

At a meeting of the WEST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the SILKSWORTH YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE, on WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Laverick in the Chair

Councillors, Ayre, Burnicle, Crosby, Dunn, Edgeworth, Haque, Haswell, Hunter, Mullen, Nicholson, O'Brien, G. Smith, P. Smith, Tye and Watson.

Also Present:-

Jeanette Chapman	Area Network Representative
Sophie Clinton	Area Network Representative
Vicky Gamblin	Head of Operations, Gentoo
Carolyn Jessup	Area Support Assistant, Sunderland City Council
Graham King	Director of Adult Services, Sunderland City Council
Steve Lowther	Head of Property, Gentoo
David Noon	Principal Democratic Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Gilly Stanley	Partnership & and Community Resilience Manager, Sunderland City Council
Scott Wilson	Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Peacock.

Declarations of Interest

Item 4 West Area Budget Report.

Councillors Laverick and Tye made declarations in respect of Recommendation 4.14, as Youth Almighty Project Manager and Chair of the Youth Almighty Management Committee respectively, and left the meeting at the appropriate point on the agenda taking no part in any discussion or decision thereon.

Councillor P. Smith made an open declaration in respect of the Silksworth Park application (Recommendation 4.13) as a friend of the park and left the meeting at the appropriate point on the agenda taking no part in any discussion or decision thereon.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 6th December 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of Northumbria Police

A report of Northumbria Police was submitted (copy circulated) which updated members on key performance information in relation to the Sunderland West area.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Inspector Hopper presented the report and introduced himself to Members having returned to the West Area where a number of years ago he had served as a Neighbourhood Sergeant before moving to take up new duties within the Northumbria Police Force area.

The Chair thanked Inspector Hopper for his report and invited questions from Members.

In response to enquiries from Councillor Tye regarding the Force restructure, Inspector Hopper confirmed that the new structure had become operational as of the Monday of the previous week. The restructure had seen the doubling of the number of area commands from three to six, to align with the local authority areas. As a result, Sunderland and South Tyneside which previously comprised a single command would now have dedicated teams each headed by a Chief Superintendent.

Councillor Hunter referred to the Sunderland West Winter Seasonal Plan and asked if Inspector Hopper was able to inform the Committee of its outcomes. Having only recently taken up his new role in the West, Inspector Hopper advised that he would need to check with the Team and report back.

Councillor Mullen asked that whenever any staffing changes were made to the Neighbourhood Policing Team in the West, please could these be communicated to the Ward Councillors. He referred to a recent change of a PCSO that Members only became aware of via a conversation with a residents' association. Inspector Hopper replied that under the new structure it was intended that there would be 2 teams covering the whole of the area. This would result in each ward having 2 PCs. He advised that once the Teams were established and Officers appointed, he would circulate names and contact details to the Members of the Committee.

There being no further questions or comments for Inspector Hopper the Chair thanked him for his attendance and it was:-

2. RESOLVED the report be received and noted.

Report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Station Manager Scott Wilson, presented a report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS), (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update in relation to the Local Indicators the West Sunderland Area Committee area from 19th November 2023 to 25th February 2024 together with the Service's annual performance figures for the period 1st April 2023 to 25th February 2024

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair thanked Mr Wilson for his report and invited questions and comments from Members.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor P. Smith regarding the Pheonix Project, Mr Wilson replied that John Anderson who had responsibility for the project was currently attending the meeting of the Coalfield Area Committee however he would ask him to provide an update as soon as possible.

Councillor Tye advised that at the last meeting of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, consideration had been given to the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which included significant investment in the Pheonix Project, diversionary activity and work undertaken with schools to reduce exclusions. In response to a request from Councillor Tye, Mr Wilson briefed the Committee on the implications and potential benefits of the CRMP for the West Area.

There being no further questions or comments for Mr Wilson, it was:-

3. RESOLVED the report be received and noted

Report of Gentoo

Vicky Gamblin, Head of Operations, Gentoo Group presented a report, (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities for the period September to December 2023 together with a schedule of the planned investment and renewal programme for 2023/24

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman thanked Ms Gamblin for her report and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Edgeworth as to whether residents had been informed of the 'impasse' in respect of 'Springwell Secret Garden', Ms Gamblin advised that they had not as yet.

Councillor Tye referred to changes around the modernisations and expressed concern that this could potentially be funded through rent increases. Councillor Tye also referred to the issues in respect of the garages in Silksworth which had been escalated to LMAPS. He asked if Gentoo would be prepared to make an effort to engineer out the issues, potentially through a £10,000 investment and asked Gentoo to consider this as an alternative to demolition.

There being no further questions or comments on the report, Ms Gamblin introduced Steve Lowther, Head of Property, who provided the Committee with a comprehensive presentation on the work being undertaken by Gentoo to prevent the occurrence of damp and mould in its properties following the tragic death of Awab Ishak in Rochdale.

Councillor Burnicle noted that modern homes were built like 'sweat boxes' and whilst it was possible to solve the issue of damp in the short term, without adequate ventilation the problem would return. He asked how Gentoo planned to address this. Mr Lowther replied that the preference was to take a proactive approach through the installation of extractor fans and ventilators. These would be installed as part of the Gentoo repairs programme.

Councillor Burnicle welcomed the training being given to Gentoo staff as simply installing fans was not sufficient to eradicate the problem. Significant cross ventilation was also required.

The Chair having thanked Ms Gamblin and Mr Lowther for their attendance, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the West Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network

The Network submitted a progress report (copy circulated) which briefed members on issues pertinent to the Committee and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Consideration was given to the report presented by Sophie Clinton which highlighted the following VCS Network activity undertaken since its last report to the Committee:-

During this reporting period, the Network had met in person at the Tansey Centre during February 2024 to consider agenda items on, Culture House, 'Enterprising Sunderland (the new Back on the Map project), the West Area Event and Network and Information Share Opportunities

In addition, Ms Clinton briefed the Committee on the delivery of the Links for Life Sunderland programme which offered services and support to communities, the call for project through Public Health to expand community based mental health and emotional wellbeing provision available for men and the development of Digital Health Hubs across the West Area through Sunderland City Council working closely with the Digital Inclusion Lead.

In conclusion Ms Clinton advised that owing to other commitments Kelly Brougham had resigned as a VCS Rep and that nominations for a new Representative were being sought from within the network.

Councillor Tye commend the development of the digital hubs which had brought a new lease of life to older buildings through the installation of some amazing kit. Youth Almighty had stepped in to fund the provision in Plains Farm and Humbledon as these areas had not qualified under the Council scheme.

There being no further comments, the Chair thanked Ms Clinton for her report and it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance

The Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA) submitted a progress report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on SVSA activity in the West Area for the period October 2023 to February 2024.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Consideration having been given to the report it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

West Area Committee Delivery Plan 2023-2026

Councillor Haswell, Chair of the West Area Neighbourhood and Community Board presented a report (copy circulated) which provided an update of progress against the Area Committee's Area Plan priorities for 2023-2024.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman having thanked Councillor Haswell for his report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the progress and performance update with regard to the West Area Committee Area Plan 2023- 2026 be received and noted, and
- ii) the progress update with regard to Sunderland City Council Service Plans - Area Priorities, be received and noted

West Area Budget Report

The Assistant Director of Housing and Communities submitted a report (copy circulated) in respect of the above matter.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Gilly Stanley, Partnership & and Community Resilience Manager, presented the report highlighting the Committee's financial statement, 11 applications for support from the Neighbourhood Fund, 2 proposals for the alignment of funding from the Neighbourhood Fund, together with details of projects approved under delegated powers for support from the 2023/24 Community Chest budget.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Area Committee's funding statement as detailed in Tables 1 and 2 of the report be received and noted,
- (ii) the alignment of Neighbourhood Funding of £100,000 for 'Highway Improvements' be approved,
- (iii) the alignment of Neighbourhood Funding of £60,000 to 'Improve Community Assets' be approved,
- (iv) Neighbourhood Funding of £4,620 be granted to Grindon Church Community Project in respect of the Growing Our Community project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (v) Neighbourhood Funding of £3,059 be granted to Active Families in respect of the Broadway Bloomers project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (vi) Neighbourhood Funding of £3,990 be granted to Community Opportunities in respect of the West in Bloom project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (vii) Neighbourhood Funding of £2,940 be granted to Community Opportunities in respect of the TCAEC Gardening project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (viii) Neighbourhood Funding of £4,600 be granted to the St Mary's & St Peter's Community Project in respect of the Blooming Good Times project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (ix) Neighbourhood Funding of £2,086 be granted to Springboard in respect of the Pallion Plants, Flowers and Trees project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (x) Neighbourhood Funding of £4,360 be granted to Hope for All in respect of the Enchanted Garden Project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (xi) Neighbourhood Funding of £700 be granted to the Tunstall Hill Protection Group in respect of the Noticeboard project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (xii) Neighbourhood Funding of £2,500 be granted to Hope for Kids in respect of the Coronation Garden Competition project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (xiii) Neighbourhood Funding of £1,340 be granted to Friends of Sliksworth Park in respect of the Silksworth Recreational Park in Bloom project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (xiv) Neighbourhood Funding of £4,994 be granted to the Youth Almighty Project in respect of the Silksworth and St Chad's in Bloom project as set out in Annex 1 of the report,
- (xv) the approval of the Community Chest applications from the 2023/24 budget as detailed in Annex 2 of the report be noted.

At this juncture and on behalf of the Committee, Councillor Tye paid tribute to Councillor Pat Smith and Councillor Colin Nicholson who would be retiring from the Council at the forthcoming Local Government elections. Councillors Smith and Nicholson responded suitably.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) J. LAVERICK,
Chairman.