

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE, CONCORD on THURSDAY, 21st JUNE, 2012 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Scaplehorn in the Chair

Councillors Farthing, Fletcher, Kelly, Lauchlan, F. Miller, G. Miller, Padgett, D. E. Snowdon, Thompson, D. Trueman and Walker.

John Rostron	-	City Services
Mike Poulter	-	City Services
Charlotte Burnham	-	Chief Executives
Karon Purvis	-	Chief Executives
Jane Eland	-	Children's Services
Andrea Seymour	-	Commercial and Corporate Services
Paul Wood	-	Commercial and Corporate Services
Alan Caddick	-	Health Housing and Adult Services
Inspector Paul Stewart	-	Police
Colin McCartney	-	Gentoo
Alaine Robson	-	SNCBC

Members of the Washington Community.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Lauchlan, D. Snowdon, H. Trueman and Williams. Neil Revely, James Third, Jacqui Reeves, Sarann Valentine, Lorraine Hughes, Jim Kennedy and Phil McAloon.

Declarations of Interest

Item 04 – Financial Statement and Proposals for funding

Councillors Fletcher and Kelly declared a personal and prejudicial interests in the Community Chest as Governors of Usworth Grange Primary School and left the room during consideration of the application

Councillor Padgett declared a personal interest in the Community Chest as an attendee of Barmston & District Community Forum.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 26th April, 2012

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 26th April, 2012 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Setting the Scene – Strengthening the Area Governance Arrangements

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to outline improved changes to the City Council's area governance arrangements and supporting practices, as part of the wider review of the Executive and Committee arrangements agreed by Annual Council on 16 May 2012-06-22.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Karon Purvis, Area Officer presented the report and was on hand to answer Members queries.

Councillor Kelly enquired if there was any way for Portfolio Holders to feed into the Area Board meetings.

The Chairman advised that any Member would be welcome to attend the Board meetings so there was a mechanism for Portfolio holders to feed into, if they so wished.

Charlotte Burnham, Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements advised that as the meetings did not involve any decision making powers, Cabinet Members would be able to sit on the Boards if they so wished.

2. RESOLVED that the Area Committee

- i) Received the report outlining the improved changes to its operating framework.
- ii) Approved the membership of Place and People boards as outlined in 3.3 of the report.

Determining the Area Committee's Priorities for 2012/13

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to determine the Area Committee's key areas of priority for the year ahead, which would form the basis of the Committee's Local Area Plan for 2012/13.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Purvis presented the report and requested Members input on the proposed key priorities to adopt.

Councillor Dianne Snowdon suggested that the issue of Health may need to be added as a priority.

Councillor Kelly commented that he felt there would be no difficulty in adding this into their works.

John Rostron, Area Community Manager referred to Paragraph 4.4 and commented that the Voluntary Community Sector representatives had wished to reinforce the point to Members that the early intervention services provided in Washington were the reason the statistics were being kept low and asked that this be taken into consideration when deciding priorities and taking the work plan forward.

Mr Rostron also requested that the Voluntary Community Sector be engaged earlier so that Members could make a more informed decision.

Councillor G. Miller commented that discussions had taken place in the past on the issue of Health and it had been decided then to keep a watching brief on the matter. Councillor Miller did not think we should add it as another priority as the Committee already had four which would be challenging pieces of work to tackle and this issue should be “parked” at present as it was a big topic to consider.

Councillor Farthing referred to paragraph 2.4 of the report in relation to the Washington State of the Area debate and felt it was a very good event which gave people the opportunity to contribute and was something which needed to be repeated.

In relation to the Health issues, Councillor Farthing commented that Public Health services were in the process of being transferred and this should be a matter for Scrutiny’s consideration before it came to Area Committee.

Councillor Kelly suggested the issue be built into the VCS Workshop so that it could still be discussed and support could be given to some of the smaller VCS groups.

Ms Purvis advised that at the last workshop, Members had identified an influencing role via the Washington Area People Board.

The Chairman commented that the added bonus of the new structure showed that whilst Health may not be one of the Committees priorities, it could be considered by the Area Board.

Mr Rostron commented that there were a number of issues not being looked at such as Self Harm and support for carers and felt that the Voluntary Sector and Members at a strategic level needed to engage with partners so that these issues don’t get lost.

3. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Considered the issues raised by residents at the State of the Area Debate and the VCS Network and agreed the priorities for 2012/13 year ahead, which would form the basis of their Local Area Plan and

- ii) Agreed to hold a further workshop to determine the detailed Washington Area Committee LAP work plan for 2012/13, as referred to in paragraph 5.1 of the report.

Strategic Initiative Budget (SIB) 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) and Community Chest to support initiatives that would benefit the area.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

4. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Noted the financial statement set out in Section 2.1 of the report
- ii) Approved the 16 proposals for support from the 2012/13 Community Chest as detailed in Annex 1 of the report.

In relation to the Area Arrangements, the Chairman advised that Members had discussed the proposal of changing the Community Chest Panel meetings from a six week cycle to a monthly cycle and that it was Members wish to keep the meetings at a six week cycle.

Ms Purvis advised that the instruction to move to a monthly cycle for meetings had been requested by Councillor Gofton.

Councillor Kelly suggested that as the instruction had been made by a Portfolio holder, that the chair speaks with Councillor Gofton to discuss the request of the Washington Area Committee to continue to work to the six weekly cycle of meetings.

Ms Burnham advised that she would report the Committees views back for consideration.

Councillor G. Miller commented that the six week cycle had worked well for the Committee and changing to a four week cycle would increase the number of meetings in Members diaries, which was already proving difficult.

Ms Burnham commented that she understood Members concerns and she would feed those raised into the process.

Councillor Kelly suggested that if the continuation of the six weekly cycle became a problem then the issue could be looked at again.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting

(Signed) B. SCAPLEHORN,
Chairman.