

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 15th DECEMBER, 2014 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors M. Dixon, Emerson, Forbes, E. Gibson, Marshall, Mordey, Price, Scanlan and Wood

Also Present:-

Paula Hunt	- East Area VCS Network Representative
Matthew Jackson	- Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Jonathan Kinnair	- Assistant Media Officer, Sunderland City Council
Jen McKeivitt	- East Area VCS Network Representative
Victoria Patterson	- East RLS Customer Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Alan Pitchford	- Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Gillian Robinson	- Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Nicky Rowland	- East Area Response Manager, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	- Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Nicol Trueman	- Area Community Officer, Sunderland City Council
Andrea Winders	- Executive Director of Enterprise Development, Sunderland City Council
Mark Witherspoon	- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillors Errington, Farr, Kay, T. Martin and McClennan together with Hazel Clark, Nonnie Crawford, Alan Duffy, Sarah Reed and Beverley Scanlon

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 20th October, 2014

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th October 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

VCS Area Network Progress Report

The East Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Network submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated the Committee on the work that had been done by the VCS network since the last meeting of the Area Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Paula Hunt introduced the report and advised that since the last area committee meeting there had been 2 meetings of the VCS network and at these meetings a total of five presentations had been received which were detailed in the report.

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

2. RESOLVED that the VCS Network progress report be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

Jamie Southwell advised that Mick Hall had left Neighbourhood Policing and as such he had taken over as Neighbourhood Inspector for the Central Area. He advised that this was usually a very busy time of year due to the large number of shoppers visiting the city; the number of events that were held and the amount of parties that took place. Traditionally the Christmas lights switch on event was a problem for the police with large amounts of antisocial behaviour and violence occurring; this year had been an exception as there had not been the usual problems with only one assault reported all evening. The Remembrance Parade had taken place with no issues.

On 15th November there had been a demonstration by right wing groups in Mowbray Park; the demonstration had taken place without any problems however after the demonstrators dispersed there was a small group had committed racially motivated offences at the Bangladeshi Centre and at a shop. There had been a person arrested for committing all of these offences.

Following the sexual assault and rape in Mowbray Park last week there had been a lot of resources put forward to investigate this; a name had been provided by the community and the person had handed himself in to police on Friday. He had been charged on Saturday and earlier today had been in court and he had been remanded in custody.

There had been a problem in the Civic Centre car park with males engaging in lewd behaviour in the stairwells; there had been investigation and CCTV had been installed which had led to 3 males being arrested for outraging public decency. Permanent signage and CCTV would be installed to prevent these activities from occurring again.

Inspector Southwell then introduced the crime figures for the Central area. He advised that all crime had increased by 5 percent compared with last year which was 128 additional crimes. There had been 44 additional violent crimes; an increase of 12 percent; however there had been a reduction in violent crimes in the city centre. There had been 7 fewer robberies, a reduction of 41 percent. Theft from motor vehicles had reduced by 7 percent. Burglary of dwellings had reduced by 22 percent; which was 26 fewer offences however burglaries other than dwellings had increased by 6 crimes.

Antisocial behaviour had increased by 159 incidents; an increase of 8 percent. Youth antisocial behaviour had increased by 18 incidents which was a 6 percent increase.

Councillor Price thanked the police for all of their hard work and for keeping Members informed of events taking place in Mowbray Park and the personnel changes in the area.

Councillor Scanlan queried whether any progress had been made on the investigation of the armed robbery at Max's convenience store at Eden Vale. Inspector Southwell agreed to find out how the investigation was progressing.

Councillor Mordey queried whether there was any information on the suggested move to the fire station. Inspector Southwell stated that currently there were no timescales in place; there had been a number of premises looked at and whatever location was selected would have a 24 hour front desk.

Councillor M. Dixon queried whether the right wing demonstrators were local people; Inspector Southwell advised that there had been a mix of local people and people from further afield. The person arrested was from Sunderland however there was a significant number attended from Scotland. The numbers attending the demonstrations were reducing.

Jen McKevitt asked whether there had been any work carried out with the voluntary sector to address the tensions in Mowbray Park. Inspector Southwell advised that there had been a meeting held at the Bangladeshi Centre and there had been a good turn out from the community.

Alan Pitchford then introduced the figures for the east area. He advised that he was new to working in the East Area but had been working in Neighbourhood Policing for the last 7 years. He also introduced Sergeant Paul Gartland who was the new sergeant for the Ryhope area.

Inspector Pitchford stated that total crime had increased by 2 percent which was an increase of 15 crimes. Robbery had reduced by 43 percent which was a reduction of 3 crimes, there had also been 7 fewer violent crimes. Sexual offences had increased by 6 percent however this was only one additional offence and there had been a lot of work done with partner organisations to increase reporting of sexual offences.

Vehicle related crime had remained the same as last year while burglaries had increased by 7 percent which was 8 additional crimes; this increase was not necessarily caused by there being an increase in offences as the way the crimes were recorded had changed. There had been an operation to identify hotspots and there were now additional patrols in these areas.

Thefts had reduced by 3 percent which was 9 fewer crimes; there had been 4 additional instances of criminal damage, an increase of 2 percent. Antisocial Behaviour in the area had increased by 2 percent which was 18 additional incidents.

Councillor Mordey advised that he had received a number of complaints from residents of the long streets area of Hendon regarding people looking over the back walls and climbing over to steal items from the yards.

Councillor Emerson stated that it was good to hear that there was a full team in place in the area. He hoped that there would be stability with the staffing for the area. He asked for a list of the team member's roles to be emailed to him.

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

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Mark Witherspoon introduced the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service; he referred to the recent fatality in Hendon and advised that it looked like the fire had been an accident; the cause of death would be released following the coroner's inquest. He also advised that bonfire night had been the quietest ever for antisocial behaviour and pleasingly there had been no attacks on firefighters; there had also been no firework injuries or firework related primary fires in the area.

Incidences of vehicle fires were increasing however the number was still lower than the number of vehicle fires which occurred last year; there were no trends to the vehicle fires and as such it was proving difficult to identify the offender.

Within Ryhope and Hendon there had been a reduction in the number of wheelie bin fires however it was still a concern.

Mr Witherspoon urged everyone to stay safe over the Christmas period and reminded everyone of the dangers of smoking in bed; cooking while intoxicated; and overloading electrical sockets.

He then referred to the Safetyworks programme and advised that there had been 191 children from the East Area had attended so far.

There had been a scheme put into place to provide six weeks of free telecare to vulnerable residents. The telecare scheme provided residents with monitored alarms for fire as well as providing alarms for in case the service user fell or had any other urgent problems. At the end of the free trial the service would cost the user £12.75 a month.

Councillor Mordey expressed his gratitude to the police and fire service for their work to try and save the life of the person who was killed by the fire in Hendon.

Councillor Emerson queried whether the fire service still provided free smoke alarms. He was advised that they did with priority being given to vulnerable residents; postcode areas where there were large numbers of vulnerable residents were targeted however it was difficult to ensure that all vulnerable residents were reached due to the difficulties encountered in sharing information.

Councillor Price congratulated the fire service for their use of social media to provide residents with information to help them avoid being the victims of fire.

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

Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an update on the work done by the Place Board against the priorities set out in the workplan for 2014/15.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Scanlan, Chair of the Place Board, introduced the report and prior to updating the Committee on the work on the 2014/15 priorities she welcomed Nicky Rowland who would be providing the Committee with an update on the works done around improving local shopping centres as part of the Gateway 2 priority.

Ms Rowland advised that Vilette Road had been the first of the streets to have work undertaken; the first step had been to approach the shops and encourage them to sign up to a voluntary code of practice which would see the shopkeepers taking responsibility for things such as ensuring the street outside of their shop was clean. The Council would then paint the shutters and shop fronts to ensure that the physical environment was more attractive; there had been some issues with the quality of work carried out by the painters however these issues had now been addressed and the painters had

moved on to the shopping area on Ryhope Road at Grangetown. There had also been any necessary highways improvements carried out such as renewing of road markings.

The voluntary code of practice for the shops on Ryhope Street South had been drawn up and shopkeepers had been approached; there were highways works to be undertaken and following this the cleaning and painting works would be undertaken.

Work had not yet started in Millfield as there had been delays in highways works being undertaken; there had been discussions with the shopkeepers however the voluntary code of practice had not yet been consulted on; this would be carried out once the highways works had commenced.

There had been issues in Grangetown where shopkeepers had complained due to the delay between the code of practice being implemented and the painting works being carried out. It had been decided that it would be best to wait until works were able to be carried out before the code of practice was implemented on Hylton Road to prevent this issue from occurring again.

Ms Robinson advised that the highways department had lost a lot of staff and it was important to acknowledge the effect this had on the capacity of services to deliver bigger projects as part of the Committee's work plan.

Councillor Price commented that the parking problems on Hylton Road were getting worse and caused problems for people turning onto Hylton Road from the side streets who could not see whether there was any oncoming traffic due to the parked vehicles. He was however concerned that enforcement might aggravate shopkeepers which could then affect co-operation on the development of the code of conduct. There had been attempts at enforcement in the past which had led to the enforcement officers being physically and verbally abused. Councillor Mordey added that should parked vehicles be causing an obstruction then the police should be contacted.

Councillor Emerson queried whether the new owner of the empty pubs on Ryhope Street South had been contacted. Ms Patterson advised that both had been empty when the consultation on the code of practice had been carried out; it was still not known what the buildings would be used for as no planning application had been made.

Councillor Emerson then asked whether a revised timetable of works could be provided. Ms Rowland agreed to provide this.

Paula Hunt commented that the scheme did not have any credibility; it was over a year since the consultation had been undertaken but the scheme still had not been implemented in some areas.

Councillor E. Gibson stated that there was a need to ensure that the Council was getting value for money from the funds spent on the project.

Councillor Mordey then advised that he would speak to the highways department in respect of these works.

Councillor Scanlan then stated that she thought that it would be necessary for the projects to be revisited at the next Place Board meeting before any new priorities were started.

Councillor Scanlan then presented the updates on the area priorities for 2014/15 as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report and in the work plan set out in annex 1. There had been 2 payments awarded as part of the green adventure priority; there was still funding available for this priority. Members were asked to provide the highways department with a list of any priority works they had identified within their area by the end of December to enable the highways maintenance programme to be developed. There would be an open day held in April for the Gateway3/Clean and Grow priority and the Committee were also being asked to align £50,000 of SIB funding to this priority.

Councillor Mordey referred to the Gateway 3 priority and advised that the Cabinet were prioritising the de-cluttering of back lanes and as such he cautioned against putting anything into the back lanes. He was supportive of tree planting and felt that this needed to be looked into. He also stated that when carrying out community clean-up operations there was a need for partner agencies to be involved. Within Hendon there were difficulties with registered social landlord Home Housing, which did not engage with the council or the community. The Chairman added concerns that Home Housing did not manage their tenants effectively.

Jen McKevitt stated that Home Housing had committed to carry out maintenance of the Amberley and Harrogate Street sites; there had not been any maintenance undertaken by them, there were also a large number of rats around the site. There was also a problem with antisocial behaviour around East Vines; he was concerned that it seemed that Home Housing did the bare minimum amount of work to tackle issues.

Councillor E. Gibson added that there seemed to be a large rat population at the moment; the number of rats in Doxford Park was a serious concern and some people had stopped using the park due to the number of rats.

Councillor M. Dixon queried when the meeting with private landlords from Hendon would be taking place. Ms Trueman advised that the meeting would be held on 26th January at 3:30pm at Bede Tower should the requested SIB funding be approved as part of the Area Budgets report.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The Place Board Work Plan set out at annex 1 be noted.
- b. The progress of the 'Green Adventure' and 'Better than Basic Signage' SIB programme be noted and future progress reports be received.

- c. Support be given to the Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme events to be held in Spring 2015 and the recommendation to approve £10,000 of SIB funding be noted.
- d. Concerns regarding highways be referred to the Highways and Transport Team by December 2014.
- e. Approval be given to 'Clean and Grow' as an area priority and the recommendation to align £50,000 of SIB to the priority be noted.

People Board Progress Report

The Chairman of the People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the work done by the People Board against the work plan for 2014/15.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Emerson, Chair of the People Board, introduced the report and advised the Committee that the work the People Board had undertaken was set out in the table at paragraph 2.1 of the report. It was recommended that £20,000 of SIB funding be aligned to the Improving resident's emotional wellbeing priority to enable a call for projects to be undertaken.

Councillor Mordey commented that he had visited Seafarers Way which was a very dementia friendly building; he encouraged everyone to visit to experience how good a facility this was. He also advised that there would be a meeting held with the Alzheimer's Society to discuss how to make the Metro more accessible and there would be a review of the signage used in the city.

Councillor Price referred to the use of music to help dementia patients. His daughter had worked as a carer and she had seen how much of a positive impact the use of music and recordings of specific sounds could help.

Councillor Forbes referred to the high suicide rate and queried whether there was any specific information available around the circumstances such as whether there were any addictions or bullying involved as issues such as these could have a devastating impact on people's mental health. Councillor Emerson commented that a lot of people considered suicide due to financial problems. Councillor Mordey added that benefit sanctions had led to some suicides.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The People Board Work Plan set out at annex 1 and the progress of the Partnership in Practice actions set out at annex 2 be noted.
- b. The progress of the 'Green Adventure' SIB programme be noted and further progress reports be received to future meetings.
- c. Approval be given to the actions to raise the profile of the Sunderland Wellbeing and Men's Networks.

- d. Area Committee Members be encouraged to attend the 'Life Worth Living Course' on suicide prevention.
- e. Information be shared with the East Area VCS Network to support choices in mental health.
- f. The People Board's recommendation to align £20,000 of SIB to the 'improving residents emotional wellbeing' priority be noted.

Area Budgets Report

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statement which detailed the current position on progress in relation to allocations of SIB and Community Chest funding and which sought Members approval of proposals for funding.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Nicol Trueman introduced the report and advised the Committee of the financial statements and the proposals for funding which Members were asked to consider.

The financial statement for SIB funding was set out at paragraph 2.1 of the report. There was 1 application for £10,000 of SIB funding to support a series of events to encourage non-accredited landlords in the area to become accredited and 2 requests to align SIB funding totalling £70,000 to area board priorities of 'Clean and Grow' and 'Improving resident's emotional wellbeing'; should they all be approved there would still be £107,996 of SIB funding available. The detail of the applications was set out in annex 1 to the report.

Members were asked to note the 12 approved Community Chest applications and the returned funding as was detailed in annex 2 to the report. There was a balance of £29,683.73 remaining for the area.

Councillor Mordey commented that he had visited Hendon Young People's Project (HYPP); they had problems with the roof of the building which had resulted in them needing to close part of the centre. It was anticipated that the cost of the reroofing would be £3,000 to £3,500; HYPP could not afford this expense and there was not sufficient funding left within the allocation for Hendon Ward. It was possible that there may be a need for an additional £1,000 to £1,500 to be allocated to the ward by the Area Committee to cover the costs of this work; the Chairman agreed to discuss the situation with Councillor Mordey outside of the meeting.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statements set out at paragraphs 2.1 and 4.1 be noted
- b. The SIB application for £10,000 from the 2014/15 budget to promote the Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme as set out in annex 1 be approved

- c. £50,000 of SIB be aligned to the 'Clean and Grow' area priority and £20,000 be aligned to the 'Improving Resident's Emotional Health' priority as set out in annex 1.
- d. The 12 Community Chest approvals from the 2014/15 Community Chest budget as set out in annex 2 be noted.

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the East Sunderland Area for the period 1st October to 20th November 2014 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) E. BALL,
Chairman.