

**At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held in THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE, THE OVAL, CONCORD, WASHINGTON, on THURSDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2023 at 6.00p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Laws in the Chair

Councillors Chapman, Fletcher, Guy, F. Miller, D. E. Snowdon, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, M. Walker, P. Walker, Warne and Williams

**Also in Attendance:-**

Pauline Hopper	-	Partnership and Community Resilience Manager (Coalfield), SCC
Sandra Stephenson	-	Partnership and Community Resilience Manager (Washington), SCC
Paul Wood	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	-	Area Arrangements Strategic Manager, SCC
Sylvia Copley	-	Area Network Representative
Bethan Wilkie	-	Gentoo
Martin Farrow	-	TWFRA
John Anderson	-	TWFRA
Inspector Phil Baker	-	Northumbria Police

And Members of the Press and Public

**Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Donaghy, Jones and G. Miller. Apologies were also submitted from Graham King

## **Declarations of Interest**

Washington Area Budget Report - Item 4 Annex 1 – Application No. 2 – Washington Individual Support Programme

Councillor Dianne Snowden made an open declaration on this application as her husband was employed by ShARP who deliver this project and left the room during consideration of the item.

Councillors Fletcher and F. Miller made open declarations on this application as volunteers at Mickey's Place, where the WISP Advice Worker was proposed to be located, therefore they left the room during consideration of the item.

Washington Area Budget Report - Item 4 Annex 3 – Councillor Chapman made an open declaration in the Community Chest application for Hope Family Church as an employee. As the recommendation was only to note the report, no further action was required.

## **Minutes of the last meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **Washington Area Committee Delivery Plan 2023 - 2026**

The Assistant Director of Housing and Communities submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested the Committees consideration and approval of the Washington Area Committee Area Plan for 2023-26 and to provide an update on the Area Committee Area Plan Governance arrangements.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Pauline Hopper, Partnership and Community Resilience Manager (Coalfield), presented the report and was on hand to answer any queries raised by Members.

In response to Councillor D.E. Snowden's enquiry if this would be a rolling plan and would be amended to 2024-2027 next year, Mrs Helen Peverley, Area Arrangements Strategic Manager advised that this was a 3-year plan and they would be starting to look at 2024 later this year.

2. RESOLVED that the Committee

- i) Considered and agreed the Draft Area Committee Plan for 2023-2026, External Priorities for referral to cabinet for approval as contained within Annex 1 of the report;

- ii) Agreed that the Internal priorities, which had been discussed and agreed at the Area Committee Workshop in June were shared with Council Service Leads and Partners to consider the feasibility of delivery and provide feedback. The priorities were currently proposals where Area Committee wished to influence/add value to existing service provision;
- iii) Agreed to continue to discuss Service Plans with Sunderland City Council Service leads and develop a list of Area Priorities for the Washington area. To be appended to the Area Committee Area Plans and arrange for quarterly updates;
- iv) Agreed to continue to collaborate with key partners (currently Gentoo, Police, TWFRS and the Voluntary Sector Alliance) to provide their plans for future activity in the Washington area. To be appended to the Washington Area Committee Area Plan and arrange for quarterly updates; and
- v) Noted the terms of reference as contained within Annex 2 of the report.

## **Partner Agency Reports**

### **a) Northumbria Police**

Northumbria Police submitted a report which provided data on crime and disorder in the Washington area comparing 'Year to date' figures with the preceding year.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Inspector Phil Baker was in attendance and informed the Committee that the Sulgrave Project was back up and running and that in relation to staffing there was to be an uplift in terms of PC's throughout the force which should see an affect in Washington and a new Neighbourhood Sergeant should be in place relatively soon.

In response to Councillor M. Walker's request for an update on the issues of shoplifting around the Concord area, Inspector Baker advised that they had arrested and charged a number of people and they had met with the manager of the premises.

Councillor M. Walker commented that a number of the smaller retailers just didn't have the time to fill in the required reports therefore he felt the figures on this may be a lot higher than the Police were aware of. Inspector Baker commented that whilst this was understandable if they did not report any instances then the Police could not address these.

Councillor Fletcher commented that this was the same issue in Sulgrave and that the Police wont come out to attend instances of shoplifting. Inspector Baker commented that retailers were aware of the processes involved for reporting shoplifting.

Councillor Chapman queried the anecdote heard that in terms of shoplifting at the Galleries, the Police had stated they won't attend an instance unless the theft had been of a value greater than £500. Inspector Baker commented that he was not aware of that at all and he was 99% certain this was not true. There was a force plan, and all Officers were aware of this.

Councillor Williams requested that Members be able to see sight of the Force plan and if it could be circulated for Members to advise residents of this. Inspector Baker advised that he could circulate the plan.

In response to Councillor F. Millers enquiry over greater police attendance at residents meetings, Inspector Baker advised that they have sent the Police shift patterns to these associations and that these meetings would need to coincide with Officers schedules where they were not needed on shift (which he understood was not always possible for residents dairies) but agreed that they could submit a written report in their absence.

Councillor Williams referred to historic reporting received by the Committee and indicated that it would be useful to have a comparison from throughout the previous year to provide greater context for Members.

Councillor Williams informed the Committee that there had been a number of fires in Princess Anne Park and greater prevention/engagement with Youths setting these fires was needed. There was also high numbers of antisocial behaviour in Lambton as this was on a main bus route.

Councillor Williams also commented that she welcomed the new PC's coming through and it would be useful to know who they were once in post.

In response to The Chairmans query over how many of the uplift in Officers would be for Washington, Inspector Baker commented that we needed to wait and see but hopefully they would know more in the next week.

The Chairman also referred to the shoplifting issue and commented that it appeared we needed to get the communication right on this as residents still felt that their concerns were not being addressed and suggested that this was picked up at the Councillor/Police meetings.

Full consideration having being given to the report, the Chairman thanked Inspector Baker for his attendance and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

#### **b) TWFRS**

The Tyne and Wear Fire Service submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided performance-monitoring details in relation to the Local Indicators for the Washington Area Committee from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, compared with the same period in 2022

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr Martin Farrow, Station Manager presented the report, expanding on the figures provided and also introduced his colleague Mr John Anderson to the Committee.

Mr Farrow advised that in the time period between the report being published there had been a number of incidents in the Washington Central and South Wards. There had been a number of issues in Princess Anne Park and Ayton Park and by comparison there had been 5 incidents in the whole of 2022 whereas just from 8<sup>th</sup> June – 13<sup>th</sup> June this year, 19 incidents had occurred with 4 happening on the same night at Ayton Park.

In terms of Princess Anne Park, 14 incidents were small grass fires and the Authority were visiting schools, mailing parents with the message that these incidents were delaying staff from attending main fires elsewhere.

In response to Councillor Williams query if the perpetrators were the same groups in Princess Anne Park and Ayton Park, Mr Farrow advised that he could not confirm this as it was very easy for the individuals to disperse quickly from the area once they heard the sirens. Mr Farrow also advised that they had worked on the Community Bus which had received good feedback.

Councillor Chapman wished to offer her regret and solidarity at how much abuse the Fire Officers were receiving when attending instances. Mr Farrow advised that staff were wearing body cams now but mostly when reviewing footage of perpetrators, only their eyes could be seen.

Councillor Guy commented that with deliberate fires up 45% in the Washington East Ward alone, enforcement clearly wasn't working and with the Youth Provision Plan he felt that Barnston and Princess Anne Park needed to be top priorities. Councillor Guy also wished to thank Officers for all the work they were doing.

Mr Anderson introduced himself to the Committee as Diversionary Activities Manager for the Authority advising that he was to look at redesigning/reinvigorating programmes and briefed on some of the work of the Princes Trust so they could look at what they could do to address some of these issues raised.

Mr Anderson advised that he had leaflets he could circulate and he would be available to speak with Members outside of the meeting and he was looking for suggestions from Members with regards to referrals to Youth Groups for their programmes. He would also like to attend a future Committee to discuss the Phoenix Project in greater detail.

Councillor Fletcher raised the concern over the affordability issue for parents and how they could transport their children to such programmes which may be a problem to consider.

Councillor Williams suggested that Officers liaise with Phil McAloon as the best contact to speak with as he provided Washington's Youth provision.

The Chairman suggested that Officers attend a future Washington Board meeting where a longer conversation could be had on this.

Councillor D. E. Snowdon wished to thank the service for attending a community open day as it had been important for residents to see their presence.

Having fully considered the report, The Chairman thanked Mr Farrow and Mr Anderson for their attendance.

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

**c) Washington Area Community Voluntary Sector Network**

The Voluntary and Community Sector Network submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update with regard to the Washington Area Community and Voluntary Sector Network.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Sylvia Copley, VCS Representative presented the report on behalf of the Network and advised that whilst they were experiencing a great deal of staff turnover at present, the service they had received from Council Officers had been excellent so wished to thank the Council for this.

Ms Copley commented that the VCS Alliance was going from strength to strength and the work from organisations in Washington was very impressive as they worked over and above to meet the needs of residents and thanked Members for their support.

The Chairman commented that whilst Washington may not get new bridges and such like built, there was so much work that was undertaken in Washington due to the VCS and he thanked them for this.

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

5. RESOLVED that the content of the report and the opportunities and issues raised by the Washington Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network be received and noted.

**d) Gentoo**

Gentoo provided a report to the Committee on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities for the period March 2022 to June 2022.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mrs Bethan Wilkie, Gentoo presented the report advising that the competition stated in para 3.4 had since closed and was now being judged and that in relation to para 4 the investment and Renewal programme, they were starting on Albany imminently.

Councillor Guy referred to the window replacement scheme and advised that residents in Harraton had been told this would start in April but it was now nearly July and they still hadn't heard anything. Mrs Wilkie advised that they were on track with the programme and due to complete this by December 2023 but she would take the address off Councillor Guy and see if she could get specific dates for those residents.

Mrs Wilkie also advised Councillor F. Miller to get in touch with details of residents issues over access for fencing repairs and she would look into this.

Councillor Williams commented on the work of the Money Matters Teams and stated that this appeared to be well managed and they were providing some great work.

Councillor H. Trueman referred to the previous issue of the garages in Albany which were initially to be demolished and then were instead sold. Councillor Trueman advised that this has lead to elderly residents raising allegations that vans were turning up at all hours of the night and exchanges were being made and even in some cases motorbikes being transferred. Residents had been advised to notify Police over this.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that it was sad the way this issue had turned out and that the communication over this with residents had been awful.

Councillor D. E. Snowdon suggested that the issue be fed to LMAP's for consideration also and they may be able to allocate a CCTV Camera for this.

Councillor Chapman enquired as to the end date for the switchover for the District Heating Scheme in Oxclose. Mrs Wilkie advised that the end date was December 2023.

In response to the Chairmans query if the reports figures were specific to Washington, Mrs Wilkie confirmed that they were group wide figures.

The Chairman thanked Ms Wilkie for the report

6. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

## **Washington Area Budget Report**

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided a financial statement as an update position on progress in relation to allocating Area Committee Funds, Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme and Community Chest as well as presenting proposals for further funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Hopper presented the report, drawing the Committee's attention to the current financial position of the Area Committee Neighbourhood Fund 2023/2024 as set out in paragraph 2.1, and the Community Chest approvals in Annexes 3 and 4.

In relation to Holiday Activities, Councillor Williams raised concerns that the proposals left gaps in most of the Wards and that they would be short of time in order to fill those gaps. Ms Hopper advised that they could put out a further Call for Projects and see if anyone new applied.

Councillor Williams commented that this would be really difficult as there was only four weeks left until the summer holidays. The Chairman suggested that a conversation was needed after the meeting as to how these applications were put out.

Full consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Noted the financial statements set out in Section 2.1 and 3 of the report;
- ii) Approved £60,000 of the Neighbourhood Fund to continue the Washington Clean and Green Project for 2 years, as set out in section 3 and Annex 1 of the report;
- iii) Approved £15,000 of the Neighbourhood Fund to continue the WISP project for 12 months, as set out in section 3 and Annex 1 of the report (subject to completion of detailed application);
- iv) Approved £40,000 Neighbourhood Fund to deliver a 12 month programme of holiday activities for 11-19 year olds, as set out in section 3 and Annex 1 of the report;
- v) Approved the 4 proposals recommended for approval, totalling £19,628 to deliver a 12 month programme of holiday activities for 8-10 year olds, as set out in section 3 and Annex 2 to the report, and to reject the remaining applications set out in Annex 2 of the report;
- vi) Noted the Community Chest approvals supported from 2022/2024 as detailed in Annex 3 of the report; and
- vii) Noted the Community Chest approvals supported from 2023/2024 as detailed in Annex 4 of the report.

### **Planning Applications – For Information Only**

Current Planning Applications relating to the Washington Area for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2023 to 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting

(Signed) S. LAWS,  
Chairman.