

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on MONDAY, 28th MARCH, 2011 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors P. Dixon, Emerson, Errington, E. Gibson, Kay, Maddison, McClennan and Mordey

Also Present:-

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| Meg Boustead | - Head of Safeguarding, Sunderland City Council |
| Charlotte Burnham | - Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements, Sunderland City Council |
| Kath Butchert | - YDG Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Hazel Clark | - East Area Voluntary and Community Sector Representative |
| Insp. John Connolly | - Northumbria Police |
| Insp. Neal Craig | - Northumbria Police |
| David Curtis | - East Area Voluntary and Community Sector Representative |
| Paula Hunt | - East Area Voluntary and Community Sector Representative |
| Matthew Jackson | - Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council |
| Janet Johnson | - Deputy Chief Executive and Area Lead Executive, Sunderland City Council |
| Susan Kelly | - CS Director, DBTW |
| Hugh Lewis | - Head of Communication, Nexus |
| Liz McEvoy | - Area Renewal Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council |
| Vivienne Metcalfe | - Community Development Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council |
| Sandra Mitchell | - Head of Early Intervention and Locality Services, Sunderland City Council |
| Keith Moore | - Executive Director of Children's Services, Sunderland City Council |
| Helen Peverley | - City Centre Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Ian Richardson | - Assistant Head of Street Scene, Sunderland City Council |
| Nicky Rowland | - East Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Ami Snowdon | - Empty Property Assistant, Sunderland City Council |
| Sgt Colin Stephenson | - Northumbria Police |
| Jamie Third | - Community Relation Officer, Nexus |
| Nicol Trueman | - Area Officer, Sunderland City Council |

Ian Warne - Station Manager, Sunderland East Fire Station
Jeremy Wicking - Media Officer, Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillors M. Forbes, T. Martin, O'Connor and Wood along with Jen McKeivitt and Inspector Warcup.

Declarations of Interest

Item 3 – Community Action in Sunderland East – Progress Review –
Community Chest Applications

Councillor Maddison declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Member of Grangetown C.A.

Item 3 – Community Action in Sunderland East – Progress Review – SIP Applications

Councillor Ball declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a member of the Raich Carter Sports Centre Management Board.

Councillor Mordey declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Member of Raich Carter Sports Centre

Councillor Errington declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Member of Raich Carter Sports Centre.

Item 3 – Community Action in Sunderland East – Progress Review –
Education Business Connections SIB application

Councillors Ball, Emerson, E. Gibson, Mordey declared Personal and Prejudicial interests in the application as the applicants were close associates.

Councillors Kay and McClennan declared personal and prejudicial interests as employees of EBC.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 10th January, 2011

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th January, 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Hazel Clark and Jen McKeivitt in the attendance.

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

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of the new issues within the area relating to Empty Properties, Sunderland East VCS Area Network and East Meets West.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

- **Empty Property Team**

Liz McEvoy and Ami Snowdon presented the update on the work of the Empty Property Team.

Ms McEvoy advised that there were over 2000 empty properties across Sunderland and within the East Area there were most empty properties in the Hendon area. There were also issues with the number of empty apartments within the city centre. The government had introduced a new homes bonus where there were rewards given to authorities for providing new housing stock. Empty properties brought back into use were included in new housing stock.

Ms Snowdon advised that there were 188 empty properties within the Hendon New Deal for Communities Area and within the Selective Licensing Area there were 142 empty properties. There was one property owner in Hendon who owned a number of empty properties and there had been meetings with this owner to attempt to find a way of bringing these properties back into use; since the meetings there had been a reduction in the amount of waste in the yards of these properties.

Councillor Kay commented that long term problematic empty properties do not necessarily become less problematic when they become tenanted.

Ms McEvoy advised that when meeting with owners the landlord accreditation scheme was discussed and in Hendon the selective licensing scheme required landlords to seek references from prospective tenants.

Councillor Mordey asked Ms Snowdon to circulate the priority list to the Hendon Ward Members and requested a map showing where the problem properties were located. He queried whether there had been any issues with getting landlords to sign up for the selective licensing.

Ms McEvoy advised that out of the 650 landlords the department were aware of in the selective licensing area there had been 421 landlords had submitted applications; there was the intention to prosecute any landlords who did not co-operate and there was only one landlord within the area with whom the department were having problems.

In response to a query from Councillor McClennan, Ms Snowden advised that there had not been an increase in the number of empty properties in the area as a result of the introduction of selective licensing. There were powers for dealing with problematic empty properties such as Empty Dwelling Management Orders and Enforced Sales however these legislative enforcement powers were a last resort if property owners refused to co-operate with the authority to bring the properties back into use.

2. RESOLVED that the update on empty properties be received and noted.

- **Sunderland East VCS Area Network**

Paula Hunt, East Area VCS Network representative, presented the report on the issues which had been raised through the East VCS Area Network. These issues included the decline in the condition of the railway embankment between Hunter Terrace and Percy Terrace and the mental health and welfare advice services which was operated in the area.

Ms Hunt asked the committee to consider appointing the VCS network to investigate the feasibility of developing the land at Hunter Terrace and Percy Terrace; and also the refer information related to an increase in mental health issues and problems with minority groups accessing advice into the developing priorities for 2011/12 and the Health Housing and Adult Services directorate provide the VCS network with information on the current support available for people with mental health issues or who have English as a Second Language.

3. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The VCS network be appointed to investigate the feasibility of developing the land between Hunter Terrace and Percy Terrace for public use and report the findings back to the Committee.
 - b. Information relating to an increase in mental health issues and problems with minority groups accessing advice be fed into the Developing Priorities for 2011-12 Task and Finish group for consideration.
 - c. Health, Housing and Adult Services Directorate provide information on current support available to people with mental health issues, and advice available to people who have English as their second language on benefits and employment to East VCS Area Network to share with local community groups and charities.

- **East meets West**

Nicol Trueman, Area Officer, presented the report and advised that there had been difficulties in the Eden Vale and Thornhill areas which were on the border between the West and East areas. There was already a number of initiatives underway to tackle the issues and it was proposed that a Task and Finish group be set up with Members of both Area Committees to co-ordinate

the interventions in the area. It was recommended that the Chair and Vice-Chair along with one other Member join the group.

Councillor Mordey nominated Councillor Kay to join the group and this nomination was seconded by the Chairman.

4. RESOLVED that:
 - a. The information be received and noted and a stakeholder's conference be held in April 2011.
 - b. The Chairman and Vice-Chair along with Councillor Kay join the task and finish group.

Community Action in East Sunderland – Progress Review

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of the progress made on the priorities identified as part of the 2010/11 Work plan along with the progress made on the development of the 2011/12 Work plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

- **2011/12 Priorities and Work Plan**

Nicol Trueman presented the report on the progress made on developing the work plan for 2011/12 and the priorities which had been identified as part of this process. There would be consultation with the area networks and the outcomes of this consultation would be reported back to the Area Committee in May.

Councillor Errington queried whether the changes to the Job Linkage service would result in changes to the opening hours or staffing levels.

Janet Johnson, Area Lead Executive, advised that the information would be sought from the SNCBC and fed back.

5. RESOLVED that the progress made on the 2011/12 work plan be received and noted and the final plan be received at the May meeting of the Committee.

- **Identification of Gaps in Youth Provision**

Sandra Mitchell, Head of Early Intervention and Locality Services, and Keith Moore, Executive Director of Children's Services, presented the report and advised Members of the three tier model of service delivery which was being used which included universal services designed to benefit the majority of young people through to specialist services which were intended for young people who were vulnerable and in need of specialist support.

Ms Mitchell advised that there had been concerns raised by the Area Committee over the reduction of provision across the East Area and the priorities for filling the gaps in provision were identified in the report. It was proposed that £30,000 be allocated through SIB funding to help with the delivery of youth provision following the loss of £300,000 funding, should the Area Committee agree.

Councillor Mordey queried how much work would be able to be done to plug the funding gap with only £30,000 being provided by the Area Committee. Mr Moore advised that it would not be possible to plug all of the gaps however it would enable some of the gaps in service delivery to be filled. Councillor Mordey then stated that it was important to protect youth intervention workers as they went out onto the streets and engaged with young people who would not be likely to access services otherwise; he felt that the best use of the Area Committee money would be to fund youth workers.

Councillor McClennan queried whether all of the Area Committees were being asked to provide £30,000; Mr Moore confirmed that this was the case.

Councillor Kay asked whether there would be any support given to the service providers to ensure that they used their available funds effectively.

Mr Moore advised that he would be happy to sit down with the providers and provide them with advice should they request this.

Kath Butchert added that the situation for voluntary sector organisations could change quickly; the Blue Watch Youth Project had recently received lottery funding.

Councillor Errington commented that it was important to look at what facilities people used and where the funding for the facilities came from. The Box Youth Project had to find the funds to maintain the building themselves while the Blue Watch Youth Project had most of these costs paid for. Ms Butchert advised that the conditions of the lease for the building often had an effect on costs; the Blue Watch Youth Project was formerly a Local Authority Youth Development organisation while the Box Youth Project was a former Community Association. Councillor Errington then stated that it was necessary to look at the leases and see why some organisations were receiving assistance but others were not.

Janet Johnson, Area Lead Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, agreed that Property Services could advise of the situation with specific community buildings.

Ms Mitchell added that the Joint Commissioning Board had discussed the future of the services and how the Authority would be able to support the providers.

Councillor E. Gibson stated that young people were the future and there was a need to invest in services for them. Youth Centres helped to build

confidence and other life skills and she did not want to see young people on the street with nowhere else to go.

In response to Councillor McClennan, Mr Moore advised that there was a publicity campaign to maximise the take up of free school meals to ensure that the level of Pupil Premium funding provided was maximised. The pupil premium was paid directly to schools and if Members had suggestions for what the schools could spend the money on then these would be fed back to the school. Councillor McClennan then added that there was a stigma attached to free school meals and there was a need to sell them well and advertise the benefits of them in order to reduce this stigma.

Councillor Mordey suggested that the Area Committee could commit SIB funding of £80,000 to the provision of services to young people instead of the original proposal of £30,000. The Committee agreed to this proposal and it was:-

6. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The report be received and noted and the actions set out in the action plan be agreed.
 - b. Funding of £80,000 be allocated from the SIB 2011/12 budget to deliver positive activities for young people living in the East Area.

- **Crime and Fire Statistics**

Ian Warne, Station Manager, Sunderland East Fire Station, presented the statistics for deliberate fires within the East Area for the period 1st January, 2011 to 15th March, 2011. Mr Warne advised that Hendon and Millfield had been the arson capital of the city however there had been an Arson Worker funded for 2 years and this had reduced the number of fires by 16.9 percent in Millfield and 20 percent in Hendon. By working with the VCS groups it could be possible to build some stability into the provision of arson workers.

The Chairman commented that despite all of the hard work there was still a problem with bins being left in back lanes. Mr Warne advised that there was a pilot scheme underway intended to clean up rubbish and reduce the number of bins left out by using education and enforcement.

Inspector Neal Craig presented the crime figures for the Central Area and advised that there had been a reduction in crime of just over 8 percent which was 460 fewer crimes. There had however been an increase of over 20 percent for Other Thefts which was related to the rising number of metal thefts. Anti Social Behaviour within the area had increased slightly however there had been a reduction in youth related Anti Social Behaviour.

Inspector John Connolly presented the crime statistics for the East Area, he advised that overall the number of crimes had remained steady; there had been an increase of less than one percent. There had however been an increase in burglaries on dwellings of 50 percent which was a concern. The

number of thefts of motor vehicles had reduced by 22 percent as had criminal damage. Anti Social Behaviour had reduced by 19 percent.

Sergeant Colin Stephenson presented the crime figures for the Doxford area and advised that there had been an increase in crime of 3.5 percent. Similarly to other areas there had been an increase in metal thefts which had led to other crime increasing by 24 percent. Vehicle crime had also increased by nearly 8 percent while burglary from dwellings had plummeted by 37 percent. Youth related Anti Social Behaviour had reduced by 29 percent.

Councillor Mordey suggested that comparisons with the figures from other areas be provided.

Councillor Kay advised that while out campaigning for the up-coming local elections he had been informed by residents of issues surrounding low level Anti Social Behaviour; it was important to tackle these issues early to prevent them from escalating. Inspector Craig stated that Anti Social Behaviour was generally underreported.

7. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service and Northumbria Police be received and noted.

- **Progress Review**

Nicol Trueman presented the progress review and updated the Committee on the outstanding issues and presented an update on the Meet Your Councillor event which had taken place and had seen Councillors meeting with young people in the area.

Councillor E. Gibson referred to the visit she had undertaken to the Box Youth Project; the young people had said that they did not like to leave their area to attend events. The Multi Use Games Area was an excellent facility however it was unused during the winter as there was no lighting.

Councillor McClennan stated that she had visited Thornhill School and had spoken to pupils from years 7 and 9; they felt that there should be more opportunity for young people to engage in sports and suggested that there could be subsidised use of the sports halls at Crowtree Leisure Centre.

Councillor Kay advised that his visit to St. Anthony's School had unfortunately been cancelled and he had instead visited St. Mark's Youth Club. The young people stated that they were not happy living in the area, they often felt intimidated and frightened, especially by one family in particular. They had not previously told anyone about this as they were frightened as to what the repercussions would be. They also felt that there were issues in the area around youth facilities, potholes and buses. He had agreed to go back to the youth club in June to see what changes there had been.

Councillor Emerson advised that he had visited Venerable Bede School and the young people he had spoken to had raised dog fouling, litter, anti social behaviour and drunks as issues which annoyed them.

Councillor Mordey commented that on his visit to Southmoor School the young people had also raised these issues. He also stated that young people often said that they were talked to but not listened to; he felt that this had been a good way of listening to young people in the area.

Helen Peverley, Area Response Manager - City Centre, and Nicky Rowland, East Area Response Manager, presented the Responsive Local Services update.

Ms Peverley circulated copies of the structure of the Responsive Local Services team and advised Members of the contact details for the officers involved; if Members had any issues then they should contact their Area Response Manager. There had been issues with fallen branches as a result of the high winds and also rubbish and litter complaints which were related to the grit used on the roads during the winter. The Strategic Land Management System was close to implementation and would be discussed by Cabinet before being formally presented to the Area Committees.

Ms Rowland advised that there had been 164 investigations into fly tipping and there had been 13 Fixed Penalty Notices issued with one prosecution. There had also been Fixed Penalty Notices issued for dog fouling. Within Millfield there were regular complaints about dog fouling, especially in back lanes and in Hendon, Millfield and St, Michael's wards there were complaints about waste being left out. In Millfield there had also been work with the fire service to reduce the number of bin fires and there were weekly meetings with the refuse collectors and enforcement officers.

Councillor McClennan commented that there were 49 people listed on the structure in addition to the front line work force and asked how many people were involved overall.

Ian Richardson, Assistant Head of Street Scene, advised that there were 100 posts however this was subject to review. The team leaders would be out on the streets working on the front line to identify issues.

Councillor Kay commented that there had been issues in the back lanes surrounding St. Mark's Road however there had been improvements and residents had stated that there had been a reduction in the amount of dog fouling and there were fewer bins left out; there had also been a reduction in the levels of anti social behaviour. There was still an issue with dog fouling however residents accepted that this was the responsibility of dog owners to clean up, there was a need for education and enforcement.

Councillor Emerson stated that there was a need for education of residents who left bins out. They often did not see a reason to take the bins in. He queried what would happen to people who did not put the bins back into their

property. Ms Rowland advised that action would depend on the area and the issues within that area. If a notice had been served then it was a finable offence not to comply; there would be education offered before any enforcement action was taken.

Councillor Emerson then commented that there had been some residents in Ryhope who had carried out a litter pick but they had then not known what to do with the bags of rubbish they had collected as they could not leave the bags next to their bins for collection. He also queried whether the issues surrounding the emptying of dog waste bins had been addressed; Ms Rowland advised that this issue had been resolved.

The Chairman commented that a dog walker in Ryhope had been clearing up their dog waste and then throwing the bags onto the roof of a bus shelter and these bags had then been blowing off the roof during the recent high winds.

Jamie Third, Nexus, agreed to ensure that the roof of the bus shelter was cleaned.

Hugh Lewis, Nexus Head of Communications, and Sharon Kelly, DB Tyne and Wear Customer Service Director, then presented the update from Nexus on the introduction of charges at the Car Park at the Stadium of Light Metro Station.

Mr Lewis advised that the car park had opened over 8 years ago and was unusual in not having parking charges. Over the last year there Nexus had put together a bid of a project of improvement works to the system and as part of this there was the need to manage the running costs and provide a quality service; DB Tyne and Wear were now operating the trains and car parks and it had been decided that the Stadium of Light car park should be brought into line with the other car parks on the network.

Ms Kelly advised that DB Tyne and Wear had needed to look into ways of raising revenue and car park charges were a good source of revenue. The charges also had benefits to customers as there was an increased staff presence which would help to improve security in the car parks.

Councillor Mordey queried how many spaces there were and what the parking charge was. Ms Kelly advised that there were 160 spaces and the charge was £1.60 per day. There had been notices displayed at the car park for 6 weeks prior to the introduction of the charges. Prior to the charges being introduced there was no information on usage of the car park; since the introduction of the charges there had been a slight dip in usage.

Councillor Kay commented that there were 9 Metro stations in Sunderland and 4 of these were within the East Area; 2 of these were major stations, Central Station and Park Lane Interchange; and there was only one station, Millfield, which had a dedicated car park. He queried whether there would be any charges imposed at this car park.

Following discussion, Ms Kelly agreed to find out whether the car park was owned by Nexus. Mr Hughes advised that the operating contract included provision for charging at strategic car parks.

8. RESOLVED that the progress review be received and noted.

- **Community Chest, Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) and Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) – Financial Statement and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources**

Nicol Trueman, Area Officer, presented the report and advised Members that there were 10 proposals for support from Community Chest, one proposal for support from SIP and four proposals for support from the 2010/11 SIB with a further proposal for funding from the 2011/12 SIB fund.

Ms Trueman referred Members to Annex 5a which detailed the proposals for support from Community Chest totalling £12,510; Annex 5b which detailed the proposal for SIP and Annex 5c which detailed the proposals for SIB.

Ms Trueman also drew Members attention to the three options outlined for the amendment of the previously approved allocation for the Education Business Connections (EBC), Community Leaders of the Future project.

9. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statement be noted.
- b. Approval be given to the 10 proposals for support from the 2010/11 Community Chest.
- c. The SIP application be approved.
- d. The SIB applications be approved.
- e. The amendment to the previous allocation of funding to EBC be deferred as the meeting was inquorate.

(Signed) E. BALL,
Chairman.