

Future of Neighbourhood Meetings

Why the need for change?

- Work has been going on for some time now to develop proposals for new ways to run these meetings. Several projects have led to the conclusion that it would be best to stop having these meetings at ‘neighbourhood level’.
- The projects that have led to this idea include a Scrutiny Review conducted by Cllrs in 2009; the ‘21st Century Cllr Project (which looked at ways the Council could better support its Members), and a review of CAPs conducted by the Police last year.

What’s the problem?

- The current neighbourhood areas are felt to be too large to be able to engage with people on the priorities for their local area effectively.
- The current meetings can be too Council-led and might benefit from more of a focus on how the Council can help local residents to improve the things that matter most to them

So what is the proposal?

- 3 meetings per year in each of the 19 wards, led by the ward Cllrs, who will set the agenda in line with the interest of residents
- The purpose is to open up a dialogue about improving the local area and services, using a “ward improvement plan” for each ward as the focus.
- Experience from elsewhere has shown that this can really work to get people interested and involved: Islington; LBWF; Tower Hamlets (2010 pilot on the Boundary Estate). Tower Hamlets created a ‘neighbourhood agreement’ that set out the responsibilities for both the Council and residents in the area.
- Currently the Mayor holds a question time at each of the Neighbourhood Forums. We want to continue to give residents an opportunity to question the Mayor outside of full Council so are developing other options such as moving to a borough-wide question time for the public, supplemented with less formal engagement, for example taking questions at shopping centres
- Meetings will be publicised via Hackney Today, the website, mailings, text messages, email lists, and any other means you would like to use for yourselves.