

At a meeting of the NORTH SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held at HYLTON CASTLE, SUNDERLAND on THURSDAY, 29th SEPTEMBER, 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Wilson in the Chair

Councillors Butler, Chequer, Chisnall, Doyle, Foster, McKeith, Samuels, A. Smith, Stewart, Usher and Vera

Also in Attendance:-

Mr Steven Bewick	-	Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Ms Wendy Cook	-	Area Network Representative
Mr. Peter Curtis	-	Area Network Representative
Mr. Steven Gordon	-	Head of Neighbourhoods, Gentoo
Mr. Neil Guthrie	-	Development Director (Residential)
Ms. Vivienne Metcalfe	-	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council
Ms. Joanne Stewart	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Ms. Ruth Walker	-	Area Network Representative

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. He invited Members of the Committee to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for their colleagues; former Councillors Howe and Walton.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bond, Hartnack and Stewart and also on behalf of Ms. Joanne Coulson, Mr. Richy Duggan, Ms. Nikki Vokes and Inspector Stephen Prested.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 23rd June, 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

North Sunderland Area Neighbourhood Delivery Plan 2020 – 2023

The Chairman of the North Sunderland Area Committee Neighbourhood and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which presented the North Sunderland Neighbourhood Delivery Plan 2020-2023 and provided an update of progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan and which also provided an update on the Neighbourhood and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2022-23.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Foster took Members through the report providing a summary of the key areas of action and/or progress of the Board, with greater detail set out in the annex to the report.

The Committee also received a presentation from Ms. Wendy Cook on the Castle and Redhill Ward's Raising Aspirations projects. This detailed the partners involved and the program of delivery. The presentation highlighted the work that had been undertaken to date and gave case study's from young people who had attended some of the youth and sports sessions to the Committee.

In response to a query from Councillor Vera as to how they were reaching out to older residents in the area, Ms. Cook advised that they had new project team workers who would knock on doors to speak and engage with residents who may be socially isolated; helping to signpost them to appropriate services to meet their individual needs. Where they did not get an answer they would leave a leaflet providing information for them.

Mr. Gordon of Gentoo advised that last year they had ran a scheme in partnership with the Sunderland Empire to provide tickets for the pantomime; along with transport and snacks; to families in the area. He commented that there may be families that they were not aware of who may benefit from similar schemes this year and stated that it may be beneficial for him to have conversations outside of the meeting with voluntary sector representatives where they may be able to share referrals. He also advised that there was no criteria for families to meet to benefit from their scheme.

Councillor Wilson referred to issues in relation to sewage and storm drain overflow at Seaburn beach and advised that Councillor Doyle had composed a letter which he was seeking the Committee's support of. Councillor Doyle recited the letter to the Committee which was seeking that further action be taken by the Leader and the Chief Executive to look at undertaking an independent water cycle study investigating the water treatment works and the impact they were having on local beaches.

Members of the Committee supported the content of the letter and Councillor Doyle agreed to circulate it prior to adding their names in support and forwarding it to the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council for their attention.

The information in the report and presentation having been fully considered, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- The progress and performance update with regard to the North Sunderland Neighbourhood Delivery Plan for 2020/23 be received and noted and the proposals for future delivery as set out in annex 1 to the report be agreed;
- The presentation on the Castle and Redhill Raising Aspirations projects be received and noted; and
- The letter composed by Councillor Doyle be circulated to all Members of the Area Committee before being signed off and sent to the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council.

North Sunderland Area Committee 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 Neighbourhood Funds, Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme and Community Chest and presented proposals for further funding requests.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Ms. Metcalfe, Area Community Development Lead, presented the report drawing attention to the recommendations detailed within the report.

Councillor Doyle commented that he would like to see a “Walk & Talk” arrangement put in place for the North Sunderland Area Committee similar to those which were undertaken by other Area Committees, which helped them to agree where to focus their funding for the year ahead. He had concerns that some areas were being neglected which could benefit from Area Committee funding. Councillor Wilson advised that they did not have a Walk & Talk arrangement in place but explained that potential future projects for funding were to be discussed at the next meeting of the North Sunderland Area Neighbourhood and Community Board.

Councillor Butler commented on the application towards a Park Run at the Quarry site advising Members that it would be an asset to the North Sunderland Area and could be an opportunity to bring people into the area from miles around. He felt it would benefit all residents and the Quarry would offer the perfect site for a Park Run with a few nominal repairs and some help from the Council in maintaining the site.

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

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the financial statements as set out in section 2.1 and 3.1 of the report be received and noted;
- (ii) approval be given to the allocation of £5,000 from the Neighbourhood Fund to the Quarry Park Run Project;
- (iii) approval be given to the allocation of £13,300 from the Neighbourhood Fund to Sunderland City Council for the Southwick Community Christmas Project; and
- (iv) the approvals for Community Chest supported from 2022/2023 as set out in the report be noted.

Partner Agency Reports - Report of the North Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network

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

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Ms. Ruth Walker, Area Network Representative, took Members through the report advising that the network had met in June, July and September, 2022 and shared the agenda items that had been covered.

Members of the Committee were advised that the network had received the Area Committee Call for Projects for youth activities and applications had been submitted; with decisions having been made in July, 2022 and all successful applicants would now have received offer documentation.

Members having no further comments or questions, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Partner Agency Reports - Gentoo Update

Gentoo submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update with regard to the work done by Gentoo between July and September, 2022.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Gordon, Head of Neighbourhoods, Gentoo, presented the report advising that regular updates would be presented to enable Members to be up to date on Gentoo current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities. Members of the Committee were given an update on Neighbourhood Services and were provided with information on investments and renewals in the North Sunderland Area.

In response to a question from Councillor Chisnall regarding the impact of the rising interest rates, Mr. Gordon advised that the level of funding grant from the government to provide affordable housing was agreed and could not just be flipped but it was an area of concern to monitor.

Councillor Butler commented on the fencing scheme that was to be undertaken and encouraged residents to be advised to report problems with any properties in their area. In addition Mr. Gordon informed the Committee that they had tasked Neighbourhood Walkers to identify and report any properties they saw that were needing attention. They would then use this information to compile into neighbourhood plans which would then set out their priorities going forward. These plans could also be shared with Members.

In response to comments from Councillor Wilson regarding issues with geo-thermal heating in some properties, Mr. Gordon advised that he had been aware that there had

been some problems when it had been first installed in properties and tenants had to be trained on how best to use the new systems. Feedback he had received since then had been positive but they were happy to send staff to help educate any residents who may still be struggling with it.

Members having fully considered the report and information provided, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Northumbria Police Update

The Committee were advised that in the absence of a presenting officer, should Members have any questions, they could be emailed to directly to Inspector Prested who would ensure that a response was provided.

6. RESOLVED that any questions be emailed directly to Inspector Prested for a response.

Partner Agency Reports – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Steven Bewick, Station Manager, TWFRS, presented the update report and provided the Committee with a verbal update on the current numbers for fires in the area. The figures referred to quarter two which ran from July to September 2022 and he provided a comparison with data from the same quarter in the previous year.

There had been 173 deliberate fires compared with 95 in the same period last year and this included 6 deliberate primary fires compared with 3 last year. There had been 10 deliberate vehicle fires compared with 8 last year and there had been 157 deliberate secondary fires compared with 84 in the previous year. A break down by ward was also provided for Members information.

Mr. Bewick provided Members with details of ongoing projects that were being undertaken in the run up to bonfire night and darker winter evenings. They continued to carry out safe and well checks in the community and smoke alarms were being installed where necessary.

Councillor Butler referred to issues that the emergency services had in accessing the allotments behind the VW Garage due to their cars being parked along the access road. He advised he had contacted the Council and Northumbria Police but had been informed that they had no powers to rectify this and asked if the fire service were able to do anything. Mr. Bewick advised that they would be in a similar position and they would have to work with the Council to look at possible solutions, advising that in other areas they had installed barriers to help.

Councillor Wilson referred to a drone that the Council had purchased and commented that he would like to see it used for prevention of young people setting fires or causing anti-social behaviour and felt that it may be beneficial to a number of partner agencies. Mr. Guthrie advised that it was currently being used by the Council for a number of initiatives, but they were limited as to who could fly it and when.

Members thanked the Officer for the update, and it was:-

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

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

(Signed) D. WILSON,
Chairman.