

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at the WASHINGTON LEISURE CENTRE on THURSDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2009 at 6.00 P.M.

Present:

Councillor Kelly in the Chair

Councillors Barkess, Chamberlin, Cuthbert, Fletcher, Miller, I. Richardson, Scaplehorn, Snowdon, Timmins, Trueman, Wake, Walker and Whalen.

Nonnie Crawford, Liz Allan – Sunderland TPCT

Ailsa Martin, Sarann Valentine - Sunderland Carers Centre

John Chapman – Gentoo

Ken Teears – SAFC Foundation

Jacqui Reeves – Washington Mind

Andy Neal – YDG

Helen Green, Charlotte Nixon, Thom Williams – Arts Centre, Washington

Neil Revely	-	Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services (Area Lead Executive)
Janet Newton	-	Children's Services
Julie Russell	-	City Services
Victoria French	-	City Services
Derek Welsh	-	Health, Housing and Adult Services
Sue Bartlett	-	Chief Executives
Nicol Trueman	-	Chief Executives
Marion Marshall	-	Office of the Chief Executive
Paul Wood	-	Office of the Chief Executive
Victoria Glass	-	Office of the Chief Executive

Members of the Washington Community.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Stephenson, Joe Cummings and Jon Anderson.

Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 10th September, 2009

Councillor Miller enquired as to the update on Flash cams from Acting Inspector Pitchford.

Councillor Snowden informed of an LMAP's meeting where it was advised that there were flash cams available without additional expenditure and suggestions for possible locations were required.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 10th September, 2009 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

Item 7 – Washington Area Committee Work Plan – Thematic Action Plans

Councillor Snowden declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item as her husband was employed on contract with Ground Works Trust and is also a board member on Gentoo Finance.

Councillor Snowden also declared a personal interest as a board member of Pitstop of which Oxclose and District Young People's Project may be requested to carry work out on behalf of.

Item 11 – Financial Statements and Funding Requests

Councillor Scaplehorn declared personal and prejudicial interests as Chairman of Blackfell Neighbourhood Watch and as a member of the Management Board of Springwell Village Hall.

Item 14 – Choosing a new provider for Barmston Medical Centre

Councillor Scaplehorn declared a personal interest in the item as a patient of the Surgery and has also been asked to be a member of patients' panel.

Councillor I. Richardson declared a personal interest as a patient of the surgery.

Question to Area Committee

The Chairman notified the Committee that a question to the Area Committee had been received.

Mr. Chris Parker was present at the meeting and the Chairman invited him to proceed to put the question he had submitted.

Mr. Parker enquired as to why his son's school, Fatfield Primary, had closed on three separate occasions during winter conditions when all other schools had managed to open.

This question differed from the original written question that Mr. Parker had submitted prior to the meeting which asked why can't the Education

Department look at how all other schools managed to stay open and implement best practice at all schools to ensure his son did not lose any further education.

John Walvin, Capital Manager (Primary) was in attendance and briefed Mr. Parker and the Committee on the Authority's policy and guidance given to schools in order to implement best practice.

At this point Mr. Parker interjected and complained that he had already heard this response.

The Chair asked Mr. Walvin to proceed with his response in order that the Committee and the meeting should be informed of the Council's policy. Mr. Parker again interjected, disputing the figures that had been stated.

Councillor Cuthbert advised that investigations and a risk assessment had been carried out at Fatfield Primary School and the Governing Body had deemed the Headteacher to have correctly decided to close the school on the grounds of Health and Safety issues further that improved measures to seek to prevent the need for future closures were forthcoming.

Mr. Parker commented that he would contact Councillor Cuthbert after the meeting and stated his dissatisfaction that he had not had his query answered.

2. RESOLVED that in accordance with procedure Mr. Parker receive a written response to the written /original question he had submitted to the Area Committee.

Variation of Agenda

The Chairman asked that the Agenda be varied to consider Item 8 – Responsive Local Services Report next to allow those officers who needed to leave to attend another meeting the opportunity to report to the Committee.

3. RESOLVED that the Agenda be varied accordingly.

Responsive Local Services

The Executive Director of City Services and the Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise the Committee of the commencement of the Responsive Local Services (RLS) project which forms part of the Council's Community Leadership Programme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Poulter, Head of Project and Service Development, noted Cllr Trueman's concerns that land ownership issues caused problems with issues such as grass cutting and litter and advised that detailed land ownership maps would be used and work was underway to align services. The directorate was liaising with partners and land owners, with task teams set up to deal with issues identified.

Councillor Cuthbert commented on the issue of graffiti and that the standard which the Council adopted across the City generally only dealt with Council owned land and some of the major issues fell on private companies.

Mr. Poulter advised that racist graffiti would be dealt with within 24 hours, but that regard had to be had to land ownership and possible trespass issues and that proactive measures to tackle the problem would include working closely with the Committee and partners in identifying hotspots in the area.

Mr. Bill Craddock commented that Washington had more subways than most areas which had been subject to graffiti and suggested the implementation of legal graffiti similar to Heworth Metro Station to cut costs.

Mr. Poulter commented that graffiti seemed to be a major issue and suggested the Area Committee set up graffiti working groups

4. RESOLVED that:-

- i) Mr. Poulter convene a Graffiti Working Group to address graffiti issues in the Washington Area;
- ii) the report be received and noted.

Washington Road Safety Measures

Ian Pearson, Acting Manager of the Traffic and Road Safety Section, was in attendance to update Members on the issues they had raised at a previous meeting of the Committee. These included:-

- Provision of footway links;
- Bus Priority Lanes;
- Accident Cluster Sites.

Mr. Pearson also addressed Members' queries that had been raised via email and it was agreed that a full report updating Members on all the issues raised would be circulated via a monthly email.

5. RESOLVED that Members receive a full list of actions updating on Road Safety issues in Washington.

Washington a Healthy Area Summary

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) and Powerpoint presentation for the Committee to consider and discuss the priority of healthy, as agreed in the Work Plan for the 2009/10 municipal year.

(For copy report and Powerpoint presentation – see original minutes).

Nonnie Crawford, Director of Public Health, gave a presentation on average life expectancy in the region and the pattern of health deprivation in the Washington Area.

Ms. Crawford advised that there had been a significant enhancement to Washington's local health services, with the establishment and opening of the Primary Care Centre, with the development of new general practice arrangements and with the recent Darzi Procurements ensuring that arrangements be put in place to address inequalities in access to primary care services.

The Teaching Primary Care Trust (TPCT) had engaged with a range of partners, including the Council, schools, primary care and third sector to deliver interventions which sustain and promote healthy lives. To deliver sustainable health improvement, strategically, there is a need to focus on those core causes of poor health and maximise local people's opportunities to benefit.

The areas that need a different emphasis relate to smoking, obesity and alcohol (relating to early mortality and inequalities in life expectancy) and emotional health and wellbeing (for both children and adults) of which workstreams were ongoing.

Neil Revelly, Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services, advised of the Accommodation with Support Needs Analysis, Older Persons Needs and Aspirations Study and the Woodbridge Garden Extra Care Housing Scheme, all of which feed into the Priority for Increasing Options for Supported Housing to enable older people to live independently for longer.

Consideration also needed to be given on how to reshape services in a way that meets the needs of Washington residents. The TPCT can provide care services, but were people living fulfilled lives? Was the Council addressing the issues pertinent to particular pockets of the area, such as the disabled or the aged?

Alisa Martin, Sunderland Carers' Centre, gave a presentation in relation to Priority 3, which was to raise awareness of support available to carers, access to GPs or receive equipment, etc.

Ms. Martin informed the Committee that carers save Sunderland £529.5 million p.a through the level of service that they provide and recommended that if Sunderland were to receive any services, Washington would need its fair share.

Ms. Martin also commented that the Carers Service could support work with TPCT to get general practitioners on board and consideration needed to be given on how GPs and Councillors could use their contacts to raise awareness and help the Washington area.

Victoria French, Wellness Manager, advised on Priority 4 to strongly link preventative services and primary care services.

The service would look to target those individuals who are not yet engaged in physical activity, ensuring there are a range of preventative services, targeted interventions and specialist support services at a local level to improve all age ranges health and wellbeing.

Ms. French informed the Committee of the Sunderland Active Bus and invited Members' suggestions for possible locations.

Ms. French also advised that there was a need to supply prevention services in the areas most affected and it was key that we work with the communities to make sure these were put in the right locations.

Ken Teears, SAFC Foundation, also spoke on the priority of preventative services and primary care and detailed the programmes ongoing such as:-

- Working with partner agencies to target young people and families with reinforced messages of the negative impacts of alcohol, tobacco and substance misuse.
- Running targeted eight week programmes with young people and their families that have been signposted via PCT dieticians and GP referral units.
- Communicating positive messages on health, nutrition and the benefits of leading an active and healthy lifestyle.

Mr. Teears also advised of the Kickz programme, which was a weekly youth club held at the Washington Millennium Centre on Friday evenings for 11-16 years. The youth club was aimed at decreasing anti social behaviour in the area by providing the young people with activities to channel their energy in a positive way.

The Programme was half funded by the Police, with the other half due to expire, which has resulted in the request for funding in order to sustain services.

Jacqui Reeves of Washington Mind advised that they provide a range of preventative mental health services for adults aged 16 and over living in the City of Sunderland and for people experiencing or at risk of developing mental ill health or emotional distress and their carers.

Mr. Revely asked the Committee to consider if the current services address the priorities and if the interventions/services weren't enough, were enhanced services required? If so, what were the issues and which communities needed enhanced services?

Councillor I. Richardson raised concerns in relation to life expectancy figures for the Washington area and commented that he would like to see in twelve months evidence that the preventative services had made a difference.

Mr. Revely advised that there was a national push to address the issue and to focus more on prevention than cure. Results in terms of prevention measures put in place may be seen rather quickly but in terms of life expectancy, results would be determined over a longer period.

Councillor Miller commented that the Council were dealing with the cure much better but he still did not see a strategic educational link in addressing drug, alcohol abuse and so on.

Councillor Miller also commented that the way Council finances were distributed should be looked at, as the communities with issues were known, yet were not always addressed.

Mr. Revely commented that he hoped the next time the group was to sit down it could address particular areas that had been identified. There were a number of challenges, such as how we work together and need to work smarter, not just through prevention but to cut out duplication of services.

Mr. Parker enquired how the price increase to use Leisure Services in the City fit in with the prevention measures proposed.

Mr. Revely advised that the Council had introduced schemes such as free swimming for the under 16s and over 65s and provided extra staffing which had resulted in more people accessing facilities from outside of the area.

Ms. French advised that the pricing structure had been out for over a year and had seen a massive increase in attendances.

Mr. Parker responded that the increase had priced a lot of people out of using the services.

Mr. Revely advised that Mr. Parker had raised valid issues which could be taken on board when the Local Area Plans were refreshed.

Councillor Timmins commented that prevention was not only tackled by introducing services but by the individual taking responsibility and this could be done through promoting the services.

Councillor Trueman noted the will of particular departments to address the issues raised with the required funding but expressed concern at possible duplication of services.

In relation to the life expectancy figures, Ms. Crawford advised that Education was necessary but not sufficiently efficient. If better arrangements were in place for partners' signposting then figures on alcohol, smoking and obesity could start to decrease, whilst there was a significant amount of work which could be done to raise levels of life expectancy within the next ten years.

If work on intervention could be completed, results could take effect within two years, so there are lots of issues which could be addressed and tackled differently.

The Chairman commented that it was not just about financing but what the Council was actually doing in relation to the issues and the need for partners to step up and address/challenge each other on what services or facilities could be utilised with a need to put in place a series of solutions over a period of time.

The Chairman also wished to thank the voluntary sector and officers and looked forward to progress on the issue.

Mr. Revely suggested that those Members involved with the Healthy Sub Group help feed into the review.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- i) The Committee note the actions identified in Annex 1.
- ii) Agree for the proposal to be developed for allocation of SIB/SIP identified in Annex 1 of £15,000 to enable the continuation of the project between March 2010 to March 2011.
- iii) Review – To receive a further report on the personalisation Agenda in relation to encouraging independent living.

To consider the Washington profile with regards to health improvement and refresh the priorities under the theme to take account of the need to emphasise smoking, obesity and alcohol in relation to early mortality and inequalities in life expectancy and emotional health and wellbeing for both children, young people and adults in the Washington area.

- iv) Members of the Healthy Sub Group feed into the review.

Choosing a new provider for Barmston Medical Centre

Liz Allan, Head of Public Involvement, South of Tyne and Wear NHS Trust, was in attendance and with Ms. Nonnie Crawford informed the Committee that the contractual agreement for Barmston Medical Centre had been terminated and applications for a new provider were in the process of going out to tender.

As discussed at Overview and Scrutiny, it would go out for formal consultation but as this has not started yet, there was no feedback to report at this time. Ms. Allan proposed that they bring any feedback to the next meeting of the Committee in January.

Councillor Scaplehorn commented that many of the patients were not getting the information they required through the lack of permanent Doctors.

Ms. Allan advised that there will be at least one public event where people can express their views on what's important.

Ms. Crawford advised that a stable GP presence would be a main issue.

Councillor Cuthbert requested that Ward Councillors be consulted before the item came back to the Committee in January.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- i) a further meeting be arranged to consult with Members;
- ii) a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

Washington Area Committee Work Plan – Thematic Action Plans

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to update Members on the key actions from the Safe and Learning themes, which were discussed at the previous Area Committee meetings.

The report also included a number of proposals to be developed/reviewed for the Committee to agree upon as identified in Annex 2.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

In relation to the Safe Action Plan update, Action 24 – Conduct an analysis on how many private landlords there are in the area and the % of accredited landlords, with a view to encouraging non-accredited landlords onto the Sunderland Accredited Landlord Scheme.

Derek Welsh, Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal Manager, circulated a report updating the Committee on the situation (for copy report – see original minutes).

It was agreed that a further report be brought before the Committee in April.

Andy Neal, Interim YDG Manager, was in attendance and updated the Committee on the youth provision to be commissioned in 2010 (for additional information circulated at the meeting – see original minutes).

In response to Councillor Timmins' query, Mr. Neal advised that the contracts would be on a ward by ward basis and that they had not been able to deliver services to all young people across all wards so were now looking for specific targets to meet.

Councillor Timmins enquired if services would only be provided for people within the ward or if it would be available to everyone.

The Chairman advised that he was not aware anyone from other areas would be excluded from using a particular service and that there would be a level of flexibility.

Councillor Timmins also raised concerns that if funding was reduced for the Millennium Centre, it would not be enough for them to provide their current levels of service.

Councillor Cuthbert expressed concern at the large amount of extra paperwork that had been circulated during the meeting for consideration.

Helen Green, Creative Director of Arts Centre, Washington was in attendance with two representatives to update the Committee on the Youth Arts Provision in the Washington area.

Councillor I. Richardson suggested if the representatives would consider forming a Committee to which Councillors could be invited and to attend future Area Committees to help feed into reviews, etc.

Members wished to congratulate Ms. Green and representatives on the good work that they were achieving.

In relation to Annex 2a – Green Team Proposal, Groundworks, Councillor Miller suggested that the Committee needed more information on why the proposal required extra funding before an application be submitted.

Members agreed that further information should be supplied via a full report.

8. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Considered the Safe (Annex 1) report and determined the appropriate option(s) set out in the report.
- ii) Considered the Learning (Annex 2) report and agreed that an SIB application is received from Arts Centre, Washington for £25,000 at a future Area Committee meeting.
- iii) Receive a further report with additional details on reasons for extra funding on the Groundworks SIB application for £50,000.

Section 106 Agreements and Playspace Provision

The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of City Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to advise Members of the use of Section 106 Agreements by Sunderland City Council in the town planning process (particularly in relation to the provision of children's play space), to consider existing adopted Council policy on children's play space and how this determined the selection of sites to be funded by Section 106 contributions and finally to provide information on Section 106 contributions received and spent in Washington over the last 3 years.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Mattock, Technical Manager, Development Control and Julie Russell, Sport and Leisure Partnership Manager, presented the report and were on hand to answer Members' queries.

Councillor Cuthbert commented that he had raised concerns many times at Planning and Highways Committees that Members were not consulted on the details of Section 106 Agreements and that whilst it is a Citywide strategy, the 1km test did not take into consideration travel issues for children.

Ms. Russell advised that if there was an issue, the agreements are in the public domain and could be challenged at planning stage.

Councillor Cuthbert commented that when raised at Planning, Members are told that it is a directorate issue.

Ms. Russell advised that she was not aware of the issues raised and as an officer, if made aware, she would investigate.

Councillor Miller raised concerns that certain areas had not been earmarked for funding and the needs of the strategy were being put before the needs of the public.

Ms. Russell advised that where there has been a recognised gap in play provision, in general, the Council has reviewed decisions where appropriate, the Princess Anne Park development being an example of that.

Councillor I. Richardson commented that the play provision at Barmston was not being used efficiently and needed an infrastructure in place for safety.

The Chairman commented that one of the biggest concerns was that when the Section 106 money had been generated it went through planning process but Members were not given the exact details. Members would like a better input on where the money should go.

Mr. Mattock advised that the money could not be spent too far away from the site and toddler space would be closer still.

Ms. Russell advised that the provision needed to benefit the new residents.

Marion Marshall, Solicitor, advised that planning permission should not be granted on an application unless Section 106 money is satisfactorily tied into the development.

In response to Councillor Snowdon's query, Mr. Mattock advised that there have not been any instances where Section 106 money has been paid back to the developer.

In response to Councillor Wake's query, Ms. Russell advised that the money spent within the 1km stipulation is "as the crow flies" but the Council does try to think of access roads and so on.

Councillor Cuthbert suggested that if Members wished to raise objections at Development Control meetings perhaps there was a need for a representative of City Services to be present who could be challenged.

Ms. Russell advised that if Members wished to refine the details, then that may be the opportunity to do so.

9. RESOLVED that further investigations be made for a representative from City Services to attend Development Control Committee meetings when there are queries in relation to Section 106 Agreements and also into Ward Councillors receiving Notification of Planning Applications.

Area Committee Handbook

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) for Members to consider and agree the adoption of the Area Committee Handbook 2009/10 to reflect the new arrangements and to facilitate the operations of the Area Committees with their partners.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

10. RESOLVED that the Area Committee agree the adoption of the Area Committee Handbook 2009/10.

Financial Statements and Funding Requests

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to outline current expenditure from the Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB), Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and Community Chest and applications for funding from these budgets in order to support new initiatives, which would benefit the area and the delivery of the Local Area Plans.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

11. RESOLVED that the Committee -

- i) approve the 15 proposals for support from the 2009/10 Community Chest as detailed in Annex 1;
- ii) approve £11,880 as a contribution from the 2009/10 SIB budget and a further £11,880 from the 2010/11 SIB budget, subject to Washington Area Committee approving second year of funding in 2010/2011 for Tyne and wear Fire and Rescue to deliver the Phoenix Project; and
- iii) approve £2,445 as a contribution from the 2009/10 SIP budget to Sunderland City Council for the Blue House Lane drop kerbed scheme;
- iv) note the financial statement for Area Committee funding for 2009/10;
- v) note the live update report on the eleven projects that were still operating and receiving SIB funding, totalling £192,599.

Review of the Local Area Plans (LAP)

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide the Area Committee with details of the review of the Local Area Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Trueman commented that if any of the issues needed to be refreshed, that she could be contacted outside of the meeting.

12. RESOLVED to note the review and to take part in the self assessments and Members' surveys.

Members Visit to Washington Multi Purpose Centre

The Executive Director, Health, Housing and Adult Services, submitted a report (copy circulated) informing of Members' recent visit to the Washington Multi Purpose Centre to understand the current range of facilities and services and to meet with service users and carers.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Chamberlin requested if Members could be invited to future carer groups.

Ailsa Martin requested Members indicate their availability through the Carers Centre.

13. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) J. KELLY,
Chairman.