

9 APRIL 2014

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 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 is initiating action on those priorities, the report set out below 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 has elected member representation, whose role is 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 to March 2014

4.1 Outlined below is a summary of the key areas of influence / achievements of the Coalfield Place Board to date.

Action Taken	Outcome
Strategic Influence: Responsive Local Services Streetscene	
Influence operational deployment of RLS Streetscene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Area Response Manager ensures regular communication with all elected members informs the street scene service delivery is appropriate to the local needs

<p>Place Board members requested that by-laws be reviewed to include more specific enforcement regulations around the control of dogs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Dog Control policy with five separate Orders has been developed. Formal public consultation in the proposals is now underway and ends on 31 May 2014 for an implementation date of 1 July 2014.
<p>Strategic Influence: Local Development Plan</p>	
<p>Members received a presentation regarding the LDP/Core Strategy and Settlement Breaks within Coalfield</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members received information on the Local Development Plan / Core Strategy and how this related to the Coalfield Area. Comments and requests have now been collated and added to the consultation process. A revised draft will be developed by the summer of 2014 to inform the next stage of the process. Lead officers will continue to consult with, and update, Members.
<p>Strategic Influence: Highways Capital Maintenance 2014/2015</p>	
<p>Head of Street Scene discussed the influence of the Highways Capital Maintenance programme with the Place Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board received information on the areas requiring capital maintenance works across the Coalfield area. The proposed areas were prioritised into high, medium and low priority to assist members. • Members were asked to consult with ward colleagues to agree which of the proposed programmes should be recommended to Area Committee for completion up to a value of £110,000 for the Coalfield area. • At the March Board members agreed recommendations to Area Committee for the completion of capital maintenance programmes in the Coalfield as described at Annex 2
<p>Influence: Public Protection and Regulatory Service (PPRS)</p>	
<p>The Place Board was provided with information on the statutory services and functions within PPRS and how the board may influence each of the functions at a local level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the increased volume of scrap and waste transfer vehicles in the area were discussed. The Board were informed of a new Act which requires all vehicles to have a licence from the Council. • Officers attended a further meeting to provide information regarding the current holders of licences in the Coalfield area and will continue to keep members updated on related issues
<p>Local Priority: Neglected Land</p>	
<p>A clean up of Council and privately owned plots identified as neglected during the audit of land has now been progressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work at the former Forest Estate, Easington Lane has begun. The perimeter of the site has been cleared and redundant lighting columns have been made safe. A smaller number of new lighting columns are being installed. • The area has been marked out and will be fenced off into two grazing plots to be let via Property Services. • Property Services have written to those on the waiting list for grazing land in this area and will draw up formal agreements once tenants have been identified. • A small leisure area will be created at the boundary closest to residential properties at the rear of Easington Lane High Street and a nature area developed in partnership with Gentoo, Groundwork and the local primary school • Four Housing and Gentoo have each made a financial contribution towards the completion of the Forest Estate site • Members of the West Area Committee are drawing on the success and experience of the Neglected Land project to consider the development of a similar project in the West of Sunderland
<p>The Love Where You Live project has been carried out on a number of sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To extend the work under this priority, the Place Board invited local VCS organisations to develop projects for environmental improvements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven applications were received in response to the Call for Projects. Summaries of each project, with recommendations, are contained within Item 8 Finance Report. • A project for footpath improvements at Baulkham Hills has been under development since October 2013. A request for funding to complete the project is presented at item 8, Finance Report • A project to 'Celebrate Success' has been developed by the Place Board and is presented at item 8 Finance Report
Local Priority: Local Shopping Centres	
<p>Business specialists are working with traders in Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row to offer tailored support depending on each individual business need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The retail support project overall continues to support all businesses in each of the three areas, most of who report that it continues to be a struggle for independent traders to survive and welcome the input from this scheme • Houghton Traders' Association is now established. The first newsletter was produced in November 2013 and the second is due to be published in April 2014. There are now 35 businesses in Houghton engaged in the programme • There are 14 businesses in Hetton currently receiving support from the programme. A survey of all businesses received a positive response from 18 traders who were interested in forming a Traders' Forum in Hetton. • Engagement in Shiney Row is significantly improved. The retailers are now interested in setting up a Traders Association and 10 grants have been awarded. • Positive publicity for the project has been achieved and the most recent Community News dedicates the front page to this work • The successes of the project have been shared with Washington Area Committee who have now developed a similar scheme for Concord in Washington
Local Priority: Improving Allotments	
<p>The first major site improvement (Burnside) is now complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fencing and clearance of plots now complete. • A new sign has been erected at the entrance to the allotments to acknowledge the support of Area Committee. • All plots are tenanted and being cultivated. • No further spend required – the site will now be closely monitored
<p>Phase 1 of the second major site (Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses) is now being implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearance of plots along the rear of Britannia Tce complete • Powder coated palisade fencing has been installed • A section of damaged and derelict timber close board fencing has been renewed • The 10 new plots have now been allocated to existing and new tenants and are being prepared for cultivation • A plot has been allocated to Dubmire Primary School for use as their community garden • Occupiers of the remaining site (phase 2) have been engaged in regular meetings about the plans to redevelop the site in the longer term.
<p>The process of letting and managing allotments has been reviewed as a result of the Working Group and Place Board requests and recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes have been revised, relying less on a series of letters being sent out, and more on email, phone and text. A new management IT system has been installed to reduce administrative time and process • New enquiries will be handled on-line and through the customer service network
Local Priority: Events and Celebrations	

Discussions with voluntary and community organisations has taken place with regard to delivering local events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VCS Network has formed a project steering group and is developing a series of events during 2014, to commemorate World War 1 • Heritage Lottery Funding for the WW1 Heritage project has now been secured and will add value to the £5,000 SIB awarded • The Place Board has produced a draft programme of key activities for 2014 which are important to the local community • SIB funding will support the delivery of the programme of activities via a Call for Projects to the VCS Network partners
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3. Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- Approve the recommendations for Highways Maintenance at 4.1 and annex 2
- Consider the progress and performance update with regard to Coalfield Place Board's Work Plan for 2013/14

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Annex 1: Workplan

Annex 2: Highways Capital Programme