

**At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held at the HETTON CENTRE, WELFARE ROAD, HETTON-LE-HOLE on WEDNESDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2009 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor J. Scott in the Chair

Councillors Anderson, Blackburn, Ellis, A. Hall, Richardson, Rolph, D. Smith, Speding and Wakefield.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Anderson, Heron and Tate and also on behalf of Councillor Mrs J. Heron (Hetton Town Council).

**Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all those present to introduce themselves.

**Declarations of Interest**

Item 5 – Coalfield: A Safe Area Summary

Councillor D. Richardson in his capacity as Mayor declared a personal interest in the item with regard to the Mayor's Awards.

Councillor A. Hall declared a personal interest in the item as a Board Member of Gentoo Living and a Member of the Management Committee of the Coalfield Forum.

Item 6 – Strategic Initiatives Budget – Ward Based Community Chest 2009/10

Councillor Blackburn declared a personal interest in the item as a governor of Easington Lane Primary School.

Councillor A. Hall declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item as a governor of Our Lady Queen of Peace RC Primary School and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

## **Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009**

### **i) Lambton Miners' Memorial Project**

In response to an enquiry from Councillor A. Hall, Councillor Rolph updated the Committee on the current position regarding the Lambton Miners' Memorial Project. Councillor A. Hall expressed her concern that the Group appeared reluctant to provide the Committee with a feedback report.

### **ii) Area Committee Governance and Business Processes**

Members expressed concern with regard to the moratorium on the co-option of community representatives onto Area Committees.

Councillor Ellis stated that her comments that she did not believe that the new structure of Governance would work had not been recorded.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the comments from Councillor Ellis.

## **Questions to Area Committee**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) on a proposal to introduce a Questions to the Area Committee session at future meetings of the Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Richard Parry, Area Regeneration Officer, presented the report advising Members that a pilot would be undertaken at the next two meetings of the Committee in September and November 2009. A review would then be undertaken to assess the success of the pilot in terms of the process and practicalities.

In response to enquiries from Members regarding the language used and statements made within the protocol guidelines, Helen Paterson, Executive Director of Children's Services and Area Lead Executive, advised that the guidelines should have been stamped as draft. What was before the Committee was a working document and Members' comments on the matter would be fed back to the project board.

2. RESOLVED that the report be approved and that the Questions to Area Committee be piloted at the Committee's meetings to be held in September and November 2009.

## **Coalfield: A Safe Area Summary**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which asked Members to consider and identify their main proposals for further development and action in relation to their safe priority theme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

To compliment the report, Richard Parry, Area Regeneration Officer, provided Members with a Powerpoint presentation which detailed the local area delivery plan process and which highlighted potential areas for action within the safe priority theme. The new Area Arrangements represented a learning curve for both Members and Officers. Work on the Safe Area was not a one off item for this meeting but would be a year long process. In allocating its budget Mr. Parry advised that there were perhaps certain issues which the Committee may wish to bear in mind, such as are the services being provided the right services? Are enhanced services required? Should current resource levels be reviewed? Are there areas where the Committee could add value? In conclusion Mr. Parry asked the Committee to agree the Safe Area Summary, but more importantly, attempt to drill down the 14 points to four or five specific actions or interventions upon which the Committee could focus.

The Chairman, together with Dr. Paterson, highlighted each of the 14 issues relating to the seven agreed priorities and sought Members' comments with regard to agreeing four or five specific actions. Detailed discussion having ensued Members agreed that the following issues should be adopted as potential areas for further development and action:-

- i) Transport and Neighbouring Wardens;
- ii) Delivery of the Youth Fire Fighters' Association and development of the Phoenix Project;
- iii) Positive Futures;
- iv) Establishment of a Community Payback Scheme.

With regard to items ii) and iii) Members requested that costings be drawn up to enable the Committee to consider how best to support the initiatives. With regard to item iv), Members asked that the Youth Offending Service be asked to provide details of current costings and investigations be made as to what added value there would be for the Coalfield area if the Committee decided to fund the project.

In response to enquiries from Members, Bill Blackett, Anti Social Behaviour Strategy Manager, offered to provide Members with regular updates from the Anti Social Behaviour Delivery Meetings. He advised that until today's inaugural meeting there had not been a Citywide approach in respect of the LMAPs. Systems were now being developed so best practice could be transferred from 'patch to patch'.

In addition Mr. Blackett agreed to refer Members' concerns regarding the Community Safety Days and the location of the mobile buses to Mr. Neal, Youth Development Group Manager.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the report be approved; and

ii) the following four activities from Annex 1 be adopted as potential areas for further development and action:-

- Transport and Neighbourhood Wardens;
- The Phoenix Project/Young Fire Fighters' Association;
- Positive Futures;
- Community Payback Scheme.

### **Strategic Initiatives Budget: Ward Based Community Chest**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) on 11 projects recommended for support from the 2009/10 Community Chest Schemes in respect of the Copt Hill, Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row wards as detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that approval be given to the 11 projects recommended for support from the 2009/10 Community Chest budget with a total value of £5,913 as detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

### **Developing Community Communications to Support Area Committees 2009-10**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought views from the Committee to help inform the development of a Community Communications action plan for the Coalfield Area Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Deborah Lewin, Interim Head of Corporate Communications, together with Verity Dodd, Senior Corporate Communications Officer, presented the report and invited Members to help identify different ways to communicate with local residents and make suggestions for communications materials to support promotions and information provision in the area.

Discussion ensued and the following suggestions were made with regard to the production of communications/promotional materials:-

- promotional fridge magnets similar to those used to publicise the Neighbourhood Help Line;
- a Coalfield periodical in a similar format to Eastwise;
- a DVD to promote the work of the Committee and the organisations to have benefited from its grants;

- the use of articles in the Houghton and Seaham Star and local pages in the Sunderland Echo;
- the heavy use of Coalfield branding;
- promotional T-shirts and baseball caps which could be linked to grant awards or distributed to schools;
- the re-introduction of posters publicising meetings and the question time session;
- any local alternative to Sunrise should not be a glossy production to lessen the 'how much did that cost' criticism;
- the use of the internet/production of a dedicated web site.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the report be received and noted; and
- ii) Members' comments be used to inform the development of a Community Communications Action Plan for the Coalfield Area Committee.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance.

(Signed) J. Scott,  
Chairman.