

18 September 2013

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PLACE BOARD

Place Board Progress Report

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an update of progress against the current year’s (2013/14) Place Board Work Plan.

2. Background

2.1 Earlier this year the Local Area Plan’s priorities associated with Place were referred to the Coalfield Place Board to action on behalf of the Area Committee. The Place Board has started to initiate action on those priorities, the report set out below and **Annex 1** outlines progress to date.

3. Area Governance Arrangements

3.1 The Area Committees are part of the Council’s Executive Function and have two key roles:-

- (a) Influencing decisions on services delivered at a local level; and
- (b) Identification of key priorities for their areas, in the context of supporting the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Outcomes Framework at a local level and ensure maximum impact where necessary through utilising its own resources.

3.2 Each ward will have elected member representation, whose role will be to liaise with their ward colleagues in between meetings and feedback collective views into the Board meetings. Members will work alongside key officers in what will be practical action orientated groups. It should be noted that the Board is not a decision making body and the work / recommendations of the Board will be presented to the Area Committees for final endorsement. Elected member representation on the Place Board for this Area Committee is as follows:-

- Cllr John Scott (Chair)
- Cllr Mel Speding (Shiney Row)
- Cllr David Tate (Hetton)
- Cllr Sheila Ellis (Houghton)
- Cllr Bob Heron (Copt Hill)

3.3 Members are required to represent their ward and should liaise with ward colleagues on Place Board matters accordingly. Cllr Dennis Richardson attends Place Board as Chair of Area Committee to assist co-ordination between Place and People Boards.

4. Key Areas of Influence/Achievements to date (September 2013)

4.1 Outlined below is a summary of the key areas of influence / achievements of the Coalfield Place Board to date.

| Action Taken | Outcome |
|---|--|
| Strategic Influence: Responsive Local Services Streetscene | |
| Influence operational deployment of RLS Streetscene | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Area Response Manager ensures regular communication with all elected members informs the street scene service delivery is appropriate to the local needs |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Place Board members requested that by-laws be reviewed to include more specific enforcement regulations around the control of dogs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Dog Control policy with five separate Orders has been developed. Members have been asked to identify specific locations of concern, which are attached at Annex 2 to this report. This information will be discussed by the Place Board at their September meeting and a verbal update will be given at the committee meeting. |
| <p>Strategic Influence: Local Development Plan</p> | |
| <p>Members received a presentation regarding the LDP/Core Strategy and Settlement Breaks within Coalfield</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members received information on the Local Development Plan / Core Strategy and how this related to the Coalfield Area. Members have requested a workshop take place before the end of September in order to discuss the issue further based on their local knowledge |
| <p>Local Priority: Neglected Land</p> | |
| <p>A clean up of Council owned plots identified as neglected during the audit of land has now been completed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plots at Percy St, Wear St, West View, Langdale Rd, McLaren Way and Market Place have now been improved, completing the programme of works identified by the Working Group and Place Board • Ward team leaders from Street Scene services are monitoring and maintaining all of the sites improved during the last 6 months to ensure they do not deteriorate • Ongoing work with colleagues in Property Services will identify and influence future use or disposal of a number of plots in the area including Britannia Tce, Fencehouses and Forest Estate, Easington Lane |
| <p>The Love Where You Live project has been carried out on a number of sites</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further involvement of partners from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) delivered more joint working • An environmental education programme is being delivered in local primary schools • In partnership with SNCBC as part of the DWP Work Programme, 17 people have been given work experience opportunities, supporting environmental improvements and gaining skills and confidence (A full report is provided to Area Committee under Item 6) |
| <p>Local Priority: Local Shopping Centres</p> | |
| <p>Business specialists are working with traders in Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row to offer tailored support depending on each individual business need</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Traders' Association is now established. The committee has become constituted, designed a logo, supported Houghton Feast by providing sponsorship and established a website which will go live from October 2013 • Individual businesses supported by the project including Ground Coffee and Hetton Fruit and Veg, in Front Street, Hetton have praised the Council for their support to local shops and feature in the September 2013 Community News • With the additional SIB funding agreed by Area Committee in June, the project will now continue until March 2014. The Place Board has requested an evaluation of the project in advance of this date to enable it to consider next steps • Traders are being encouraged to participate in joint projects and are beginning to identify opportunities to work more closely with the Council and their local community to improve the local area. This will be further developed as part of LWYL |
| <p>The Communications Officer for the Coalfield area is working with the lead agent to promote Shop Local</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The September Community News featured the project. This will also be promoted in November with a Shop Local at Christmas campaign offering discounts in local shops • A Shop Local advert was published in the Houghton Feast brochure which will be distributed to local shops, community venues and libraries. |

| Local Priority: Improving Allotments | |
|--|---|
| At the request of the Working Group and Place Board, the feasibility of continuing to lease Seaham Rd site has been explored | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been identified that high costs of managing the site (due to major fly tipping and inappropriate use), along with rent payable for the land is not cost effective for the Council • Property and Legal Services are investigating the option of formally terminating the agreement with the landowners. |
| Enforcement action has been taken against those not using plots for cultivation purposes and tenancies terminated. The vacated plots have now been cleared | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All potential tenants must now attend a site visit with Officers to ensure are in full agreement with the terms of their licence • 5 new tenants at Hutton Street reducing the waiting list to 0 • 4 new tenants at Old Store Tce, reducing the waiting list to 5 • 2 new plots at Girven Tce, will reduce the waiting list to 13 • 5 new plots available at Urwin St, will reduce the waiting list to 24 • 8 new plots at Elemore Vale, will reduce the waiting list to 12 |
| A 'masterplan' of Britannia Terrace Allotments, Fence Houses was drafted and phase 1 is now being implemented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants using plots inappropriately have now vacated site • A series of meetings with those keeping horses on site has taken place. A solution for future arrangements is being developed • Letters have been sent to residents in Britannia Tce, informing them of the improvement works • Work to clear all plots at the rear of Britannia Tce has now commenced and is due to be completed by the end of September • Fencing for phase 1 has been procured and will be erected once plots are cleared • Tenants taking up the newly created plots will be met on site by the Allotments Officer to ensure they understand the terms of their licence and their responsibility in cultivating and maintaining the plot appropriately |
| The process of letting and managing allotments has been reviewed as a result of the Working Group and Place Board requests and recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes have been streamlined by relying less on a series of letters being sent out, and more on email, phone and text • All applicants are now met on site before any tenancy is offered. The applicants' plans for allotment use are investigated and discussed before they are given a licence • The Customer Services Network is developing a more streamlined application process to reduce administration, update waiting lists automatically and improve communication • New and existing tenants are being encouraged to form allotment associations or allotment committees in order to take on responsibility for the continued improvements of their sites. This will allow them to attract external support and funding |
| Local Priority: Flood Risk Planning | |
| The Place Board discussed local issues with the Head of Street Scene | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council, in its lead role as Lead Local Flood Authority are co-ordinating plans and actions with NWL and the Environment Agency to address flooding issues. A public meeting was held in July 2013 where all three organisations discussed issues and forward plans with residents. The issue is also subject to a scrutiny review during 2013/14 |
| Local Priority: Events and Celebrations | |
| Discussions with voluntary and community organisations has taken place with regard to delivering local events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VCS Network wish to develop and deliver a series of events during 2014, to commemorate World War 1 • Heritage Lottery Funding has been applied for via VCS Network members to support a wider programme of activity |

3. Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- Consider the progress and performance update with regard to Coalfield Place Board's Work Plan for 2013/14

- Discuss and agree the proposed locations for Dog Control Orders

Contact Officer: Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Community Officer
Tel: 0191 561 7912 Email: pauline.hopper@sunderland.gov.uk

Annex 1: Workplan

Annex 2: Dog Control Orders