with the concerns of local communities; a resentment of the popular stereotype of being stupid and benefit dependent whereas they saw their values based on hard work, reciprocity and support.*

- If people feel like outsiders they will not join in.

Is there data that evidences that current services/facilities can meet the needs of existing and projected numbers of residents, as per demographic breakdowns.

What happens to the information collated – is it shared with any group/organisation that would benefit from it?

How do you ensure that all of the community has access to key information?   How is it distributed?   There are many opportunities available within Bankside and neighbouring areas – what percentage of the local population be they residents, workers or visitors know about it?  Feedback from groups consulted on the SPD confirm this lack of knowledge about local activities/services

Do we have information around the needs of all sections of the community?  This could highlight hidden problems.

There is a need to map community/social services.   Are the needs of the very young and the older members of our community being met?  Are there barriers to involvement, participation?  Could any gaps impact on future space requirements within the area?

How do we create a public profile to highlight what we are trying to achieve – website, social media, use of In SE1 etc

## **What, If Any, Are the Key Spatial Focuses for the Theme in the Area?**

Again, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2007 Neighbourhood Programme research highlighted *'the need for more intensive community development support where there is a long history of disadvantage, where there  is a fragmented community and where there is a major change at community level e.g. as a result of regeneration programmes.   It will also be needed where there are pockets of disadvantage in more affluent areas, which are often hidden from view and where there has been previous little investment'.*  Bankside and surrounding areas have been tremendously affected by regeneration.  Some people living south of Southwark Street already feel marginalized by the development of the river front.  Soon these people will be the 'squeezed middle' living between two major regeneration programmes - Bankside and Elephant.

In spatial planning, is sufficient focus being given to the fact that long-standing members of the community, many of whom might be older, might not feel they belong any more; much that they knew in terms of physical landmarks do not exist anymore.  This can compound their feelings of confusion.  New facilities in the form of shops, restaurants are unaffordable and not appropriate to their needs.

Where are community/social services located – are they within the NP core area or outside?

Within Borough & Bankside there are different places that people identify with.  It will be important for new development to be sensitive to the different scale and character of places and both protect and develop micro neighbourhoods e.g. land on estates currently unused but could be developed to promote interaction amongst residents.

If planning permission is given to housing schemes where the affordable housing element of the proposed scheme is elsewhere in the borough, does this communicate a commitment to a continued mixed community or does it promote a 'them and us'.  How will that affect the community mix in the longer term?  Is there a real danger of creating a divided and fragmented community?

Joseph Rowntree Foundation also concluded that '*neighbourhood structures should make sense to the people living there'.* How will we communicate our structure to people, how can we demonstrate our commitment to do things differently? How do we ensure we protect all communities within the area.

## What Would Be the Proposed Methodology in Assisting the Forum in Reaching Conclusions About Them?

Review information available and its source. Are there sections of the community whose voices have not been heard?

Agree target impacts – what do we want the Plan to achieve in terms of impact of the quality of life for everyone in the area in respect of health and well-being, access to opportunities, sense of belonging, economic benefits etc? Would we use the Southwark 2016 priorities?

Agree what level of provision we are trying to achieve now and in the medium and longer term. Would we agree to levels of development over and above our local needs to help pay for improved facilities?

Agree which social and community services need to be within the core and extended areas and which are acceptable being a short distance away acknowledging that programmes need to respond to different attitudes, cultures and priorities.

Analyse existing community structure and power to see how these can be addressed/negotiated within proposed structure.

**Other issues for the NF**

Impact of Community Infrastructure Levy on future plans ensuring equity in the decision-making process and securing sufficient resources to ensure implementation of Plan.

How do we keep up to date with changes within the area?

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