

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in BEDE TOWER, BURDON ROAD, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 8th JUNE, 2015 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors M. Dixon, Emerson, English, Forbes, E. Gibson, Kay, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, O'Neil, Price and Wood

Also Present:-

Hazel Clark	- East Area VCS Network Representative
David Groark	- Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council
Paula Hunt	- East Area VCS Network Representative
Adrian Jackson	- Station Manager, Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service
Matthew Jackson	- Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Victoria Patterson	- Customer Relationship Officer, Sunderland City Council
Sarah Reed	- Assistant Chief Executive & Area Lead Executive, Sunderland City Council
Gillian Robinson	- Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Nicky Rowland	- Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	- Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Nicol Trueman	- Area Community Officer, Sunderland City Council
Helen Wardropper	- Scrutiny & Area Support 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 Farr and Scanlan together with Alan Duffy, Chris Marshall, Jen McKeivitt, Jackie Nixon, David Robinson and Beverley Scanlon

Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor McClennan declared that she was an appointee of the Management committee of CHANCE who had received money from Community Chest.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 16th March, 2015

Councillor Kay stated that Councillor Mordey had seconded Councillor E. Gibson's motion to award £50,000 to the Fourteen Project although this was not recorded in the minutes. He also stated that he and Councillor McClennan had voted against the proposal to award £50,000 to the project. He also felt that the Hendon and Ryhope Ward Councillors appointed to the Local Reference Group should have been named within the minutes.

Councillor Mordey seconded these amendments and the minutes having been put to the Committee it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th March, 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the above amendments.

VCS Area Network Progress Report

Paula Hunt provided the Committee with a verbal update on the work of the VCS Network since the last meeting of the Area Committee. She advised that there had been 2 meetings held and that at these meetings there had been presentations relating to the 50 Plus Forum, the Beach School and the Fourteen Project. There were no issues to report.

The Chairman thanked Ms Hunt for her report and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the VCS Network progress report be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

Neighbourhood Inspector Jamie Southwell introduced the update and advised the Committee that Inspector Pitchford had been placed on secondment for six months; during this time both the Central and East areas would be covered by Inspector Southwell.

Inspector Southwell then introduced the crime figures for the Central area. He advised that there had been six more crimes than during the same period last year, an increase of 1 percent, although there had been changes to the way that crimes were recorded including the recording of violent crimes even where the victim did not want to press charges and the recording of burglaries when people had a belief that they may have been about to be burgled, for example if they had spotted an intruder in their garden.

He advised that 80 percent of violent crimes in the area were related to the night-time economy however it was important to recognise that there was not a problem with violence in the city centre.

Theft from motor vehicles had reduced by 47 percent following a 'rat trap' operation which had been carried out; it had been a resource intensive operation and while it had not been successful in catching any criminals it had been successful in stopping the crimes from taking place, it was believed that the criminals must have become aware of the operation. The majority of the offences had been where windows had been smashed and then the car had been searched for valuables; in a number of incidents nothing had actually been taken from the vehicle.

Burglary of dwellings had increased by 4 crimes however it was believed that 3 of these were not actual burglaries but instead were recorded due to the changes in the recording of crimes. There had been work done in the area around the Ivy House pub and there had been 2 offenders imprisoned. There had been a slight increase in burglaries around Millfield and additional resources had been placed into the area dedicated to tackling this issue.

Burglaries of property other than dwellings had reduced by 42 percent; there had been a prolific offender released from prison however he had been imprisoned again.

Antisocial behaviour had reduced by 17 percent and youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by even more.

Councillor Price referred to the violent crimes in the city centre; Inspector Southwell advised that the police had a good relationship with licenced premises and they were now getting more assistance from door staff when dealing with incidents. There had been a slight loss of coverage when the team had been moved to Southwick police station however this had now been addressed and coverage of the city centre on evenings was now back to normal.

Councillor Kay commented that the police normally attended meetings of the Thornholme Residents Association and that they would share patterns of crime with the residents to allow local residents to know what issues were in the area and what to keep aware of. He also queried what impact the plan to house students in the city centre would have on policing. Inspector Southwell advised that there needed to be education work done at the start of the university term; some of the new students were naïve to the risks of living in a city centre. There was a dedicated police university liaison officer who did good work in helping to prevent students from becoming victims of crime.

In response to queries from Councillor M. Dixon relating to an incident at the Norfolk Hotel Inspector Southwell advised that the incident had been dealt with by the serious crimes unit due to the severity of the incident. Officers had spoken with the community so that drug users knew that there was the possibility of dangerous drugs being in circulation. It had been difficult to find out what had happened. Drug dealing was a priority target for the police.

Councillor McClennan added that the incident had been looked at by the hostels working group; the incident had involved a new resident who had told

staff about their alcohol dependency but had not mentioned their drug use. There was a need for people to be more honest about their addictions when they were trying to get accommodation. There would be an increase in multi-agency checking of residents.

Councillor M. Dixon then thanked Inspector Southwell for his regular attendance at St Michael's Residents Association meetings.

Inspector Southwell then introduced the figures for the East area and advised that there had been 56 more crimes than in the same period last year.

Other thefts had increased by 59 percent which was mostly due to the change in policy which now saw stolen wheelie bins being recorded as crimes.

There had been 4 fewer thefts from vehicles which was a reduction of 29 percent; the majority of offences had taken place in Hendon and Grangetown.

Burglary of dwellings had increased by 3 crimes to a total of 12 crimes; there had been an increase in offences in Grangetown however an arrest had now been made. Burglary other than dwellings had reduced by 2 crimes which was an 11 percent reduction.

Antisocial behaviour had increased by 10 incidents however these were attributable to a group of regular callers. Youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 41 percent.

Councillor McClennan queried whether there were any cost figures available relating to the investigation of theft of bins. Inspector Southwell replied that the costs were not yet available.

Councillor Mordey commented that it had been predicted that there would be an increase in the number of reported bin thefts now that the Council had started charging for replacement wheelie bins.

Councillor McClennan then stated that she had attended a meeting about the Forevercare hostel on Toward Road. There had been a number of problems since the hostel opened including 166 missing persons reports in the last year. It was necessary to understand the cost implications of providing for care leavers until they were 21 and also the costs of policing due to hostels like this. She also stated that there had been complaints about a group of people who were congregating on land behind Beaumont Lodge apparently in order to access free Wi-Fi from one of the flats; there was work being done to try and identify the owner of the Wi-Fi network to get the network closed. There had been reports that the group had been verbally abusive towards residents and they had also been seen searching through bins.

Inspector Southwell then stated that the neighbourhood team was due to move into an office at the old Orphanage by the end of June. There would also be several teams moving into the fire station in September.

3. RESOLVED that the update from Northumbria Police be noted.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Adrian Jackson introduced the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. He advised that he had just taken over as station manager. For the period 1st March to 31st May there had been no fatalities within the area. There had been 2 accidental dwelling fires which resulted in injury; this was the same figure as last year. There had been 8 accidental dwelling fires which had not resulted in injury.

Deliberate primary fires had increased by 3 to a total of 9 fires. Primary vehicles fires had increased by 5 to a total of 10 fires. Deliberate secondary fires had increased by 28 to 110 fires. There had been a long spell of warm dry weather and this had led to issues such as grass fires. There had been litter picks undertaken to help reduce the risk of litter fires.

There had been targeted response vehicles introduced. These were Mercedes Sprinter vans which carried 2 fire-fighters and would be on the road between 6am and midnight, they would be able to tackle fires but also report issues and act as a deterrent. Currently there were 2 vans however there would be a total of 10 vans introduced.

A new policy had been introduced on 1st June which now saw the fire service not responding to non-domestic fire alarms unless information was received to confirm that there was a fire; this allowed resources to be kept available for domestic incidents rather than attending false alarms at non-domestic premises.

In response to a query from Councillor Mordey regarding wheelie bins Mr Jackson advised that there had been campaigns carried out and stickers were placed onto bins which were left out. Bins being put out the night before collection were an issue. Councillor Mordey then asked that the police and fire service both provide figures on bin thefts and fires so that any patterns could be identified.

Councillor Price queried whether there was any pattern to the vehicle fires; he was informed that there had not been any pattern to indicate that any particular individuals might have been involved.

Councillor Price then commented that he had seen the targeted response vehicles at a meeting of the fire authority; he had seen how the vehicles were to be used and he was very impressed by them.

Ms Rowland stated that Responsive Local Services now had a member of staff dedicated to looking at the issue of bins being left out. There had been partnership working done in previous years which had led to some successes; she felt that it could be beneficial for RLS and the fire service to meet again.

Mr Jackson agreed with this and advised that there were proactive patrols undertaken and any issues were reported.

Councillor Kay commented that last year there had been concerns raised that the small response vehicles would not be effective. He queried whether there was any evidence of their effectiveness. Mr Jackson advised that they had only been introduced in May and as such there were only limited figures available. It was acknowledged that a full size appliance was safer for crews however there had been positive feedback from the fire-fighters who had used the response vehicles. Each vehicle was manned by a crew manager and a fire-fighter so there was the same range of skills available as there was on a full size vehicle.

4. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service be noted.

Gentoo Update

The Committee were advised that the update from Gentoo had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Place Board Proposed Priorities and Government Arrangements for 2015/2016

The Chair of the East Sunderland Area Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought approval of the priorities to be taken forward as part of the work plan for 2015/16 and provided an update on the Place Board governance arrangements for 2015/16.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor E. Gibson, Chair of the Place Board, introduced the report and advised the committee of the proposed priorities which were set out at paragraph 3.1 of the report. The governance arrangements including the proposed membership of the board were also set out within the report.

Councillor Mordey commented that it was pleasing to see that the priority relating to developing stronger sustainable and well used community assets and facilities had been included in the work plan. He also felt that the board should look at recycling. He then expressed concerns over the proposal to look at influencing the use of Section 106 monies. It was his understanding that Section 106 monies were limited in how they could be used and that the Board would not be able to influence this; he asked for more information to be provided on this. Ms Robinson stated that there would be training sessions on this subject arranged for Members.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The East Sunderland Area Place Board priorities for 2015/16 as set out in paragraph 3 and annex 1 be approved; and
- b. The area governance arrangements for the board for 2015/16 as set out in paragraph 4 and annex 2 be approved.

People Board Proposed Priorities and Governance Arrangements for 2015/16

The Chairman of the East Sunderland Area People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought approval of the priorities to be taken forward as part of the work plan for 2015/16 and which provided an update on the People Board governance arrangements for 2015/16.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Marshall, Chair of the People Board, introduced the report and advised the Committee of the proposed priorities which were set out in paragraph 3.1 and in annex 1. She drew Members attention to the governance arrangements, in particular the membership of the East LMAPS group which covered Doxford, Hendon and Ryhope wards; there was a vacancy on this group however as both Councillors McClennan and Mordey had put themselves forward to sit on this group then Members of the Doxford Hendon and Ryhope wards would need to determine who they wanted to have representing their wards on the LMAPS board. The LMAPS representation was then put to the vote and with:-
6 Members voting for Councillor Mordey;
1 Member voting for Councillor McClennan; and
1 Member abstaining; it was agreed that Councillor Mordey be appointed to the East LMAPS group.

Councillor Kay referred to the work plan and asked that the changing demographics of the city centre be added to the work plan. There were plans for a significant number of student beds within the city centre and the residential population of the city centre was expected to double which would have a significant impact. Ms Trueman advised that there had been a lot of work undertaken; it would also affect the North Sunderland Area and it was proposed that a joint meeting with members from both East and North Sunderland areas be arranged.

6. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The East Sunderland Area People Board Work Plan priorities for 2015/16 as set out in paragraph 3 and annex 1 to the report be approved
 - b. The governance arrangements for 2015/16 as set out in paragraph 4 and annex 2 be approved with Councillor Mordey appointed as the East LMAPS board representative.

Area Budgets Report

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statement which detailed the current position on progress in relation to allocations of SIB and Community Chest funding and which sought Members approval of proposals for funding.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Trueman introduced the report and advised that the starting balance for the 2015/16 year was £318,071. There had been four projects carried forward from last year and these were detailed within the report at section 2. The Villiers Street youth provision project was expected to be brought to the July meeting of the Place Board.

In the period between March and May 2015 there had been 14 Community Chest applications approved totalling £11,426 leaving a balance of £61,007.73 to be allocated.

Councillor Mordey queried what would happen with Community Chest applications if there was not a unanimous agreement within the ward. Ms Trueman advised that a majority vote was sufficient to determine an application. Should a casting vote be required then the Chair of the Area Committee would be called upon for the casting vote.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statements for SIB and Community Chest set out at sections 2 and 3 of the report be noted
- b. The 14 Community Chest approvals set out at annex 1 be noted.

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the East Sunderland Area for the period 1st April to 20th April 2015 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the Meeting.

(Signed) E. BALL,
Chairman.