

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held at PORTLAND SCHOOL, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER, 2009 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Wares in the Chair

Councillors Ball, P. Dixon, Errington, M. Forbes, E. Gibson, Paul Maddison, T. Martin, M. Smith and Vardy

Also Present:-

John Allison	- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Graeme Wilson	- Asst. Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal Manager, Sunderland City Council
Jane Peverley	- Senior Marketing Officer, Sunderland City Council
Ray Leonard	- Chief Executive, Back on the Map
Sgt. G. Hall	- Northumbria Police Neighbourhood Team
Insp. M. Ord	- Neighbourhood Inspector Sunderland East
Insp. C. Warcup	- Neighbourhood Inspector Doxford Ward
Colin Bowman	- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Vince Taylor	- Head of Strategic Economic Development, Sunderland City Council
Jeremy Wicking	- Media Officer, Sunderland City Council
Dawn Osborne	- Policy Officer (Inclusion), Sunderland City Council
Eddy Moore	- Long Streets Association
Dave Leonard	- Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
John Smith	- Environmental Health Manager (commercial), Sunderland City Council

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Peter Maddison, O'Connor and Wood and also Sandra Kenny, Lucy Malarkey and Julie Raine

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 29th June, 2009

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

Item 6 – East Sunderland – A learning Area

Councillor Errington declared a personal interest as a member of the Box Youth Project

Item 7 – Feedback from working groups

Councillor Ball declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Council appointed member of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue service board.

Councillor M. Forbes declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Member of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Item 10 – Financial Statements and Funding Requests

Councillor E. Gibson declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Governor of Mill Hill Primary School

Councillor Paul Maddison declared a personal interest as a Council appointed member of the Mayor's Fund and declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a resident of Nelson Close.

Economic Masterplan

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated Members on the progress that had been made on developing an Economic Masterplan for Sunderland and sought the views of the Members on the Economic vision that is emerging.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Vince Taylor, Head of Strategic Economic Development, presented the report. He advised that a consortium of consultants led by GENECON was appointed in April 2009 following a competitive procurement process. They proposed a pragmatic approach following four key principles:

- Realistic – ambitious but credible
- Outward-looking – collaborate to compete
- Demand-led – market shift through perceptual change
- Innovative – new models for delivery and economic governance.

Mr Taylor explained the three scenarios developed, these were:

- Northern Gateway – building on the strength of the city's location in the region and positioning the city as a regional gateway
- Entrepreneurial Nimble City – Building on the city's strengths in manufacturing and associated services and positioning the city as a

‘smart city’ that is attractive to knowledge workers and has high levels of enterprise and innovation.

- Creative Park City – building on the strengths of the environmental assets and focusing on low carbon technologies and creative industries.

These scenarios were not designed as options where one should be picked; they were designed to set out possible parameters for the city’s development.

Councillor Paul Maddison asked what effect there would be should the Vaux site be developed as the Council desired.

Mr Taylor advised that this was a high priority which needed to go ahead; it would provide new employment opportunities for the city. There was a need for new employment opportunities in the City Centre; Newcastle had approximately 50,000 jobs in the city centre while Sunderland only had 15,000.

Councillor Errington asked whether the University had been involved in the process and whether their aspirations had been considered.

Mr Taylor stated that the Chancellor of the University was on the steering group and there was a working relationship with the university.

Councillor M. Forbes stated that there was a problem with transport links in the city and there was insufficient car parking. She felt it would be difficult to progress the aims and ambitions without there being a suitable infrastructure in place.

Mr Taylor advised that road development was driven by economic need and was prompted by congestion rather than future need. The city was not as busy as others and had spare capacity in the road network.

2. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

East Sunderland a Learning Area Summary

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with a summary of the priorities and actions identified.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Judith Hay, Head of PC&EWB, presented the report and introduced the priorities.

Councillor T. Martin asked what contribution there had been from ETEC in delivering Priority One – encouraging young people into further education and targeting those not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Ms. Hay advised that ETEC were a training provider who provided opportunities for Apprenticeships, they were highly active in the East End. Most young people were not NEET and those who were often moved in and out of NEET status however there was a small cohort who were NEET long term. There was a need for the facilities to be in place to allow people to engage in some form of education, employment or training.

Councillor Errington queried whether the youth provision would be linked in with other areas. Would young people be encouraged to go to facilities in their ward rather than going to other areas.

Ms. Hay stated that where young people went to would be monitored. They normally used the facilities closest to home as they identified it as being theirs. Most young people in the Doxford area used the Box Youth Project rather than the A690 Youth Project. There was a record kept of everyone who used the facilities and their postcode.

Councillor Errington asked for information on the number of young people from Doxford who attended the A690 Youth Project. Kath Butchert, Integrated Youth Officer, agreed to provide this information.

The Chairman queried the funding requested for the mobile youth villages.

Ms. Hay replied that there was a significant core funding of £300,000 however everyone wanted further provision, as a result there was a need for additional funding to enable more resources to be provided. The provision could be moved quickly and easily. There were workers present who were qualified to help young people if necessary. Young people were banned from the provisions if drunk and often the people turned away were sober the week after. There was a reduction in anti social behaviour in the areas covered by the youth villages.

Councillor M. Forbes raised concerns that there was a large amount of funding being requested and that this could have a detrimental effect as there would be less ability to provide for other projects. She felt that the funding should come from mainstream funding as a Council wide project. What costs would be incurred by the Wards buying in local provision.

Ms. Hay stated that it was important to involve all partners and operational groups would be set up for each area which would look at who to target in each area. The youth villages were mobile which would allow them to be moved to the areas where they are needed most. Elected Members would be included when deciding where to deploy the provision.

Councillor P. Dixon commented that he felt that Millfield was lacking in provision for Young People when compared with the other Wards in the area. He suggested that anti social behaviour figures were used when deciding where the provisions should be used.

Ms. Hay advised that there would be provision across the city however there needed to be more funding in order to help provide this full coverage. It was intended that every area would be covered on Fridays and Saturdays. There needed to be information provided so that the provision could be provided in the areas where there were the greatest problems. The facilities would be provided for a period of 10 weeks and then reviewed.

Councillor T. Martin commented that he had attended the XL Youth Village at Grangetown, an area where there had been gaps in youth provision. There had been children of all ages attending and he felt that they were a good thing to have in the area.

Councillor Errington stated that location was important. The Youth Village in Doxford was close to the Ward boundary; there was a need for co-ordination between the areas to ensure that there was no overlap of facilities.

Ms. Hay stated that the provision was delivered by an overall steering group and then regional groups; this would ensure that there was no overlap between the areas while ensuring that all of the areas are represented.

The Chairman stated that there were a lot of good youth projects in the area; he was reluctant to take money away from these projects to give to the youth villages without properly evaluating the project beforehand. The Blue Watch Youth Project do good work for the area and it was possible that there would be problems caused for them should the money be given to the youth village instead.

Ms. Hay stated that there was evidence that different people used the youth villages and youth centres.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The report be received and noted
- b. The actions identified be noted
- c. The information surrounding the mobile youth provision be developed further before a bid for funding is received.

Feedback from Working Groups

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated Members on the work that had been carried out by the working groups.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman, Area Officer, presented the report and introduced the officers who were presenting the feedback reports and would be able to answer any questions from Members.

John Allison, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, presented the report from the Phoenix Project, he advised that there was a disproportionately high

amount of deliberate fires in the East Area. The project had reduced the amount of offending, 48 percent of attendees did not reoffend within 12 months and 86 percent showed a decrease in the seriousness of their offending.

Eddy Moore asked whether there was a correlation between empty properties and fires.

Mr Allison advised that there was always the problem of empty houses becoming targets.

Councillor T. Martin commented that empty properties and fly tipping was a major cause of deliberate fires. There had been notices sent out to residents of the long streets to tell people to keep the area tidy to prevent fires.

Mr Allison advised that there was an arson officer who would be looking for these problems.

Councillor P. Dixon asked how many of the young people involved in the project had been involved in arson.

Mr Allison advised that most of the participants in the scheme had been referred by the Youth Offending Service; it was likely that many of these young people were involved in anti social behaviour.

Councillor P. Dixon then asked whether there was still a problem with wheelie bin fires.

Mr Allison confirmed that this was the case; the majority of arson was refuse fires.

Councillor P. Dixon then commented that it cost £2 million to attend deliberate fires; the Council's Environmental Health department should be involved to help prevent bins from being left out.

Inspector Mark Ord advised that Hendon accounted for 50 percent of all anti social behaviour fires. Operation Heat was in place to help combat this, there would be a police investigation of all refuse fires. This was a six month pilot to see what impact there would be.

Councillor Vardy commented that youth projects normally reduce anti social behaviour. He asked whether these projects reduced fires.

Mr Allison advised that the projects had made a difference, the youth villages would be used in the approach to bonfire night.

The Chairman stated that young people often did not understand the dangers or implications of starting fires. They did not appreciate the potential for damage to houses in the surrounding area.

Mr Allison advised that there was a schools education programme in place. Year 1 and Year 5 were targeted along with secondary schools where there had been a problem identified. Counselling was available for anyone who needed it.

Inspector Mark Ord, Neighbourhood Inspector for Sunderland East, presented the report from Northumbria Police.

Councillor T. Martin asked whether undercover officers were used as part of the neighbourhood policing.

Insp. Ord stated that 18 months ago there had been an undercover operation based in a second hand shop in Hendon.

Insp. Ord then commented that during the summer holidays there was traditionally an increase in anti social behaviour. There had been a high visibility police operation in Hendon which had focussed on preventing anti social behaviour and had reassured the public.

4. RESOLVED that the feedback reports be received and noted and that the Phoenix Project be encouraged to submit an application for SIB/SIP funding.

Back on the Map Ltd – Succession Strategy

The Chief Executive of Back on the Map Ltd submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of the development of Back on the Map's succession strategy in conjunction with the Council and Local Strategic Partnership.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ray Leonard, Chief Executive of Back on the Map, presented the report. He advised that the submission of this strategy was the beginning of the process. Back on the Map was one of 39 New Deal For Communities (NDCs) initiatives comprising a £2 billion Government investment to regenerate communities. The company looked at five main areas: Education; Employment; Community Safety; Health and; Housing and Environment. The company was buying houses in problem areas and the land at Harrogate Street and Amberley Street was ready to be developed once the economy was ready, they currently owned 39 houses and they were aiming to own 60.

Councillor T. Martin congratulated Back on the Map for their hard work. He stated that he had attended the first meeting in 2001 and since then there had been a lot of progress made, there were three new schools in the area. He was pleased to see that the empty houses were being bought and he hoped that the plans for the central Hendon area would go ahead.

Councillor M. Forbes commented that the amount of information Back on the Map held was a strength of the company; she asked whether the information was fed into other agencies.

Mr Leonard advised that they were lucky enough to get the information for free. The company was data rich. There was information provided by residents and sometimes this life experience contradicted the figures. Information was shared as much as possible however some information needed to be ratified by the government before it could be shared and there was some information was six months old and was still not ratified.

Councillor M. Forbes then commented that worklessness was a big problem and asked whether the education programme was linked in to worklessness.

Mr Leonard advised that the education programme was ongoing; there was always room for improvement. He also stated that people aspire to own their own home and if the housing in the area was not suitable then people would move away. There was over 1100 people had found employment and had then left the area.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Update on Community Communications to support Area Committees 2009/10

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated the committee on the development of the Community Communications action plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Jeremy Wicking, Area Communications Link Officer, presented the report and advised Members of the communication methods being developed.

The Chairman commented that a fold out map could be produced showing the facilities, such as youth clubs, throughout the area. It was necessary to ensure that good news stories were published.

Councillor P. Dixon asked whether the Members would be contacted to provide information for the Ward pages in the newsletter.

Mr Wicking advised that this was the case; it was important to ensure that groups and events within the ward were publicised.

Councillor M. Forbes raised concerns over the costs involved for producing the merchandise; there was a need to have a responsible attitude. She then commented that most areas had a Community Association, the newsletter should provide a list of what events and activities were taking place.

Mr Wicking advised that a staple part of the newsletter would be showing what was taking place in the area.

Councillor Errington asked whether it would be possible to produce an East Area web page to provide information on what is happening in the area.

The Chair stated that the address for the web page could be included in the newsletter.

Nicol Trueman stated that Corporate Communications had provided help throughout the development of the Local Area Plans and that the Area Officer would be able to provide information for the newsletter.

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Financial Statements and Funding Request

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which outlined the current expenditure from SIB, SIP and Community Chest and requested Members approval of the applications for the budgets.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman, Area Officer, presented the report and advised that the Committee was being requested to:

- Approve the 16 proposals for support from Community Chest as detailed in Annex 1 to the report
- Agree the approved SIB budget for 2009/10 as detailed in Annex 2
- Approve the new emergency protocols for accessing SIB and SIP funding subject to the amendment of paragraph 7.4 to read “The Deputy Chief Executive in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice Chairman”

The Chairman expressed concerns regarding the Emergency protocols, he felt that the time involved was too long as there was the potential for it to take 15 days before the money was released; emergencies should receive the funding within a week.

The Members echoed the Chairman’s concerns.

Ms. Trueman explained the reasoning behind the time taken for the decision to be made. There had been two possible ways for determining applications outside of the normal committee cycle. The first possibility was for an extra meeting to be called which would take a long time due to legal constraints. The other option was for the decision to be taken using the scheme of delegated powers; the Deputy Chief Executive would then action the decision in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair. It was expected that this procedure would take no more than 7 to 10 days. The applicant would be informed of the decision

immediately and the Committee would be updated at the next meeting. It was recommended that the Committee agree to have decisions taken by the Deputy Chief Executive using the Scheme of Delegation.

Councillor P. Dixon stated that there was a need for the process to be quicker; using modern technology it would be possible to have a meeting within a day.

Councillor Paul Maddison asked whether all Members would be required to attend.

Ms Trueman stated that all Members would be expected to attend and all Members would be given the opportunity to attend however it was not necessary for all Members to be present.

Dave Leonard advised that for a meeting to be arranged there was a legal requirement to provide at least five working days notice.

Councillor M. Forbes stated that emergencies needed to be immediate; it was inadequate if power was taken away from the Chairman. She moved that the decision was deferred to enable further information to be received.

Councillor T. Martin seconded this motion.

In response to a query from Councillor Vardy regarding the Community Chest, the Chairman advised that any funding that was not used would be reclaimed so that it could be reallocated.

Councillor E. Gibson asked what would happen if applications were not directly related to the priorities.

Ms Trueman advised that the Local Area Plans did not encompass every priority, if an application did not fit one of the priorities in the plan then there would need to be proof that it is a priority and how it would fit in with the other priorities.

7. RESOLVED that:

- a. Approval be given to all 16 proposals for support from the 2009/10 Community Chest totalling £10,285 from the 2009/10 budget.
- b. Approval be given to the SIB budget for 2009/10 as detailed in Annex 2.
- c. The emergency protocols be deferred to allow further information to be received and to work on reducing the timescales involved as far as is possible.

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

(Signed) D.R. WARES,
Chairman.