

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 5th OCTOBER, 2015 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors Emerson, English, Forbes, E. Gibson, Kay, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, O'Neil, Price and Scanlan

Also Present:-

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| Hazel Clark | - | East Area VCS Network Representative |
| Alan Duffy | - | Head of Operations, Gentoo |
| David Groark | - | Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Adrian Jackson | - | Station Manager, Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service |
| Matthew Jackson | - | Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council |
| Sarah Reed | - | Assistant Chief Executive & Area Lead Executive, Sunderland City Council |
| Gillian Robinson | - | Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council |
| Nicky Rowland | - | Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council |
| Beverley Scanlon | - | Head of Educational Attainment & Lifelong Learning, Sunderland City Council |
| Jamie Southwell | - | Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police |
| Nicol Trueman | - | Area Community Officer, Sunderland City Council |
| Jeremy Wicking | - | Senior Media Officer, Sunderland City Council |

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillors M. Dixon, Farr and Wood together with Paula Hunt, Jen McKevitt and Alan Pitchford

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 8th June, 2015

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th June, 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

VCS Area Network Progress Report

Hazel Clark provided the Committee with a verbal update on the work of the VCS Network since the last meeting of the Area Committee. She advised that there had been presentations delivered in relation to the Raich Carter Centre, the Live Life Well project, ICOS, and Make Your Way. The youth development team had been on visits to identify best practice and how to operate the service from a centralised location. There were concerns over this as there had been a lot of work done in the local area and moving to a centralised location could damage the relationship which had been developed with young people in the area. There were also concerns that Members had not been made aware of the visits.

Beverley Scanlon advised that there was consultation being undertaken. There were three questionnaires available; one aimed at providers; one for young people; and a third aimed at adults including parents, Members and local residents. The plans were to look at the future of youth services. The services on offer from other organisations including churches, schools and uniformed groups would be looked at and any gaps in provision would be identified. Over recent years there had been changes in the way that youth providers were funded and there was a need to look at how to support the organisations.

The consultation would last for 4 weeks and then a report would be taken to Cabinet in November. The best practice visits had been undertaken to allow officers to see how other places were working well. There had not been any decisions made yet. The consultation had gone live earlier in the day and she agreed to ensure that Members were informed in advance in the future.

The Chairman asked all Members to go online and complete the consultation questionnaire.

Sarah Reed stated that it was not satisfactory that Members had not been informed of the consultation in advance and she agreed to look into this to ensure that it did not happen again. With regard to the reorganisation of services she advised that there would be a reduction in the Council budget of around £120million over the next five years; there would be difficult choices to make around the organisation of services as the Council would still need to provide statutory services.

Ms Clark then stated that now that the VCS network was aware of the questionnaire they were asking people to complete it.

The Chairman thanked Ms Clark for her report and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the VCS Network progress report be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

Jamie Southwell introduced the crime figures for the area. Within the city centre and Millfield sector there had been an increase in crime of 4 percent; the majority of the additional offences being acquisitive crime such as shoplifting, thefts and low level assaults. Across the force area command there had been an increase in crime of 15 percent so although there had been an increase in the area it was still performing better than other areas were.

At the start of August there had been a spate of burglaries of dwellings; some had been sneak-in burglaries during the day while others had seen UPVC doors and windows being forced open. There had been a number of arrests including the arrest of a suspect inside of a property and the arrests of 3 people who were in possession of stolen items. Despite this spate of offences the number of burglaries on dwellings had reduced by 26 percent which was 20 fewer offences than last year. Burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 33 percent, which was 34 fewer offences.

Shoplifting had reduced by 11 percent which was 49 fewer offences; this area was the only area in the wider force area which had seen a reduction in shoplifting offences during this period.

Adult Antisocial behaviour had reduced by 7 percent while youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 13 percent. There had been some issues in Mowbray Park however there had been work done with youth workers and with the Council's Responsive Local Services team to reduce the issue.

The use of mountain bikes by officers had increased and had been beneficial in helping officers to get around the area. There was also work being done with students to help ensure their safety following a couple of assaults on students; it was not known whether these were random assaults or whether the victims had been targeted because they were students.

Inspector Southwell then presented the crime figures for the East Area. Total crime had increased by 30 percent which was 97 additional incidents. This was a similar level of performance to other sectors in the force area. Violent crime had increased by 33 percent; in most of these incidents the offender was known to the victim. Alcohol played a part in a number of the incidents and a lot of the offences were related to domestic violence.

Theft from motor vehicles had reduced by 14 percent however there was still a problem with people leaving items on display which then led to opportunist thieves smashing windows.

Burglary of dwellings had reduced by 13 percent; there had been some issues in the long streets area of Hendon and there were now regular police patrols in this area. Burglary of properties other than dwellings had increased by 11 percent which was 5 more crimes.

Antisocial behaviour had increased with there being an 11 percent increase in adult antisocial behaviour.

Councillor McClennan queried whether Inspector Southwell was aware of an incident of racist verbal abuse against a family living in Hendon. Inspector Southwell confirmed that he was aware of the family and the abuse they had been suffering; he agreed to look into the matter further.

Councillor McClennan then referred to concerns which had been raised at the PACT meetings relating to the police's inability to chase motorcycles and the problems that antisocial motorcyclists were causing in the long streets area; she queried whether it would be possible for the Area Committee to support the provision of motorcycles to the police. Inspector Southwell advised that it was a force policy not to pursue motorcycles unless air support was available due to the dangers involved. Air support was not as readily available as it used to be as the force did not have its own helicopter anymore. Alternative techniques such as identifying riders using CCTV footage from petrol stations were used instead.

Councillor Mordey referred to complaints from residents of the long streets regarding people walking along the streets knocking over the front boundary walls of the houses. Nicky Rowland agreed to look into this.

Councillor Mordey then asked what was happening with regard to the police patrols in Mowbray Park. Inspector Southwell advised that there were PCSOs in Mowbray Park every day and that dispersal notices were issued to clear people out of the park who should not be there.

Councillor Scanlan queried whether the gates in Mowbray Park were now being locked on a night. David Groark advised that there had been a communication failure between the Council and the security contractor ISS. The gate closest to the museum was a bespoke gate with a bespoke locking system which suffered from reliability issues; after the gate had been fixed the guard employed by ISS had not been informed that the gate was now lockable and needed to be locked on a night. Steps had been taken to ensure that these failings would not happen again.

Councillor Emerson stated that he had attended a meeting between residents and Durham Police relating to the Coast Watch scheme they were operating which had seen engagement with residents and a phone number provided so that any issues such as antisocial motorcyclists or flytipping on the coast could be reported. He asked whether Northumbria Police had any plans to implement such an initiative in the East Area. Inspector Southwell agreed to find out; he asked that any issues be reported and advised that there were

some cameras which could be installed should a problem hotspot be identified.

3. RESOLVED that the update from Northumbria Police be noted.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Adrian Jackson introduced the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. He advised that during the period 1st July to 30th September there had been no fatalities in the Tyne and Wear area. There had been 7 accidental dwelling fires in the East Area during the reporting period; this was a reduction of 1 fire when compared with last year. There had been 9 deliberate primary fires which was an increase of 6 over last year; 5 of these had been within the Hendon ward and were mostly related to bin fires spreading to properties and also fires in Houses in Multiple Occupation.

There had been 5 deliberate vehicle fires, 4 in Hendon and 1 in Ryhope. This was a reduction of 1 compared with last year. It was believed that the fires were linked and there was a likely perpetrator who had previously been imprisoned; at this time there was no proof that it was this offender who was responsible.

There had been 53 secondary fires; this was a reduction of 9 compared with last year. There had been 21 fewer wheelie bin fires than last year.

Since the targeted response vehicle had been introduced in September there had been a 60 percent reduction in the number of secondary fires. There was a focus on antisocial behaviour related fires and it was hoped that this downward trend would continue.

Councillor Emerson referred to the fact that there had been a house fire in Thomas Street which had left residents feeling concerned; he asked whether the cause of the fire was known. Mr Jackson agreed to find out this information.

Councillor Mordey stated that there had been a fire at his home. He thanked the fire service for their quick response and also for the work they had done following the fire which had included fire prevention advice for neighbours.

4. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service be noted.

Gentoo Update

Alan Duffy introduced the update from Gentoo. He advised that the last of the properties in Doxford Park had now been demolished, bringing the total number of demolished properties to 860. There had been £51.3million spent in the area and a number of the schemes had now been completed. The extra

care scheme at Addington Vale had been completed and the supported housing and bungalows at Knightwood were also completed; the final 12 residents had now moved from Croftside House to Knightwood and Aldi were now on the site of Croftside House to construct their new supermarket. The phase of development which Gentoo were currently constructing would be made available for sale.

In Ryhope there had been 143 new houses completed and £16.3million had been spent. The majority of the houses were available as affordable rents. There had been two houses had not been demolished and these had been refurbished. The work was now completed and all of the new homes had been let.

The modernisation works were continuing on the high rise blocks in Hendon. There were 50 properties available for decanting residents into during the works; the 1st floor of Darcey Court had been completed and handed back to residents. It was expected that the block would be completed by March 2016.

Councillor Ball queried whether the 14 bungalows in Doxford Park had been taken; she was advised that all of the bungalows had either been let or sold in the summer.

5. RESOLVED that the update from Gentoo be noted.

East Sunderland Area Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the East Sunderland Area Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the work of the Place Board against the priorities set out in the work plan for 2015/16.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor E. Gibson, Chair of the Place Board, introduced the report and advised that the work done by the board was set out in the table at paragraph 2.1 and the work plan was set out at annex 1. She drew Members attention to the recommendation that £50,000 of SIB funding; £10,000 per ward; be approved to allow Members to address issues within their ward which had been identified following a tour of the area. It was also recommended that £5,000 of SIB funding; £1,000 per ward; be approved to fund the work associated with research into barriers to accessing green space.

Councillor Mordey welcomed the recommendation that SIB funding be awarded; he felt that the funds would allow Councillors to help develop lasting legacies within their wards. He stated that he wanted to see community groups become more involved in taking responsibility for projects in their area as it was possible that in the future the Area Committee may not be able to award as much funding as it currently did.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The East Sunderland Area Place Board Work Plan as set out in Annex 1 be noted.
- b. The board's recommendation to align £50,000 of SIB funding for Councillors to develop capital projects up to £10,000 per ward and approve £5,000 of SIB to enable the Be Active Survey to be carried out, which both contribute towards the area priority 'Develop stronger sustainable and well used community assets and facilities' as set out in the Area Budget Report be noted.
- c. The positive impact the role of the externally funded Hostel Co-ordinator had in the community be noted.
- d. The progress of the All Age Friendly Environment and the Making Waste Useful programmes be noted.

East Sunderland Area People Board Progress Report

The Chairman of the East Sunderland Area People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on the work of the People Board against the priorities set out in the work plan for 2015/16.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Marshall, Chair of the People Board, introduced the report and advised that the work undertaken so far was set out in the work plan at annex 1 and also in the table set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

Councillor Mordey stated that he felt the camping exchange programme was an excellent idea and queried how the programme would work. Ms Trueman advised that it was based on a project which had been operating successfully in Durham. It was intended to be low cost and had started out taking place in school grounds. Once confidence in the project had increased the children had then started to go camping in the grounds of other schools; locations such as Derwent Hill and Beamish were now being looked at. The low cost enabled more children to participate in the project. Currently only primary schools would be involved however it was possible for the programme to be extended to secondary schools as well.

Hazel Clark advised that the youth projects had done a similar scheme a few years ago and that it had been a very popular scheme.

Councillor McClennan stated that there should be links between this project and the uniformed groups in the area. After children had been given a taste of camping there may be an increased desire to join uniformed groups. Ms Trueman agreed to look into the potential for linking the project to the uniformed groups.

Councillor Mordey then queried the inclusion of Groundworks in the organisations which had submitted expressions of interest; all of the other organisations were schools. Ms Trueman advised that schools had been approached however not all of them had the resources available;

Groundworks North East had expressed an interest in helping to deliver the project.

Councillor McClennan referred to the reducing demand on A&E Services priority and stated that hostel residents were often users of A&E Services. This was in part due to the prevalence of alcohol and drug problems among residents. She felt that there was a need to have medical services based within hostels; most of the hostels had a medical room however GPs were reluctant to hold surgeries there. A lot of the hostel residents were not registered with a GP and a number of the residents would be unlikely to attend appointments.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The updates on the Community Connectors Model, Camping Exchange, Reducing Demand on A&E Services, Leisure Partnership and the Live Life Well Service be noted.
- b. The East Sunderland Area People Board Work Plan as set out in Annex 1 be noted.
- c. The People Board's support and recommendation to approve £11,000 of SIB project proposals for the area priority 'Upskilling Volunteers' and support the establishment of the community e-learning management systems as set out in the Area Budget Report be noted.

Area Budgets Report

The Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statement which detailed the current position on progress in relation to allocations of SIB and Community Chest funding and which sought Members approval of proposals for funding.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Trueman introduced the report and drew Members attention to the SIB financial statement set out in paragraph 2.1; there had been three applications approved since the last meeting using the emergency procedures and there had been funds returned to the SIB budget from projects which had underspent.

The funding for the Community Leaders scheme would be ending in December 2015; there was still a remaining balance of £12,586 aligned to the budget to be allocated to projects

The Safety on our Streets project which had funded transport costs for children attending schools in the East Area to attend Safetyworks had now ended; there had been an underspend of £3,130. The project had been a huge success and had exceeded all of its targets with 756 pupils benefiting from the project when it was predicted that 580 children would benefit.

Members were asked to give consideration to the extension of the project for another year to utilise the unspent funds.

Members discussed the extension of the project and agreed that the project should continue to fund transport costs until July 2016 by utilising the unspent funds.

Ms Trueman also advised Members of the remaining Community Chest balances and the 25 project approvals between June 2015 and September 2015. This was set out at Annex 2 to the report. There had also been funding returned and the total remaining Community Chest balance to be granted for the area was £41,420.79.

Councillor Price queried why there was such a large underspend on the Holiday Hunger Scheme. Ms Robinson advised that a full evaluation of the project was being undertaken and the findings would be presented to the November meeting of the board.

Councillor Mordey stated that the Seagull Scheme had been a huge success and there were still a reduced number of seagulls in the park. He felt that it was a worthwhile project and there was a need to look at having a similar project in place next year. He also queried whether the £50,000 of SIB funding that the Place Board recommended be aligned to allowing each ward to develop large scale projects up to £10,000 per ward would be added to the Community Leaders budget to allow this project to continue or whether it would be a separate pot of money. Ms Trueman advised that the proposal had come about as a result of the tour of the area which had been undertaken; it was feasible for the funding to be used to top up the Community Leaders project budget and extend the project. She agreed to liaise with board Members to determine what the most appropriate course of action would be.

Councillor Kay stated that he did not believe that the Seagulls scheme had been a success. It had improved the situation in the park but had simply just moved the gulls to different parts of the city centre. He felt that there was a need for alternate measures such as the use of mechanical bird scarers and the installation of nets and spikes on properties would provide a better long term solution. Mr Groark advised that seagulls were an issue and that the options for bird-proofing buildings had been explored. There was the issue that once a building was protected the seagulls just moved onto the next unprotected building; there was a need to remove the food sources as this was the best way to discourage the bird population. There had been less cleaning required in the park since the scheme took place and he had not received any reports of increased issues in other areas.

Councillor Mordey asked that Marion Dixon be invited to the next meeting where this issue was discussed so that an environmental health perspective on the matter could be provided.

8. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statements set out in sections 2 and 3 be noted.
- b. The two SIB funding requests for £16,000 from the 2015/16 SIB budget, as set out in annex 1, be approved.
- c. £50,000 be aligned from the 2015/16 SIB budget to enable Place Board Members to develop large scale projects up to £10,000 per ward (subject to full application, consultation and evaluation)
- d. The 25 Community Chest approvals from the 2015/16 budget as set out at annex 2 be noted.
- e. The unspent funds from the Safety on our Streets project be used to fund the project for another year.

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the East Sunderland Area for the period 1st September to 22nd September 2015 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

9. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(Signed) E. BALL,
Chairman.