

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at OXCLOSE CHURCH, OXCLOSE, WASHINGTON on THURSDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 2011 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Kelly in the Chair

Councillors Chamberlin, Fletcher, Miller, Padgett, Snowdon, Timmins, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, Wake, P. Walker and Williams.

Mike Poulter	-	City Services
John Rostron	-	City Services
Andrew Jackman	-	City Services
Dave Leonard	-	Chief Executive's
Karon Purvis	-	Chief Executive's
Linder Pott	-	Chief Executive's
Meg Boustead	-	Children's Services
Alan Caddick	-	Health Housing & Adult Services
Marion Marshall	-	Commercial & Corporate Services
Paul Wood	-	Commercial & Corporate Services
Mark Overton	-	Sunderland TPCT
George Thompson	-	Area VCS Network Representative

Members of the Washington Community.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cuthbert, I. Richardson, Scaplehorn and Neil Revely and Sue Morgan.

Declarations of Interest

Item 3 – Community Action in Washington: Progress Review

The Chairman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Community Chest application for Usworth Primary School as Chair of Governors for the school and left the room during consideration of the item.

Councillor Padgett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the SIP application for Eco Lighting Energy Saving project as he was a Governor of Fatfield Primary School and left the room during consideration of the item.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 4th November, 2010

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 4th November, 2010 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Community Action: Identifying New Issues and Agreeing Actions (2010/11 Work Plan)

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to ensure that the Area Committee be kept up-to-date with current events and developments affecting their neighbourhoods via an intelligence hub which had been established to act as a repository for information available and to identify new issues.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Karon Purvis, Area Officer, presented the report and informed the Committee of the new issues identified.

Councillor Wake referred to the review of regulations in relation to Dog Control Orders and questioned the rationale for the removal/replacement of existing signs which were easy to understand, especially when money is presently in short supply.

The Chairman agreed, commenting that it was part of a general review and proposed Councillor Wake be invited to take part in those discussions when arranged.

In relation to the issue of access to Princess Anne Park, the Chairman commented that it was initially thought that adjustments could be made to the footpaths, but this was not possible due to the proximity of the Primary Care Trust Centre.

Councillor Timmins commented that the situation gave an impression of incompetence within the Council with the particular access being a very busy area. Councillor Timmins also commented that it was a contentious issue as to what the park could be used for now that it was classed as a village green.

Councillor Williams believed that the costs for the access works should not be sought out of the Area Committee budget, but from the department's budget, which had made the oversight on the issue.

Councillor Miller agreed and hoped that the Senior Officer responsible for the oversight would be held accountable.

Councillor Wake queried the Legal Department's involvement in failing to pick up on the oversight and also enquired as to why the works would cost between £50,000 to £75,000.

Ms. Purvis advised that it was a large space which would require road strengthening and such like.

Alan Caddick, Acting Area Lead Executive, suggested that a report be submitted outlining the issues of how this had occurred and the way forward.

Councillor Miller requested that a breakdown on figures of the costs involved be included in the report.

Councillor Chamberlin requested that all alternative options to the proposals be included also.

2. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) note the byelaw review and agree to receive an update on the outcomes affecting the Washington area's cemeteries, beaches, countryside and parks via the Ward bulletin service;
- (ii) considered options to identify a cost effective method to gain access to a Council owned field to the south of the Washington Primary Care Centre in Princess Anne Park for events and activities with a further report to be submitted at a future meeting.
- (iii) note the information in Section 4 of the report and agree to hold an informal discussion for those Washington Members who wish to participate, before 17th January, 2011.

Community Action in Washington – Progress Review

Work Plan 2010/11 and Task Group Updates

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to update the Committee on the progress against the agreed actions in the current year's (2010/11) Work Plan and give progress reports on the Health and Wellbeing and the Employment and Business Task and Finish Groups.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Purvis updated the Committee on the progress of the Health and Wellbeing and Employment and Business Task and Finish Groups.

The Chairman then introduced Andrew Jackman, Interim Assistant Head of Traffic Road Safety, who updated the Committee in relation to proposals for a Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) programme, installation of a pedestrian refuge at The

Parkway and consideration of the installation of parking bays at Kestrel Close in response to a petition received.

The Chairman commented that some of the Members had not received the notification in time for the rearranged meeting to discuss road safety measures and that a further meeting may need to be arranged.

In response to Councillor Williams' enquiry, Mr. Jackman advised that other sites could be added to the VAS programme if additional funding was available.

Councillor Williams referred to the parking issues at Kestrel Close and commented that there was a debate if the land was owned by the Council or Gentoo and that she was concerned if this were to be granted, it would set a precedent which could result in other areas requesting money to deal with parking issues.

Councillor Timmins commented that he felt it was time the Authority looked at solutions for the problem of indiscriminate parking around the school areas.

The Chairman agreed that there were issues over parking around school areas which needed addressing and also commented that in relation to Kestrel Close, some Gentoo residents may benefit from the parking which was why the Council would work in partnership with Gentoo so that the costs be shared.

Councillor Fletcher commented that she did not agree with funding for the extra parking as it would set a dangerous precedent.

Councillor Miller disagreed and commented that he was originally against the idea when proposed by his Ward colleagues, however, upon investigation the problems occurring at Kestrel Close were dangerous and he believed the circumstances of the area were unique and had to be addressed.

Councillor Chamberlin enquired as to why the VAS programme costs had been transferred from SIB to SIP funding.

Ms. Purvis advised that the Vehicle Activated Signs were ongoing programmes with continued revenue costs which SIB could not give a future funding commitment to.

Mr. Jackman advised that research showed that the maximum impact of the signs was three months, so there was the need for rotation of the signs to provide maximum impact.

In reference to the proposals for Kestrel Close, Councillor Wake also disagreed that it would set a precedent and commented that it was a safety issue as large vehicles such as the ones the refuse collectors used had great difficulty in accessing the street.

Councillor H. Trueman referred to a recent Development Control Committee meeting which considered the Volker Stevin site at Springwell Village and wished to remind officers that part of the application included that the developers provide a suitable road scheme also.

Mr. Jackman advised that officers were currently investigating the speed limits on that particular road.

Councillor Snowdon referred to paragraph 5.3 of the report and welcomed the proposed installation of a pedestrian refuge for The Parkway near the medical centre and hoped it could be moved forward as soon as possible due to the increase of usage.

Mr. Caddick wished to inform the Group that a review had been carried out on how the Council could deliver services differently on the issue of Anti Social Behaviour and that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Williams stated that she was unhappy with the recommendations for Kestrel Close and requested her concerns be noted over the need for caution on the issue.

Councillor Chamberlin commented that a new traffic order was due to be implemented introducing double yellow lines, which would result in no available parking whatsoever and perhaps this was reason enough to set a precedent.

Mr. Jackman suggested that as a certain amount of clarification was needed, that the item be deferred.

Councillor Williams proposed that the decision be deferred, with Councillor Timmins seconding the proposal.

Councillor Miller commented that the proposals, having been worked on for three years, should not be deferred and wished for it to be put to a vote and hoped that his colleagues would support the proposal.

Councillor Walker agreed with Councillor Williams' concerns and commented that when the original consideration of the funding was given he did not believe the stream was to be used for parking issues otherwise he would have made several suggestions where problems occur.

The Chairman advised that the issue had not been raised by Members but via a petition submitted, which was why it had been included in the list.

The motion to defer the recommendations for Kestrel Close having been proposed and seconded, it was put to Members for a vote. With six votes in favour of a deferral and six votes against, the Chairman used his casting vote.

The Chairman requested that the recommendations be approved subject to valuations and costings being received and also dependent on Gentoo's involvement.

The Chairman also commented that if Gentoo were willing to contribute to the works, then the Authority would be looking for them to contribute to further problematic parking areas.

Councillor Williams commented that she could not believe costs had not yet been sought.

Ms. Purvis advised that further investigations needed to be made if there were any utilities underneath the surface which could affect the costings.

Councillor Williams commented that she did not want the same problems to occur as the ones experienced with Princess Anne Park.

Councillor Timmins also requested that enquiries were made into how the extra parking bays were to be managed/maintained.

3. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) agree to commissioning activity through a Call for Projects to deliver education and skills programmes and generate opportunities for young people in the culture and heritage sector in Washington;
- (ii) agree to the three traffic initiatives as detailed in Section 5 through the Washington Road Safety Scheme funding.

Responsive Local Services

The Executive Director of City Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform the Committee of the current scope of Responsive Local Services covering service areas such as litter, graffiti, refuse, grass cutting and dog fouling. It also provided the opportunity for a wider range of issues to be considered within a context of local problem solving.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Poulter, Head of Project and Service Development, presented the report and advised that the issue of potholes was a priority and would be dealt with using the limited resources at their disposal.

Mr. Poulter advised that the recruitment of the Area Response Managers was still ongoing and that they would be introduced at a future Area Committee meeting as soon as appointed.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that he welcomed the Out of Hours Noise Service and referred to a recent incident at the George Washington Hotel in which officers had been instrumental in dealing with the situation.

Councillor H. Trueman also commented that he wished officers the best of luck in tackling the issue of abandoned shopping trolleys as it had been attempted in the past with no success and he believed when all else failed, the trolleys should be collected and destroyed.

Mr. Poulter agreeing that action was required commented that it would be remiss of the Authority not to try and work with the supermarkets and to rest assured that the appropriate course of action would be carried out if necessary.

Councillor Miller commented that until Prudential accepted responsibility and either erected barriers or improved security, then the Council should destroy the shopping trolleys.

Councillor Miller also commented that the issue of dumping of waste was a disgrace and appeared to be getting worse. Councillor Miller informed the Committee of a recent incident where he had reported an individual for fly tipping, yet nothing was able to be done as it was his word against theirs.

Mr. Poulter advised that procedures had moved on in dealing with abandoned shopping trolleys and there were enforcement powers at their disposal if it became necessary.

Mr. Poulter also advised that the Area Response Manager's main role would be to tackle such issues and that they would not just look at the perpetrators of flytipping but also where the waste had originated from.

Councillor Williams referred to a recent repossessed property which had its contents dumped in the street outside and queried that it should have been the repossession companies' responsibility to dispose of the waste and not the Council's.

George Thompson, Area CS Network Representative, advised that one of the main things that bothered communities was graffiti and particularly the green boxes throughout estates which were not being cleaned. Mr. Thompson enquired as to how this issue had progressed.

Mr. Poulter advised that progress was being made and that they were doing the best that they could. Great strides had been made with graffiti and they would crack the problem, it was just taking a little time.

Councillor Chamberlin passed on compliments received by her constituents for the services provided and enquired as to the operating times for the Out of Hours Noise Service.

Mr. Poulter advised that he would find out the operating times and provide Councillor Chamberlin with the details. Mr. Poulter also informed the Committee that in relation to Councillor Scaplehorn's query at a previous meeting, there was now a grit store at Parsons which could be utilised during periods of bad weather.

4. RESOLVED that the report be noted and further updates be received regarding any issues arising from the intelligence group.

Community Chest, Strategic Initiative Budget (SIB) and Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) – Financial Statement and Proposals for further allocation of Resources

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to request the Committee's consideration of proposals for the allocation of the Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB), the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and Community Chest to support initiatives that would benefit the area.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

As the Chairman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Community Chest application for Usworth Grange Primary School, Councillor Walker took the Chair during consideration of the item.

5. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) note the financial statement for Area Committee funding for 2010/11 as detailed in Item 3c;
- (ii) approve 11 proposals for support from 2010/11 Community Chest as detailed in Annex 1a;
- (iii) approve £24,488 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIB budget for the Oxclose Play project;
- (iv) approve £6,670 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Eco Lighting Energy Saving project;
- (v) approve £2,000 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Trams project – NE Electric Traction Trust;
- (vi) approve £1,029 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Wharfedale Drive Dropped Kerbs project.

Influencing Practice, Policy and Strategy

Refreshing Washington Local Area Plan

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to help inform the Committee on refreshing their Local Area Plan (LAP) between January 2011 to March 2011. To support the Committee throughout the process, information was provided on four main elements:-

- what are people telling us;
- developments to consider;
- proposed framework for managing the refresh and review of the Plan;
- recommendations, including terms of reference.

The Area Committee had been provided with significant Citywide and local strategic information over the last 3 years. In addition, partners, including the community and volunteer sector, have fed information into the Area Committee process that has resulted in the development of the Washington Local Area Plan and the Committee's annual work plans. The plans not only identified key priorities, but through the establishment of task and finish groups supported the Committee in influencing the provision of public sector service delivery at a local level and focussed the allocation of its delegated budgets to deliver actions to address those priorities.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Purvis presented the report and at the request of the Chairman, Councillors Snowdon, Williams and the Chair himself volunteered for the Task and Finish Groups.

Councillor Wake referred to paragraph 2.3 of the report and commented that he was very much in favour of apprenticeships for young people but queried why they were only linked to Culture and Heritage.

The Chairman advised that they would not solely be linked to Culture, Inclusion and Heritage as the skills obtained would be transferable into other areas.

The Chairman commented that the Washington Area Committee had always agreed that if a project was identified that did not fit in with the year's Local Area Plan, that it would still be considered and moved forward if suitable. Upon the Chairman's request, the Committee agreed to continue this practice.

6. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) agreed to establish a Washington LAP Task and Finish Group and note the terms of reference for the Group, outlined in Annex 1;
- (ii) nominate the membership of the Group;
- (iii) agreed the proposed consultation framework outlined in Section 4 above;
- (iv) noted the findings of the report and agreed to receive a further report in March 2011.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Signed) J. KELLY,
Chairman.