

**At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held in DUBMIRE
PRIMARY SCHOOL, FENCE HOUSES on WEDNESDAY, 3RD NOVEMBER, 2010
at 6.00 p.m.**

Present:-

Councillor D. Richardson in the Chair

Councillors F. Anderson, Blackburn, Ellis, A. Hall, Heron, Rolph, J. Scott, D. Smith,
Tate and Wakefield.

Also in Attendance:-

Ron Barrass	Member of the Public	
Susan Brown	Area Community Co-ordinator	Sunderland Council
John Chapman	Head of Neighbourhoods	Gentoo
Les Clark	Head of Street Scene	Sunderland Council
Victoria French	Sport, Wellness & Partnership Manager	Sunderland Council
Emma Hindmarsh	Democratic Services Officer	Sunderland Council
Pauline Hopper	Area Officer	Sunderland Council
Andrew Jackman	Assistant Head of Traffic	Sunderland Council
Amelia Laverick	Member of the Public	
Phil Conn	Youth Lead Officer	SNCBC
Vivienne Metcalf	Area Community Co-ordinator	Sunderland Council
Ann Owen	Voluntary Community Sector Representative	
Karen Lightfoot - Gencli	Commissioning and Inspection Officer	Youth Development Group
Allison Patterson	Area Co-ordination Manager	Sunderland Council
Annette Parr	School Improvement Service	Sunderland Council
Ian Richardson	Operations Manager	Sunderland Council
Nicky Rowland	Local Environment Manager	Sunderland Council
Beverley Scanlon	Head of Service	Sunderland Council
Sue Stanhope	Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Sunderland Council
Ian Warne	Station Manager	Tyne and Wear Fire Service

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Speding together with Councillor Juliana Heron, Hetton Town Council, Graham Carr, Inspector Finlay, Helen Paterson, Andrew Perkin and Lee Wardle.

Declarations of Interest

Item 3 – Community Action in Coalfield: Progress Review: (c) Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB), Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and Community Chest – Financial Statement and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources

Councillor Tate declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Community Chest application in relation to Easington Lane Primary School as a close family member was the Chair of Governors and in the application in relation to Hetton School as a Governor of the School and withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of the items.

Councillor Blackburn declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Community Chest application in relation to Easington Lane Primary School as a Governor of the School and in the application in relation to Elemore Boys FC as a family member attended the club and withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of the item.

Councillors Ellis, Rolph and Wakefield declared a personal interest in the SIP application towards Tithe Barn, Rectory Park as members of the Friends of Rectory Park.

Councillor Rolph declared a personal interest in the SIP application towards Outdoor Play at Newbottle School as a Council appointed Governor of Newbottle Primary School.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 9th September, 2010

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 9th September, 2010 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to amendments on page 5 that 'Keir Hardie' play area is spelt correctly and it be clarified that Councillor Tate was referring to the play park in Hetton, not Hetton Park.

Community Action in Coalfield: Identifying New Issues and Agreeing Actions (2010/2011) Work Plan

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with information on the progress made in relation to its Work Plan and the priorities identified by the Area Committee for 2010/11.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper, Area Officer, introduced the report and advised that new issues had been identified in relation to motorcycle disorder, speeding or dangerous traffic and youth disorder (anti-social behaviour).

Ms. Hopper acknowledged that motorcycle disorder could be seasonal and advised that when particular hotspots were tackled, the nuisance tended to move to a different location. She requested that the Committee identify any known hotspots and provide either Councillor Rolph (LMAPS representative), Inspector Finlay or Ms. Hopper with the information.

Councillor Anderson welcomed an overall strategy to help deal with the issue as motorcycle disorder had been an issue in the area for the last 30 years and more needed to be done.

With reference to speeding or dangerous traffic, Councillor Blackburn advised that there were a significant number of sites across the area that were problematic and an area wide strategic plan was the most beneficial way forward to inform future service delivery.

Mr. Andrew Jackman, Assistant Head of Traffic agreed that more investigation was needed into hotspot areas and agreed to provide Members with a plot of where in the area accidents were occurring.

Councillor Rolph commented that although information about accidents would be useful, it did not always give the full picture and depended from whom the statistics had been provided and how they were collated. For example, if an accident was not reported to the Police then consideration needed to be given to the records of wider services to gain a comprehensive traffic pattern.

Councillor A. Hall also stated that problem areas should not just be addressed once an accident had happened; there was a need to consider hotspots for potential accidents – prevention rather than reaction.

Councillor Wakefield advised that he had recently met with Inspector Finlay to discuss the apparent lack of Police traffic cars in the area. Speeding and dangerous driving was a Police matter that had to be enforced.

Councillor Anderson remarked that vehicles used residential areas as 'rat runs' to avoid motorway traffic and she applauded the Portfolio Holder's efforts to install pelican crossings in areas that posed a threat to pedestrians.

Discussion then ensued in relation to youth disorder. Ms. Hopper advised that the current main area of concern was Easington Lane, the disorder in Penshaw having recently reduced.

Ms. Lightfoot Gench, Youth Development Group advised that another meeting of the Excel Youth Village Steering Group would be convened to provide a partnership approach to the issue.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the issue of motorcycle disorder is placed on the Work Plan for 2010/2011 and provide information regarding motorcycle disorder hotspots to LMAPS via the nominated Elected Member, the Police or the Area Officer;
- (ii) information be received regarding speeding or dangerous traffic from the Interim Head of Traffic Road Safety and agree the issue to be placed on the Work Plan for 2010/2011; and
- (iii) Committee agree to add the issue of youth disorder to the 2010/2011 Work Plan and to expand the remit and membership of the Excel Village Steering Group to include youth disorder

Community Action in Coalfield: Progress Review

(a) Work Plan 2009/10, 2010/11 and Task Group Updates

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated which provided an update on the progress against agreed actions in the current year's 2010/2011 Work Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper invited Ms. Susan Brown, Area Community Co-ordinator to provide a progress report on the Bulb Planting and Landscaping Priority.

Ms. Brown advised that over 52 local community and voluntary groups were taking part in the planting and discussions were underway to develop the project to include Christmas and Spring planting.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Ms. Brown, Gentoo and all the community and voluntary groups for their marvellous efforts in making the scheme such a huge success and he looked forward to seeing the hard work come to fruition with huge benefit for communities within the area.

Councillor Rolph stated that the project had fired everyone's imagination and it linked very well with the Green Space Strategy. It was important to consider how the project could be sustained and evolve in future.

With regard to Local Shopping Centres, Ms. Hopper advised that Councillor R. Heron should have been included in the list in the report detailing membership of the Task and Finish Group.

She advised that the Committee were requested to agree to fund Phase 1 of the proposed plan by approving £5,000 from the SIB allocation.

Ms. Hopper proceeded to update the Committee on progress in relation to the Heritage and Unadopted Roads respectively.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the progress reports be received and noted; and
- (ii) the Committee approved £5,000 from the SIB allocation to fund Phase 1 of the proposed Local Shopping Centres Plan (subject to a fully appraised project application).

(b) Responsive Local Services

The Executive Director of City Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform the Committee of the current scope of Responsive Local Services covering Service areas such as litter, graffiti, refuse, grass cutting and dog fouling. It also provided the opportunity for a wider range of issues to be considered within a context of local problem solving.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Les Clark, Head of Street Scene advised the Committee that the Winter Maintenance Plan for 2010/2011 had been prepared and was now available on the Sunderland website which highlighted the gritting routes and locations of salt/grit bins.

In response to a query from Councillor D. Smith, with regard to salt bin criteria, Mr. Richardson advised that bins were primarily located on a significant incline providing access to a major road, or adjacent to any other incline likely to be dangerous in icy conditions and the team were currently working through requests for new sites for the bins against the policy criteria.

Mr. Ian Richardson, Operations Manager and Nicky Rowland, Local Environment Manager made reference to the problem of fly tipping in the area. Members were also advised of the new structure for Street Scene which included six Area Response Managers, one for each area of the City and one for the City Centre.

In the current climate many householders were selling unwanted wares on to scrap collectors for disposal. There had been an increase in itinerant collectors in the Coalfield area. The Committee were informed that the householder's duty of care prescribed that all householders in England had a legal responsibility to ensure that all of their waste was disposed of properly.

Furthermore, the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations, require all householders to make sure their waste is only removed from their premises by registered waste carriers. Householders not taking reasonable measures to do so could face fines of up to £5,000.

Mr. Richardson advised that sites could be continually cleared however, through joint intervention, the enforcement of the Householders Duty of Care, specific targeting and an awareness of social responsibility much more could be done.

In response to a question from Councillor Anderson, regarding costs relating to clearing sites and how the issue is best tackled, Mr. Richardson advised that in areas such as the old Hetton Lyons Boys Club preventative measures such as a bund were useful. Resolving issues around land ownership would also help to alleviate certain issues. Effective intervention in hotspot areas in the form of patrolling was also key.

Ms. Rowland advised that the “supply and demand” of rogue persons agreeing to dispose of household rubbish (and subsequently dumping it) needed to be cut off.

Mr. Clark advised that national estimates suggested that each fly tip would cost on average £60 to clear up.

Councillor A. Hall commented that a characteristic of the Coalfield area was that it consisted of pockets of land whose ownership was unknown. This land often fell victim to fly tipping and she felt that the ownership of it warranted further investigation.

Referring to grass cutting on Newbottle Bank, Councillor Wakefield advised that the grass was extremely long but he had been told it would not be possible to cut it due to the incline being too steep. Grass cutting had ceased for the winter.

Mr. Clark advised that grass cutting on banks had been stopped in recent months to allow an audit and risk assessment to be carried out as there had been some health and safety issues. There was a need to ensure the correct machinery was being used for the job.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor D. Smith as to whether Aurora’s database regarding street lighting repair was linked to the Council’s, Mr. Clark believed that it was and agreed to recheck.

Councillor R. Heron questioned the ease at which individuals could obtain a scrap metal licence and was advised by Ms. Rowland that the Police were currently looking at a protocol for “waste carriers” as it was important they carried an official transit note.

In relation to service requests for ‘animal fouling’, Councillor Rolph enquired whether the statistics included horses. Ms. Rowland advised that legislation related specifically to dogs, although reports of horse fouling were occasionally received.

In response to a question from Councillor Rolph regarding which category leaves (detritus) came under and what influence this had on the figures, Ms. Rowland advised that it came under the category of rubbish and litter.

Councillor Rolph commented that it would be useful to have sight of the statistics from the previous year to compare service request numbers.

Councillor Tate advised that Gentoo had been replacing boilers in a number of their properties in Hetton. Scrap collectors had been prolific on the estate and he questioned whether Gentoo had a policy regarding disposal of the old boilers.

Mr. Chapman, Gentoo advised that they were aware that unscrupulous scrap collectors had been combing the area, and Gentoo took full responsibility for disposing of replaced fittings and any necessary clean up.

4. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be received and noted and the Committee receive further updates regarding any issues arising from the intelligence group.

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

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to request the Committee's consideration of proposals for the allocation of the Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB), the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and Community Chest to support initiatives that will benefit the area.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper presented the report and outlined the funding balance. With regard to SIB, Ms. Hopper advised that following the September 2010 Committee meeting £212,423 remained to be allocated during 2010/11. Since September 2010, two emergency multi area SIB application bids were approved through delegated powers. These were £1,000 to support a City wide angling competition in December 2010 delivered by the Angling Trust, and £1,675 to contribute towards Grace House North East Children's Hospice, leaving a balance of £209,748.

Referring to those applications agreed under the delegated decision process, Councillor Rolph raised concerns that the bids were City wide and the information that had been sent to Members had not made it clear how they benefited the Coalfields area. It had been agreed that no blanket bids would be approved by the Committee and would more than likely have been rejected at Committee.

Councillor A. Hall agreed that Members had not been provided with enough information on which to base a decision. Moreover, Members needed to be clearly told why the application was a delegated decision.

Members then went on to consider each application in turn.

With regard to the SIB application in relation to Ear 4 U (Impact Family Services), Ms. Hopper agreed to ascertain the upper age limit for the project.

With regard to the application in relation to Regent Street/Church Street Give Way and Parking SIP request, Councillor R. Heron felt that the proposal would make the junction inoperable.

Councillor J. Scott recommended and it was agreed that the application is deferred pending further information.

Mr. Clark agreed to undertake further consultation through Andrew Jackman.

With reference to the SIP application for Sunderland Road/High Lane Speed Limit and Gateway, Councillor Heron also suggested that the application is deferred as he was unclear what advantages the scheme would have. No other Member expressed concerns and the application was approved.

Ms. Hopper advised that there were amendments to be made to two Community Chest applications. The Moorsley Care of the Aged application should be amended to the amount of £1,000 and the Easington Lane Primary School should also be amended to the amount of £1,000.

At this juncture Councillor D. Smith proposed that an emergency Community Chest application for Market Street Traders Christmas lights of £1595.00 be considered by the Committee. Councillor Smith asked if this application could be awarded at the meeting as there would not be another opportunity to consider the matter until the next meeting in January, which was after Christmas.

Discussion ensued on the matter and in accordance with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed by reason of the special circumstances that the application could be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

However, Members disagreed on the amount that should be awarded and following further discussion it was agreed that £750 would be awarded as a contribution.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the application for split SIP (Shiney Row)/SIB funding of £9,723 and £10,277 respectively as a contribution towards Wensleydale Avenue Traffic Calming be approved;

- (ii) the application for split SIP (Houghton)/SIB funding of £14,000 and £20,000 respectively as a contribution towards Walking Route to Rainton Meadows be approved;
- (iii) the application for split SIP (Hetton and Copt Hill)/SIB funding of £19,221 and £10,000 respectively as a contribution towards North Road/Hazard Lane Pedestrian Safety be approved;
- (iv) the application for SIB funding of £13,200 as a contribution towards Ear 4 U (Impact Family Services) be approved subject to the condition that any young people resident in the Coalfield but attending schools outside of the area have equal access to the project;
- (v) the application for SIP funding of £3,500 as a contribution towards Fencehouses Gateway Project be approved;
- (vi) the application for SIP funding of £4,000 as a contribution towards Tithe Barn, Rectory Park be approved;
- (vii) the application for SIP funding of £2,000 as a contribution towards Community Outdoor Learning (Newbottle Primary School) be approved;
- (viii) the application for SIP funding of £10,000 as a contribution towards Regent Street/Church Street Give Way and Parking be deferred pending further information;
- (ix) the application for SIP funding of £25,000 as a contribution towards Sunderland Road/High Lane Speed Limit and Gateway be approved;
- (x) the application for SIP funding of £3,100 as a contribution towards Queensway traffic calming be approved; and
- (xi) approval be given to the 17 proposals for funding from the Community Chest totalling £9293.00 as set out in Annex 1b of the report and to the further emergency Community Chest application for £750 from the 2010/11 budget.

(d) Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) and Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) Funded Projects - Interim Report Covering the Period April to September 2010

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide detail on how the Area Committee had allocated its resources to date (April 2010 – September 2010) and to enable consideration of how those initiatives were performing against agreed objectives.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper introduced the report and outlined progress on areas where the progress indicator was amber or red.

With reference to South View Phase 2, Councillor John Scott advised that the £2,260 underspend will be returned to the SIP budget.

In respect of Hetton Memorial Garden Regeneration, the Committee were reminded that the project was due to be completed in November 2009 and had been delayed due to match funding. It was proposed that £3,000 from the funding be used to reinstate the memorial lights and the remainder be brought back into mainstream funding.

With regard to the additional 3G Camera, Ms. Hopper advised that delivery of the camera was expected next week.

At the request of Councillor Hall, Ms. Hopper agreed to provide an update on the battle at Hylton Castle.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) £3,000 from SIP funding for Hetton Memorial Garden be used to reinstate the memorial lights. The remaining £27,000 would be returned to mainstream budget; and
- (ii) the update be received and noted.

Influencing Practice, Policy and Strategy

The City Services Directorate submitted a report (copy circulated) which offered Members the opportunity for consultation on plans and strategies relevant to the Coalfield area. It also provided information and updates to encourage Members to feed into proposals for service or policy change.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Vivienne Metcalfe, Area Community Co-ordinator (East), presented the report, advising Members of consultations with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) on the draft Community Assets Policy in order to receive their comments on a Council policy which would have a direct impact on them.

7. RESOLVED that Members considered the draft Community Assets Policy which was subject to consultation and would participate in the consultation process to ensure that the strategy would effectively address the requirements of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the Coalfield area of the City.

The Chairman thanked Members, Officers and Partners for their attendance.

(Signed) D. RICHARDSON,
Chairman.