

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 24th NOVEMBER, 2008 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Wares in the Chair

Councillors Ball, P. Dixon, M. Forbes, Paul Maddison, T. Martin, Mordey, O'Connor M. Smith and Wood

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Peter Maddison.

Minutes of the last meeting held on 29th September, 2008

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 29th September, 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

Item 6 – Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report

Councillor Paul Maddison declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Grangetown Community Association and left the room prior to discussion of the item.

Councillor T. Martin declared a personal interest in the matter as a member of the East Community Association.

Item 9 – Sport and Leisure in East Sunderland

Councillor Ball declared a personal interest as a Director of the Raich Carter Centre.

Councillor Mordey declared a personal interest as a Director of the Raich Carter Centre.

Presentation from Northumbria Police on Crime Rates Relating to the East Sunderland Area and Minutes of the Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving Groups (LMAPS)

Inspector Neal Craig presented the figures for the Millfield and St. Michael's areas. He advised that in Millfield all crime had reduced by 48 offences which was a reduction of 5 percent. In St. Michael's there had been an increase of 13 offences giving a rise of 2 percent on last year.

Criminal damage had increased by 13 percent in Millfield and reduced by 14 percent in St. Michael's; which equated to 27 and 23 offences respectively.

There were 19 violent crimes in Millfield, a decrease of 10 percent on last year while in St. Michael's there had been 17 offences, an increase of 17 percent.

There had been a reduction of 27 percent or 44 offences for vehicle crime in Millfield while in St. Michael's there had been an increase of 62 percent which was 59 offences.

In Millfield there had been an increase in Burglaries of 14 percent for dwellings and 62 percent for other properties, this was 7 and 23 offences respectively. In St. Michael's the figures were a 62 percent reduction for dwellings and a 14.6 percent reduction for other properties, these equated to 41 offences and 6 offences respectively.

Robbery had increased by one offence, 14 percent, in Millfield while in St Michael's there had been 7 offences which was the same as last year.

Inspector Keith Goldsmith presented the figures for Hendon and Ryhope and advised that empty properties were causing a problem in the area and that the percentages for Robberies made the figures look worse than they were.

All Crime in Hendon had increased by 0.25 percent, an increase of 4 crimes on last year. In Ryhope there had been a decrease of 2 percent which was 10 fewer crimes. The detection rate for all crime in the area was 33.6 percent

In Hendon there had been 46 fewer offences of Criminal Damage, a reduction of 20 percent compared with last year. In Ryhope there had been an increase of 2 offences which equated to an increase of less than 1 percent

Violent crime had reduced by 3 percent in Hendon, a decrease of 5 crimes. In Ryhope there had been a total of 93 crimes, the same as the previous year.

There had been a 15 percent, 14 crime decrease in Vehicle Crime in Hendon while there had been 4 more crimes in Ryhope, an increase of 2 percent.

Burglary from Dwellings had increased by 88 percent, 30 offences in Hendon while it had increased by 4 percent, 2 offences in Ryhope.

There had been 20 more Burglaries from properties other than dwellings in Hendon, an increase of 36 percent. In Ryhope there had been a decrease of 45 percent which was 19 fewer crimes.

Robberies had increased by 75 percent for the area however this was only 3 offences. In Hendon there had been 1 more offence which was an increase of 100 percent while in Ryhope the increase had been 200 percent, 2 more crimes.

The chairman agreed that the percentages sounded bad.

Councillor Wood commented that this was the second time in a row that there had been an increase in crime in the St. Michael's area and asked what was being done about violent crime as this increase was a concern. Inspector Craig advised that people's perceptions of violent crime were different to what was actually classed as violent crime. Harassment and verbal abuse would be classed as violent crime and cases of actual physical violence were low however all violent crime was an ongoing concern.

In response to further questions from Councillor Wood, Inspector Craig advised that vehicle crime was a big problem, especially in the run up to Christmas and there was an operation running to combat vehicle crime. Students were seriously affected by vehicle crime and the crime prevention message needed to be spread. Talking signs were being used to advise people to secure their vehicles and remove valuables, especially satellite navigation systems, from the vehicles. He also advised that the detection rate in the East area was the highest in Sunderland at 45 percent for all crime.

Councillor O'Connor advised of the Anti Social Behaviour problems in the area at the bottom of Hylton Road and advised that residents and shop owners were concerned that the problems were being caused by the tenants of the flats above the shops. Inspector Craig advised that the situation was being monitored as part of the LMAPS and that a housing provider from outside of the area had let the flats to problem tenants and was now looking for ways to sort the problems. Fire regulations would allow for the tenants to be evicted as there had been breaches of the regulations by the tenants. He added that it was unfortunate that there was a high concentration of problem tenants in the area.

Councillor T. Martin commented that in Hendon selective licensing of landlords was being investigated and that it was a voluntary scheme, this could be a possible option in the Millfield area.

Councillor P. Dixon queried the increase in Burglaries of properties other than dwellings and Inspector Craig advised that there had been a series of burglaries of commercial properties in the Hylton Road area. It was believed that there was a small group of offenders responsible and that they were breaking into the properties by breaking into the vacant flats above and then breaking into the shops through the ceiling. The LMAPS group were working with business owners to get motion sensitive cameras installed into vulnerable premises.

With regards to the LMAPS minutes, Councillor Wood advised that a site visit had been undertaken in the Ashbrooke area to look at the parking problems and he advised that there were plans for double yellow lines to be implemented. Inspector Craig advised that double yellow lines were being looked at as a shorter term solution with the long term solution being residents only parking.

In response to a question from Councillor Wood regarding the problems around a petrol station in the Durham Road area, Inspector Craig advised that the police were working with Licensing to reduce the problems and that there had been a site visit although it was quiet during the visit. He advised that the operator had plans for an open door policy however this had raised concerns over the safety of staff. He recommended that if residents encountered any problems they should call the police.

Councillor P. Dixon added that the garage owners were submitting a license application for an open door policy and that local residents wanted the license to be reviewed. Councillor T. Martin added that residents had reported that recently there had been improvements in the area.

Councillor Wood then went on to comment on the problem of speeding traffic along Leechmere Road and advised that he felt there needed to be speed checks in place. He also commented that there had been some prosecutions and that some residents had been fined for speeding. Inspector Craig advised that there were plans to secure speed detection equipment so that the Neighbourhood Policing Team did not have to rely on the Traffic Section to carry out speed checks. Councillor T. Martin advised that the speed along the road had been monitored and was found not to be excessive. Councillor Wood added that there had been numerous investigations into speed and that they had all shown different results.

Councillor M. Forbes advised that there had been accidents along Tunstall Road and Queen Alexandra Road and asked whether speed cameras could be used. Inspector Craig advised that the issue was raised regularly and would be investigated.

Councillor M. Forbes then asked whether there had been a reduction in recorded speeds where flashing speed sensitive signs were installed. Inspector Craig agreed to look into this and report back to the committee.

In response to a query from Councillor P. Dixon regarding youth disorder in the Thornholme area, Inspector Craig advised that there had been problems however these had reduced recently as a result of ongoing liaisons with the local schools and an increased police presence at lunchtimes and home time as these were the main times for problems to occur, he also advised that the major offenders had been caught after the first week, which had reduced the problems.

2. RESOLVED that the crime figures and the LMAPS reports be received and noted.

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

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with information on the following project which it had previously funded through its SIB allocation:-

- Sunderland City Council – Strategic Change Team – Ryhope Customer Service Centres Training Room - £31,345 on 3rd July, 2006

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, introduced Mike Poulter in respect of the project who proceeded to provide Members with a commentary on his feedback report and answered questions thereon.

The chairman having thanked Mr Poulter for his presentation it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) on the proposed allocation of Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) funding to support the following initiative of benefit to the area:-

- (i) £32,545 from the 2008/09 budget to provide Grangetown Community Association with access ramp to the front and accessible toilets.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, presented the report and advised that should the committee endorse the request before the committee it would leave a balance of £34,343 in the 2008/2009 budget.

Ms. Trueman provided members with a summary of the application and introduced Jean Hepple from Grangetown Community Association who was present to address any comments and questions from Members.

Consideration having been given to the application it was:-

4. RESOLVED that approval be given to the allocation of Strategic Initiatives Budget Funding of:-
 - £32,545 from the 2008/09 budget to provide Grangetown Community Association with access ramp to the front and accessible toilets.

Strategic Initiatives Budget – Live Update Report

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an update on the live projects which the Area Committee has previously approved funding through its Strategic Initiatives Budget.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, introduced the report and advised the Members that for this period the Regeneration Framework had been allocated £2,748,568 and an update on all the projects still operating was attached as Annex 1 to the report.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget: 2008/2009 Ward Based Community Chest

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) on 11 projects recommended for support from the 2008/09 Community Chest Scheme in respect of the Hendon, Millfield, Ryhope and St. Michael's Wards.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

6. RESOLVED that approval be given to the 11 projects recommended for support from the 2008/09 Community Chest Budget with a total value of £8,243 as detailed in Annex 1 of the report.

Sport and Leisure in East Sunderland

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with information relating to sport and leisure service provision in the East Area.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Paul Young, Centre Operations Manager - Crowtree Leisure Centre, presented the report and informed members of the types of facilities available in the East Area. He welcomed comments and feedback from Members, especially relating to the Play and Urban Games Provision.

Councillor Paul Maddison advised that the report had no mention of play provision development in St. Michael's using funding from the Play Pathfinder Award. Mr Young advised that St. Michael's would be looked at when considering future provision.

Councillor M. Forbes asked whether the schools in St. Michael's had been assessed. Mr Young agreed to find out and report back to Councillor M. Forbes.

Councillor P. Dixon commented that Diamond Hall Pocket Park had received funding for landscaping and while he was pleased to see action he felt that more could have been done including the provision of play facilities in the park. Mr Young agreed to look into this as he felt that there was a need to improve access to high quality play provision.

Councillor Mordey asked whether the play site at Grangetown Primary School would be within the school grounds or next to it. He was concerned as there had been problems with the play provision at Hudson Road school as this was within school grounds and the Hendon Young Peoples Project were unwilling to allow members of the public to use their Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) for security reasons. Mr Young agreed to investigate and provide a response for Councillor Mordey.

Councillor Mordey also commented that he was pleased to see progress being made at the Town Moor.

Councillor O' Connor advised that Millfield residents wanted a Multi Use Games Area to be provided at the school and that this would be a better location than Millfield Park.

7. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) D.R. WARES,
Chairman.