

22 January 2014

**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 is initiating 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 has elected member representation, whose role is 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 (January 2014)**

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

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

<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"> <li>• 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 <b>Annex 2</b> to this report.</li> </ul>
<p>The issues around the large volume of fly tipping in the Coalfield area was discussed and Place Board requested the purchase of cameras to deliver a pilot project to address the problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working in partnership with colleagues at Durham County Council, a project plan was developed to build on best practice and incorporate cross boundary working</li> <li>• Ten cameras with relevant power packs and required signs have been purchased with funding from LMAPS and SIB</li> <li>• The cameras have been located around the area, at sites with the highest levels of fly tipping</li> <li>• A number of fly tipping incidents have been caught on camera. Discussions with legal officers are underway to establish a route for prosecution</li> <li>• Close working relationships with the Neighbourhood Police Team and LMAPS will further develop the project and increase effectiveness</li> <li>• The early indications are that incidents of fly tipping are reduced in the hot spot areas discussed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Influence: Local Development Plan</b></p>	
<p>Members received a presentation regarding the LDP/Core Strategy and Settlement Breaks within Coalfield</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members received information on the Local Development Plan / Core Strategy and how this related to the Coalfield Area. A Coalfield specific workshop took place in September 2013 at the request of Members. A follow up meeting took place in November 2013, where key officers updated Area Committee Members on how their views had influenced the way forward. Members will be consulted further during the collection of key evidence required to prepare the next Draft of the Core Strategy due in summer of 2014</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Influence: Highways Capital Maintenance 2014/2015</b></p>	
<p>Head of Street Scene discussed the influence of the Highways Capital Maintenance programme with the Place Board at the November 2013 meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board received information on the process for members to influence and prioritise the areas of capital maintenance works for 2014/2015, with 25% of the capital maintenance budget identified for influence.</li> <li>• Further information will be presented to the Place Boards in February identifying locations for consideration by members for inclusion in the capital maintenance programme. These areas have been identified from a number of sources including members, residents and Highways staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Influence: Public Protection and Regulatory Service (PPRS)</b></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Place Board was provided with information on the statutory services and functions within PPRS and how the board may influence each of the functions at a local level.</li> <li>• The service has a small health promotion team who can signpost community groups to healthy lifestyles information. This is to be discussed further and feed into VCS Network where appropriate</li> <li>• Consumer education can be provided e.g. Sheltered Accommodation residents can be given advice and support on how to avoid cold calling and postal scams.</li> <li>• Concerns about the increased volume of scrap and waste transfer vehicles in the area were discussed. The Board were informed of a new Act which requires all vehicles to have a licence from the Council.</li> <li>• The board requested some of the information provided, to be available at a local level. This is not currently available but in the future the information will be more area focused.</li> </ul>

<b>Local Priority: Neglected Land</b>	
A clean up of Council owned plots identified as neglected during the audit of land has now been completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All small council owned plots have now been improved and ward team leaders from Street Scene services are monitoring and maintaining all sites to ensure they do not deteriorate</li> <li>The former Forest Estate will be cleared and fenced off into two grazing plots to be let via Property Services. It is proposed that a small leisure area will be created at the boundary closest to residential properties at the rear of Easington Lane High Street and a nature area developed in partnership with Groundwork and the local primary school (see <b>Annex 3</b>)</li> <li>Negotiations with Four Housing and Gentoo are underway with regard to a financial contribution towards the completion of the Forest Estate site as above</li> <li>Place Board recommends an increase to the existing SIB project of £30,000 to complete all works</li> <li>Enforcement action has commenced on three areas of privately owned land.</li> <li>The Place Board wish to promote the work carried out to date, and also to encourage private land owners to improve and maintain any areas highlighted as needing attention. It is therefore recommended that a request be made to local youth groups to develop a communication project with a budget of £2,000</li> </ul>
The Love Where You Live project has been carried out on a number of sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the September 2013 Area Committee meeting, a number of successes in relation to working with voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners were reported. The Place Board wish to extend this work and has developed a project brief (attached at <b>Annex 4</b>) to invite a call for projects for environmental improvements.</li> <li>Place Board request a budget of £30,000 SIB be made available for this work</li> </ul>
<b>Local Priority: Local Shopping Centres</b>	
Business specialists are working with traders in Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row to offer tailored support depending on each individual business need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Houghton Traders' Association is now established. The first newsletter was produced in November 2013 and the website is now live. There are 26 businesses in Houghton engaged in the programme</li> <li>There are 14 businesses in Hetton currently receiving support from the programme. A survey of all businesses received a positive response from 18 traders who were interested in forming a Traders' Forum in Hetton</li> <li>There are 8 businesses in Shiney Row currently receiving business advice and support. The physical aspect of the shopping area has been improved and positive feedback received from traders and shoppers</li> </ul>
The Communications Officer for the Coalfield area is working with the lead agent to promote Shop Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The November Community News featured the project. Local Christmas celebrations in all three centres were promoted as 'Shop Local at Christmas'</li> <li>A high profile marketing campaign is being developed to highlight and promote the work of the Place Board and Area Committee in supporting the development of Houghton Traders Association and the business advice, support and funding for all three shopping centres</li> </ul>
<b>Local Priority: Improving Allotments</b>	
Enforcement action has been taken (on all sites) against those on not using plots for cultivation purposes and tenancies terminated. The vacated plots have now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All potential tenants must now attend a site visit with Officers to ensure are in full agreement with the terms of their licence</li> <li>Waiting lists have been reduced considerably as a result of this exercise (see attached at <b>Annex 5</b>)</li> </ul>

been cleared	
The first major site improvement (Burnside) is now complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All fencing and clearance of plots now complete.</li> <li>• A new sign has been erected at the entrance to the allotments to acknowledge the support of Area Committee.</li> <li>• There are now two plots currently on offer and awaiting responses to offer letters. All other plots are tenanted and being cultivated.</li> <li>• No further spend required – the site will now be closely monitored</li> </ul>
Phase 1 of the second major site (Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses) is now being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearance of plots along the rear of Britannia Tce complete</li> <li>• Consultation has taken place with bordering residential properties, with a positive response from occupants</li> <li>• Powder coated palisade fencing has been procured and due be installed w/c 6 January 2014</li> <li>• A section of damaged and derelict timber close board fencing will be renewed</li> <li>• Once this first phase is complete, the 10 new plots will be allocated to existing and new tenants including a community garden for Dubmire Primary School</li> <li>• The costs to complete the Phase 1 work will amount to approximately <b>£32,000</b> including removal of all waste and levelling the ground</li> <li>• Occupiers of the remaining site (phase 2) have been engaged in regular meetings about the plans to redevelop the site in the longer term. The last meeting took place in Nov 2013 and a further meeting is scheduled for February 2014. Detailed proposals on the new redevelopment plans will be provided, and tenants' co-operation will be sought. Updates will be provided in due course</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Processes have been revised, relying less on a series of letters being sent out, and more on email, phone and text</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The Customer Services Network is developing a more streamlined application process to reduce administration, update waiting lists automatically and improve communication</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
<b>Local Priority: Events and Celebrations</b>	
Discussions with voluntary and community organisations has taken place with regard to delivering local events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VCS Network wish to develop and deliver a series of events during 2014, to commemorate World War 1</li> <li>• Heritage Lottery Funding has been applied for via VCS Network members to support a wider programme of activity</li> <li>• The Place Board has produced a draft programme of key activities for 2014 (attached at <b>Annex 6</b>). With the exception of the WW1 commemoration which is a new project, all activities listed are those which are supported each year and are important to the local community</li> <li>• The Place Board recommend a budget of £15,000 SIB is allocated to a '2014 local celebrations' project, developed with the local community and delivered by the VCS Network and partners</li> </ul>

**3. Recommendations**  
Members are requested to:

- Consider the progress and performance update with regard to Coalfield Place Board's Work Plan for 2013/14
- Consider recommendations for SIB requests at Item 5, Finance Report

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

**Annex 1:** Workplan

**Annex 2:** Dog Control Orders

**Annex 3:** Forest Estate site information

**Annex 4:** Environmental Improvements project brief (draft)

**Annex 5:** Allotment Waiting List

**Annex 6:** Timetable of Events 2014