

At a meeting of the WEST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held at RICHARD AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL, HURSTWOOD ROAD, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 7TH OCTOBER, 2015 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors, Allan, Atkinson, Essl, G. Galbraith, I. Galbraith, Gofton, Tye, Waters, P. Watson, S. Watson and A. Wilson.

Also Present:-

Phil Baker	Acting Inspector	Northumbria Police
Steve Burdis	Station Manager	Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service
Bill Blackett	West Area Response Manager	Sunderland City Council
Simone Common	Acting Head of Community and Family Wellbeing	Sunderland City Council
Joanne Laverick	VCS Network Representative	Youth Almighty
Natasha Lawson	Youth Vice Chair	Youth Almighty
Bill Leach	Partnership Co-ordinator	Pennywell Com. Centre
Chris Marshall	Head of Operations	Gentoo
David Noon	Principal Governance Services Officer	Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	Area Co-ordinator	Sunderland City Council
Linda Reiling	Locality Commissioning Manager	Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group
Edna Rochester	Treasurer, Secretary	Tansy Centre and Pennywell Com. Centre
Patrick Scott	Acting Sergeant	Northumbria Police
Gilly Stanley	Acting Area Community Officer	Sunderland City Council
Sonia Tognarelli	Area Lead Executive	Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting especially those attending their first meeting of the West Sunderland Area Committee. He thanked the Head teacher and staff of Richard Avenue Primary School for hosting the meeting and paid tribute to the work being undertaken by the school within the community some of which was supported by funding from the Area Committee. The Chairman then invited those present to introduce themselves.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Porthouse, P. Smith, Waller and T. Wright.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Committee held on 3rd June, 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Place Board Progress Report

The Chairman of the West Sunderland Area Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on progress against the current year's Place Board Work Plan.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Essl presented the report drawing Members' attention to the initiation of action towards achieving key priorities as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report together with a summary of key areas of influence and achievements of the Place Board in relation to Responsive Local Services, Northumbria in Bloom, Age Friendly City, Public Protection and Regulatory Services, Maximising Greenspace and Improving Derelict Land, Shopping Centres and Environment and Street Scene Improvements as at 21st September, 2015.

Councillor Gofton stated that there was such a lot of good work and good news described in the report but in particular she would like to focus on the partnership developed with the Pallion traders. A relatively small amount of funding from the Area Committee had kickstarted a tremendous amount of fantastic work which wouldn't have been possible without the walk and talk budget. Councillor Paul Watson agreed that the work programme of the Place Board had generated some phenomenal results and the partnership work with local traders had been fantastic. He hoped that having seen the results, property owners would be prepared to contribute to any future capital improvements thereby enabling more work to be undertaken.

Councillor Ian Galbraith commended everyone involved with the Area Event held in Barnes Park. He believed that the Park had proved to be an excellent venue and could readily host similar events.

There being no further questions or comments on the report it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the report be received and be noted;
- ii) the Area Committee continue to support the development of Sunderland as an age friendly city; and
- iii) consideration be given to the financial issues arising from the Place Board report later in the meeting at item 5 on the agenda.

People Board Progress Report

The Chairman of the West Sunderland Area People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on progress against the current year's People Board Work Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Atkinson presented the report drawing Members' attention to the initiation of action towards achieving the key priorities as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, together with a summary of key areas of influence and achievements of the People Board in relation to Sport and Leisure Management, Joint Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Job Prospects, Young People and Health and Well Being as at 21st September, 2015.

With regard to the newly commissioned Live Life Well Service, Councillor Atkinson encouraged members to forward any feedback to Julie Parker Walton, the Committee's Public Health Locality Lead to ensure Members' views continued to influence the service delivery.

Councillor Paul Watson commended the West Area Team and members on the outcomes of the report especially in relation to its value for money. The impact of the roll out of universal credit remained a worrying issue however. He expressed concern that applications could only be made on line and questioned whether all claimants would have the necessary skills, competency or technology to do so. He also questioned whether the Council had the capacity to provide adequate support and reported that some centres listed as electronic halls no longer existed. In this regard he asked that an audit was undertaken of Council facilities to provide comfort that the council had the capacity to support people in accessing IT.

The Chairman added that the Regional Manager of the DWP had assured the People Board that claimants wouldn't go unnecessarily into sanctions however this remained to be seen. He agreed that an audit of the Council's capacity to provide support was necessary to identify appropriate venues within its control and what they could offer to claimants. The Committee needed assurances that venues were available where people could get help immediately.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Councillor Atkinson for her report. He referred to the recommendations in the report and in particular that relating to the community helpers (paragraph 5.3). He advised that the original recommendation from the Board had requested the Area Committee to consider the allocation of £82,000 SIB funding (to be supplemented by £20,000 match funding from the CCG) to provide a Community Helpers Project for the West Area comprising three Helpers, each covering two wards. Following the meeting of the Board, further discussion had taken place with members and an alternative option had been proposed. This would provide a scheme comprising six Community Helpers, one per ward, each working a period of 18 hours per week. The SIB funding requested would remain at £82,000, again supplemented by £20,000 match funding from the CCG. The Chairman advised that he would be moving this revised recommendation

when the Committee considered the allocation of funding at the appropriate place on the agenda. Members endorsed this course of action.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the report be received and be noted; and
- ii) consideration be given to the financial issues arising from the People Board report later in the meeting at item 5 on the agenda.

Report of the West Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network (AVCSN)

The AVCS Network submitted a progress report (copy circulated) which briefed the Committee on issues pertinent to the Voluntary and Community Sector.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Gilly Stanley, Acting Area Community Officer presented the report highlighting the following feedback and input arising from the two VCS meeting held since the Area Committee last met in June:-

- i) the receipt of Environmental Health information with a particular focus on Food Hygiene standards and Tattooists.
- ii) an invitation to a Live Life Well Development Workshop in August which introduced the service and its key aspects together with information on how community groups could link in with the Live Life Well Service
- iii) information on a 1 year pilot Community Mental Health Learning project,
- iv) a presentation from Barclays on the opportunities available to the VCS including a coding workshop for young people. As a result the West VCS network was very keen investigate how they could link with Barclays in the delivery of future opportunities for west residents.

In addition Members were informed that the West VCSN would continue to deliver activities and services which support the Area Committee's priorities of Health and Wellbeing, Improving Job Prospects, Increasing skills and personal aspirations, Activities for Young People, Heritage and Environment, Greenspaces and Shopping Centres

With regard to item iv) above, Councillor Gofton suggested that it would be useful if the Council could arrange for FACL Officers to continue to connect with the community via the VCS Network.

Councillor Paul Watson welcomed the initiative from Barclays to provide a coding workshop for young people. He stated that as Sunderland was renowned as a 'Software City', perhaps the Area Committee could look to support the development of similar workshops either via schools or businesses.

There being no further comments or questions the Chairman thanked Ms Stanley for her report, and it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Northumbria Police – Sunderland West

Acting Inspector Baker of Northumbria Police presented a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on the Force's most recent performance indicators for the period 1st April to 19th September, 2015 and the percentage increase / decrease against the same period last year.

Particular reference was paid to crime levels in relation to violent crime, vehicle crime, burglary from dwelling, burglary other than dwelling, criminal damage, theft and handling, shoplifting, youth ASB, Non Youth ASB and drug crime. In addition members were informed of the particular crime patterns in respect of the Barnes, Pallion, St. Anne's, Sandhill, Silksworth and St Chad's wards.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Tye believed that it was no coincidence that the 15.7% increase in the total crime figure had occurred following the loss of the '24/7' Police presence at Farrington Police Station. He stated that it was clear from the crime statistics that the closure had produced a detrimental effect. The very presence of Police on the ground provided an actual deterrent and sharing the adjacent Fire Station was not the answer. He welcomed the 22% decrease in drug crime across the West Area as a whole but expressed concern at the 9% increase within the Sliksworth ward. He advised that dealing was being undertaken brazenly by known perpetrators in front of peoples' faces. It was a situation that required urgent attention. In conclusion Councillor Tye welcomed the decrease in Youth Anti-Social Behaviour and suggested that perhaps this was a reflection of the emphasis placed on Youth provision by the Area Committee.

Councillor Paul Watson stated that the crime figures before the Committee were not something it was used to having become accustomed to falling crime levels over the previous 15 years. He believed it was clear that the decrease in funding at the front line lay behind the rise. The problems in west Sunderland could be contrasted with Newcastle and the provision of the brand new facilities at Forth Banks. The new state of the art Police station had hugely increased the feeling of safety in that area of the city and as a result the Stephenson Quarter was booming through the attraction of new businesses.

Acting Inspector Baker reassured members that the West Area still had the same number of Police Officers on the ground and they still worked the same shift patterns. The only difference was that their base had changed. He contended that the real reason for the apparent rise in the levels of crime were the changes to the national crime recording systems. With regard to the drug related problems in Silksworth he urged members to encourage people to report their concerns to the Police.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Gillian Galbraith, Acting Inspector Baker confirmed that in terms of the volume of crimes committed, St. Chads ward was

generally the lowest. The increases in violence with injury and shop theft had been against the general trend.

The Chairman having thanked Acting Inspector Baker for his attendance it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

The report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) (copy circulated) was submitted which provided the Committee with an update on the Service's performance indicators for the period 1st June to 1st September, 2015 with particular reference to:-

- i) the number of deaths from all fires (none),
- ii) deliberate property fires (2),
- iii) deliberate vehicle fires (9), and
- iv) secondary fires not involving property or road vehicles (75).

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Station Manager Steve Burdis took Members through the report and in response to an enquiry from Councillor Amy Wilson regarding Bonfire Night, confirmed that the 'darker nights campaign' would shortly be underway and that between 2nd and 8th November extra 'uplifts' would be undertaken in conjunction with officers from Gentoo and the Council.

Councillor Tye thanked Mr Burdis for the format of the report which now incorporated statistics at ward level as previously requested by members.

Councillor Paul Watson asked how members could marry up incidents recorded in both the Police and Fire reports. For example, how would the car fires detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report be reflected in the Police statistics? Acting Inspector Baker advised that they would be recorded as criminal damage.

There being no further questions or comments on the report, the Chairman thanked Mr Burdis for his attendance and it was:-

6. RESOLVED the report be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) and Community Chest – Financial Statement and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources

The Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements submitted a report (copy circulated) in respect of the above matter.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Helen Peverley, Area Coordinator, presented the report highlighting the Committee's financial statement, details of 18 projects approved for support from the 2015/16 Community Chest budget, proposals for the allocation of SIB funding, details of the allocation of funding under the small grants process in relation to maximising greenspace/derelict land activity and the proposed change of use in respect of previously allocated SIB funding.

The Chairman drew members attention to the report recommendations at paragraph 6 and reminded the Committee that while the proposed allocation of funding in respect of the West Community Helpers project (paragraph 6.2) remained unchanged, it was now being recommended that the project described in Annex 1 of the report be amended to provide a scheme comprising six Community Helpers, one per ward, each working a period of 18 hours per week.

This was agreed accordingly.

Consideration having been given to the report, (as amended), it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Area Committee's funding statement be received and noted;
- (ii) approval be given to the allocation of £82,000 SIB funding (to be supplemented by £20,000 match funding from the CCG West Health Programme) and to the call for project brief to support the delivery of the West Community Helpers scheme comprising six Community Helpers, one per ward, each working a period of 18 hours per week;
- (iii) approval be given to the allocation of £5000 SIB funding to support the delivery of the Safety Works Educational Programme across the West Area as detailed in Annex 2 of the report;
- (iv) approval be given to the allocation of £40,000 SIB funding to support the development of a West Area Event as detailed in Annex 3 of the report;
- (v) approval be given to the change of use of SIB funding previously allocated in respect of the Healthy Lifestyles project as detailed in Annex 4 of the report;
- (vi) the two proposals agreed through the small grants process in respect of Maximising Greenspace / Derelict Land activity as detailed in Annex 5 of the report be noted; and
- (vii) the approval of the 18 Community Chest applications as detailed in Annex 6 of the report be noted.

Current Planning Applications (West Area)

A schedule (copy circulated) of current planning applications lodged during the period 1st and 22nd September, 2015 was submitted for members' information only.

(for copy schedule – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED the schedule be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and especially to all at Richard Avenue Primary School for their kindness and assistance in hosting the meeting and the associated community event.

(Signed) P. GIBSON,
Chairman.