

Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Action Groups Review Group held on Tuesday 18 September 2012, 5:30pm.

Present: Councillor Brunning, Coventry and C Williams

Officers: Z Dhamani (Overview and Scrutiny Officer), A Flynn (Head Of Neighbourhood Management) and R Solly (Head of Community Safety)

Witness: D Livingstone (Chair Safer Neighbourhood Delivery Group [SDNG])

Appointment of Chair

That Councillor Brunning be elected as Chair of the Review Group
Councillor C Williams be appointed as Vice-Chair.

Terms of Reference

That the Terms of Reference be agreed.

Current Positions of Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs)

It was noted that the Safer Neighbourhood Delivery Group (SNDG) was currently in the process of sending out a survey to NAGs, via the Thames Valley Police (TVP) representatives across Milton Keynes. The aim was that the feedback from the survey would provide basic information about the NAGs, the current priorities, how they operate and what was missing. It would also identify where the effective NAGs were and where no NAG had been established.

It was highlighted that TVP representatives, who completed the survey in areas without NAGs, might have a different view point to NAGs and Parish Councils. Parish Councils would then be contacted in the areas without NAGs after the initial responses had been collated.

Milton Keynes Council (MKC) officers would take responsibility to ensure surveys issued to Council officers would be returned promptly.

The Chair of SNDG provided some comments on his current view of NAGs which included :

- NAGs were operated by volunteers
- When chairs change the handover was not effective in every case
- The previous format for NAGs to operate was very formulated
- TVP had stepped back from this approach and this had allowed NAGs to operate more freely
- One approach for NAG operation would not suit all areas
- NAGs needed support, training, particularly for chairs and back office support
- There was a lack of awareness within NAGs as to what resources were available to them
- The survey would highlight some of these issues

There were discussions around the approach for NAGs. There was a consensus that while NAGs should have the same terms of reference it would be open to each one to interpret them according to their area. A common approach to communicating with residents and a process for identifying priorities would be useful. A set of guiding principles for NAGs would be key to having a consistent approach without restricting NAGs.

Current Guidance from National Government on NAGs

It was noted that there was no formal guidance for NAGs. Previous guidance from the Home Office was very rigid and the group which set these no longer existed. With the elections in November for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) it was thought the new Commissioner would provide guidance on how NAGs might operate, in each police area but it could be late 2013 before this was in place. The PCC and the Community Safety Partnership will have a mutual requirement and duty to take due regard to standards and priorities of one another.

It was thought that this would give the Review Group a good opportunity to put steps in place to improve the effectiveness of NAGs across Milton Keynes.

Review Group Work Plan

The work plan was amended in response to the discussion as follows:

Date	Item	Witnesses
18.09	Review the original aim of NAGs and how they have moved on from then. To look at the current priorities for NAGs ahead of the results of the survey detailed below by the Delivery Group. Number of NAGs and in which areas. Areas without NAGs.	Chair of SNDG
	Look at current guidance from Central Government on NAGs	
22.10	Look at the outcomes of the survey conducted by the Safer Neighbourhood Delivery Group: What are the priorities for NAGs? Decision making process for NAGs	
	Look for possible options for alternative structures for NAGs in preparation for the next meeting	
	Look at the risks for NAGs, for example, lack of resource and what solutions could be found	
5.11	A workshop with witnessed from a cross section of partners.	Representatives from MKC, TVP, Parish and Town Councils, Schools, Ward Members, Junior NAGs, Voluntary Organisations, Health sector, Local Businesses, Barwatch
	Look at the outcomes of the current SaferMK survey	
3.12	Support for NAGs from MKC and resources needed Draft recommendations and report Consider PCC Election result and any early indications to the impact on NAGs	
	Consider the funding implications including partner contributions	

14.01	Review final report and recommendations ahead of Committee meeting 6 February	
	Actions	Owner
1	A map to be circulated to the Group and brought to the next meeting to plot where the effective NAGs are across Milton Keynes	Z Dhamani
2	Preparation of workshop and invitation of witnesses	Z Dhamani
3	Initial outline of survey to be circulated ahead of next meeting	D Brunning to provide to Group

Dates for meetings	Civic Offices
Tuesday 18 September 530	Conservatory
Monday 22 October 530	Room 3
Monday 5 November 330 (Workshop) 530 meeting if needed	Room 4 (workshop) Room 3 (meeting)
Monday 3 December 530	Room 3
Monday 14 January 530 TBC	Room 3