

# BARNSELEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Area Chairs Meeting  
Date: 19 September 2016**

## **Community Magazines**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

This report provides Central Council members with an update about the production and delivery of Community Magazines in the 5 Area Council areas over the past year.

The report also asks Central Area Council to consider if it would like to be included in the Community Magazine programme over the next period: November 2016 - October 2017.

### **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:**

- 2.1 Central Council members consider if they want to be included in the Community Magazine programme for the next period, as outlined in the report.**
- 2.2 Should they want to be included, Central Area Council notes the human and financial resource requirements linked to this approach, including officer/member time and approves the approximate distribution costs as outlined in the report.**
- 2.3 Central Area Council notes the process for signing off future publications.**

### **2. Background**

- 3.1 The area councils (excluding Central) have so far produced two community magazines which have been distributed to resident's homes in December 2015 and July 2016. We are currently out of contract for future editions.**
- 3.2 The community magazine is designed and printed at no cost to the area councils as this is subsidised by 12 pages of advertising. However, the production of the magazine takes significant time and resource from the Area Council, Area Team, members and communications and marketing team. This resource is used to write and proof copy, source distribution and liaise with the designers.**

3.3 Due to the large areas and mixed postcodes, the distribution of the magazines has been difficult to organise. Some households have received the wrong copies of the community magazines, which has been inevitable when distributing copies from the first four parts of postcode data. Communications and marketing have outlined recommendations to improve this process in section 5.2 of the paper.

#### 4. **Feedback**

4.1 Residents were asked to complete a survey to give their feedback on the magazines. The survey had 25 responses. 65 per cent found the information useful. Comments about the magazines were mixed, many asked for more up to date information about local events and activities that community members could get involved in. 90 per cent of those that answered the survey said they would like to see more information about their local area. A full copy of the survey report can be found in Appendix 1.

Other feedback from area teams;

- The Dearne Area Team and local groups have had a positive response to the newsletter with a cash donation given to the Salvation Army and items donated to the local allotment
- The North Team has had positive verbal feedback from active volunteers and engaged residents who also said they would like more local event information. The week that the magazine landed on doorsteps the North Team had four phone calls regarding litter and dog fouling complaints. The team also had an email from a resident asking how to get involved in volunteering. As a result of this, the team has successfully matched him to a group that suited his interests.

4.2 It is suggested that evaluation of each community magazine edition continues to keep up to date with the feedback from residents. Area councils are encouraged to ask for feedback via their social media channels and face to face.

#### 5. **Distribution costs**

The first issue of the community magazines in December 2015 were solely delivered by Royal Mail

	<b>Households</b>	<b>Cost of distribution by Royal Mail</b>
Penistone	13,343	£1,681.22
Dearne	10,582	£1,333.33
North	22,169	£2,793.30
South	24,517	£3,089.15
North East	20,820	£2,452.57

The July 2016 edition was part delivered by Royal Mail and part delivered by a local distribution company.

	<b>Households</b>	<b>Cost of distribution by Royal Mail</b>
Penistone	13,343	£1,681.22
Dearne	10,582	£1,333.33
North (extra magazines were delivered by local company)	22,169	£2,793.30
South (extra magazines were delivered by local company)	24,517	£3,089.15
North East	22,492	Local company

## **6. Future editions**

To improve the way in which the magazines are collated and distributed in the future, the Communications and Marketing Team recommend the following:

- 6.1 The production of the magazines will be staggered. This will allow Area Councils to have more up to date content and a shorter timescale of turnaround. This process will be trialled and monitored to review if it works better than having one deadline for all area councils, as was previously the case.
- 6.2 To improve distribution of the magazines, the Communications Team has two proposed methods:
  - Tender for a distributor for all of the Area Council magazines.
  - Each Area Council is responsible for sourcing a distributor for their area magazine.

The responsibility for the distribution will be with the Stronger Communities service.

- 6.3 Communications and Marketing will produce a template which will guide Area Councils on the type of information which may be useful to include in the magazines. This will allow for a mix of content including health information, future Council messages, up to date information about local events and activities for residents.
- 6.4 Features focusing on other council services that apply to all areas such as waste, school admissions, and cultural events may be included if it is viewed to be relevant and considered appropriate by area managers and elected members. The communications and marketing team will provide this content.
- 6.5 If Central Area Council decide to be included in the Community Magazine programme, the next issue will be published in the winter of 2016 (through a staggered approach) and again the summer of 2017.
- 6.6 The roles and responsibilities are outlined in the flow chart below;



## 7. Next steps

- 7.1 If Central Area Council agree to be included, communications and marketing with liaise with the designers to sign a new contract for future magazines. A report will be brought to the next meeting of Central Area Council with specific timescales/ copy, production and distribution deadlines for the Central Community Magazine.