

At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held in HERRINGTON COUNTRY PARK on WEDNESDAY, 1st JUNE, 2011 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor D. Richardson in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Ellis, Heron, Rolph, Speding and Wakefield

Also in Attendance:-

Ron Barrass	Member of the Public	
David Ellison	Area Response Manager	Sunderland Council
Hazel Hedley	CEO	Impact Family Services
Cllr Juliana Heron	Member	Hetton Town Council
Pauline Hopper	Area Officer	Sunderland Council
Matthew Jackson	Governance Services Officer	Sunderland Council
Amelia Laverick	Member of the Public	
Ian Richardson	Assistant Head of Street Scene	Sunderland Council
Sue Stanhope	Director of HR & OD and Area Lead Executive	Sunderland Council
A. Taylor	Acting Inspector	Northumbria Police
James Third	Community Relation Officer	Nexus
Pauline Tsentas	Youth Development Group Manager	Sunderland Council

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Anderson, Hall, Scott, D. Smith and Tate along with John Chapman, Susan Brown, Inspector Finlay and Helen Paterson.

Declarations of Interest

Item 04 – Community Chest

Councillors D. Richardson, Rolph and Speding declared personal interests as members of Houghton Feast Steering Group.

Councillor Ellis declared a personal and prejudicial interest as the Chair of Friends of Rectory Park.

Councillors Rolph and Wakefield declared personal interests as members of Friends of Rectory Park.

Councillor Heron declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Council appointed member of the Hetton Centre.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 30th March, 2011

On the progress report on the Regeneration of Rectory Park Councillor Rolph stated that she had actually asked how much was spent annually on maintenance at the park rather than the recorded question of how funds were spent on the park.

Pauline Hopper, Area Officer, agreed to provide this information.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 30th March, 2011 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the above amendment.

Coalfield Area Committee – Annual Report 2010/11

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which enabled the Committee to give consideration to the Committee's Annual Report for 2010/11. The report provided Members with a snapshot of the Committee's work over the municipal year.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Pauline Hopper, Area Officer, presented the report and advised that there had been work with community groups and partners within the area and there had been significant progress with addressing youth disorder.

Ms Hopper then introduced the Child Poverty priority and advised that this was a difficult priority to address. She introduced Hazel Hedley who would be providing an update on the work of Ear 4 U which had received funding from the Area Committee.

Ms Hedley advised that the funding had allowed the project to expand from going into schools to do group work to being able to hold individual one to one sessions. Bullying was the main focus for the work of the project however a number of the young people referred to the programme had other underlying issues as well. There had been a lot of referrals within the Coalfield area and as a result it had been necessary to introduce a waiting list. There had been good feedback from the schools as the project was helping to get children to return to school; the children involved had also provided good feedback as they felt that the workers understood their issues and were able to help solve them.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding the waiting list Ms Hedley advised that Hetton School and Houghton Kepier School had been asked to put the project on hold while the waiting list was worked through.

Councillor J. Heron stated that it was a shame that the project had been put on hold at Hetton and Houghton Kepier Schools; these were the major schools in the area. Ms Hedley stated that this showed how many referrals to the programme there had been.

Councillor Rolph commented that while Hetton and Houghton Kepier Schools were the main schools for the area there were children from the area who attended Biddick or St. Robert's Schools. This scheme was open to all children within the area. She queried whether there had been any referrals from either of these schools.

Ms Hedley advised that she was not aware of any referrals from either of these schools however there was an added difficulty for children from the Coalfield who were attending Washington schools as Washington was not participating in the programme. In response to further questions from Councillor Rolph Ms Hedley advised that there had not been any one to one referrals relating to domestic violence however there was work done to ensure that children were aware of the issue.

The project had funding until the end of the school year; when the organisation applied for funding they were often told that the schools or Local Education Authority should be funding the project.

Ms Hopper then introduced the Heritage priority and advised that the task and finish group would be meeting on 7th June and the recommendations would be reported to the July meeting of the Committee.

On the Bulb Planting and Landscaping priority, Ms Hopper advised that the outcome had been far greater than what the Committee had set out to achieve.

Councillor J. Heron stated that the programme had been highly successful and the outcome was excellent.

Councillor Rolph agreed that the work had been a huge success; there was however a need for the correct maintenance to be carried out. There were some points along Sedgely Road where the flower beds had been mown flat by maintenance workers from gentoo.

Ms Hopper then moved onto the Shopping Centres priority; this was a long term priority and had been progressing slowly so far.

On the Play Provision priority Ms Hopper advised that it had been identified that there was a lot of provision for children aged 13 and over however there was not a lot of provision for 8-12 year olds; it was often difficult to address the issue due to the number of services involved.

With regard to Unadopted Roads Ms Hopper advised that the Area Committee would be acting as an influencing and consultative body and there would be a report to the September meeting of the Committee.

Ms Hopper then advised that Responsive Local Services was now a service area within the Council rather than an Area Committee funded project and had been progressing well.

Councillor Rolph stated that in her experience the word 'responsive' was appropriate; whenever she had any issues the response had been extremely quick. The Chairman stated that he had the same experiences.

Dave Ellison, Area Response Manager, thanked the Members for their kind words; he stated that if anyone had any issues they should contact the department immediately. He invited the Members to attend the Ward Walks to help with identifying any issues.

Ms Hopper then introduced the Motor Cycle Disorder priority and advised that there had been a lot of work done through the LMAPS meetings and that this was an issue across all areas of the city.

Ms Hopper then presented the Speeding and Dangerous Traffic update and Councillor Blackburn queried the absence of a R.A.G. colour coding on the Lake Road projects. Ms Hopper advised that the projects had not been intended to be commenced until the 2011/12 municipal year and as such there was no performance target in place.

With regard to the Committee's Finances Ms Hopper advised that the ring fencing of funds to priorities had worked well and all of the funds had been allocated.

Councillor Rolph referred to the pie chart within the report which showed the allocation of SIB funding by priority; she stated that many of the projects would cover more than one priority and as such it must have been difficult to create the chart. She also asked whether it would be possible to ask applicants to ensure that certain percentages of the allocations were spent on specific priorities.

Ms Hopper advised that applicants were asked which priority they intended to address with the application. Previously applicants had been able to identify multiple priorities however this had made it difficult to track the spending on each priority.

Councillor Rolph then stated that it seemed like the chart was an over simplified representation of how the funds had been spent.

On the Lessons Learned Councillor Speding queried what was being done to increase the influencing role of the Committee.

Ms Hopper advised that the Committee would be consulted where necessary and Ms Stanhope advised that it could be possible to link the Forward Plan to the Committee so that upcoming decisions could be identified.

Councillor Rolph stated that there was a need to develop the remit of the Committee. The Scrutiny committees looked at issues before they went to cabinet and she felt that the Area Committees should monitor the forward plan and develop a scrutinising role. Ms Hopper agreed to look into ways of improving the consultation item on the standard agenda for the committee.

2. RESOLVED that the content of the Annual report be received and noted and the lessons learned be progressed during the coming year.

Work Plan for 2011/12

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of the priorities which had been carried forward from the previous year along with the newly identified emerging priorities. The report also provided Members with the work plan for the coming year.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Pauline Hopper, Area Officer, presented the report and advised that the work plan had been developed following extensive work and the views of the Community and Voluntary sector had been sought in addition to Members being consulted.

On the Activities for Young People priority Ms Hopper introduced Pauline Tsentas, Training and Accreditation Manager, who would be providing an update on youth provision within the area.

Ms Tsentas advised that there had been no change to the core youth offer with at least 3 sessions taking place every week. There had been an additional £30,000 provided for youth provision by the council and the Area Committee had agreed to enhance this using an allocation of SIB funding; this was to replace the Positive Activities for Young People grant and Youth Opportunities Fund which had both ended on 31st March, 2011. These funding sources had provided additional activities during school holidays and had also provided targeted activities for young people who were at risk of exclusion from school or who were Not in Education Employment or Training.

Councillor Speding commented that some groups, such as NEETs needed to have activities available all year rather than just during the holiday periods.

In response to questioning by Councillor Ellis, Ms Tsentas stated that to access the funding from the Committee the providers would have to go to the Committee and request the funds; there had been £3,000 spent so far to provide activities during the Easter Holidays and half term. The provision would not necessarily be the same as the provision which previously existed and would be tailored to meet the needs of the young people in the area.

The XL Youth Village Steering Group would be meeting on 10th June and the outcome could be fed back to the next meeting of the committee.

Ms Hopper stated that if Members had any ideas for activities then they should inform Ms Tsentas or they could attend the meeting of the group if they so wished.

Ms Hopper then introduced the Support for Older People priority and advised that this was a new priority for the Committee and it was intended that a Task and Finish Group be set up. The Membership of the group had been discussed at the last meeting and it was proposed that Councillors Hall and Heron be appointed to the group.

Councillor Blackburn stated that he felt there should be a representation from each Ward on the Task and Finish Groups and put himself forward as the group Member for Hetton Ward however he was happy for either of his Ward Colleagues to take the position on this group. Local Members would know the issues which affected their local area.

It was also suggested that Councillor J. Heron sit on the group to represent Hetton Town Council.

Councillor Wakefield queried the figures which were set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report. Ms Stanhope stated that it appeared that the figures were referring to 20.5 percent of residents over 65 were receiving care services.

On the Neglected Land Priority it had been proposed at the last Meeting that there would be a task and finish group set up and the Lead Agents for the group would be Dave Ellison, Area Response Manager, and John Chapman from gentoo. It was proposed that Councillors Blackburn, Rolph, Speding and Wakefield be appointed to the group along with Susan Brown.

Ms Hopper advised that on the Empty Properties priority Graeme Wilson, Assistant Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal Manager, would be the lead agent and would be bringing a report to a future meeting.

With regard to the Public Transport priority Ms Hopper advised that the Area Committee could not solve the problem however they could consider transport when looking at the other priorities. James Third would be attending the Meetings to represent Nexus.

Councillor J. Heron commented that people over 65 were not satisfied with the bus services. There had been changes to the timetables with no publicity and this had meant that people had not known what time the buses were due to arrive.

Councillor Blackburn stated that many buses had managers on them and these managers were rarely approached by people with concerns over the services.

Councillor Rolph advised that young people used buses regularly however there was no reference to them in the report. She agreed that public transport could be linked in to every priority.

Ms Hopper then referred to the alignment of SIB to the priorities, as detailed in section 3 of the report; it was intended that there would be a call for projects which would see the task and finish groups or the Area Committee devising a project brief defining expected outcomes, budget and timescales and inviting applications for funding from organisations who would be able to carry out the project. It was acknowledged that while the call for projects would be beneficial it may not be suitable for all of the priorities.

Ms Hopper then referred Members to the recommendations set out in the report and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The Work Programme in annex 1 be agreed
- b. Youth Activities and Play Provision Priority:-
 - i. Consideration be given to the activities delivered to date
 - ii. The use of £3,000 of the funding to provide activities during school holidays be noted
 - iii. A programme of holiday activities be developed
 - iv. The Task and Result group develop a recommendation for allocating a proportion of SIB in line with Children's Services Area funding of £30,000 to deliver positive activities for children and young people living in the area.
 - v. Further reports be received on the programme of activities to be delivered and evaluating the success of the programme.
- c. Support for Older People Priority:-
 - i. A Task and Result group be set up
 - ii. Councillors Hall, Heron and J. Heron appointed to the group with Councillor Blackburn appointed as a provisional Member subject to none of the other Hetton Ward Councillors wishing to sit on the group
- d. Empty Properties Priority:-
 - i. Work be done with the lead agent to develop and implement a Coalfield Empty Property Action Plan
- e. Neglected Land Priority:-
 - i. A Task and Result group be set up
 - ii. Councillors Blackburn Rolph, Speding and Wakefield be appointed to the group
 - iii. Susan Brown be appointed as lead agent
- f. Public Transport Priority:-
 - i. The priority be removed from the Work Plan and added as an action against each of the other priorities
- g. The Call for Projects protocol to be used in the allocation of SIB funding be agreed

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

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested Members to consider proposals for the allocation of Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) and Community Chest to support initiatives which would deliver activity against the priorities for 2011/12.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Pauline Hopper, Area Officer, presented the report and informed Members of the 4 proposals for SIB funding, one proposal for SIP funding and 16 Community Chest applications which were detailed in the appendices to the report.

There was SIB funding of £238,257 available and there were 4 projects totalling £26,275 presented to the Committee with a recommendation to approve; there would be £211,982 remaining should these be approved. The projects were detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

There had been an underspend on projects in the Shiney Row Ward and as such there was SIP funding of £4,453 remaining and it was proposed that this be spent on the Grangewood Play Site Footpath Lighting project.

The 16 proposals for support from Community Chest totalled £5,900 and there would be £36,980 remaining should they be approved. The projects were set out in Annex 2 of the report. There had been an amendment to the protocols for Community Chest and there was now no requirement to wait 2 years before being able to recoup any unspent funding from projects.

In response to a question from Councillor Speding, Ms Hopper advised that the fault with the lighting at Grangewood had been located and remedial works would be carried out.

Councillor Rolph commented that the Sunderland Festival application was the first citywide application which truly was of benefit to the whole city.

4. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The financial statements be noted
 - b. The SIB and SIP applications set out in Annex 1 be approved
 - c. The Community Chest proposals set out in Annex 2 be approved

(Signed) D. RICHARDSON,
Chairman.