

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held in THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE, THE OVAL, CONCORD, WASHINGTON, on THURSDAY, 16TH MARCH, 2023 at 6.00p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Lauchlan in the Chair

Councillors Donaghy, Farthing, Fletcher, Guy, Laws, F. Miller, D. E. Snowdon, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, P. Walker, Warne and Williams

Also in Attendance:-

Pauline Hopper	-	Area Officer – Sunderland City Council
Marc Morley	-	Director of Environmental Services, Sunderland City Council
Paul Wood	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Denise Gilholme	-	Community Support Worker
Bethan Wilkie	-	Gentoo
Martin Farrow	-	TWFRA

And Members of the Press

Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Councillors G. Miller and M. Walker. Inspector Phil Baker and Shirley Gillum

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

Minutes of the last meeting held on 15th December 2022

The Chairman informed the Committee that in relation to funding of the Albany Pit Wheel, Officers had just learned that the £20,000 would be funded corporately therefore the allocation would be coming back to Washington Area Committees budget.

Councillor Farthing referred to Page 9 of the minutes and Inspector Passey's commitment to look into the Community Speed Watch Programme and requested that as Inspector Passey had moved on that the new Inspector be contacted to take this forward. Ms Hopper advised that she would speak with Inspector Baker on this issue.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 15th December, 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Washington Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020-2023

The Chair of Washington Neighbourhoods and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update of progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan which would be the focus for the Washington Area Committee during 2022-2023 and also provided an update on Neighbourhood and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2022-2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Laws presented the report, highlighting the key points of action within the relevant Task Groups and was on hand to answer any queries raised by Members.

Councillor Laws informed the Committee of conversations with Officers relating to the Trees/Management Plan and that they should have indicative timelines in place soon. Marc Morley, Director of Environmental Services advised that they were looking to award contracts from 23rd March and in relation to Councillor F. Millers concerns over bird nesting, informed that they would manage this and advise on any issues that arose but the team worked throughout the year and take due course for habitats etc so this work wasn't alien to them. Mr Morley also advised that they would communicate with those residents should they raise any concerns.

Councillor Farthing referred to Enforcement and Neighbourhood Management, advising that she had received many comments from residents in Stanhope about dog walkers not picking up after themselves and requested that this be raised. Ms Hopper advised that she would take this back for consideration.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that whilst he did not want to take anything away from the Council's Cleansing Team who did a brilliant job, he felt he must highlight the fantastic job being done by the Clean and Green Team who had just cleared an area near the Galleries Shopping Centre which had been in a poor state.

Councillor Williams also wished to raise the issue of enforcement, in particular dog attacks and she had been left infuriated with responses received in trying to deal with the matter. Councillor Williams advised that she had been

informed that dog on dog attacks were a civil matter so she was unsure how this could be enforced and she had asked for this to be raised at LMAP'S as she didn't feel like she was being heard.

Councillor Williams also referred to the Keep Washington Tidy team who were providing an excellent service and that there needed to be a balance over what they did and where they needed to be so she would welcome closer working between those and the enforcement team.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that we were heading toward a scenario where all dogs would have to be kept on leads at all times as dog on dog attacks were happening more and more regularly. The Chairman queried if orders were not already in place for this within Parks.

Councillor D. E. Snowdon commented that dogs had to be put on leads when asked.

Mr Morley informed that some areas specify a lead is required at all times, such as Roker Park and the Council website specifies which areas in the City this applied to.

Councillor Williams commented that there was a need to look at this further with a city-wide strategy to deal with it.

Councillor F. Miller also wished to thank the Clean and Green Team and cautioned that the plantations that they were tackling were quite dangerous and the volunteers required goggles/protective equipment.

Councillor F. Miller also informed of issues raised around ASB in Staithes Road and enquired about CCTV. Ms Hopper advised that she would have to check if there were any columns suitable for CCTV in the area but she would take this away for consideration.

Councillor Farthing referred to the Highways Maintenance Programme and queried the Vigo Lane footway listing as she had suggested this be funded via the Ward Improvement fund. Ms Hopper advised that she would speak with the Officer for further consideration.

2. RESOLVED that the Committee

- i) Considered the progress and performance update with regards to the Washington Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020- 2023, and agreed the proposals for future delivery as contained within Annex 1 of the report;
- ii) Agreed the recommendations contained in Annex 2 in relation to Highways Maintenance Programme 2023/24

Partner Agency Reports

a) 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)

Ms Bethan Wilkie, Gentoo presented the report and was on hand to answer Members queries.

In response to Councillor Warne's query over the sale of garages in Albany, Ms Wilkie advised that she did not work in that particular department but she would find out if there were any plans for the sale of garages in the other Villages and get back to the Member.

Councillor Williams advised of the work to Lambton Village Centre and that this was due to be completed before Christmas however she had received complaints from residents and a gentleman in particular who had scaffolding end up in his garage and also queried when the clock was to be repaired. Ms Wilkie advised that she would speak to the asset team and also get details of the resident in question so she could get in touch.

Councillor Williams referred to the earlier news that the Albany Pit Wheel would be funded corporately and as the Garages in the area were not to be demolished anymore, some of this budget had been allocated for the landscaping, therefore suggested this money should also be brought back into the Area Committee budget. Councillor H. Trueman advised that it had been proposed for low level fencing if the garages had been demolished.

Ms Hopper advised that she would check with Officers as to the status of this and may be able to update Members at the upcoming workshop.

Councillor Farthing referred to Para 3 of the report and Pension Credit being one of the most underclaimed benefits, commenting that the eligibility criteria and having to apply for this was the main barrier and felt that this should be an automatic provision and that it seemed the Government put barriers in place to access this support mechanism.

Councillor Farthing also referred to the Tenant satisfaction survey and commented that due to supplies issues and the Ukraine situation that there would be more reports from residents than ever as repairs were taking longer.

Ms Wilkie commented that these questions needed to be asked to get residents feedback and if there were issues, Gentoo needed to know about them so encouraged those residents contacting Members to contact Gentoo directly also.

Councillor Laws referred to Para 2 of the report and the Cost of Living Survey,

commenting that this had been carried out through social media and had received a massive response, however some of those struggling the most may not have access to social media and enquired what Gentoo were doing to make sure contact was being made with every tenant.

Ms Wilkie advised that the Neighbourhood Co-ordinators were trying to be as visible as possible and they were opening conversations up and in contact with as many tenants as possible in order to provide support.

Councillor F. Miller informed of a recent presentation given by Gentoo at the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee which detailed actions taken on Damp/Mould issues and also stated that all double glazing installations were to be completed by December 2023 but advised of a resident who was still yet to be contacted over this. Ms Wilkie advised that she would speak with the Member outside of the meeting to obtain further details of the resident and get in touch directly.

Councillor D. E. Snowdon informed the Committee of drop in sessions for any residents to report issues from the construction works.

The Chairman thanked Ms Wilkie for the report

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

b) 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 having submitted his apologies to the meeting, it was:-

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)

Area Committee VCS Representatives having submitted their apologies, 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.

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 and was on hand to answer any queries raised by Members.

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

6. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Noted the financial statements set out in Section 2.1 and 3.1 of the report;
- ii) Noted the Community Chest approvals supported from 2022/2023 as detailed Item 4 Annex 1

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the Washington Area for the period 1st February, 2023 to 28th February, 2023 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

7. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting

(Signed) L. LAUHLAN,
Chairman.