

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 20th JANUARY, 2014 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors Emerson, Errington, Forbes, E. Gibson, Kay, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, Price, Scanlan and Wood

Also Present:-

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Jeff Boath | - Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service |
| Andrew Carton | - Locality Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| David Groark | - Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Paula Hunt | - VCS Network Representative |
| Matthew Jackson | - Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council |
| Jessica May | - Sunderland Partnership Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Jen McKevitt | - VCS Network Representative |
| Sarah Reed | - Assistant Chief Executive and 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 Sunderland East, Northumbria Police |
| Nicol Trueman | - Area Officer, Sunderland City Council |
| Jeremy Wicking | - Media 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 Hazel Clark, Nonnie Crawford, Mick Hall and Beverley Scanlon.

Declarations of Interest

Financial Statements and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources

Councillor Mordey declared that he was a Council appointed member of East Community Association.

Councillor McClennan declared that she was a Council appointed member of the management committee of Chance.

Councillor Marshall declared that she was a Council appointed member of Doxford Park Community Association; she withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this application.

Councillor Kay declared that he was a Council appointed member of Deptford and Millfield Community Association and he had spoken to them about this application. He was also a member of Chance and had an involvement with Swan Lodge; he withdrew from the meeting during consideration of these applications.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 16th September, 2013

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

VCS Progress Report

The East Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Network submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated the Committee on the work that had been done by the VCS network since the last meeting of the Area Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

VCS Network Representatives Paula Hunt and Jen McKeivitt presented the report and advised that the network had met twice since the last meeting of the committee. They advised the Committee of the work that they had done around expressions of interest from VCS organisations for funding to help support the delivery of the Area Committee's priorities. There had been concerns raised at the meetings regarding the increase in accommodation units being established in the city centre when there was already an excess of this type of dwelling; the Hostel Strategy Working Group was looking into this issue. The Council's Corporate Procurement Team would be attending a future meeting of the Network in order to discuss access to funding opportunities from the Council.

The Chairman thanked Ms Clark and Ms Hunt for their update and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the update from the VCS Network be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

Inspector Jamie Southwell presented the crime figures for the area. He started with the figures for the Central area and advised that there had been an increase of 337 crimes over last year however last year had seen a reduction of 1000 offences compared with the year before. Over the last few weeks there had been a reduction in the number of crimes. He advised that theft from vehicles had increased by 44 crimes and that burglaries had also increased with 40 additional burglaries from dwellings and 79 additional burglaries from property other than dwellings; recently there had been offenders caught and since then there had been a reduction in the number of burglaries. Violent crime including robberies had reduced as had theft from persons and theft of pedal cycles. Antisocial behaviour within the sector had reduced by 574 incidents.

Inspector Southwell then introduced the figures for the East sector; he advised that there had been an increase of 61 offences compared with last year although last year crime had fallen by 24 percent when compared with the year. The last 28 days had been the best of the year with only 76 offences taking place. Burglaries, criminal damage, robbery and theft of pedal cycles had all reduced. Work was being done with shops to combat shoplifting. Other thefts had increased which was a sign of the economic climate.

Councillor Mordey stated that at the weekend he had been made aware of a theft of a plaque from Grangetown Cemetery, he asked whether there were ever police patrols in the cemeteries. Inspector Southwell advised that PCSOs checked the cemeteries as part of their patrols. During the summer there had been a number of plaques stolen and two offenders had been imprisoned for this; one of them was a prolific offender and had recently been released from prison.

Councillor McClennan commented that shoplifting was often being committed out of desperation. Inspector Southwell agreed that it was a difficult problem at the moment as there had been an increase in first time offenders when previously there were a group of prolific offenders who were responsible for the majority of shoplifting. There was a lot of community restitution work being done to tackle first time offenders; rather than being locked up for their first offence they would instead be required to make a donation to the victims chosen charity to the value of the shoplifted items or would have to take part in other community payback schemes; support was being provided to first time offenders to move them away from crime.

Councillor Forbes queried whether the increase in use of self service tills had lead to an increase in shoplifting; she was informed that the biggest problem

was with people requesting cashback and forgetting to take it and the next customer then stealing it.

Councillor Mordey referred to the programme following the shoplifters in Sunderland which had been broadcast a few months ago; Inspector Southwell advised that it was a disappointing programme and that Inspector Hall had been interviewed for the programme but this interview had not been used. The programme did not portray anyone involved in a positive light. The police were already aware of the shoplifters who were featured on the programme.

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

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Jeff Boath, Station Manager, introduced the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service which included the figures for deliberate fires within the area. He advised that there had been a significant reduction in the number of primary fires with only 2 in Hendon and 3 in Millfield, areas which were previously hotspots for deliberate primary fires. Secondary fires were still a problem as over the last six months there had been a 25 percent increase in the number of secondary fires which included bin fires and fires involving dumped waste. There were plans to run a campaign placing stickers onto bins advising residents of when the bins should be put out and encouraging them to bring the bin back in straight after it was emptied. There had been an increase in deliberate vehicle fires of 60 percent which was an increase of 6 offences; the number had increased following a report in the Sunderland Echo which had detailed how the fires were being started. He also advised Members that the closure of Sunderland Central fire station had now been approved as part of the cost saving exercise.

Councillor McClennan referred to the introduction of the charge for removal of bulky waste and asked whether this had led to an increase in the number of rubbish fires. Mr Boath advised that there was no evidence to show this and whenever fire service personnel saw any dumped waste they would report it to the Council for removal.

Councillor Kay expressed his disappointment that the closure of Sunderland Central fire station had been approved; he felt that it was necessary to ensure that the building had a future and that it would not be left unused like the old central fire station.

The Chairman expressed concerns over the impact there would be on response times as a result of the closure. Mr Boath advised that the area was only losing one of its appliances and that they had previously been the fastest responding fire service in the country; they would still be able to meet their targets.

In response to comments from Councillors Forbes and Wood that this was the third busiest station in the area and that there were several other options

which should have been considered Mr Boath advised that the service was facing budget cuts of 23 percent and all options had been considered.

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

Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the progress against the Place Board's Work Plan for 2013/14.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Scanlan, Chair of the Place Board, introduced the report and updated the Committee on the projects the board had been undertaking work on. She then introduced the Area Response Managers, David Groark and Nicky Rowland, who would be providing updates on the Responsive Local Services work in the area.

Mr Groark advised that the winter grounds maintenance programme was progressing well with around 65 percent of the work completed so far. The Coke truck coming to the city centre had been a huge success and had resulted in a significant increase in footfall across the city. Ken Dunbar had been appointed as Chief Executive of the BID; he would be working with Mr Dunbar to develop improvements in the city centre.

Ms Rowland advised that there had been a lot of work undertaken around the Gateway 1 and 2 projects. The landscaping at Millfield had been completed in conjunction with Groundworks. There had been daffodil bulbs planted on the roundabouts in Doxford Park which had been the subject of the bulb planting last year. Work had continued with the planting at Vilette Road and the trees on the central reservation on Ryhope Road had been planted.

There had been a lot of preparation work done on the shopping centres projects and the work would be started after the completion of the winter maintenance programme.

Dog fouling in the area was a major problem especially in Ryhope which had been the focus of a campaign to reduce the problem; the campaign would be expanded to cover the rest of the area. The East Area had been leading on the development of Dog Control Orders which would be rolled out across the city.

Councillor Scanlan then advised the Committee that there had been meetings with the sculptor who would be creating the artwork for the land next to Holly Court and a sundial had been chosen to be installed on the site. She also advised that parking was a concern within all of the shopping areas and this

had been passed onto Network Management to investigate potential solutions.

Councillor Wood stated that there had been parking issues around the city for a number of years; he hoped that the Parking Management scheme which was already in place around the hospital could be expanded into other residential areas of the city soon.

Councillor Mordey commented that parking at Villette Road was a major problem; it was often extremely difficult to access the long streets due to the sheer quantity of parked vehicles at the entrance to the streets. He also referred to the problem of dog fouling and advised that there had been a reduction in Hendon following the installation of new red dog waste bins to replace the black bins which had previously been installed; it was thought that the bins were used more as people were able to identify them more easily. It was intended to roll out these new bins across the whole city.

Councillor McClennan expressed concerns over the benches in Mowbray Park which had memorial plaques attached; some of these plaques had been stolen and she hoped that there would be a record of who the benches were dedicated to so that the plaques could be replaced. Mr Groark advised that there were records and he would look into ensuring that any missing plaques were replaced.

Councillor Kay referred to the proposals to redevelop the B&Q store at Trimdon Street to provide a new Morrisons store in addition to B&Q. He felt that this was an excellent economic opportunity and coupled with the highways network improvements in the area there was the potential for there to be a significant benefit to the shops on Hylton Road.

Councillor Scanlan then referred the Committee to the work done around the Coastal Path; she thanked everyone involved for their hard work. This project had been ongoing for a number of years and it was pleasing to see that the work was progressing; estimated costs for the work were detailed in annex 2 to the report.

Councillor Price queried the possibility of benches being installed along the route and he was informed by Councillor Scanlan that there would be benches installed at some points along the route including at Hendon.

Councillor Mordey queried where the signage for Hendon Beach was to be located. Ms Trueman advised that the sign would be at the entrance to the tunnel between Commercial Road and Hendon Beach.

Councillor Scanlan then went on to refer to the Highways Maintenance Programme and advised that the list of streets had been submitted to the Highways department and a representative of the department would be in attendance at the February meeting of the board.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The report and work plan updates at Annex 1 and 2 be noted
- b. Network Management be requested to investigate options on how to improve parking management at Villette Road and Ryhope Street South, and provide an update to the Place Board on the review of parking management at Hylton Road.

People Board Progress Report

The Chairman of the People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the committee with an update on the progress against the People Board's Work Plan for 2013/14.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Emerson, Chair of the People Board, introduced the report and updated the Committee on the work carried out. He advised that there were voluntary groups who were looking at the possibility of taking over the library buildings; the business plans were being assessed and it was intended that the buildings would be transferred to new tenants by April 2014. There had been an integrated Health Services Event held; ideas raised at this event would be used to form the basis for further discussions at the People Board. There was a need to integrate the health services fully with the council services including aspects like Planning where funds from Section 106 planning obligations could be used to provide improved health services within areas with new housing development. There was a need to improve links with the Clinical Commissioning Group; most GPs in the area did not know who the local councillors were. There had been a lot of work done around reducing the number of NEETs in the area; it had been proposed that SIB funding would be aligned to the priority however following concerns being raised this proposal had been withdrawn pending the resolution of the issues. Concerns had also been raised relating to the Small Grants Scheme for the Transforming Adult Social Care priority and as such this SIB application would also be withdrawn to enable further work to be undertaken.

Councillor Emerson also offered an open invitation to all Members who were not Board Members to attend any of the Board meetings they wanted to.

Councillor Wood referred to the Doxford and Hendon Libraries and asked what involvement the Committee would have in identifying a future use. He also queried the availability of library books in the areas where the libraries had closed.

Ms Trueman advised that the buildings were to be transferred out of council use as part of the Surplus Buildings Policy which did not require any engagement with the Area Committee. There were a number of book collections points across the area where residents would be able to access library books.

Councillor McClennan commented that she had been told that Councillors would have an input into the final decision making process for Hendon Library.

Councillor Kay advised that representatives of the Clinical Commissioning Group had attended a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee; unfortunately it had not been a success as the CCG representatives did not understand what was involved with working with Councillors; the connectivity with officers was excellent however. He hoped that the Area Committee could become involved. Councillor Errington stated that the Primary Care Trust had no direct input into the council and as a result of this they did not have knowledge of working with Councils.

Councillor Price queried whether there would be any system in place to provide information on what library books were available and where. He also suggested that the community libraries could be incorporated into cafes as this would help to attract people both to the library and the café. Councillor Mordey stated that the main libraries would maintain the electronic scanning systems for checking books in and out; the community hubs would not have any formal recording of which books had been withdrawn. Councillor E. Gibson added that the system was based on trust.

6. RESOLVED that the update from the People Board be noted.

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

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statement for the allocation of Community Chest and SIB.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman presented the report and advised Members of the financial statements which were set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 3.1 and advised of the previously approved Community Chest applications which were detailed in annex 1 of the report.

The request to align funds of £120,000 to the reducing the number of NEETs priority had been withdrawn from the agenda along with the £10,000 which was to be used for the small grants scheme. These proposals would be brought back to the Committee once further work had been done to address the outstanding issues.

Following the withdrawal of these applications there were 2 applications for SIB remaining; £2500 towards the NEET road shows and £20,500 towards the little bit extra scheme. Approval of both of these applications would leave £183,025 of funding to be allocated.

Councillor Mordey referred to the applications from Sunderland MIND and Sunderland Symphony Orchestra; he stated that these were citywide organisations and he felt that it was important that any funds given by the Area Committee would be used to benefit people within the East Area. Ms Trueman advised that the intention of SIB was to provide support to projects which benefited the area; there would be a requirement that any funding provided be used to benefit the area.

Councillor Wood agreed that there was a need to ensure that the funds were spent to benefit the East Area. He advised that both Sunderland MIND and Sunderland Symphony Orchestra were based within the East Area. He acknowledged that other areas were likely to benefit from the funding in addition to the East Area benefiting however it was important to remember that the East Area sometimes benefited from SIB funds spent by other areas. It was also important to consider that it was a relatively small amount of money but it would make a big difference to the organisations who would be receiving funds.

In response to queries from Councillor McClennan Ms Trueman advised that the Adult Social Care priority had been agreed by the Area Committee in June 2013 and surveys had been carried out with the groups who were involved with over 50's. There had been 24 groups who had requested funding to provide support or equipment to assist with the delivery of the priority. There was a need to ensure that the groups would be able to cope should they have people referred to them.

7. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The financial statements set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 3.1 be noted
 - b. The 18 approved Community Chest applications set out in Annex 1 be noted
 - c. £2,500 of SIB funding to deliver NEET road shows across the East Area, as set out in Annex 3a, be approved
 - d. £20,500 of SIB funding to purchase equipment to support the delivery of services included in the interim online directory as set out in Annex 3b be approved.

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

(Signed) E. BALL,
Chairman.