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Neighbourhood management in Westminster.

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NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT IN WESTMINSTER

**A research report by
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The last 15 years have seen an increasing role for communities in renewing neighbourhoods and in improving local services. The pressures towards ‘localism’ and service modernisation have led most large local authorities to introduce some form of ‘neighbourhood working’ which can often take the form of a neighbourhood management approach. The University of Westminster developed this research project in order to analyse the ‘Westminster model’ of neighbourhood management and consider its future in the light of the emerging economic and policy context.

Objective 1: Clarify the definition of NM and brief scoping of the various models of NM operating in England

‘Neighbourhood management’ (NM) is broadly defined as a process which brings the local community and local agencies together, at neighbourhood level, to tackle local problems and improve local services. This process has been particularly applied to deprived neighbourhoods. There are seven key elements of NM:

1. A clearly defined neighbourhood
2. Resident involvement and support for residents to get involved
3. A dynamic neighbourhood manager with ‘clout’
4. A local partnership to provide strategic direction
5. Support and commitment from the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership
6. Quality information
7. Commitment of service providers.

‘*Beyond the Pathfinders*’, a report prepared by SQW for the DCLG (2008b) sets out the findings of a survey of 135 local authorities. It concluded that NM initiatives were operating in at least 27% of England’s unitary or district level authorities, covering 4.2 million people, 8% of England’s population, across nearly 500 neighbourhoods. However, this survey underestimates third sector-led NM activity given its selection bias towards local authorities in receipt of ‘special funding’.

Objective 2: In-depth analysis of the ‘Westminster model’ of NM sub-contracted to the Paddington Development Trust (PDT) in Church St, Westbourne and Queen’s Park

Analysis of the Westminster model of NM makes clear that its structures and operations are in line with the core approach and key elements that constitute NM as defined nationally, as opposed to broader neighbourhood ways of working. The model takes the form of Local Area Renewal Partnerships (LARPs). The LARPs encapsulate the core approach of NM in terms of community engagement and influencing services, seeking to co-ordinate partnership action at a neighbourhood level to address local priorities, and use detailed local knowledge to tailor mainstream services more effectively. The LARPs constitute the crucial ‘neighbourhood delivery platform’ for the City’s Local Strategic Partnership, the Westminster City Partnership (WCP).

In terms of scale, crucially in Westminster, NM is targeted on the City’s most deprived areas rather than being an area-wide approach. This ‘equity of outcome’ ethos is appropriate given the City’s extreme socio-economic polarity and diversity.

In common with experiences in the rest of the country, Westminster's NM approach is subject to the challenge of funding sustainability given its reliance on core revenue funding for staff and the decline of 'special funds' intended to catalyse its adoption. This indicates that the approach has yet to be 'mainstreamed' in Westminster despite its obvious embrace by WCP partners (especially some Council departments and the Primary Care Trust, NHS Westminster).

Objective 3: Assessment of the impact and Value-for-Money (VFM) of the Westminster model

Overall, the research found clear benefits of NM in terms of efficiencies (saving or releasing resources) and effectiveness (achieving the outcomes sought at neighbourhood and strategic levels). The additional costs of NM are justified, not only in light of the City's 'equity of outcome' ethos, but by the way in which the NM approach secures better VFM for this spend than if NM was not in place. The Westminster model of NM has undoubtedly had a positive impact on securing better quality-of-life outcomes in the City and has had some success in bending the mainstream. Key is that the contribution of NM to securing better VFM for Council and other statutory partners can be clearly demonstrated.

Critical challenges remain in terms of developing a database which secures evidence of outcomes and impact and in terms of securing buy-in so that the benefits of the model are more widely understood. While the onus is placed on the LARPs to 'justify' their existence and further work is undoubtedly needed, NM partners have a significant role to play in providing the necessary evidence. The Council's 'Mapping the Money' (2010) project is to be applauded as a step in the right direction, particularly given its recognition of the need for 'outcomes mapping', seen as leading to greater collaborative working at a local level (HMSO, 2009: 37).

In addition, it is clear that community involvement facilitated via NM in service planning, design, implementation, delivery and evaluation has been an extremely important element in the City meeting its Local Area Agreement (LAA) requirements and in contributing to its high Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) scores, recently culminating in the award of a 'green flag' for community engagement. The success of the Westminster model is evident in its national context, with Church St NM highly rated in the National Evaluation of the NM Pathfinders (SQW, 2007b), and the WCP's area renewal approach selected as a good practice example by the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA).

The importance of the support, guidance and direction from PDT was consistently stressed by respondents at all levels in all sectors. Its credibility and expertise is reflected in it being the managing body for 3 of the City's 5 LARPs; its role in facilitating cross-cutting LARPs knowledge exchange and working; and its LAA Delivery agreement with the WCP.

Conclusions

A great deal has been achieved in a short period of time in the establishment and operation of the pioneering Westminster model of NM. Respondents recognised:

- The quality, expertise and motivation of the NM teams
- The importance of the support, guidance and direction from PDT

- The significant support of the NM approach from ward members and executive members in City Hall and other statutory partners, though the need to increase understanding of the approach and its value amongst those not directly engaged was also stated.

Key national policy documents (such as *Putting the Frontline First*, 2009) echo the rationale lying behind the NM approach, that being “public services responsive to citizens’ needs and driven by them” (HMSO, 2009: 5). Mechanisms include a reduction in “centrally-imposed burdens on the frontline” (HMSO, 2009: 10) and reduced ring-fencing of budgets, as reflected in the Total Place pilots, a process upon which Westminster has already embarked. The Conservative green paper, “Control Shift: Returning Power to Local Communities” (2009) echoes this, including proposals to phase out ring-fencing, and give councils and local communities more say in how to spend their funding allocations. Emphasis is also placed on strengthening the role of citizens and civic society as expressed in the form of groups of residents and third sector bodies (Cameron’s “big society”).

The City’s lauded LARPs infrastructure is in line with this direction. Given the consensus regarding localism, the emergent suite of policies include joint commissioning, for which Westminster is a beacon Council, and likely development of co-production. The value of ‘neighbourhood institutions’ as centres for local services is stressed, with scope for community management of facilities and social enterprises delivering services.

The increased emphasis on the role of local government combined with the intent to commission more services from the third sector indicates that there are significant opportunities for the PDT and the LARPs, but that these are to a large extent contingent on the Council’s continued support and commitment to its well-established and effective deprived neighbourhood infrastructure.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University of Westminster developed and co-funded this analysis of the ‘Westminster model’ of neighbourhood management (NM) in order to fill gaps in the evidence base to inform decisions about the way forward for the NM approach in the context of changing local and national policy direction and funding streams.
- 1.2 A research steering group was convened in January 2010 comprising representatives of the PDT (which contributed to research costs), the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), and the National Association for Neighbourhood Management. It agreed the following objectives for the research:
 1. To clarify the definition of NM and to carry out a scoping study of the various models of NM operating in England;
 2. To analyse in more depth the ‘Westminster model’ of NM, which is sub-contracted to PDT in Church St (a Round 2 NM Pathfinder) and two other areas (Queen’s Park and Westbourne);
 3. To assess the impact and value for money of the Westminster model.
- 1.3 The research was conducted between January and March 2010 by Dr Madeleine Pill of Cardiff University’s School of City and Regional Planning and Professor Nick Bailey of the University of Westminster’s School of Architecture and the Built Environment.
- 1.4 The methodology comprised desk-based initial scoping and subsequent analysis of secondary data regarding NM in England. Concurrently a listing of Westminster respondents was agreed and a total of 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted in February 2010. Respondents included representatives of the key statutory partners in NM, such as Westminster City Council officers and members, the Police and NHS Westminster; as well as other NM partner organisations in the City. Interviews were also conducted with residents and other bodies engaged on NM Boards, and with NM staff members, with a particular focus on Church St neighbourhood management. The interviews were recorded and transcribed prior to analysis. In addition, a review of relevant documentation, such as reports, evaluations, policy statements and strategies, was carried out.
- 1.5 The interview topic guide which was provided to all respondents in advance of the interview is appended, along with the research’s respondent listing and a bibliography of the policy and academic literature cited in the report.
- 1.6 **Acknowledgements:** The authors would like to thank all those who assisted with and participated in the research. Particular thanks must go to Neil Johnston (PDT Chief Executive), and Marco Torquati (Church St Neighbourhood Manager). We benefited from the involvement of Ben Lee at the National Association for Neighbourhood Management, and Laura Cane of the DCLG, for initial advice on the research approach and literature. We are very grateful to all those interviewed for their time, knowledge and expertise.

2 POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 The last 15 years have seen an increasing role for communities in renewing neighbourhoods and improving local services. The notions of ‘new localism’, ‘double-devolution’ and ‘place-making’ all indicate consensus around the value of working at the neighbourhood level. A continued emphasis on such ‘localism’ is indicated for the future, with initiatives such as Total Place¹, the development of co-production, and the work of the Commission for 2020 Public Services. Future directions, such as the move towards “big society”, are considered at the end of the report. Within the broad suite of ‘neighbourhood policies’, four objectives can be identified (Benington et al, 2006):
- deepening representation and participative democracy
 - improving the responsiveness, accountability and value for money of public services to frontline users and to local communities
 - tackling disadvantage and neighbourhood renewal
 - developing social capital and social cohesion.
- 2.2 Relevant mechanisms have included local participation in service delivery and design under Best Value, the creation of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), the requirement for Local Area Agreements (LAAs) under the aegis of the ‘community leadership’ role for local government (following the Local Government Act, 2000), and a performance management regime which increasingly emphasises locally-relevant outcomes (the ‘Comprehensive Area Assessment’, CAA).
- 2.3 For deprived neighbourhoods in particular there has been greater emphasis on the quality and appropriateness of public sector provision through ‘bending’ mainstream spending programmes. This emphasis on ways of enabling responsive local service provision resulted in the establishment of the NM Pathfinder programme, following the recommendations of the Social Exclusion Unit’s Policy Action Team 4 (2000).
- 2.4 The benefits of the NM approach are generally cited as improving democracy (through increasing the level of decision-making vested in the neighbourhood) and improving services (by tailoring service provision to neighbourhood needs and priorities), resulting in overall improvement of the community’s ‘well-being’. The neighbourhood level is seen as providing the best opportunity for ‘joining up’ action by linking residents and service decisions (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2008). Residents are not seen as “the clamorous public” but as experts whose knowledge and experience can make an important contribution to policy and practice (Newman et al., 2004: 221). The approach’s focus on ‘local knowledge’ stems from the belief that local people understand the needs, opportunities, and priorities in their neighbourhood in ways that professional non-residents may not (Chaskin and Garg, 1997: 634).
- 2.5 The pressures towards ‘localism’ and service modernisation have led most large local authorities to introduce some kind of devolved structure (both political and

¹ The ‘Total Place’ initiative launched in 2009 is investigating how a ‘whole area’ approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost in 13 pilot areas in England.

managerial) for the design and delivery of services. Such 'neighbourhood working' may incorporate many of the features associated with NM, but for the purposes of this research it is important to clarify definition of the NM approach.

3 Objective 1: CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF NM AND BRIEF SCOPING OF THE VARIOUS MODELS OF NM OPERATING IN ENGLAND

Definitions of Neighbourhood Management

- 3.2 'Neighbourhood management' (NM) is broadly defined as a process which brings the local community and local agencies together, at neighbourhood level, to tackle local problems and improve local services.
- 3.3 This process has been particularly applied to deprived neighbourhoods. It was identified by the Social Exclusion Unit's Policy Action Team 4 (2000) report as a tool to "enable deprived communities and local services to improve local outcomes, by improving and joining up local services, and making them more responsive to local needs". The programme saw NM as "a way of encouraging stakeholders to work with service providers to help improve the quality of services delivered in deprived neighbourhoods". The intention of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme was to test the potential role of NM in promoting neighbourhood renewal and 'narrowing the gap' between deprived and other neighbourhoods.
- 3.4 However, beyond the Pathfinder initiative, there is less consensus about what 'neighbourhood management' means. The term has become more generally and sometimes sloppily used to encompass neighbourhood ways of working which are not necessarily targeted at deprived areas. Indeed, local authority 'area working' does not equate with NM, often tending to involve LAs 'reaching down' to neighbourhoods at a larger scale, often comprising clusters of wards, to gauge resident priorities regarding service provision. An example is the 'Neighbourhood Partnerships' approach being rolled out by Bristol City Council.
- 3.5 It is therefore important to ascertain the key elements that constitute NM prior to considering the different forms it can take, before placing the Westminster model within this range of approaches.

The key elements of neighbourhood management

- 3.6 There is consensus that the two defining and related characteristics of the NM process are community engagement and influencing services (though these two key ingredients can be interpreted and operationalised in a variety of ways, discussed below). However, approaches that have these features may not necessarily constitute 'neighbourhood management'. To ensure that the Westminster model is being compared to other NM approaches rather than other forms of neighbourhood or area working, refinement of the NM's key elements is required.
- 3.7 The most useful source for this is the seven key factors set out in '*A Rough Guide to Neighbourhood Management*' (SQW for DCLG, 2006a: pp8-17). These are set out in Table 1 below. These elements and the way they are put into practice can be regarded as success factors for the NM approach. Further detail on what tends to happen in practice in terms of the NM Pathfinder

programme and beyond is detailed in the second column. This derives from the final evaluation of the Pathfinder programme, and the *'Beyond the Pathfinders'* report which draws from survey data of local authorities (both SQW for DCLG, 2008a and 2008b respectively).

Table 1: Key Elements of NM

Key Element	In (Best) Practice...
1. A clearly defined neighbourhood	Majority of NM initiatives cover areas of up to 15,000 population
2. Resident involvement and support for residents to get involved	Community involvement in partnership decision-making processes, supported by dedicated community development workers with the responsibility of involving a wider range and greater number of residents and building the capacity of those already involved. NM also should give residents the skills and knowledge to engage with strategic agendas (such as LSPs).
3. A dynamic neighbourhood manager with 'clout'	The authority to take an overview of service delivery, to co-ordinate various activities, and to negotiate for change at both local and strategic levels.
4. A local partnership to provide strategic direction	Partnerships tend to be unincorporated with the local authority employing staff and providing financial systems. But some rely on third sector bodies such as a local housing association or community development trust to provide these functions.
5. Support and commitment from the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	This includes a clear relationship between the neighbourhood-level and wider area strategies. NM needs to be linked 'upwards and outwards' into the broader political agenda.
6. Quality information	Including tracked baseline data on neighbourhood conditions; evidence of residents' needs and priorities and local service performance; monitoring data on interventions; plus resident satisfaction surveys – all to review progress and inform future working.
7. Commitment of service providers	To focus resources on the neighbourhood; but also to make fundamental changes to engage with residents effectively and put in place the processes that make services responsive to residents' priorities and needs. Partners who have become particularly engaged in NM are the local authority, the police, the Primary Care Trust (PCT), and housing associations/ RSLs.

3.8 These elements of NM are echoed in the PAT 4 (2000) report on neighbourhood management. However, the report's 'five principles' are more tightly specified,

as befits its role in initiating the more prescribed Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder programme. For example, the report stipulates ‘the tools to get things done’ as an essential ingredient. The ‘toolkit’ suggested includes agreements with service providers, devolved service delivery and purchasing, and special resources for enabling and cross-cutting activities (2000: 8).

- 3.9 Despite being able to establish the defining characteristics of NM, these characteristics are expressed in a variety of forms. Returning to the two defining characteristics of the NM process - community engagement and influencing services – and the differing ways these can be put into practice emphasises the variety of forms which NM can take:
- **Community involvement:** is sought not only to enable more responsive service delivery but due to its perceived intrinsic value – it is an end in itself as well as a means to an end. Thus caution is needed to separate ideas of community engagement as a ‘good thing’ in itself (related to notions of civil renewal and community cohesion) from the engagement of residents in influencing service delivery. While related, these two forms of engagement may require complementary but different approaches and are likely to receive differing emphases in different cases.
 - **Influencing services:** it is important to unpick what is meant by ‘influencing services’ in terms of what services are included and how these are influenced. Mechanisms for influencing may comprise changes in routine working or new initiatives on the part of the NM partnership itself or its partners. In turn, the partnership may engage in direct neighbourhood service delivery. However, in its review of non-Pathfinder NM initiatives, SQW (2008b) found that their focus of activity and primary approach has been to influence mainstream service delivery rather than to engage in direct service delivery.
- 3.10 In addition to variance in the form and functioning of community involvement and in the range of service-related tasks undertaken (which, in part, is related to the nature and extent of funding available to the initiative), there is also variance in the forms of governance used for NM approaches. This is explored further below.
- 3.11 These factors are indicative of a crucial underpinning to the NM approach – which is that ‘one size does not fit all’ and that the approach needs to be tailored, in light of for example levels of deprivation and the institutional infrastructure at neighbourhood level. As stated in the *Rough Guide to NM* (SQW, 2006a: 8.), “strong NM working takes into account the political, strategic and local context”. This scope for variance given varying contexts is reflected in the range of forms of NM currently in operation in England.

The range of NM Initiatives in England

- 3.12 Comprehensive, reliable information about the extent of and form and function taken by NM initiatives in England is lacking. The best available information source is the ‘*Beyond the Pathfinders*’ report prepared by SQW for the DCLG (2008b). This sets out the findings of a survey conducted of 135 local

authorities. It concluded that NM initiatives were operating in at least 27% of England's unitary or district level authorities, covering 4.2 million people, 8% of England's population, across nearly 500 neighbourhoods.

- 3.13 It is important to note that this survey will have underestimated NM activity in England due to selection bias. The local authorities surveyed were primarily those in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds or Neighbourhood Element funding, and regarded as a result as "most likely to be engaged in neighbourhood management" (SQW, 2008b: 6). The survey sample will therefore be biased towards local authority-led (and funded through the provision of special funding by central government) NM, rather than third sector-led approaches or approaches that are mainstream funded. Indeed, the report recognises its likely underestimation of RSL-led NM activity (SQW, 2008b: 6). Other NM instigators/ providers of its accountability and management structures, such as community development trusts, are not mentioned in this context.
- 3.14 This important caveat aside, the survey findings show that (beyond the NM Pathfinders) the design of NM initiatives varies between areas reflecting differing contexts and issues. However, overall the approach is largely the same, as set out in Table 1 above. In addition to the common characteristics detailed above, the research found that NM is primarily used as a tool for facilitating the renewal of deprived neighbourhoods. It also found that initial NM activity has focused on 'crime and grime' ('grime' being environmental and streetscape issues) and then moved on to address other issues/ extended partnerships with statutory service providers once the initiative has become established.

Examples of different models

- 3.15 While the '*Beyond the Pathfinders*' (SQW, 2008b) report remains the most comprehensive source of information about the extent of and form taken of NM initiatives in England, for the purposes of this research limited further scoping of the various models of NM operating in England has been carried out, drawing from recommendations and desk-based research into secondary sources. Prior to considering these, however, it is useful to mention the ten case studies of non-Pathfinder NM initiatives detailed in the report (SQW, 2008b: pp44-75). The selection criteria used were: different approaches to NM; different scales of operation; *ostensibly* different funding sources (despite the report's broader survey being biased towards local authorities in receipt of 'special' funding as explained above); and a regional spread. Key areas of variance – scale of approach, funding, and governance - which emerge from the case studies are echoed by the initiatives identified in the further research undertaken and these are considered below.

Range by type

- 3.16 Table 2 sets out detail on five NM initiatives identified in the brief scoping exercise undertaken as part of this research. These were selected to illustrate the range of NM initiatives in operation, in terms of:
- the scale of approach taken (local authority-wide; deprived area focused)

- different types of local authority context – unitary; county and district; urban and rural
- funding source (‘special funding’ such as NRF/ Neighbourhood Element versus mainstream)
- governance, including the neighbourhood’s strategic links, NM staff team, and forms of resident engagement.

3.17 The limits on the information available is evident given the table’s blank fields. Scope for additional research was constrained by the parameters of this study and the need for further research and understanding is recognised. But these examples, along with the case studies mentioned above, provide a useful source for drawing out some themes pertinent to setting the scene for examination of the ‘Westminster model’.

Table 2: Further Examples of NM Initiatives

Scale of Approach		Funding	Governance		
<i>LA Context</i>	<i>Deprivation focus?</i>		<i>Strategic Links</i>	<i>NM Staff</i>	<i>Local Partnership</i>
Leicestershire County-wide across 7 districts	19 priority wards			Neighbourhood Teams - dedicated locally-based staff; plus an Action Team of officers (not neighbourhood-based).	Consultation forum.
Salford: Unitary authority-wide	8 areas - av pop 27,000	Enhanced co-ordination & casework support of existing service base; gap-filling services; plus flexible fund; funding for communications & engagement & intelligence; funding for change management support.	Support from/ accountability to political and executive leadership, including councillors. Strong joint commissioning links.	Working Neighbourhoods Teams - an 'all service' joint local management team with joint targets.	
Nottingham: Unitary authority-wide (based on police beats)	9 most deprived areas - av pop 32,400	Neighbourhood interventions focused on bending mainstream but also 'one-off' projects depending on issue. Deprived neighbourhoods have action plans.	LSP Exec Board & Portfolio Roles; Directors' Forum; Area Management Team; Ward councillors.	(Virtual) Neighbourhood Action Teams: officers co-ordinate delivery.	4 Local Issues Groups; plus Area Housing Panels, & surgeries.
Bradford: Unitary authority-wide			Cross-agency co-ordination focused on wards.	30 cross-agency 'Ward Officer Teams'; 15 'Ward Co-ordination Teams' (each covering 2 wards).	
Fenland, Cambs: Rural district authority-wide		"Possible additional funding for each area to spend on community priorities".	Fenland DC LSP and LAA Board	5 Neighbourhood Management Boards (1 rural communities; 4 market towns). Comprise elected county & district members; district council officers; & county, police & RSL officers. Parish councillors on Rural NM Board.	Neighbourhood Forums

Scale of NM Approach

3.18 While the principles of the NM approach could improve service delivery in all types of neighbourhoods, local authorities that have pursued NM have struck a balance between treating neighbourhoods equally in process terms and treating

their different needs equally (or what can be termed ‘equity of provision’ versus ‘equity of outcome’).

- 3.19 The examples detailed in Table 2 are area-wide NM systems. However, a particular focus on deprived areas via a more intense form of NM is evident in some cases (for example, in Nottingham as well as Salford and Leicestershire). The SQW case studies (2008b) include some approaches which solely target deprived neighbourhoods (for example, in Peterborough, pp46-48) as well as those which encompass some form of area-wide neighbourhood working combined with explicit neighbourhood management in more deprived areas (for example, as being rolled out in Lewisham, pp64-66). A good example of this latter approach is provided by activities in the City of Bristol. The local authority has introduced a city-wide system of 14 ‘neighbourhood partnerships’, each covering two or three city wards. While this does not constitute NM but broader ‘neighbourhood working’, what is noteworthy is how existing NM initiatives (deriving from previous area-based programmes such as NDC) are being linked to these structures, with the partnership bodies responsible for NM delivery in deprived areas working with the Council to roll out broader neighbourhood working while maintaining enhanced provision in areas of greater need.

Funding of NM

- 3.20 The final Pathfinders evaluation (SQW, 2008a) found that 60% of NM initiatives have started since 2005, showing that the approach’s spread has been directly enabled by the provision of special funding by central government, with the clear majority of initiatives reliant on NRF and Neighbourhood Element monies. As these funding sources end, “there is an open question as to whether these initiatives will continue to be funded, and if so, how” (SQW, 2008a: 75).
- 3.21 The case studies detailed (SQW, 2008b: pp44-75) emphasise the influence that NRF/ Neighbourhood Element funding has had in instigating NM initiatives. In only one of these cases has the local authority (Staffordshire Moorlands DC, pp. 58-60) not been in receipt of these special funds. The selection bias of this report has been explained. That notwithstanding, it is important to emphasise that the principal aim of NM is to enable deprived communities previously disconnected from the mainstream to re-engage with and influence statutory service provision. While central government special funds have undoubtedly been an important catalyst for the spread of the NM approach, the funding was intended as such a catalyst, as reflected in its time-limited nature. PAT 4 (2000) stated that “where neighbourhood management is implemented, it should receive core funding in the form of long-term revenue funding” (2000: 10), though of course this is conditional according to whether the approach achieves the targets set by the community. The policy intent was that through such initiatives the relationships between communities and their service providers are fundamentally – and permanently – changed. Thus the Staffordshire example can be regarded as one which encapsulates the ‘true spirit’ of the policies developed to encourage NM as an embedded process or ‘way of doing things’. The NM approach requires some form of ongoing revenue funding for the dedicated officer teams (plus the facilitation and support for community engagement) that are essential ingredients of the process. Now that the

dedicated, pump-priming funds are coming to an end, and where NM has proved itself, the process requires ‘mainstreaming’.

- 3.22 As evident in Table 2, information is sketchy on the funding arrangements for non-Pathfinder NM initiatives not detailed in the ‘*Beyond the Pathfinders*’ (SQW, 2008b) report. But these examples do illustrate that the local authorities have adopted NM as an *approach*. Implicit in this is local authority and other statutory partner recognition that the approach is worth supporting from core revenue funds in terms of officer support, as well as making additional funding available (as is the case in Salford).
- 3.23 It should also be stressed that the NM approach figures in the ‘forward strategies’ of bodies created as a result of previous area-based initiative funding regimes. The neighbourhood-based partnership for Portsmouth’s NM initiative, Heartland Community Voice, combines two pre-existing SRB community boards (SQW, 2008b: pp55-57). Returning to the City of Bristol example, Community at Heart, the entity created to manage Bristol’s New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme, is seeking to continue its NM delivery role (which had been augmented via NRF funding) as well as partnering with the Council in rolling out its broader ‘neighbourhood partnership’ approach. Indeed, Community at Heart residents and staff have recently visited Church St Neighbourhood Management (CSNM) in Westminster to gain advice on how to successfully operate the NM approach. In turn, representatives of the EC1 NDC programme (in the London Borough of Islington) have also recently visited CSNM to discuss development of the NM approach as part of their forward strategy.

Governance of NM

- 3.24 The Pathfinders’ final evaluation (SQW, 2008a) identifies a basic model for the operation and governance of NM, which echoes the key elements and best practice identified in Table 1. This model comprises:
- A small professional team led by a Neighbourhood Manager, usually including community outreach, policy and administrative officers, all based in an accessible office within the target area.
 - Team members usually employed by, and financial and legal matters dealt with, via an accountable body (in most cases the local authority).
 - A multi-sector partnership, including public, private and third (voluntary and community) sector representatives, dedicated to the target area and to whom the Neighbourhood Manager is accountable. This is led by a board, but the partnership usually has a range of thematic working groups and forums involving a wider range of local stakeholders. The partnership is a voluntary association, not a legal entity.
 - Development of a programme set out in an annual delivery plan agreed by the partnership board. The plan sets out the partnership’s aims and priorities and the range of activities it intends to pursue, usually including a mix of community development activities, work to influence local service providers and perhaps some direct project delivery.
- 3.25 Not all the examples examined ‘beyond the pathfinders’ meet the detail of this model, which in part is a function of the more prescribed nature of the

Pathfinder programme. But most of the examples do meet the key principles (though Nottingham’s ‘virtual’ rather than neighbourhood-based NM professional team is a borderline case).

- 3.26 What is clear is that local authorities tend to be the lead agency of NM. In the case of the Pathfinders, 29 out of 35 initiatives had the local authority as accountable body. The additional examples identified in Table 2 are also all local authority-led NM initiatives.
- 3.27 However, vital to this consideration of NM governance is the role of the third sector, not only as a crucial partner in NM as reflected in the constitution of NM partnership boards, but as a ‘delivery agent’ or even lead agency or instigator of the NM approach. The lead agency role can be performed by housing associations, a regeneration agency, or a community development trust. To a limited extent this is reflected in the selection of Round 2 Pathfinders, where the NRU actively encouraged the use of different accountable bodies and 5 out of the 15 initiatives did so (SQW, 2006b: 46). These, including Church St, which is explored in much greater detail later in the report, are set out in the following table (derived from SQW, 2006b: 46).

Table 3: Third Sector-Led NM Pathfinders

Pathfinder	Accountable Body
Oldington and Foley Park (Wyre Forest)	Wyre Forest Community Housing - an RSL.
Improving Croft and Cowpen Quay (Blyth)	Guinness Trust Group - an RSL.
Transform (North Devon)	North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company (RegCo) - a non-statutory organisation.
Ovenden Initiative (Calderdale)	North Halifax Partnership – a company limited by guarantee.
Church Street (Westminster)	Paddington Development Trust - a community-led organisation with social objectives.

- 3.28 These five, along with the case studies selected ‘beyond the pathfinders’ (SQW, 2008b) demonstrate that despite local authority dominance, the scope for using different ‘delivery partners’ is recognised (for example, an RSL delivering NM in one of the target neighbourhoods in the Middlesbrough case, pp. 67-69). However, information is sorely lacking in the NM literature, which is dominated by the central government funding regime-related (and thus local authority-biased) suite of SQW reports on NM.
- 3.29 Housing associations/ RSLs have received the most attention in this regard, not least given the links between housing and estate management approaches and NM. One example cited in a report prepared by the Young Foundation for the Housing Corporation (Bacon et al., 2007) is Poplar HARCA (Housing and Regeneration Community Association), a resident-led housing association set up in the late 1990s as a stock transfer vehicle for some of Tower Hamlets’ most deprived estates. It operates a neighbourhood centre on each of its estates which provides a base for their NM approach. Harrow Road Neighbourhood Partnership in Westminster, discussed in the following section, is also led by

local housing associations. Other examples revealed in the course of this research include:

- In Bristol, **Community in Partnership (CiP)** is an independent community NM Board created to deliver NM in the Filwood ward (and parts of two other wards). This organisation has also been contracted by the Council to manage the wider three-ward 'neighbourhood partnership' of which the NM area is a constituent part.
- In Luton, **Marsh Farm Community Development Trust** (created to managed the area's NDC programme) has piloted an NM approach
- In Hull, the **Goodwin Development Trust**, established in 1994 by the residents of the Thornton Estate, operates a NM programme on the estate.

3.30 Therefore the governance of NM in terms of the lead agency does vary, not least because different bodies are best placed to perform this role in different areas. The key requirement is the body's ability to do business both with local strategic partners *and* with the local community. The value of an organisation already active within the neighbourhood and thus with the credibility and networks with strategic partners and residents to perform the role is recognised. Therefore it is important to stress that while the majority of NM initiatives are local authority-led, and that local authority support is vital in all cases, third sector bodies can and do lead NM. This obviously relates to the presence and capacity of third sector organisations at neighbourhood level. Where such organisations exist it can be argued they are better placed than local authorities to be the lead agency. Just as NM acts as an intermediary between services and residents, a valid case can be made that third sector bodies, themselves intermediaries used to joint working with residents and services, are extremely well-positioned to facilitate NM.

In summary

3.31 NM is an approach which engages the community in improving local services by acting as an intermediary between services and the diversity of residents at neighbourhood level, facilitating effective responses to residents' concerns. The precise form it takes varies according to the political, strategic and local context. This shall now be explored in terms of the 'Westminster model' of NM.

4 Objective 2: IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE ‘WESTMINSTER MODEL’ OF NM SUB-CONTRACTED TO PDT IN CHURCH ST, WESTBOURNE AND QUEEN’S PARK

Westminster’s Neighbourhood-based Approach

4.2 “We believe that strategically a neighbourhood-based approach to service improvement makes sense in Westminster. This is because the City is so sharply polarised in terms of the socio-economic profile of many of its neighbourhoods. A uniform approach to service delivery across the whole City is, in principle, unlikely to meet needs in a way that is equitable” (DTZ Piedad, 2005: v).

Development of Neighbourhood-Based Approaches in Westminster²

4.3 The drive for an area-based approach to Westminster’s deprived neighbourhoods and subsequently the development of NM in these areas was spearheaded by the core Westminster City Partnership (WCP, the City’s Local Strategic Partnership), and particularly Westminster City Council and the Paddington Development Trust (PDT), a community-led third sector organisation.

4.4 The early stages of NM in Westminster evolved out of work in the north of the city by the PDT, established in 1998 with the mission to undertake economic, environmental and social regeneration of the north Westminster area. PDT secured regeneration funding through its New Life for Paddington SRB programme (1999-2006), which it used in part to support the establishment of a neighbourhood forum in Church Street ward, which developed an NM approach (explored in detail below). It also supported development of residents’ networks in other deprived neighbourhoods in the north of Westminster (Westbourne, Queen’s Park and Harrow Road wards). These developments were ‘ahead of the curve’ in terms of policy and funding mechanisms. With the creation of the WCP in 2002 concerted efforts to tackle neighbourhood deprivation intensified, assisted by the allocation of NRF funding to the City. The Partnership brought together the public, private and third (voluntary and community) sectors to seek a co-ordinated approach to improving quality of life, with a focus on the need to improve outcomes in the most deprived communities and to ‘narrow the gap’ (as per the national neighbourhood renewal strategy, SEU, 1998 and 2001).

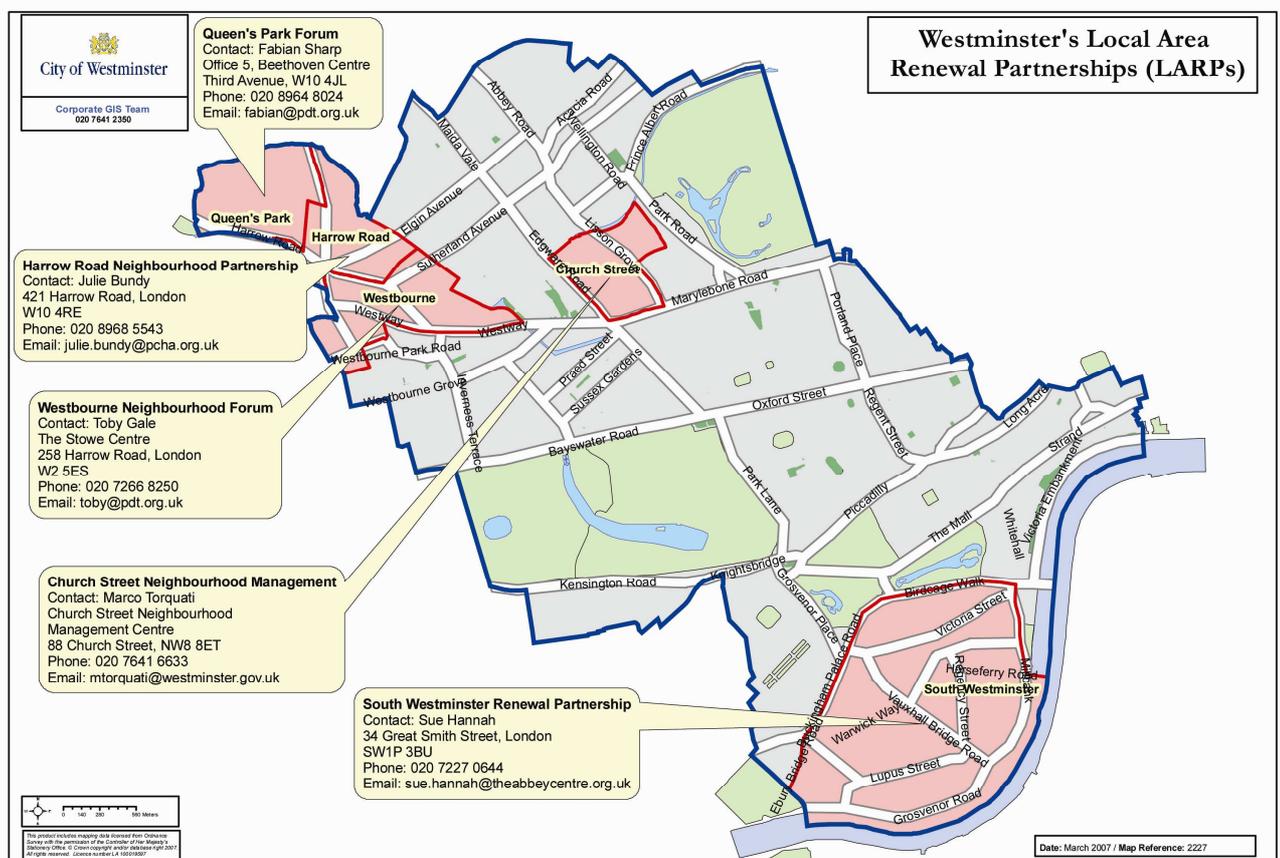
4.5 The WCP published its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy in 2002, with the priority of improving the quality of life in the City’s most deprived neighbourhoods of Church St, and also Westbourne, Queen’s Park, Harrow Road and South Westminster.

² With regard to neighbourhood-based working, it should also be mentioned that Westminster currently has 5 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), supported by the Council, which fund additional street cleansing services and other initiatives designed to make their trading area safe, welcoming and attractive (WCC Economic Development Strategy, 2008-2011: 31). These do not overlap with the LARPs areas.

Local Area Renewal Partnerships (LARPs)

4.6 In order to realise its aims, in 2003 the WCP set up Local Area Renewal Partnerships (LARPs) to formally recognise and support the evolving local 'change' networks in the deprived neighbourhoods. These incorporated the Church St Neighbourhood Forum, neighbourhood forums or partnerships in Queen's Park, Harrow Road, and Westbourne which were developed from the residents' networks established in these areas by the PDT, and a new partnership in South Westminster. The LARPs were created to be the 'neighbourhood delivery platform' for the WCP, constituting the Partnership's neighbourhood-based infrastructure by which it seeks to deliver better quality of life outcomes (which are now expressed in the Local Area Agreement, LAA).

Figure 1: Westminster's LARPs



4.7 Importantly the LARPs encapsulate the core approach of NM in terms of community engagement and influencing services. They bring together service providers (including the Council, police, PCT, and the community and voluntary sectors) and residents to identify and address key local issues across a range of areas (such as crime, health, housing, education, employment, and environment). In line with the NM ethos, the approach seeks to co-ordinate partnership action at a neighbourhood level to address local priorities, and use detailed local knowledge to tailor mainstream services more effectively. The focus is on using existing resources to meet local needs and on 'joining up' local initiatives to maximise community benefit.

- 4.8 Taking each of the themes as set out in the previous section of the report in turn enables greater consideration of the ‘Westminster model’ of NM in light of the key elements of the NM approach.

Scale of NM approach in Westminster

- 4.9 The Westminster model of NM as expressed in the LARPs is one targeted on the City’s most deprived areas rather than being an area-wide system. This ‘equity of outcome’ approach is balanced by other mechanisms which assist in providing ‘equity of provision’. In addition to the LARPs NM approach, there are other forms of neighbourhood-based *consultation* (rather than management) in operation in the City. These include service-based groups such as the PCT’s Local Involvement Network (LINK, formerly the Patient and Public Involvement Forum for Westminster), Police Community Consultative Groups, and Safer Neighbourhoods Panels.
- 4.10 The City Council’s ‘One City’ and now ‘Living City’ agendas share a common emphasis in line with the NM ethos of empowered citizens who influence local services. Of particular note is the City Council’s ‘neighbourhoods programme’ introduced as part of the ‘One City’ agenda (2006), which is founded on the view of the City as a collection of neighbourhoods, each with their own characteristics and needs. The programme sought to give greater voice to the City’s distinctive communities (and strengthen representative democracy) by “empowering ward members as the local champions for their area. Improved information, access to senior officers and neighbourhood budgets are designed to support ward members to improve the social, environmental and economic well-being of their local area” (WCC, 2007). For 2008-09 and 2009-10 a £100k budget was allocated to each ward. In light of financial constraints, this has been reduced to £50k per ward for 2010-11.
- 4.11 In addition there are Area Forums, chaired by a local councillor and attended by a senior officer, which each cover 2-5 wards and provide a mechanism for enabling better understanding of neighbourhood issues and priorities. The LARPs are covered by the following Area Forums:
- Church St LARP covers one of 3 wards in Marylebone Area Forum
 - Westbourne covers one of 4 wards in Bayswater Area Forum
 - Queen’s Park covers one of 4 wards in Maida Vale Area Forum
 - South Westminster covers four of 5 wards in South Area Forum; plus part of one ward in West End Area Forum.
- 4.12 However, such neighbourhood budgets and consultation mechanisms do not constitute NM as defined previously. These are broader ‘neighbourhoods ways of working’ which are not targeted at deprived areas.

Funding of NM approach in Westminster

- 4.13 LARPs were initially funded by the WCP through Neighbourhood Renewal Funds and other partnership monies (CSNM is funded as a Round 2 NM Pathfinder - further detail is set out in the in-depth case study below). More recently, funding has come through the LAA. The current funding arrangements (for the two financial years 2009-10 and 2010-2011) total an

allocation of £2.927 million of LAA funding by the WCP to support ‘area renewal’. This comprises:

- delivery agreements between the WCP and each LARP which set out how their efforts support LAA outcomes
- support for the Council’s area renewal team (based in its Policy Unit) which provides strategic support to the LARPs (the team currently has one vacant post)
- the LAA Delivery Agreement between the WCP and the PDT for the provision of services in the north of the City (a total of about £1m per annum, which includes £772k for the three LARPs for which PDT is the management agency).

4.14 In addition to the total LAA funds, the WCP expects that its partners implement the actions outlined in the neighbourhood delivery plans prepared by the LARPs using mainstream funds, in line with the NM ethos of making statutory service provision more responsive and ‘bending the spend’. NHS Westminster (the PCT) and WCP thematic networks have also commissioned the LARPs and PDT to deliver specific LAA projects (for example, the Westminster Works programme).

4.15 The WCP recognises that a key challenge will be to identify sources of funding to sustain area renewal work beyond 2011. This is in line with national trends. The Partnership also recognises the need to make the current Westminster model of NM/ area renewal as efficient as possible. Progressing these issues was considered as part of the WCP’s Area Renewal Review in 2009 (explained below) and the report’s subsequent sections also consider these.

Governance of NM in Westminster

4.16 The ‘Westminster model’ can be characterised as the broad approach taken to NM in the City. A noteworthy characteristic in line with the ‘spirit’ of NM is that within Westminster, the model provides a framework for the NM approach which enables neighbourhood-specific variance in terms of the form NM takes and the functions it performs. Each area has developed its own distinctive approach and governance arrangements. Of course, such variance is also a function of the level of funding available.

Table 4: Westminster’s LARPs

LARP	Church St Neighbourhood Forum (now Network)	Westbourne Neighbourhood Forum	Queen’s Park Forum	Harrow Rd Neighbourhood Partnership	South Westminster Renewal Partnership
Full-time staff	9	4	4	3	2.2
Area covered	One ward	One ward	One ward	One ward	Four & a half wards
Population	c12,000	c10,000	c11,500	c8,500	c40,000
Management Agency	PDT	PDT	PDT	Genesis Housing Group	Cross River Partnership

- 4.17 The governance of the Westminster model of NM echoes the key elements of NM identified in Table 1 and the basic model of NM set out by SQW (2008a). As structures, they all comprise:
- an NM staff team based in each area (either in a dedicated neighbourhood office in the case of Church St and Harrow Road, or from an established community centre), led by a manager
 - team members employed by, and financial and legal matters dealt with, by a management organisation (accountable body)
 - a multi-sector NM board/ partnership steering group including residents, WCC and other public statutory service providers, and private and third sector organisation representatives
 - thematic/ action/ working groups (there may also be project groups)
 - a wider forum or network to bring local people together with service providers.
- 4.18 However, governance does not merely comprise the structure taken by such bodies as set out above, but the ways in which they operate. NM seeks to fundamentally change relationships between communities and their service providers. To this end all the LARPs have developed:
- resident consultation and engagement mechanisms (for example, Westbourne has trained a group of local people in social research methods) to identify priority issues and concerns
 - local neighbourhood delivery plans to address these which are endorsed by the WCP
 - strong working relationships, in particular between key officers in the NM staff teams and the Council and other partner organisations.
- 4.19 As can be expected given the flexibility of the NM model, the LARPs are each structured and operate differently in light of neighbourhood context, history and institutional infrastructure and, crucially, in light of the funding available. This variety is expressed in the range of LARP lead organisations (the ‘management organisations’ in LAA parlance, or ‘accountable bodies’ in terms of the NM Pathfinder programme). Such bodies are crucial as they enable a group of local people to oversee public funds without being a legal entity themselves.
- 4.20 This variety also highlights the strength of and importance of the third (voluntary and community) sector to the Westminster model of NM, a factor which makes the Westminster approach rather distinctive compared to its counterparts elsewhere in the country. In Westminster the third sector is well placed to perform the lead organisation role in NM as the bodies involved are able to work with local strategic partners *and* with the local community given their credibility and networks with both groups.
- 4.21 Since 2004 the WCP has funded three different management agencies to progress the 5 LARPs, two of which are third sector bodies (a community development trust and a housing association) and one of which, a partnership, has its origins in voluntary sector action:
- **PDT** manages three of the LARPs. Church St, as the most advanced area for neighbourhood-based working given its PDT support since 1998, was selected

as a focus area for 2004-05 by the WCP to explore the potential for mainstreaming an area-based approach via NM. Sufficient progress was made for Church St to gain NM Pathfinder status in 2005 (explored below) which explains its greater staffing levels. PDT was also funded to develop the Westbourne Neighbourhood and Queen's Park Forums. Initially simple public forums were established in both areas, which built on existing networks established as part of PDT's New Life for Paddington SRB programme. These forums enabled development of better understanding of local needs and how services can best be shaped to meet them, as well as building resident involvement. The forums have since developed, informed by the Church St NM approach, to comprise an NM Board including elected residents along with service providers, a wider Forum and a NM staff team of four (plus a staff member seconded from the PCT in Queen's Park).

- **Genesis Housing Group** is the management agency for the Harrow Road Neighbourhood Partnership, reflecting the fact that local housing associations were the driving force behind development of the neighbourhood-based approach in this area.

- **The Cross River Partnership**, which had gained SRB funds for community capacity building, is the management agency for South Westminster Renewal Partnership. The partnership grew from a community network run by Voluntary Action Westminster. Its staffing reflect these origins with a full-time Renewal Co-ordinator and Renewal Officer employed by WCC in the Cross River Partnership team, and a resident engagement worker employed by Voluntary Action Westminster working one day a week.

4.22 The South Westminster LARP also demonstrates that the variety which is characteristic of NM approaches in different local authority areas across the country can be replicated at a sub-local level. It is distinctive in that it covers a much greater geographical area of four and a half wards (Churchill, Tachbrook, Vincent Square, Warwick and the southern part of St James's) than the other LARPs, which map onto single ward boundaries. For this reason, the LARP does not attempt the same NM approach as adopted by the other LARPs. It prioritises activities to bring people together and to raise awareness of local services and opportunities.

Review of the LARPs

4.23 Against the backdrop of reduced LAA Partnership Funds, in 2009 the WCP asked for a review of the LARPs to inform their future development. It was decided that one extreme – of scaling back LARP activity – was unviable as it would significantly reduce their capacity to deliver; and that the other extreme – that all LARPs move to the Church St NM model – was unviable due to the extra funding required (*WCC Area Renewal Reference meeting note, 2009*).

4.24 The review resulted in the LARPs being asked to focus on specific key priorities for their areas (which has resulted in a refocusing of their neighbourhood plans), to engage statutory sector providers in supporting local neighbourhood delivery plans, and for more shared functions across LARP areas to address overarching issues, including consideration of scope for

levering new external resources. The need to improve and streamline management and monitoring arrangements was also recognised. The important role of the PDT in facilitating more cross-cutting LARPs working, and in developing a sustainable forward strategy for NM working, was recognised and additional resource was allocated to the PDT for these purposes.

Nneighbourhood delivery platform

4.25 Importantly, the model that the WCP agreed for future working retains the crucial ‘neighbourhood delivery platform’ provided by the LARPs:

- Taking health inequalities as an example, the value of the LARPs is recognised given the need to target resources and services towards areas experiencing the highest levels of health inequalities (City of Westminster et al, *Health Inequalities Strategy*, 2009: 46). The strategy emphasises the need for statutory agencies to recognise that the strength of the LARPs lies in their partnership approach to looking at neighbourhood issues, and their grassroots approach to problem-solving.
- In turn, it is widely recognised that “engagement with the LARPs has improved how we address the needs of particular communities” (WCC/ NHS Westminster *Joint Strategy for Involving People* Consultation Draft, 2009: 11).
- It is recognised that ongoing work with the LARPs will be crucial to delivering the Economic Development Strategy (WCC Economic Development Strategy, 2008-2011: 6).
- Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life is a priority in Westminster’s Housing Strategy 2007-12 and the LARPs key role is recognised, for example regarding residents’ health in parts of Queen’s Park where property conditions are poor.
- In March 2010, the Council released its *Housing Renewal Strategy* following consultation. The strategy’s initial focus will be on five neighbourhoods, four of which are contained within three of the LARPs areas and with which the LARPs are already engaged in terms of resident consultation:
 - Church Street/ Edgware Road (Church Street and Little Venice wards)
 - Tollgate Gardens Estate (Maida Vale)
 - Brunel Estate (Westbourne)
 - Ebury Bridge Estate (Churchill, South Westminster LARP)
 - Westbourne Green (Westbourne) – added as a priority area following consultation.

4.26 However, it was also recognised that crucial to realising the ethos of the Westminster model of NM is that statutory sector agencies need to strengthen how neighbourhood issues and priorities identified through the LARPs are reflected in their wider strategic planning processes. This indicates that the ‘bending the spend’ expected as part of the NM approach has not been realised as fully as envisaged. Though the WCP (and therefore its statutory sector partners) have approved the LARPs’ neighbourhood delivery plans, there is scope for further change in their practices. WCP’s partners need to incorporate neighbourhood plans into their own business planning processes. NM has still to become an embedded process on the part of statutory partners, though the examples set out above do demonstrate that for some partners the LARPs NM infrastructure underpins delivery of important elements of their remit.

4.27 Now that the Westminster model has been explained, emphasis turns to the focus of this research – the LARPs for which PDT is the management agency (Church St in particular, plus Westbourne and Queen’s Park)³. Table 5 compares each of these LARPS with the key elements of NM as set out in Table 1. This demonstrates that the Westminster model of NM does align with the precise definition of NM set out previously. The variance evident also demonstrates that each LARP is an expression of both its local context and the funding allocated to it.

³ This research focuses on Church St NM, but some analysis has been undertaken (in the form of in-depth interviews and secondary analysis of data) regarding the other LARPs.

Table 5: Key Elements of NM for the PDT LARPs

	Church St*	Westbourne	Queen's Park
1. A clearly defined neighbourhood	Single ward-based – pop c12,000; 4,200 households	Single ward-based – pop c10,000	Single ward-based – pop c11,500
2. Resident involvement and support for residents to get involved	6 elected residents on Board Capacity building, including 60 residents signed up to, and 25 regularly involved, as 'Church St Connectors'	7 elected residents on Board Capacity building	6 elected residents on Board Capacity building
3. A dynamic neighbourhood manager with 'clout'	Employed by/ seconded from Westminster City Council	Employed by PDT	Employed by PDT
Staffing	9 full-time staff: 1.5 employed by WCC; others by PDT	4 full-time staff	4 full-time staff (plus a PCT secondee)
4. A local partnership to provide strategic direction	Church St Neighbourhood Network and NM Board, plus sub-groups	Westbourne Neighbourhood Forum and NM Board plus sub-groups	Queen's Park Forum and NM Board plus sub-groups
5. Support and commitment from the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	LAA delivery agreements between the 3 PDT LARPs and Westminster City Partnership (LSP). Current 2009/10-2010/11 agreement:		
	£400k pa	£185,000 pa	£187,000 pa
6. Quality information	Performance & Evaluation officer 0.5 post seconded from WCC.	Surveys, trained group of local residents; monitoring against plan actions.	Household surveys, monitoring against plan actions.
7. Commitment of service providers	Board representation; staff secondment by WCC and PCT. Also eg. SLA between WCC and CSNM for management of Church St Market.	Board representation	6 statutory bodies represented on Board; staff secondment by PCT.

* Church St is subject to NM Pathfinder programme requirements.

In-depth case study: Church St Neighbourhood Management (CSNM)

- 4.28 To better understand the Westminster model of NM it is useful to consider one of its NM areas in more depth, drawing out and illustrating how the model works in practice. Key factors include the role of the PDT as accountable body and the adaptability of the NM approach in light of funding and policy shifts.

Development

- 4.29 A neighbourhood approach to service delivery in Church Street started in 1998 with the establishment of the Church Street Neighbourhood Forum that brought together a network of about 80 statutory, voluntary and community organisations with the support of the PDT. The Forum elected an executive Action Group and created theme-based task groups. In 2001 the Forum prepared a community plan for Church Street which outlined for the first time the needs and issues for the area. The intention to bid for an SRB programme was thwarted when the funding regime ended and “the Forum was left with a plan but no resources” (CSNM, 2005a: 11). However, the Church St Action Group adopted a central role in driving forward change in the area, effectively acting as a shadow NM Board.
- 4.30 The newly-created WCP recognised the potential of Church St’s emergent NM approach and decided to test its effectiveness in encouraging more joined up working between service providers and in giving local people a greater say in service delivery. It was decided to focus on Church St by making it a ‘priority area’ for the year 2004-05. An evaluation of this focus on the area (DTZ Piedad, 2005) found that it had fostered new working practices to improve service delivery which - crucially - were cost neutral but represented either a more efficient way of working or enhanced service providers’ understanding of the local needs of the area which meant that local priorities were addressed (DIZ Piedad, 2005: iii). It cites as one example the formation of the market working group. It found that “the NM approach can be expected to deliver significant and lasting benefits in service delivery” (DTZ Piedad, 2005: vi).
- 4.31 The WCP’s focus on Church St was an important factor in it becoming a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (under Round 2 of central government’s programme) (DTZ Piedad, 2005), following an application from PDT (WCC’s application to the first round had been unsuccessful). This entailed an award of £2.65 million (about £380,000 per year) for a 7-year programme running from 2005 until 2012. The Council provided shopfront premises for CSNM at 88 Church Street.
- 4.32 The first CSNM Board meeting was held in July 2005, following elections for the 6 resident Board members. The turnout by voting zone was between 20 and 28%, which given that the turnout for local government elections in London in 2002 was 32%, showed a remarkable level of interest (DTZ Piedad, 2005: iv). The delivery plan and baseline report for Church St (required as part of its Pathfinder status) were agreed by the WCP. The delivery plan (CSNM 2005a) set out, under seven themes, what CSNM was seeking to achieve, informed by a baseline report (CSNM 2005b) which included an Ipsos-Mori-conducted household survey along with neighbourhood data held by various agencies.

These two documents set the context for NM and enabled progress to be tracked and measured (explored later in the report).

- 4.33 After the first 4 years of the Programme, CSNM conducted a mid-programme review in 2009. The review, in line with the WCP's LARP review (and the Year 3 Pathfinder evaluation conducted by SQW in 2007) concluded that for CSNM's final 3 years as a Pathfinder, there should be concentration on a limited number of top priorities. Delivery of these 14 priorities is the aim of CSNM's LAA delivery agreement for the two financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11. In 2009 CSNM also conducted a review of its Board structure and membership, and streamlined its Advisory Panels and Working Groups, in line with its refocused priorities.

Funding

- 4.34 In its LAA delivery agreement with the WCP for the financial years 2009/10 and 2010-11, CSNM is receiving £400k per year. Of this, £320k per year is for staff and operating revenue costs, with the balance of £80k constituting seedcorn funding to support the Board's 14 priorities (for example, the summer festival and noticeboards). This demonstrates, as can be expected, that NM as a mode of working requires revenue funding, not capital spending, given its emphasis on influencing the mainstream, not engaging in direct service or project delivery.
- 4.35 As an NM Pathfinder, CSNM was awarded a total of £2.65 million for its seven-year lifetime (flat profiled this is £378,500 per year, only £20k short of the £400k total which CSNM receives in its current LAA delivery agreement). Since April 2007, all Pathfinder funding has been delivered through LAAs and thus there is no ring-fencing of NM funding for Church St. The Pathfinder programme ends at the end of the 2011/12 financial year, one year beyond its current LAA delivery agreement. It is assumed that the final year of programme funding will be allocated to CSNM – ie. that the funding is to all intents and purposes ring-fenced. As yet, the other LARPs do not have revenue funding in place beyond the delivery agreement lifetime which ends in March 2011.

Governance

- 4.36 The Church Street NM Board is the central decision-making body. Its latest constitutions, operating procedures and guidance were prepared in January 2009 (CSNM, 2009). The board has 22 voting members:
- 6 local residents (elected from 2 voting zones)
 - 6 representatives of neighbourhood organisations, including voluntary and community organisations, schools and businesses (selected by elected board members, including the PDT as accountable body);
 - 6 representatives from the statutory sector (senior offices responsible for public service delivery relevant in particular to the 14 priority objectives);
 - 3 ward councillors
 - 1 Church Street Young Advisor.
- 4.37 The PDT, as accountable body, provides financial and monitoring support and procedures to enable the CSNM Board to meet its external funding body

requirements. PDT also provides advice on core legal requirements, supports bids on behalf of the CSNM Board, and provides core human resource and payroll services for all NM staff, which it employs (with the exception of the Neighbourhood Manager and the part-time Performance and Evaluation Officer, who are employed by and seconded from WCC's Housing Team). The PDT also provides a direct link to the WCP where it is represented. The relationship is formalised with an agreement between CSNM Board and the PDT (for an initial period of 7 years, the lifetime of the NM Pathfinder programme). The PDT is represented on the CSNM Board, and in turn the CSNM Board is represented on PDT's Board of Trustees.

- 4.38 In addition to its role as accountable body, it is also important to reiterate the vital role of the PDT in catalysing and incubating what, compared to many of the examples of NM examined in section 1 of this report, is a genuinely 'locally-grown' NM approach. CSNM stems from the PDT's initial work to relink the deprived community of Church Street to its statutory service providers, originating with the development of the Neighbourhood Forum in 1998, the gaining of SRB funding to develop this in 1999, and the subsequent WCP focus on the area, culminating in the award of Pathfinder status. CSNM therefore stands out compared to its Pathfinder peers as its existence was catalysed not by central government special funds, but by the efforts of the local community itself. In turn, the vital role of the Council in the development of the partnership approach crucial to CSNM has to be stressed. In particular, several respondents highlighted the value of having a seconded Council officer, with knowledge and understanding of how local government works, as Neighbourhood Manager:

"the Neighbourhood Manager is a council employee seconded... that's been very helpful as it's opened up the channels of communication and meant that to Council officers he's another Council officer, and that has been able to help him, on behalf of the team and the board, negotiate work effectively, advocate for the NM approach... the role of the Neighbourhood Manager being someone who can broker relationships between the local community, local residents, local businesses and the Council, and get access into some of the Council departments you might not think would easily relate to a neighbourhood... that bridging role between the Council and other voluntary and resident partners"
Senior Council Officer.

In summary

- 4.39 Analysis of the Westminster model of NM makes clear that its structures and operations are in line with the core approach and key elements that constitute NM as defined earlier in the report, as opposed to broader neighbourhood ways of working.
- 4.40 Crucially in Westminster, NM is targeted on the City's most deprived areas rather than being an area-wide approach. This 'equity of outcome' ethos is appropriate given the City's extreme socio-economic polarity and diversity.
- 4.41 What is especially distinctive in the Westminster model is the governance of NM, which capitalises on the strength of the City's third sector in the form particularly of the PDT as management agency. Indeed, a prototype of NM was

developed in Westminster ahead of national policy direction given PDT's support of the Church St Forum. This reliance on the PDT is appropriate given its ability (and credibility) to act as an intermediary between residents and statutory partners, which aids facilitation of the NM approach.

- 4.42 In common with experiences in the rest of the country, Westminster's NM approach is subject to the challenge of funding sustainability given its reliance on core revenue funding for staff and the decline of 'special funds' intended to catalyse its adoption. This indicates that the approach has yet to be 'mainstreamed' in Westminster despite its obvious embrace by WCP partners (especially some Council departments and the PCT). It seemingly indicates that NM is being perceived as a programme or 'add on' rather than an embedded process or 'way of doing things' which fundamentally changes the way in which communities and statutory services relate to each other.
- 4.43 Key is the need for better understanding of the NM approach and the added value it generates. This is the subject of the next section of the report.

5 OBJECTIVE 3: ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT AND VFM OF THE WESTMINSTER MODEL

Methodology for Assessing NM's Value for Money (VFM)

- 5.2 As explained in the previous section, the Westminster model of NM has yet to be 'mainstreamed' or become widely-held standard practice. Consideration of future funding for NM will be undertaken in the context of huge pressures on public spending. This highlights the need for an assessment of the impact and added value of the NM approach in the City, to enable a more informed debate about its future direction.
- 5.3 A crucial caveat is that it is widely accepted (eg. PAT 4 report, 2000; Johnstone, 2008) that NM is characterised by benefits that tend to not be directly attributable to it. This is due to NM's emphasis on influencing services in line with residents' needs and priorities rather than engaging in direct service delivery. The evidence on the 'cost-benefit balance' of NM thus remains relatively limited and tends to be more qualitative than quantitative, especially with regard to benefits. However, in the course of this research a fairly substantial evidence base has been developed, the consideration of which is informed by a methodological approach which has been formulated specifically for NM approaches and - importantly - is tailored to take into account the nature of NM practice.
- 5.4 In this section the core case study assessed is CSNM. Such a focus is necessary given limitations on the scope of the research. However, focusing on one case enables a more in-depth and useful analysis of NM's impact which is of relevance to the other LARPs and indeed WCP's overall approach to the City's deprived neighbourhoods.
- 5.5 The basis of the methodology adopted derives from Johnstone (2008). This report (prepared by a Government Regional Office Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser) provides a useful methodological critique of how to assess NM value-for-money (VFM). The 3 core notions which underpin the methodology are each explained below. These are that:
- NM's VFM derives from its effectiveness as well as efficiency
 - NM's VFM derives from its contribution rather than attribution
 - NM lacks financial evidence.

NM's VFM derives from its effectiveness as well as efficiency

- 5.6 To assess VFM entails consideration of:
- **Economy:** minimising the **costs** of resources needed
 - **Efficiency:** how well resources are used in generating outputs, in terms of quantity (eg. numbers benefiting) and quality (eg. user satisfaction).
 - **Effectiveness:** this relates to the extent of success in:
 - achieving intended strategic outcomes (such as those set out in the LAA)
 - in bringing about changes in organisations, institutions and people. This encapsulates the '**strategic added value**' of NM, pertinent given that the approach seeks to influence the behaviour of mainstream agencies. As

explained previously, Westminster's Area Renewal Review stressed the need for statutory sector agencies to reflect neighbourhood issues and priorities identified through the LARPs in their wider strategic planning processes.

NM's VFM derives from its contribution rather than attribution

5.7 While it is important to establish the extent to which observed changes relate to the NM approach, it is valid to think in terms of 'contribution' rather than 'attribution'. This makes sense as the NM approach is predominantly characterised by its influencing and facilitation of the actions of other agencies, rather than its direct provision of projects or services. The 'contribution analysis' of evaluation methodology seeks to identify and document change, for example through tracking relevant indicators (an example being CSNM's repeated household surveys). A key element of such analysis is "plausible association", ie. whether "a reasonable person, with knowledge of what has been delivered and the outcomes that have actually occurred, would agree that the intervention contributed to those outcomes" (Hendricks, 1996). The semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders conducted as part of this research principally constitute the evidence base about the *contribution* of NM to outcomes.

NM lacks financial evidence

5.8 Financial evidence is notoriously hard to come by, not least because data tends to be kept on the basis of a service or business unit, and not by neighbourhood. In this context the onus is placed on CSNM to 'justify' its existence, and further work is undoubtedly needed regarding its impact and VFM, but NM partners have a significant role to play in providing the necessary evidence. The 'Total Place' pilots recognise this, as has WCC in its 'Mapping the Money' (2010) project conducted as part of the 'Living City' agenda. There is significant scope for further development. A lack of emphasis on joint outcomes has been identified as a significant barrier to greater collaborative working at a local level (HMSO, 2009: 37), as benefits accrue to a wider set of organisations than the one which funds the intervention. This research confirms the need for service provider NM partners to gather data regarding both costs and joint outcomes on a neighbourhood basis⁴. The 'outcomes mapping' that WCC is currently undertaking is to be applauded in this regard⁵.

5.9 At a broader level, the nature of NM practice implies a need to think differently about 'efficiency' in terms of the use of resources:

- **Resource saving:** NM may save resources in the long-term given its preventative benefits (through its role for example in reducing crime or ill health).
- **Resource releasing:** NM may also release resources that would otherwise need to be allocated (through its role for example in providing a resident

⁴ This would also assist WCC in providing 'Use of Resources' evidence as required by the Audit Commission as part of the CAA regime. This is planned to be extended to assess how well not only local authorities but other frontline organisations are collectively managing their resources to deliver VFM to local communities (HMSO, 2009: 45).

⁵ NHS Westminster commissioned Shared Intelligence to produce an evaluation guide for health inequalities and promotion projects which encourages consideration of broader project outcomes.

consultation infrastructure that does not need to be replicated by individual statutory bodies; or by it facilitating the ‘joining up’ of agencies).

- 5.10 The data gathered as part of this research were assessed employing this methodological approach as set out in Table 6:
- The first column details (by delivery theme) examples of CSNM’s *contribution* in terms of the activities it has organised, facilitated or funded
 - The second column sets out examples of the ‘resource saving’ or ‘resource releasing’ *efficiencies* which have resulted
 - The third column sets out examples of the *effectiveness* of NM, in terms of its contribution to the outcomes sought (by all WCP partners); and in terms of NM’s strategic added value (its influence on mainstream agencies, for example through changing ways services are provided or policy shifts).
 - The fourth and final column contains comments on the financial data/evidence available. This highlights, as explained above, the need for partner commitment to have an NM-appropriate approach to gathering and tracking data.
- 5.11 Given restrictions on the research’s scope and the data readily available, it is important to consider what the available data *indicate* about the added value that the Westminster model of NM brings to the City’s residents and WCP partners. The methodology used does not attempt to capture and repeat all of the data previously gathered in evaluations⁶ and monitoring conducted on CSNM’s activities. Instead of replicating *output* data (which can be said to encourage an unhelpful programmatic view of NM), this research attempts to change how NM’s contribution is viewed to one more appropriate to its core ethos of reconnecting residents to influence their local services and improve *outcomes*.
- 5.12 Table 6 should be viewed as an initial attempt which needs to be augmented, but indicates the contribution of the NM approach to achieving better quality of life outcomes for the residents of the area by connecting them to the statutory sector. This paramount aim of improved quality of life is one shared by residents and statutory agencies.

⁶ As an NM Pathfinder, Church Street was subject to three annual evaluations as part of the national evaluation undertaken by SQW for the DCLG (SQW, 2005, 2006c and 2007a).

Table 6: CSNM Contribution to Efficiencies (in Resource Use) and Effectiveness (Outcomes) By Delivery Plan Theme

CSNM Contribution: examples	Efficiencies: 'Resource saving or releasing' examples	Effectiveness/ Strategic Added Value: examples	(Non-output related) evidence
Community cohesion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly network lunch - Summer festival, Christmas lights, culture and history events - 'Walker-talker' community engagement officer - Noticeboards, magazine, guide - Resident engagement eg. Community Connectors - Resident capacity building, eg of CSNM Board members and Young Advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners joining up and better able to see connections between different organisations/ services - Raising awareness of services available and adding value to service providers' publicity - Volunteers may release public sector staff time for other activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community confidence - Community attachment and engagement - Reduced fear of crime - Greater community self-help and social capital - Local knowledge and expertise improving the detail of service provision 	<p>Ipsos-MORI baseline household survey 2004, replicated 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decline in people claiming to not know other people in the area from 20% to 15% - Decline in people who feel they cannot influence decision-making from 57% to 51% - 1,500 people voted for 6 Board reps; 40 residents closely involved in CSNM.
Economic development			
<p>Church St Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitated Market Governance Group, produced strategy for market, now Service Level Agreement with WCC - Host Senior City (Market) Inspector at Neighbourhood Centre - NM officer responsible for market - Church St market website - Remarketed pitches and improved access - Marketing strategy developed <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shopfront grant improvement scheme - Retail strategy for letting shop units - Gained Terry Farrell and resident engagement in 'Transforming Church St' masterplan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Catalyst to partners joining up and enabling better market management - Easing implementation of Civic Streets initiative - Masterplan process benefits from NM local relationships and communication mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved services - New traders attracted - Area more attractive to residents and potential investors - Improved external perceptions and confidence in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data on service delivery costs and performance indicators from WCC - Increase in numbers of market traders mid-week (WCC Licensing figures) - 5 quality new businesses located in neighbourhood in 2009/10 (CSNM Annual Performance Review 0910)

CSNM Contribution	Efficiencies	Effectiveness	Evidence
Education, skills & worklessness amended in Mid-Programme review now Training & Employment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host Westminster Works advisor at Neighbourhood Centre - c3000 people coming to Neighbourhood Centre given basic advice and signposting - Regular Neighbourhood Centre drop-in sessions from Connexions Service and other agencies, eg. City Brokerage - CSNM funded Westminster Sports Unit to train 30 young people in Community Sports Leaders Level 1 - CSNM funded Fourth Feathers to deliver successful employment project for 30 NEETs - Apprenticeship event & follow up "Reach Ur Destination" - Local Resident Traineeship for a local resident to become an NM Officer, including a qualification; 5 other local residents employed/ volunteered at Neighbourhood Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced JSA claimants (eg. creation of apprenticeships) - Enable providers to 'hit the ground running' with referrals, 'releasing' public sector spend - Improving routes for local people to and through training and employment opportunities - Raising awareness of services available and adding value to service provider s' publicity - Joint strategic working with PDT, Vital Regeneration and Paddington First - Volunteers may release public sector staff time for other activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased local service take up and outcomes (qualifications and jobs) - Higher local aspirations through participation and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7 out of the top 8 performing wards in terms of percentage change in JSA claimants (Aug 2008 - Aug 2009) LARP wards
Crime and nuisance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating CivicWatch and Safer Neighbourhoods Panel with Neighbourhood Manager as Chair - Hosting Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team, City Guardians, and City Inspectors at Neighbourhood Centre - Facilitating close working links between Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team, City Guardians, City Inspectors, Traffic Attendants, Animal Warden, major landlords and residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners joining up and better able to see connections between different organisations/ services - Better informed and co-ordinated service responsiveness - Community intelligence - Freeing police resource for other activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaging at a local level with police - Fall in recorded crime - Fall in vandalism - Improved services - Area more attractive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ipsos-MORI baseline household survey 2004, replicated 2007: - Increase in satisfaction with police from 18% to 26% - Possible calculations using average costs to Criminal Justice System for range of offences

CSNM Contribution	Efficiencies	Effectiveness	Evidence
Physical environment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Red dot' initiative – over 200 street and pavement improvements identified by residents - Open space audit - Upgrades to open spaces including Time Triangle, Lisson Gardens, Orange Park - Local intelligence on dog fouling to Animal Warden - Lisson Green Estate gardens available for public use through work with landlords - Support for successful £1 million library lottery bid and hosting WCC Library officer at Neighbourhood Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informing better targeting of highways/ public realm spend - Gaining local resident and organisation involvement in library redevelopment enabling connections between different services/ projects and improving quality from user perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaging at a local level with service providers - Increased publicly accessible open space - Improved services and satisfaction levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data on service delivery costs and performance indicators from WCC
Housing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resident engagement/ consultation - Occupancy research conducted - Local Lettings Scheme - Work with private landlords to introduce block caretakers and tidy up forecourts - Environmental Health investigating houses in poor condition - Definitive social housing listing across 13 landlords - Choice Based Lettings DVD to households registered with housing options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occupancy research identified potential for 'home swaps' – more efficient use of social housing - Private landlords taking greater responsibility with likely ASB and streetscape savings - Enable Env Health to 'hit the ground running' with target poor condition properties, 'releasing' public sector spend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy shift not to increase social housing unless major local benefits - Area a more attractive place to live - Higher resident satisfaction - Improved understanding of Choice Based Lettings scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing data on the costs of voids (repairs, making safe, maintenance) (from RSLs etc)

CSNM Contribution	Efficiencies	Effectiveness	Evidence
Health			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting PCT staff member at Neighbourhood Centre - CSNM developed Health Training Programme for frontline workers to give better signposting and guidance to residents - Mapping of health and well-being services - Dentistry survey – identified needs - Facilitated development of a joint strategy for Older Peoples Services - Supported Healthy Living Programme - Delivering healthy cooking and eating programme - Health Outreach Worker providing effective link between vulnerable people and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable PCT staff to ‘hit the ground running’ ‘releasing’ public sector spend - Overall better joining up of activities which influence well-being, such as open space provision, physical activities, better signposting about services, activities for the elderly 	<p>Bend mainstream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Training Programme mainstreamed by PCT - Elements of Healthy Living Programme sustained by PCT - Dentistry survey identified needs and informed PCT action <p>Also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaging with service providers - Improved services - Increased service take up - Changes in resident behaviour leading to improved health 	<p>Ipsos-MORI baseline household survey 2004, replicated 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in GP use (86% to 92%) and dentists’ services (55% to 63%) - Reduction in life expectancy gap from 16 to 9 years when compared to the City’s least deprived ward <p>Possible calculations using eg. unit costs data on GP and practice nurse consultations</p>
<i>New theme Mid-Programme review: Children and Young People (including education)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised funds for ‘Working With Men’ charity pilot for outreach - Collated and disseminated information on holiday activities - Raised funds for ‘Beyond NW8’ activities to build aspirations by Working with Men, London Tigers and Dreamarts - GCSE revision classes - The development of London Tigers – 4 years funding the Church St Sports programme - Business planning for 3 main youth organisations - After school IT classes - Connexions working closely with organisations in the neighbourhood - Raised funds to support extended schools activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - joining up and supporting existing providers of services to young people - disseminating information about services and opportunities to young people - reduction in young people going through the Criminal Justice System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaging at a local level with service providers - Identified gaps in services to children and young people and piloting solutions - Increased local service take up and outcomes (qualifications and jobs) - Higher local aspirations through participation and learning - Reduced crime and ASB 	<p>Possible calculations using average costs to Criminal Justice System for range of offences</p>

CSNM's Impact and VFM

- 5.13 NM undoubtedly *costs*, as most obviously evident in terms of the LARPs' LAA funding agreements. But what is crucial is the need for a better understanding of what *benefits* the NM approach brings – in terms of efficiencies (saving or releasing resources), and in terms of effectiveness (achieving the outcomes sought at neighbourhood and strategic levels). The initial attempt as set out in Table 6 to assess the contribution of Westminster's NM model, with CSNM as the case study, clearly indicates these benefits.
- 5.14 VFM is extremely hard to measure as explained above, but the research has revealed a widespread perception amongst respondents that services in Church St, and the other LARPs areas, have greatly improved since the introduction of the NM approach, and that residents feel they have greater influence over service priorities and delivery. Perceptions of greater resident influence are evidenced in part in Church St by household survey data. Perceptions of service improvement are supported by evidence that the NM areas have attracted additional capital and revenue expenditure, including from the private sector (for example, the block caretakers introduced by private landlords following work with CSNM). CSNM's role in improving market management, the Church St Masterplan and the area's designation as a Civic Street can also be reasonably linked to future leverage of additional private resource to the area.
- 5.15 Key evidence of additional spend in the NM areas is contained in the Council's 'Mapping the Money' (2010) report⁷. The report found that overall, the Council spent more resources in wards with the highest relative needs (in terms of the 'deprivation index') compared with more affluent wards, a pattern which was reflected by total spending across services. Around one quarter of total spend is focused on the City's three most deprived wards (Church St, Westbourne and Queen's Park) with Harrow Road ward fourth. Of course these are the wards which are also subject to the Westminster model of NM (excluding the atypical South Westminster LARP given its much larger geographical area).
- 5.16 Taking Church St as an example, the average planned WCC spending for 2008/09 per ward was £35 million; with the highest spend of £68 million in Church Street. The average combined planned spend per ward by the Council and the public bodies included in the study was £75 million; with the highest spend of £126 million in Church Street. This is inevitable given that the ward has the City's highest proportion of social housing and thus has some of its greatest concentration of deprivation.
- 5.17 The key point here is that, notwithstanding the difficulty of *attributing* a proportion of this greater spend to the NM approach in the sense of linking residents' needs more directly to service providers (an example being the 'red dot' initiative), CSNM's *contribution* to securing better VFM for this spend can be clearly demonstrated using the methodology as set out above. Examples of

⁷ In advance of the Total Place pilot findings, WCC conducted an audit of public spending within Westminster to identify total planned spending on services within wards by the council, its strategic partners and other key public sector bodies (such as the PCT, the Metropolitan Police, CityWest Homes and housing associations; as well as the Department for Work and Pensions).

the NM approach securing better VFM on WCC spend include CSNM's important role in the Church St Library redevelopment, linking non-statutory providers with the amenity, and in alerting Environmental Health about target private properties in poor condition. Another prominent example is CSNM's role in ensuring VFM for the Council's spend of £350k on consultants for the 'Transforming Church St' masterplan, by directing the masterplanners on how best to communicate in the neighbourhood and in ensuring that a well-trained and suitably selected 'Futures Group' of 20 residents is engaged in the process.

- 5.18 Examples are also cited in Table 6 of better VFM being facilitated by CSNM for other statutory providers, such as the PCT and the Police. Therefore, while NM *costs* in terms of securing additional public sector resource for the deprived areas in which the approach is used, these additional costs are not only justified in light of the City's 'equity of outcome' ethos previously described, but by the way in which the NM approach secures better VFM for this spend than if NM was not in place.
- 5.19 From the perspective of CSNM (as explained in the Mid-Programme Review, CSNM, 2008), its impact has been to move the neighbourhood from one of isolation and neglect to one which has the active engagement of the City Council with local people through NM. This is improving the quality of service delivery, ensuring that public money is spent more wisely to address the problems and solutions more effectively, and improving the relationships and understanding between the statutory sector and residents. This reflects the findings of the evaluation of the initial one-year focus on Church St, which found that NM had improved local services through creating more demanding customers, enabling better identification of community priorities and developing new ways of working (DTZ Piedad, 2005: vi-vii).
- 5.20 As explained in the methodology section above, the interviews conducted as part of this research provided the evidence base to be able to assert CSNM's contribution to achieving the efficiencies, effectiveness and VFM as set out. Key quotes from statutory partner respondents which provide their perspective on CSNM's contribution are set out in Table 7.

Table 7: CSNM Contribution: Statutory Partner Respondent Quotes by Theme

Economic development
“I went to Church St to find out from a deprived areas perspective how the recession was hitting, and just being able to go to a member of staff in the LARP team and he took me into 3 businesses and they all knew him and being able to speak face-to-face like that. That’s not always that easy to do without a broker”. WCC Officer
Education, skills & worklessness <i>now</i> Training & Employment
“The LARPs, as of late last year, have produced a third of referrals to the Westminster Works programme. Because they have very good links into the community and they know people on the estates. So they’re talking to people every day. And also in Church St they have a Westminster Works advisor actually based in the office there, so that’s helpful”. WCC Officer
Crime and nuisance
“The weekly Civic Watch meeting for Church St, to give you an example of the differences, is I turned up for one a month or 2 ago, the table was full – about 6 or 7 different departments there external to the Police. Whereas if I go to another one, maybe the local Civic Watch liaison officer is speaking to the sergeant on their own... The reason it’s working better is because of the LARP”. Police Officer
Physical environment
“There are many examples of projects being delivered which the Council wouldn’t have done so well. Ten years ago the Council would have said we’re going to improve the environment and they would do the paving and lights and that’s where their responsibility stops. Now the Council says what outcomes do we want. This covers a broad range of issues and services. That’s where expectations go up and we can ensure that where money is spent it meets defined outcomes. We need someone on ground with the right skills to co-ordinate. The skills of community engagement are very important”. WCC Officer
Housing
“If you have an idea, [the LARPs] provide you with capacity to deliver that – that delivery platform concept... the [housing] regeneration programme – I can’t really envisage moving Church St forward with the CSNM not being there. We’d lose so much we’d have to really build it back up again anyway”. WCC Officer
Health
“I see NM, particularly the LARPs, in terms of community engagement – they are critical, a critical framework, a critical pathway into the community to have that two-way dialogue and engagement... The LARPs themselves have been excellent in that work in helping us deliver real health outputs and outcomes for people’s health and well-being. That’s not just engagement, they’re a really good channel to improve health and well-being. We deliver loads of projects through the neighbourhoods which we couldn’t do otherwise”. PCT Senior Staff
Children and Young People (including education)
“Despite Church St having a vast array of youths, they don’t seem to have any proper disorder. Some of that is down, luckily, to the LARP and Safer Neighbourhoods came into existence at a similar time, just at the right point where the crime trends were changing and youths were becoming more gang-orientated. So those youngsters met the police 3, 4 years ago... It stopped it in the bud any real kind of disorder”. Police Officer

Praise for the Westminster Model

5.21 As part of this research, existing research and evaluations were reviewed of CSNM/ other LARP activity and the City’ approach to area renewal. While the emphasis here is on encouraging more appropriate ways of considering the added value of NM, the findings of previous work are valid in demonstrating its positive impacts. Indeed, Westminster demonstrates that real community involvement, facilitated via NM, in service planning, design, implementation,

delivery and evaluation has been an extremely important element in the City meeting its LAA requirements and in contributing to its high CAA scores.

- 5.22 In turn, the success of the Westminster model is evident in its national context given the recognition it has received. CSNM was the subject of a community cohesion case study as part of the National Evaluation of the NM Pathfinders (SQW, 2007b). This found that NM is resulting in real quality of life improvements, as well as residents believing that service providers are no longer neglecting the area. Key to the process has been to establish effective lines of communication with residents with the community cohesion activities playing an important role in bridging the gap between service providers and residents. It is argued that without the existence of the NM team, linked to resident involvement, then there would not be the constant pressure on service providers for change in the neighbourhood.
- 5.23 At a broader level, the WCP's approach to area renewal was selected as a good practice example by the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA). IDeA's case study (2008)⁸ found that the approach is resulting in tangible benefits for local people, citing successes such as:
- increased resident involvement in priority setting, problem solving and monitoring improvements
 - the creation of robust local infrastructure which can be used to deliver improvements across a range of policy areas
 - increases in resident satisfaction with local public services
 - strengthened partnership working between agencies
 - a stronger focus on neighbourhoods and their distinctive needs throughout Westminster City Council and within other lead agencies
 - improved relationships between the Council and local people.
- 5.24 IDeA flag the changes in culture, working practices, and relationships that NM is bringing about, which reflect the approach's strategic added value. The report recognises that the LARPs have begun to change the way that local public service providers operate, and have been instrumental in creating new networks and opportunities for partnership working, which have helped to drive improvements. IDeA concludes that the LARPs provide an infrastructure in neighbourhoods that is increasingly helping partners to deliver the city plan and LAA priorities, which in turn reflects the contribution of NM to achieving outcomes.
- 5.25 In turn, the Area Renewal Review (2009) found that according to WCP partners, LARPs are helping them to work together better to improve the quality of life in deprived areas. They offer a mechanism for neighbourhood delivery which is increasingly contributing to the achievement of LAA outcomes.
- 5.26 LARP staff teams have been particularly successful in providing WCP partners with a holistic local perspective, offering partners a 'way into the community', providing them with local intelligence, and facilitating innovative solutions to

⁸ <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8039139>

tackle the complex issues that affect the lives of residents. Examples cited include:

- the innovative ways that CSNM and Harrow Road LARPs have helped partners to transform the Church Street Market and the Prince of Wales Junction
- the role of the Queen’s Park LARP in supporting WCP’s Healthy Futures Project, including hosting a PCT staff member who co-ordinates the project
- the role of South Westminster LARP in taking forward WCP’s employability pilot in Churchill Garden’s Estate.

- 5.27 Recognition of the value of the Westminster model of NM recently culminated in the award of a ‘green flag’ in 2010’s Comprehensive Area Assessment for community engagement. This denotes “exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from”. The LARPs contribution to this achievement is evidently paramount:

“A well-established, innovative and sustained focus on neighbourhood working by all public sector partners through the LARPS has ensured that the most vulnerable in the area are engaged and supported... the LARPS have ‘people’ at the core of their business”⁹.

How NM works in practice

- 5.28 Importantly, the initial assessment of CSNM as set out in Table 6 also demonstrates how NM works in practice. It illustrates that NM is about making practical, tangible, changes that improve people’s quality of life. It emphasises that NM is about changing the relationships between residents and mainstream public services.
- 5.29 Behind each of the examples of CSNM’s contribution in the table’s first column lies a potential case study narrative. Such narratives have been set out in various strategies, for example, regarding the piloting of the ‘Healthy Futures’ approach in Queen’s Park as presented in Westminster’s Health Inequalities Strategy (2009: 48); and the regeneration of Westbourne Green as set out in the Council’s Housing Renewal Strategy (2010: 30). More useful here than presenting a set of detailed case studies is to set out the elements which make NM work. These elements were revealed in the course of the semi-structured interviews conducted with NM staff, residents engaged with NM, and Council, police, PCT, and other partner bodies in Westminster. They are consistent with the ‘success factors’ highlighted in previous studies.

Getting the Detail Right

- 5.30 NM is an approach which engages the community in improving local services and facilitates effective responses to residents’ concerns. Several respondents stressed that NM is about getting the detail right - making sometimes small changes in service provision that tangibly increase quality of life. Statutory partner respondents emphasised how NM has enabled knowledge of and response to ‘the detail’:

⁹ <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaassessment/pages/localpriority.aspx?region=51&area=422&priority=4423>

“Church St is a very complex mixed neighbourhood... a lot of tensions and issues. It’s a good example of how you have to get to the finegrain of problems and how an overarching policy for the whole of the City just doesn’t work in a particular neighbourhood... the approach is if you want the best out of your services, work with us in this way and we can do this better. One of the examples is the Red Dot scheme... the response from Highways was incredibly positive, saying let’s have a process. What it’s identified is some ways of working which we’ve then been able to take to other areas... Looking at all the small things in an environment that make it look tired and a place that’s not looked after” Senior Council Officer.

“At Church St we’ve now got masterplanners working with the neighbourhood team and proposals for looking at physical and economic regeneration. We’ve got a really good platform to work on because we’ve got all of the relationships, the networks that have been built with the neighbourhood. It feels much safer to build quite a challenging, complex, potentially disruptive renewal programme on a much more secure base of working with that neighbourhood first, building the relationships, understanding the issues, in much more detail” Senior Council Officer.

“[The LARPs] are good at reflecting back to services how effectively or otherwise their delivery is perceived or is performing in a neighbourhood. Often maybe where one service is doing one thing and another service another thing and it conflicts. And they can be the advocate for the community and say that this doesn’t work, change it, and maybe just a slight tweak here which doesn’t cost very much will yield a significant improvement in how satisfied people are or deal with the problem. There a lot of examples around nuisance-related issues, to how the market interfaces with residential areas very close by. Small things, but a series of small things that all add up to the area being much a more liveable place” Council Officer.

“[CSNM] they’ve got office space in the community, they’ve got staff that work and live in the community, so you get that constant ‘feeding in’ thing. You respect their advice... if someone says you really need to address this issue you can trust it’s true as an issue. And obviously the personal contacts between the actual working staff, the PCs, the PCSOs, the individuals, the intelligence flow can come from them [the NM team]” Police Officer.

Developing relationships with residents

5.31 Establishing strong and positive relationships with local people takes time. Critical ingredients include enabling residents to shape the process; consistency and a long-term approach; appropriate governance arrangements; developing different and direct working relationships between officers and residents; and strong communication. The engagement of residents benefits those involved not only by giving them the opportunity to contribute to improving services, but through developing their skills and confidence:

“I was given a mentor. And then sadly I had to cut him loose and go on my own but I seem to be doing ok at the moment, so I’m now the chair of the neighbourhood board, and it’s been a great thing, and I thoroughly enjoy it. Nobody looks at you as just a token resident, you’re taken seriously in the role that you’re doing” Resident NM Board Member.

Developing appropriate approaches to resident involvement

5.32 As explained previously, involvement is sought not only to enable more responsive service delivery but due to its intrinsic value as a means of securing community cohesion. With regard to services, the LARPs seek to not just involve the ‘usual suspects’, but to develop structures and processes for engagement that reach out to a wide range of local people, including the ‘hard-to-reach’ or ‘seldom heard’. They seek the most appropriate ways of involving local people in local services and provide an infrastructure for statutory partners to engage.

5.33 While there are other forms of community *consultation* operating in Westminster as explained above, NM is a unique approach which performs a distinct role compared to that of, for example, Area Forums:

“There’s the often heard and the seldom heard. And the often heard are concerned about dogs pooing on the pavement, or people cycling on the pavement, which tend to be the main topic at the area forums, you need a forum for those issues and they tend to happen there. But the seldom heard tend to be [heard] through the NM structure” Third Sector Representative.

5.34 With regard to cohesion, the LARP areas are extremely diverse and NM also finds ways to bring people together to develop a stronger sense of common purpose and to agree shared priorities.

Relationships are crucial

5.35 NM is all about developing good relationships. This requires an investment of time and skills from the NM team and from statutory partners to change the way they, and ideally their organisations, work. Neighbourhood managers have been critical in forging positive and productive ‘horizontal’ relationships in each neighbourhood and ‘vertical’ relationships back into partner agencies. It is noteworthy that the LARPs have been able to recruit (and retain) a committed staff that has been able to develop and sustain these relationships. Without an ongoing NM structure and approach these relationships would not sustain:

“It is often the relationships formed with residents and service providers that have led to interventions and improvements, rather than resulting from changes in structures and processes” (SQW, 2007a: 18).

“The LARPs’ skills have developed and our skills on the other side in responding has been about finding ways through issues, and finding compromise, finding mediation, finding a solution. It has been a model of co-operation and partnership, but I think that has been helped by these soft linkages into the Council. Relationships and trust and people getting to know each other” Senior Council Officer.

5.36 In turn many respondents stressed the role of NM in changing and developing more positive relationships between residents and the Council:

“There was a lot of hostility against the council. That’s now completely changed. Members now work in partnership and are very complementary about NM. NM enables us to reach out. So one of the biggest benefits is to the council’s reputation” Senior Council Officer.

Role of the PDT

5.37 The importance of the support, guidance and direction from PDT was consistently stressed by respondents at all levels in all sectors. Its credibility and expertise is reflected in it being the managing body for 3 of the City's 5 LARPs, as well as supporting Harrow Rd LARP; its role in facilitating cross-cutting LARPs knowledge exchange and working; and its LAA Delivery agreement with the WCP. What was particularly emphasised was its vital role as an intermediary between residents and service providers:

"This isn't just another contract for the PDT... when you are a local development agency, your own raison d'être is to service the community and raise the bar for everybody in that community... I don't actually think it would be possible for any other organisation to fulfil that remit in this Borough... that community intelligence does not exist within standard private sector or even standard voluntary sector organisations... PDT doesn't take its remit from other organisations, it takes its remit from the people that live within the locality" (Non-PDT) Third Sector Chief Executive

"My strategic link is the PDT. I've never heard critique from members or community reps. I think they've all appreciated having that input and support. From an NHS perspective, we've worked extremely closely with the neighbourhoods and the PDT over the years. I find I can go to [the PDT] to find out what's going on on the ground, that strategic link between neighbourhoods and us in terms of community engagement" PCT Senior Staff

"Having a third sector organisation that was prepared to go away and do that and buy-in [to developing the LARPs] was really important. They [the PDT] bring a degree of credibility to the LARPs" Council Officer

"I don't think the council could do it [deliver NM] it as well. It has to listen to residents but in order to deliver you need to be based in the community and engaging people. Sometimes council officers go to areas and don't understand what the need is. It's also about delivery. PDT has taken on difficult issues and done a better job than the council" Senior Council Officer

Resourcing and sustainability

5.38 The NM approach is time and resource intensive. NM takes time to develop as it needs to be underpinned by the capacity building of local communities, the development of community partnerships, and development of relationships with statutory partners. DTZ Pineda (2005: vii), in considering Church St, found that this process can take at least 2 to 3 years. All of the LARPs have now been through these processes, informed by CSNM's approach, and are consolidating. But uncertainty about future funding, particularly in the current tough financial climate, is undermining their work as it makes it more difficult to plan ahead and gain and retain the commitment necessary:

"When people start to talk about the LARPs being under threat, the more that gains currency, and it legitimises the way forward and people start to take it for granted – the LARPs are going. And we need to reverse that because there's been a horrible vacuum in which no one's been saying anything, and it's all been whispers and rumours and scaremongering, and in that I think we have suffered significantly" Neighbourhood Manager.

"With the best will in the world, there is no way that a resident that does this as a community thing has got the knowledge that these people here have got. Have got the contacts, have got the know how. At the moment my worry is

that the rug will be pulled from underneath, and the people of Church St won't realise what they've lost until that door doesn't open in the morning. And then it will be too late" Resident NM Board Member.

Challenges

5.39 This issue of the sustainability of the Westminster model of NM leads to consideration of the challenges moving forward.

Data and evidence on impact

5.40 As explained above, it is very difficult to quantify the LARPs' impact due to the nature of NM. This was flagged by SQW (2007a) in their evaluations of CSNM. IDeA (2008) in turn highlighted the need for more work to articulate the links between the high-level objectives set out in the LAA and the detailed work that goes on at neighbourhood level. This is related to the need for a more NM-appropriate way of assessing impact as initiated here, and for which the Council's current work on mapping 'outcome chains' provides an opportunity.

Securing buy-in

5.41 The Area Renewal Review highlighted the challenge of LARPs having to influence partners from the 'outside'. Visible championing and securing of political support for the Westminster model of NM is critical, not only to the continued resourcing of the LARPs, but to securing the necessary engagement from statutory partners. A clearer explanation of how the NM approach works and its impact, such as that attempted here, would aid in securing such buy-in on the part of WCC members and officers and the wider WCP. Key is the need for understanding of how NM constitutes a good VFM delivery mechanism for securing neighbourhood *and* strategic level outcomes.

In summary

5.42 The Westminster model of NM has undoubtedly had a positive impact on securing better quality-of-life outcomes in the City and has had some success in bending the mainstream. Key is that the contribution of NM to securing better VFM for Council and other statutory partners can be clearly demonstrated.

5.43 The methodology used here is an initial attempt to demonstrate the VFM of the NM approach but further work and the commitment of statutory partners to the more appropriate assessment of NM is needed. In the meantime Westminster's NM approach is subject to a shifting political and financial context. The opportunities and challenges this presents are considered in the final section. The next, penultimate, section draws some conclusions from the analysis of the Westminster model.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.2 Analysis of the Westminster model of NM makes clear that its structures and operations are in line with the core approach and key elements that constitute NM – ie. engaging the community in improving local services by acting as an intermediary between services and the diversity of residents at neighbourhood level. NM in Westminster seeks to ‘get the detail right’ by facilitating sometimes small changes in service provision that tangibly increase quality of life. The Westminster model reflects its political, strategic and local context. NM is targeted on the City’s most deprived areas, appropriate given the City’s extreme socio-economic polarity and diversity. What is particularly distinctive about the Westminster model is the role of the PDT in the governance of NM given its ability (and credibility) to act as an intermediary between residents and statutory partners.
- 6.3 In common with experiences in the rest of the country, Westminster’s NM approach is subject to the challenge of funding sustainability given its reliance on core revenue funding for staff and the decline of ‘special funds’ intended to catalyse its adoption. The ‘virtuous circle’ of NM, with partner buy-in securing impact and thus securing further understanding and commitment to the approach, leading in turn to greater impact, has taken time and resource to develop. To sustain this momentum, so that NM become an embedded process which fundamentally changes the way in which communities and statutory services relate to each other, it is crucial that Westminster’s NM approach and the added value it generates is better understood.
- 6.4 The Westminster model of NM has undoubtedly had a positive impact on securing better quality-of-life outcomes in the City. The contribution of NM to securing better VFM for Council and other statutory partners can be clearly demonstrated. This is underlined by the key broadly-shared opinions which emerged in analysing the research’s interview data. Senior Council and other statutory partner officers who are engaged with NM can clearly see the benefits that the approach brings in terms of delivering mainstream services more efficiently and effectively to target deprived communities. There is evidence of:
- well integrated, multi-agency projects
 - innovative approaches
 - priorities being mainstreamed (but this is not consistent across all service providers)
 - effective use of engagement and consultation methods
 - the engagement of minority and ‘seldom heard’ groups.
- 6.5 The methodology used in this report is an initial attempt to demonstrate the VFM of the NM approach but further work and the commitment of statutory partners to the more appropriate assessment of NM is needed.
- 6.6 In all, it is clear that a great deal has been achieved in a short period of time in the establishment and operation of the pioneering Westminster model of NM. Respondents recognised:
- The quality, expertise and motivation of the NM teams
 - The importance of the support, guidance and direction from PDT

- The significant support of the NM approach from ward members and executive members in City Hall and other statutory partners, though the need to increase understanding of the approach and its value amongst those not directly engaged was also stated.

6.7 These views of the Westminster-based respondents are in turn reflected in the high esteem which accrues to the Westminster model of NM externally, as evidenced by its championing by IdeA, in its recognition in the CAA process, and by the regular approaches made to the PDT and CSNM by those seeking to establish or sustain NM in other cities in England and internationally.

The Way Forward

6.8 NM has reached a threshold in Westminster where key strategic decisions are needed about its future. As explained previously, the current period of uncertainty, particularly due to financial strictures, has the potential to damage the infrastructure which has been developed to link communities to service providers. Three broad options can be identified:

6.9 **Option 1. Continue as is:** this would entail the commitment of revenue funding for the NM staff teams. Given what has been achieved already, and the development of a strong infrastructure which is well-positioned to enable delivery in the future (examined in the final section below) there is a strong argument in favour of consistency and continuity of approach. Much expertise has been developed at all levels (to the extent that the model has been commended nationally). It should also be stressed that the needs-based case of the LARP areas for additional resource and effort remains.

6.10 **Option 2. Return to a centralised model of service delivery:** though this has serious repercussions for the realisation of better public service outcomes which reflect community priorities, a particular concern for the City in line with future directions (explored below).

6.11 **Option 3. Capitalise on the expertise established and review:**

- the geographical areas covered - could they be enlarged or merged and made more strategic? Should the emphasis on deprived wards be retained?
- the funding available
- staffing levels – such as scope for more secondments from statutory partners (sharing the revenue costs of staffing teams amongst the statutory partners which benefit from the outcomes generated)? Or perhaps using fewer staff in larger areas?

6.12 It should be emphasised that many of the issues raised here were considered as part of the Area Renewal Review (2009), which concluded with the maintenance of the Westminster NM approach with a refocusing of LARP Neighbourhood Plan priorities, and an increased strategic support role for the PDT.

6.13 Moving forward, to achieve retention of the Westminster model, the LARPs (supported by the PDT) need to demonstrate that the NM approach adds value to realising a shared vision for the City - on the basis of efficiency,

effectiveness, VFM and appropriate targeting. The approach set out in this report should assist in that process. The final section of the report considers future directions for the context in which the Westminster model of NM operates.

7 THE FUTURE

Westminster ‘Direction of Travel’

- 7.2 A common theme in WCC respondent interviews was a “retreat to the core”. WCC sees itself in the future as a smaller, more focused authority, working more closely in partnership with other services to co-ordinate provision while continuing to set a ‘Westminster standard’ for service delivery.
- 7.3 This shift to ‘smaller government’ is a potential threat to sustaining the strong NM infrastructure given its demands on revenue funding. But importantly this shift can also be seen as an opportunity for the LARPs, as the NM approach assists WCC in enabling close partnership working with other services, while linking residents to service decisions and improving outcomes that deliver better quality of life. This in turn assists the Council in maintaining its high public satisfaction levels.
- 7.4 As the state gets smaller, opportunities should be generated for the PDT and the LARPs given their demonstrable impact on frontline service provision. The PDT and the LARPs constitute the infrastructure needed to deliver outcomes in the City’s most deprived neighbourhoods, where needs are greatest. A core component of this infrastructure is its ability to act as a credible intermediary between the community and statutory partners. Specific strategies for which the LARPs constitute a delivery infrastructure assisting impact and VFM include:

North Westminster Economic Development Area (NWEDA)

- 7.5 The council’s Core Strategy (2009) has identified the North Westminster Economic Development Area (NWEDA) to address the need for economic renewal of Church Street, Westbourne, Harrow Road and Queen’s Park¹⁰.

Housing Renewal Strategy

- 7.6 The Strategy makes a commitment to involve as many people as possible at every stage of the regeneration and renewal of Westminster’s neighbourhoods (2010: 6-7). The clear role of the LARPs in facilitating this engagement is clear. The commitment derives from understanding that housing improvements cannot be delivered in isolation if opportunities (better housing, better community facilities, more job opportunities and improvements to the physical environment) are to be maximised for local people. This process is underway with the Church St Masterplan and is exemplified in Westbourne Green:
- “The close working relationship between the council and the Westbourne LARP has enabled the programme to respond to local needs and concerns. The Westbourne LARP, managed by Paddington Development Trust, is a community- led process which enables priorities identified by the community to be fed into service planning. The LARP has been an effective route for meaningful public consultation and communication.”* (WCC Housing Renewal Strategy, 2010: 29-30).

¹⁰ The Core Strategy is the main Development Plan Document prepared by the Council. It sets out the key elements of the planning framework for Westminster for the next 15-20 years.

Joint Service Commissioning

- 7.7 Future changes flagged at the Westminster level include more joint service commissioning. NHS Westminster has highlighted the important role of the LARPs in providing the infrastructure for resident engagement in this process:
- “Both WCC and the PCT have a shared commitment that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments [JSNA] should drive all service planning, commissioning and provision. Clearly we have a duty as part of that to engage with our community. There’s scope for more strategic input from the LARPs in terms of service commissioning... to really help us deliver our priorities and ensure that all our outcomes are driven by community engagement. If I send in some of these consultants who are costing me a fortune into these neighbourhoods, they’re going to be rejected, if they work through the neighbourhoods to access the people in an inclusive and culturally appropriate way, we’d have much more impact... if you want to make change, community engagement has to be embedded in commissioning”.* PCT Senior Staff

Unified Public Services Model

- 7.8 The strongest expression of future direction is contained in the City Council’s ‘Living City’ manifesto, which shares a common emphasis with the NM ethos on empowered citizens who influence local services. The manifesto seeks more devolution of services to users, and continued out-sourcing of service provision to the third sector (ranging from social enterprises, to citizen delivery of services, to shared provision):
- “Building a Living City is our way of making a visible difference to the lives of all the people we serve. Where the Council supports you with responsive services, leads the renewal of the city and encourages a sense of responsibility within our communities”¹¹.*
- 7.9 The Council’s ‘Mapping the Money’ (2010) audit, carried out as part of the ‘Living City’ agenda, suggests that the next step for Westminster’s public services should be to focus on developing the ‘unified public services’ model¹². An existing example cited is Westminster Works, which, as established in Table 6, greatly benefits from the City’s NM infrastructure. A joint statement of intent to take forward unification of services was agreed by the Council and NHS Westminster in January 2009, as demonstrated by the JSNA process, within which the LARPs are seen as key as explained above.
- 7.10 The next planned phase of work is the identification of areas to improve services and obtain better VFM by exploring the potential of sharing services, further joint commissioning and pooled resources. Some of the potential areas identified by the WCP - consultation and the development of service delivery points/ one stop shops - would obviously greatly benefit from the existing infrastructure provided by the LARPs.

¹¹ <http://www.westminster.gov.uk/services/livingcity/>

¹² The audit of public spending conducted in the City (WCC, 2010) found that 60% (circa £1 billion) of the combined gross revenue expenditure is by the Council (33%) and the PCT (27%).

National direction of travel

- 7.11 The themes evident at the Westminster local government level are reflected nationally. Despite the uncertainty about future policy given the recent general election, localism is a clear direction of travel, which some would describe as ‘small government’, underpinned by a shared emphasis on improved public service outcomes and VFM. This is framed by a broad consensus that public expenditure must be significantly reduced by any incoming government.
- 7.12 Key national policy documents (such as *Putting the Frontline First*, 2009) echo the rationale lying behind the NM approach, that being “public services responsive to citizens’ needs and driven by them” (HMSO, 2009: 5). Mechanisms include a reduction in “centrally-imposed burdens on the frontline” (HMSO, 2009: 10) and reduced ring-fencing of budgets, as reflected in the Total Place pilots, a process upon which Westminster has already embarked. The Conservative green paper, “Control Shift: Returning Power to Local Communities” (2009) echoes this, including proposals to phase out ring-fencing, and give councils and local communities more say in how to spend their funding allocations. Emphasis is also placed on strengthening the role of citizens and civic society as expressed in the form of groups of residents and third sector bodies (Cameron’s “big society”).
- 7.13 The City’s lauded LARPs infrastructure is in line with this direction. Given the consensus regarding localism, the emergent suite of policies include joint commissioning, for which Westminster is a beacon Council, and likely development of co-production. The value of ‘neighbourhood institutions’ as centres for local services is stressed, with scope for community management of facilities and social enterprises delivering services.
- 7.14 The increased emphasis on the role of local government combined with the intent to commission more services from the third sector indicates that there are significant opportunities for the PDT and the LARPs, but that these are to a large extent contingent on the Council’s continued support and commitment to its well-established and effective deprived neighbourhood infrastructure.

**Researching Neighbourhood Management in Westminster
Interview Topic Guide**

Main question: the impact of the ‘Westminster model’ of neighbourhood management

Preamble

Check about the interview being recorded.

Neighbourhood management is loosely defined as a process which brings the local community and local service providers together, at a neighbourhood level, to tackle local problems and improve local services.

The Paddington Development Trust (contracted by Westminster City Council to develop and deliver neighbourhood management in Church Street, Queen’s Park and Westbourne) and the University of Westminster are working together to analyse the ‘Westminster model’ of neighbourhood management. The aims of this research are to explore:

- how what we do and how we do it compares with the broad range of neighbourhood management activities taking place around the country; and
- to consider the impact and value for money of what we're doing in Westminster.

This research is timely given changes in the policy and funding context. It will help us reflect on what we have achieved and inform how we intend to proceed. The research is overseen by a steering group comprising representatives of the PDT, the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), and Shared Intelligence (a consultancy which is establishing the National Association for Neighbourhood Management).

Questions

About your role

- Can you explain what your role is?
- Can you explain your involvement in neighbourhood management in Westminster?
- Who do you work with and how, including:
 - Statutory agencies
 - Communities
 - The third (community, voluntary, RSL/ housing association) sector?

The ‘Westminster’ model

- What do you understand is involved in ‘neighbourhood management’?
- In your opinion, how does neighbourhood management work in Westminster? How are communities linked to service provision?
- Who do you think are the key agencies (including the statutory and third sectors)?
- How much does neighbourhood management depend on formal structures? How much does it depend on informal relationships/ ways of working?
- What do you think is distinctive about the way neighbourhood management is undertaken in Westminster?
- How much does this relate in your opinion to Westminster’s distinctive context, for example, the City Council’s approach, the presence and strength of third sector organisations?

Impacts

- How do you think that the approach used in Westminster ‘adds value’? Please provide some specific examples, such as in terms of:
 - Cost saving/ value for money
 - More efficient service delivery
 - More targeted/ tailored service delivery
 - Preventing future and more costly to resolve problems
 - Encouraging shared working/ ‘joining up’
 - Developing better information and consultation processes
 - Having a community infrastructure to make use of
 - Getting communities/ ‘hard to reach’ groups engaged/ empowered
 - Improving resident/ service user satisfaction.
- How has neighbourhood management affected how services are provided? How has the ‘mainstream been bent’ by communities via neighbourhood management?
- How have agencies been affected by neighbourhood management?
- Please give any specific examples in your or other organisations of how the approach has had broader impacts, such as:
 - how you go about delivering services in other areas (‘rolling out’)
 - working (‘joining up’) with other agencies.

Costs

- What are the costs of neighbourhood management, particularly for your organisation?
- Of these costs, how much are additional (‘project funding’) and how much relate to ‘bending the spend’/ affecting the use of mainstream resource?

Successes and Problems

- What do you think works especially well?
- What do you think could work better? What specific improvements could be made?

The Future

- What do you see as the future for neighbourhood management in Westminster?
- What specific challenges does it face?
- How do you think it should proceed/ be funded and organised?

3 Finally

- Is there anything else you would like to add?
- Do you have any questions about the research/ how the material will be used?

Thank you

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RESPONDENT LISTING

	Karen Buck MP
Westminster City Council	
Senior officers	
	Martin Whittles, Head of Public Realm Rosemary Westbrook, Head of Housing Daniel McCarthy, Housing Strategy Katy Bentham, Head of Economic Well-Being Policy
Operational Officers	
	Laura Hannan, Libraries Trevor Withams, Environmental Health Officer Anthony Kilbey, Senior City Inspector
Members	
	Councillor Barbara Grahame, Church St Ward Member Councillor Guthrie McKie, Harrow Rd Ward Member
NHS Westminster (PCT)	
	Fidelma Carter, Director of Inclusion, Communications & Engagement Anna Waterman, Head of Health Inequalities
Metropolitan Police	
	Michael Wright, St John's Wood Inspector
Other WCP members	
	Maryam Zonouzi, Chief Executive, Westminster Action on Disability & former Chair, Westminster Community Network
Local Area Renewal Partnerships (LARPS)	
WCP LARPs Oversight	
	Drew Stevenson, Paddington Development Trust Chairman & North Westminster LARP oversight (except Harrow Rd) (WCP)
LARPs Board Members (<i>Church Street focus</i>)	
Resident Representatives	
	Jeannette Buckley, Chair Don MacKenzie
Neighbourhood Organisations	
	Angela McConville, Chief Executive, Vital Regeneration
Statutory Sector	
	Mike Fairmaner, WCC Economic Policy and Area Programmes Manager
Selection from Neighbourhood Management Teams	
Neighbourhood Managers	
	Marco Torquati, Church St Fabian Sharp, Queens Park Toby Gale, Westbourne
Neighbourhood Management Officers	
	Julie Mallett, Church St Claire Millett, Church St
Performance & Evaluation Officer	
	Anthony Kelly, Church St

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