

20 June 2013

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PLACE BOARD**

**Place Board Progress Report**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To provide an update of progress against the current year’s (2013/14) Place Board Work Plan.

**2. Background**

2.1 Earlier this year the Local Area Plan’s priorities associated with Place were referred to the Coalfield Place Board to action on behalf of the Area Committee. The Place Board has started to initiate action on those priorities and **Annex 1** outlines progress to date.

**3. Area Governance Arrangements**

3.1 The Area Committees are part of the Council’s Executive Function and have two key roles:-

- (a) Influencing decisions on services delivered at a local level; and
- (b) Identification of key priorities for their areas, in the context of supporting the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Outcomes Framework at a local level and ensure maximum impact where necessary through utilising its own resources.

3.2 Each ward will have elected member representation, whose role will be to liaise with their ward colleagues in between meetings and feedback collective views into the Board meetings. Members will work alongside key officers in what will be practical action orientated groups. It should be noted that the Board is not a decision making body and the work / recommendations of the Board will be presented to the Area Committees for final endorsement. Elected member representation on the Place Board for this Area Committee is as follows:-

Cllr John Scott (Chair)  
 Cllr Mel Speding (Shiney Row)  
 Cllr David Tate (Hetton)  
 Cllr Sheila Ellis (Houghton)  
 Cllr Bob Heron (Copt Hill)

3.3 Members are required to represent their ward and should liaise with ward colleagues on Place Board matters accordingly. Cllr Dennis Richardson attends Place Board as Chair of Area Committee to assist co-ordination between Place and People Boards.

**4. Key Areas of Influence/Achievements up to 31 May 2013**

4.1 Outlined below is a summary of the key areas of influence / achievements of the Coalfield Place Board up to 31 May 2013.

Action Taken	Outcome
<b>Responsive Local Services Streetscene</b>	
Influence operational deployment of RLS Streetscene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RLS delivery/activity reports presented to May 2013 and June 2013 board for members to influence and target resources</li> </ul>

Place Board members requested that by-laws be reviewed to include more specific enforcement regulations around the control of dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Dog Control policy with five separate Orders has been developed. The implementation of the policy was discussed at the June Place Board and members have been asked to identify specific locations of concern. This information will be collated and further discussed at the July Place Board meeting before being implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>Neglected Land</b>	
A clean up of Council owned plots has now been completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The old Dubmire School site is now complete, with informal seating, new trees and shrubs and a footpath installed. Feedback from local residents and pupils/staff from the nearby school has been very positive</li> <li>• Children from Dubmire School, and young people from a local youth project have been involved in carrying out environmental improvements giving 'ownership' of the site to young people.</li> </ul>
The Love Where You Live project has been carried out on a number of sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of partners from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) has enabled more joint working to take place</li> <li>• Young people from Kepier School have been involved in litter picking, flower planting, grass cutting and street sweeping in and around the Houghton town centre area. The project has raised awareness of environmental issues amongst the young people</li> <li>• An environmental education programme is being developed with Houghton Kepier School to encourage young people to consider the consequences of negative behaviour on the environment</li> </ul>
A partnership project to provide an improved youth facility at the Flatts Youth Centre was developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External improvements including the laying of tarmac and pruning of overgrown shrubs has been carried out</li> <li>• A comprehensive programme of internal and external building improvements has taken place</li> <li>• The newly refurbished centre will be launched on 25 June 2013 and will be opened by the Mayor. All members will receive an official invitation</li> </ul>
<b>Local Shopping Centres</b>	
Site visit carried out with shop owners, elected members at Shiney Row. A number of small scale issues were identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Railings, bollards and seats have been painted, weeds have been removed and floral displays have been reinstated</li> <li>• Positive feedback from elected members and traders in the area</li> <li>• Joint working has taken place with SNCBC to provide short term work placements for clients on the DWP Work Programme</li> </ul>
Business specialists are working with traders in Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row to offer tailored support depending on each individual business need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist advice and mentoring support is being delivered to 7 businesses in Houghton, 7 in Hetton and 8 in Shiney Row. Early indications are that all of the businesses engaged are benefiting positively from the project</li> <li>• A traders association has been set up in Houghton. A constitution has been signed by 8 Committee members. Around 35 businesses have expressed an interest in joining</li> </ul>
SIB support has allowed a comprehensive support package to be delivered in the three shopping centres. The project has gained great momentum and is due to end in September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place Board discussed the need for extended intense support and recommend the consideration of a sum of £40,000 from 2013/14 budget to continue the project until March 2014 (see finance report)</li> </ul>
<b>Allotments</b>	
Six sites with unlettable plots have been cleared and new fencing installed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 newly available plots created</li> <li>• Waiting lists reduced</li> <li>• Positive feedback from existing tenants</li> </ul>
Enforcement action has	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten tenancies have been terminated</li> </ul>

been taken against those not using plots for cultivation purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plots are now being offered to new tenants</li> </ul>
A 'masterplan' of Britannia Terrace Allotments, Fence Houses has been drafted and implementation has now commenced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants using plots inappropriately have now vacated site</li> <li>• A series of meetings with those keeping horses on site has taken place. A solution for future arrangements is being developed with tenants</li> <li>• Phase 1 of a long term improvement plan has been agreed by the Place Board. The first phase will include the clearance of all plots situated along the back lane of Britannia Terrace and remodelled, uniform, plots created with new perimeter fencing and internal demarcation. The work will be carried out under the previously approved SIB Allotments project and will commence at the beginning of August 2013</li> </ul>

### 3. Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- Consider the progress and performance update with regard to Coalfield Place Board's Work Plan for 2013/14
- Consider the request for SIB funding under Item 5, Finance Report, to support the Local Shopping Centres priority
- Note the commencement of Phase 1 at Britannia Terrace allotment site

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### Annex 1: Workplan