

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at the COMMUNITY FIRE STATION, GLOVER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WASHINGTON on WEDNESDAY, 4TH OCTOBER, 2006 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Sleightholme in the Chair

Councillors Fletcher, Grey, Miller, J. Stephenson, W. Stephenson, Trueman, J. Walker, P. Walker, Whalen, B. Williams and L. Williams

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Macknight, Timmins and Young.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 5th July, 2006

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 5th July, 2006 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Notes of the Washington Pride Meeting held on Friday, 28th July, 2006

2. RESOLVED that the notes of the Washington Pride meeting held on Friday, 28th July, 2006 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Presentation from Northumbria Police on Crime Rates Relating to the Washington Area

Inspector Rea and Sergeant Robinson were in attendance. Inspector Rea briefed Members on crime rates relating to the Washington Area. Crime rates for the period past year which were as follows:-

Washington North:

Burglary had increased by 6%
Burglary other than dwellings had decreased by 26%
Damage to property had decreased by 21%
Theft from motor vehicles had decreased by 5%
Violent crime had increased by 7%
Crime overall had decreased by 14.5%

Washington South:

Violent crime had increased by 10%
Robbery had decreased by 50%
Burglary/dwellings had increased by 27%
Burglary other than dwellings had increased by 6.4%
Thefts from vehicles had decreased by 26%
Theft of vehicles had increased by 4%
Crime overall had increased by 3.6%

Washington West:

Violent crime was up by 3.3%
Robbery had increased 33% (4 offences as opposed to 3 offences)
Burglary/dwellings had increased by 8%
Theft from vehicles had decreased by 18%
Theft of vehicles had decreased by 46%
Overall decrease of 0.15%

Washington East:

Violent crime had increased by 15%
Robbery remained static
Burglary/dwelling had decreased by 1.2%
Burglary (other) had decreased by 11.2%
Damage to property had increased by 6.7%
Theft of vehicles was down by 37%
Overall decrease of 1.8%

Washington Central:

Violent crime had increased by 17.9%
Robbery had decreased by 25%
Burglary/dwellings had decreased by 32%
Burglary other than dwellings had increased by 72%
Theft from vehicles had decreased by 32%

Inspector Rea advised that the main problem for the Washington Area Command was burglary of dwellings which had increased by approximately 13-14%. Inspector Rea advised that this figure must be looked at in context with last year's statistics which had been very good.

Inspector Rea explained that the definition of violent crime had now been amended to include a wider range of offences. The new definition of violent crime now included all crimes within the categories of public order offences (where actual harm may not have occurred at all). This goes some way to

explaining why, for the purpose of the statistics, violence appears to have increased in some wards. Violent disorder can relate to the threat of violence, disorderly conduct and the use of threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour.

Councillor Trueman expressed concern over the stories that were being told regarding a local gang the 'Donwell Dogs'.

Councillor Stephenson questioned why instances of burglary had gone up and whether this was as a result of soft targets or renowned exponents back on the street. In response, Inspector Rea advised that a certain degree of complacency had arisen amongst members of the public as a result of good publicity surrounding crime rates. People leaving doors, garages, sheds etc. open were an easy target for thieves.

Councillor Stephenson enquired whether genuine violent attacks had increased. Inspector Rea advised that targeted areas do see a dramatic decrease in violent crimes, operations in Concord being one such example. However, when an operation is withdrawn from the area crime numbers tend to rise once more. It is very much a balancing act and direction of resources. However, the general perception is that violent attacks are lower.

In response to a question from Councillor Williams regarding the '101' number, Inspector Rea confirmed that the service had been very effective and had been heavily utilised.

At this point in the meeting Karen Gillard, Area Regeneration Officer, updated Members on the Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving Initiative (LMAPS). The LMAPS act as a key local area delivery function and include a core group of agencies such as the Police. The LMAPS have important implications for the Area Committees which will provide a framework for targets. A further update will be provided to the Committee in due course.

Councillor Whalen queried the effect erratic crime statistics and the methods of collation had on morale. Inspector Rea informed the Committee that the fluctuating figures were frustrating. If there has been a huge success in tackling a specific crime this can be a hard act to follow. Moreover, if resources are focused on a certain area, other localities or types of crime are neglected.

Satellite navigation systems installed in cars had contributed to an increase in theft from motor vehicles.

In response to concerns raised by Councillor Trueman regarding the local gang the Donwell Mad Dogs, Sergeant Robinson addressed the Committee. Sergeant Robinson advised that ASBOs had been placed on the ring leaders and it appeared a number of youths were latching on to the 'Dogs' banner and circulating rumours of horrendous stories. However, organised crime is not as prevalent as perceived.

3. RESOLVED that the information from Inspector Rea and Sergeant Robinson be received and noted.

Tackling Social Exclusion Through Transport (TSETT) Initiative Dropped Crossings and Raised Kerbs

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to request the Committee consider nominating locations for inclusion in the TSETT Dropped Crossings and Raised Kerbs Initiative.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Karen Gillard, Area Regeneration Officer, presented the report.

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Washington Leisure Centre : Summer Holiday Programme 2006

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise the Area Committee of the success of the Summer Holiday Promotion.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Tony Mullen, Centre Manager, presented the report and advised Members that the Programme for 2006 had engaged 100,000 residents and visitors in activities.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Washington Leisure Centre : Summer Holiday Programme 2006

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise the Area Committee with regard to a partnership that has recently been developed between Washington Leisure Centre and Children's Services, to contribute towards the Government agenda of improving school attendances.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Tony Mullen, Centre Manager, presented the report and advised the Committee that the Leisure Centre was currently working with Children's Services to provide an incentive for children to strive towards excellent school attendance. The Centre was providing 30 swimming passes, so that families from all areas of Sunderland can access the City's swimming facilities.

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Food in Schools Programme

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report to advise the Area Committee of the exciting work undertaken by the Food in Schools team as part of the citywide strategy for the DfES transitional school meals funding.

John Rostron, Community and Cultural Services, presented the report and informed Members that the programme will enable schools to improve the health of the school community, achieve the National Healthy Schools Standard, provide food education allowing pupils to make informed choices about diet and promote working partnerships between schools, pupils and parents.

Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of operating closed door policies and the choice of food available.

7. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Sunderland International Kite Festival

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to appraise Members of the extremely successful Sunderland International Kite Festival 2006.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Sue Henderson Project Development Manager, updated Members about the attraction.

8. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Adult Social Services – Ward-Based Data Analysis – February 2006

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Members with ward-based intelligence about key areas in Adult Social Services. The report looked at information that covers the cycle from referrals of clients aged 18 and over through the assessment process to services delivered.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Paul Allen, Research and Performance Management Officer, presented the report.

9. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Regeneration Issues Report : Feedback on Projects Previously Funded Through Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB)

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Information to the Area Committee on expenditure from the Strategic Initiatives Budget on projects it has previously funded.

- Sunderland Astronomical Society
- Rhyme Around the Nursery

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman introduced Beverly Quinn in respect of Rhyme Around the Nursery.

10. RESOLVED that the feedback report be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) Regeneration Issues Report

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) on the proposed allocation of Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) funding to support the following initiatives of benefit to the area.

- (i) £7,500 from the 2006/07 budget as a contribution to re-roofing the 1st Washington Scout Hut.
- (ii) £3,100 from the 1006/07 budget as a contribution to access improvements at North East Aircraft Museum.
- (iii) the virement of £5,585 for the ISIS project.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman introduced Doug McIntyre in respect of Washington Scout Hut and David Line in respect of the Aircraft Museum who provided Members with a brief presentation on their application. Karen Gillard presented the virement for the ISIS project.

Members having welcomed the projects, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that approval be given to the granting of:-

- (i) £7,500 from the 2006/07 budget as a contribution to re-roofing the 1st Washington Scout Hut.

- (ii) £3,100 from the 1006/07 budget as a contribution to access improvements at North East Aircraft Museum.
- (iii) the virement of £5,585 for the ISIS project.

Strategic Initiatives Budget : 2006/2007 Ward-Based Community Chest

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated)

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) on two projects recommended for support from the 2006/2007 Community Chest Scheme in respect of Washington North and Washington South Wards.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

12. RESOLVED that approval be given to the two projects recommended for support from the 2006/2007 budget with a total of £1,450 as detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

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

(Signed) D. SLEIGHTHOLME,
Chairman.