

**At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held remotely on MONDAY, 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020 at 5.30p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor E. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors Bewick, M. Dixon, Fagan, Hodson, Hunt, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, Oliver, Potts, Scanlan, A. Wood and P. Wood

**Also Present:-**

Jo Bell	-	Gentoo
Alan Duffy	-	Gentoo
Matthew Jackson	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Shaun Makin	-	TWFRS
Julie Maven	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Nicol McConnell	-	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council
Allison Patterson	-	Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	-	
K. Ramanathan	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Jon Ritchie	-	Executive Director of Corporate Services, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	-	Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Claire Tulley	-	Nexus

**Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillor Essl and from Joanne Cooper.

**Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2020**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **VCS Area Network Progress Report**

Julie Maven provided the Committee with an update on the work of the VCS Area Network since the last meeting of the Committee. She advised that the network had held two virtual meetings where a number of presentations had been received including from Moving On Tyne and Wear, Moneywise Credit Union, Churches Conservation Trust, and Groundworks North East. Allison Patterson had also given a presentation on how the Area Committee and local authority would support the VCS; there had been concerns over who would be the lead organisation on this partnership working. Organisations in the area were working hard to support residents who were being affected by the ongoing pandemic; the support from the local authority had been vital in allowing this support to be provided. There had always been good partnership working in the East Area and the pandemic had highlighted how good this partnership was.

Ram added that the concerns raised had been over whether the Council's Infrastructure Group or VCS Organisations should lead on the partnerships and further discussions were taking place. a number of organisations had already built strong partnerships and there was a desire to ensure that this was not negatively affected.

The Chair thanked the organisations and their volunteers for all of their hard work.

2. RESOLVED that the update from the VCS Network be noted.

### **Northumbria Police Update**

A report was submitted in respect of the West Area which covered Doxford Ward.

Neighbourhood Inspector Jamie Southwell provided the Committee with an update on the crime statistics for the East area and of the work done by Northumbria Police. In the A1 area which covered the City Centre, Millfield and Ashbrooke there had been a 31 percent reduction in all crimes; vehicle crime had seen a reduction of 45 percent. Burglaries of dwellings had reduced by 31 percent while burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 36 percent. Youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 19 percent while adult antisocial behaviour had increased by 31 percent

In the A2 area which covered Hendon, Grangetown and Ryhope there had been an increase of 10 percent which was due to there being a sharp increase in criminal damage incidents and also in violence without injury which included public order offences and harassment. There had been an increase in burglaries of dwellings of 16 percent while burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 35 percent. Both youth and adult antisocial behaviour had seen an increase; of 85 percent and 134 percent respectively. The increase in antisocial behaviour was due to how incidents of breaches of the covid-19 regulations were recorded.

Burglaries were a priority and Operation Decipher was ongoing to tackle these; since the operation had started there had been no further burglaries.

Operation Eagle, which targeted off road motorcycle use, was ongoing and a camera had been purchased to assist with identification of offenders.

Operation Elf would be starting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and would run until Christmas. This would be targeting high footfall areas of the city centre to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour and would see an increase in high visibility foot patrols.

Councillor Hodson asked whether city centre patrols could include the minster park; there were large numbers of youths congregating in this area and they were causing a disturbance for the minster and the residents of the alms houses as well as causing damage by using skateboards. Inspector Southwell advised that the park was included in the patrols.

Councillor Hodson also advised of complaints from residents about youths congregating in the subway at Neville Road; Inspector Southwell agreed to pass this information on to the neighbourhood officers.

Councillor Bewick advised that he had recorded a video of an off road motorbike being used at King George Park in Ryhope; he had submitted this video through the dash cam reporting section of the police website but asked whether there were alternative methods of reporting. Inspector Southwell advised that the footage could be submitted to the neighbourhood Sergeant and he would provide these details; he also advised that there were dangers in trying to stop the riders so retrospective action was taken instead.

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

### **Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update**

Shaun Makin was in attendance to provide the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. He advised that the figures were for the last three months and were in comparison to the same period last year. In terms of deliberate fires there had been:-

Doxford Ward – 5 this year compared with 9 last year  
Hendon Ward – 38 this year compared with 45 last year

Millfield Ward – 23 this year compared with 43 last year  
Ryhope Ward – 12 this year compared with 10 last year  
St Michaels Ward – 9 this year compared with 12 last year  
In total there had been 87 deliberate fires compared with 109 for the same period last year.

It was pleasing to see this reduction. It had been good to hear that there had been no firefighters attacked in the East Sunderland area during the Bonfire night period and this was in part thanks to the hard work done in partnership with the police, Gentoo and the Council.

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

### **Gentoo Update**

Alan Duffy presented the update from Gentoo. He advised that there had been a six month suspension on all non-urgent transfer requests to ensure that vacancies went to those who were in most need. There was also a review of the allocations policy being undertaken. The movement of existing gentoo tenants between properties had also been suspended.

Work was continuing on the renewal schemes with work continuing at Doxford Park with phase 6 being to deliver 100 new homes with 90 for sale and 10 for affordable rent. Planning permission had been granted for the redevelopment of the Silksworth office site where there would be 13 new houses for affordable rent; work would be commencing after Christmas and was expected to be completed by late 2021.

Councillor Hodson advised that work had been done to provide craft packs for the elderly residents of the city centre tower blocks which were to be distributed by the Cultural Spring however they had been denied access by gentoo. Ms Bell advised that it had been agreed to display posters in the blocks and that tenants were going to be spoken to about this work.

Councillor M. Dixon queried how often communal garden areas were visited to remove litter; there were concerns over the condition of the gardens in the Azalea Terrace and Woodstock Avenue areas. He also queried who the Gentoo contact was for the St Michael's ward. Mr Duffy advised that the Gentoo owned gardens saw grass cutting through the summer and that litter was collected prior to this; during the winter the removal of litter was a responsive task. The contact for St Michael's was Jo Bell.

5. RESOLVED that the update from Gentoo be noted.

## **Nexus Update**

Claire Tulley provided the update from Nexus. She advised that the travel shop in Park Lane interchange had been closed since March due to the covid-19 pandemic. Plans were in place to close the remaining six travel shops; there was a survey of users to inform Nexus of their views and how the closures would affect them.

Work was being done to address the issue of passengers not complying with the requirement to wear face masks and also fare evasion and a compliance team had been created. There was also a new team to tackle antisocial behaviour.

There was a new phone app being launched which would allow people to use their phones to pay for tickets and to access the network which would assist with contactless access to the Metro.

Councillor Hodson expressed concerns over the closure of the travel shops taking place before the survey; he questioned whether the results of the survey would result in any of the shops remaining open. He also queried why there were such large changes to the Metro timetable. Ms Tulley advised that the travel shops had closed due to the lockdown in March and it had not been possible to reopen them in a covid secure manner. The survey would allow passengers to express their views on the closure of travel shops and these views would be considered before a final decision was taken. Metro usage was lower than usual and she agreed to find out why the winter timetable was such a large change.

Councillor Hodson then stated that he understood the need for changes in the current situation however it was not clear whether the changes would be temporary or permanent. He asked for further information on the closure of the travel shops and on the timetable changes and Ms Tulley agreed to provide this.

Councillor P. Wood expressed concerns that the bus timetables had changed some months ago however the timetables displayed at the bus stops had not been updated and still showed some services which no longer existed. He asked when these were likely to be changed. Ms Tulley advised that Nexus was responsible for over 6,500 bus stops across Tyne and Wear and agreed to speak to the teams involved in updating bus stop timetables to look at when the East Area would have the timetables updated.

Councillor McClennan queried whether the survey was electronic and Ms Tulley confirmed that it was and that if residents could not access the electronic survey they could phone the contact centre for support; a paper version could be provided if requested. Councillor McClennan expressed concerns that within the East End there were a lot of residents who relied on public transport and did not have access to technology; she felt that there was a need to work with the VCS organisations in the area to get the surveys to residents. Ms Tulley advised that she was happy to work with any VCS

organisations that wished to be involved; there was a desire to get as many views as possible.

Councillor Potts queried whether it would be possible to offer the travel shop services in other shops and Ms Tulley agreed to look into whether this had been considered.

6. RESOLVED that the update from Nexus be noted.

### **East Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020/2023**

The Chair of the East Sunderland Area Neighbourhoods and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the East Area Committee Delivery Plan for 2020/2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Marshall introduced the report and advised of the work that had been undertaken against the delivery plan since the last meeting of the Area Committee which was set out in the report.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a) future updates be received from the University of Sunderland One Campus Master Plan in the future and support be given to the proposal that the University are consulted on planning applications relating to student accommodation, in the city, regardless of the number of units involved.
- b) Members identify pieces of derelict land and properties within their wards and forward details onto the Area Arrangements Team, for consideration under the 'derelict land' area priority.
- c) the Walk and Talk ward budgets will be reviewed in December 2020 at the Neighbourhood and Community Board.
- d) Endorsement be given to the scheme to reinstate the playing fields known locally as, King George 5<sup>th</sup> playing field.
- e) Members identify and forward details to the Team about potential allotment plots in their wards which they feel could be recovered and reused.
- f) Endorsement be given to the recommendation for the following Councillors to become Members of the East Highways Task Group which will consider traffic calming measures and identified speeding hotspots across the East area, these are:
  - Doxford Ward: Cllr Fagan
  - Hendon Ward: Cllr Scanlan
  - Millfield Ward: Cllr A Wood
  - Ryhope Ward: Cllr Hunt
  - St Michael's Ward: Cllr P Wood

- g) It be noted that a funding request could be made outside the Committee cycle to support the expansion of the Fancy a Day Out programme over the school holidays in December 2020.
- h) Endorsement be given to the recommendation for the following Councillors to become Members of a Multi Area Stephenson Trail Task Group which will consider making physical improvements to the Trail and well as co-ordinating a celebration event in 2022, these are:
  - o Doxford ward: Cllr Heather Fagan
  - o Millfield ward: Cllr Andrew Wood
  - o St Michael's ward: Cllr Peter Wood
- i) The relevant updates set out in Annex One relating to: Empty Properties; Derelict Land; Affordable Housing; Love Where You Live; Enforcement; Invest in Highways and Parks; Supporting the VCS; Volunteer Platform; Reducing the fear of crime and Preserving Heritage be noted.

### **East Area Budget Report**

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided financial statements in respect of the Area Committee's delegated budgets and presented proposals for funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms McConnell presented the report and drew Members attention to the financial statements set out in the report and the applications for funding totalling £11,500 from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme as set out in Annex 1. There had been eight community chest grants approved between October and November 2020 and these were set out in annex 2.

Councillor Hodson referred to the community chest grant that was awarded to food banks in March and queried whether this was being looked at for the Christmas period and also asked how much Walk and Talk budget was remaining for Millfield.

Ms McConnell advised that it was only the Millfield ward which had granted Community Chest funding to the food banks in March and that there was currently work ongoing to identify what support to give to food banks and there had been a meeting to discuss the provision for the Christmas period. Once a full picture of the provision available had been identified there would be communications presented to the public to inform of the available provision. Digital food vouchers for free school meals were being looked at. The Walk and Talk programme would be looked at as part of the agenda for the next meeting of the Board and a financial statement would be presented to that meeting.

Councillor Bewick referred to the CCTV cameras which required repairs and asked whether it would be more cost effective to trade them in against new ones rather than trying to repair them. Ms McConnell advised that the intention was to trade them in and the cost of £3,500 was to get a new camera with the old camera traded in.

Councillor Bewick then asked whether there was any further information available regarding the ecological survey that had been undertaken at King George Field. Ms McConnell advised that there had been discussions around the reinstatement of the football pitches. Surveys had been undertaken due to the increase in footfall along the coastal SSSI following the building of new houses in the area in order to try and identify alternative walking areas to the SSSI.

8. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statements set out in tables one to three be noted;
- b. Approval be given to the £11,500 Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme as set out in Annex 1;
- c. The approved Community Chest grants between October and November 2020 as set out in Annex 2 be noted;
- d. The potential pipeline projects which may be submitted for consideration at a future meeting be noted;

### **Community Wealth Building Champions**

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised the Committee of the next steps, following Cabinet approval in March 2020, of the Sunderland Community Wealth Building Strategy.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Helen Peverley presented the report and advised that Members were being asked to approve the appointment of the Area Committee Chair as Community Wealth Building Champion for the area.

The Community Wealth Building Champion would work alongside the Area Arrangements team and the Community Wealth Steering Group to develop a training and induction programme for Members and ensure that the principles of community wealth were adopted by the Area Committee.

Councillor Hodson queried the Membership of the Steering Group and was informed that the membership would be the Assistant Director of Community Resilience; representatives of Procurement, HR, Business Investment, Property Services and Financial Resilience; the Cabinet Member for Vibrant City, Cllr Williams; Allison Patterson as Area Arrangements Representative and Helen Peverley as Community Wealth Building Lead. There would be feedback from the group to the Area Chairs by Helen Peverley and the Assistant Director of Community Resilience on a monthly basis and if the Area



Chairs had any information to refer to the group then this could be raised at that time. The Area Chairs were to be the voice of their area.

Councillor Hodson then expressed concerns that there was no opposition representation; he was concerned that the opposition Councillors would not be consulted and felt that there was a need for there to be opposition involvement; especially in the East and West areas where there were a large number of opposition Members. Ms Peverley advised that she would take these concerns back to the steering group and also stated that everyone was a community wealth champion and that the Chairs were intended to be the voice of their area.

Councillor M. Dixon agreed with Councillor Hodson that there should be opposition representation; this would help to give residents of the area more representation.

Members gave consideration to the recommendations set out in the report at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 and the concerns raised by Councillors Hodson and M. Dixon. Members voted on the recommendations and with all Members, other than Councillor McClennan who abstained due to concerns over the level of consultation with the VCS organisations, voting for the recommendation at 4.1 this recommendation was carried. The recommendation at 4.2 was put to the vote and with:-

4 Members voting for;

8 Members voting against; and

1 abstention

The recommendation at 4.2 was not carried.

As such it was:-

9. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and acknowledgement be given to the work to support the growth of community wealth across Sunderland and it be agreed that support be given to the delivery of the Sunderland Community Wealth Strategy.

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

(Signed) E. GIBSON,  
Chairman.