

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at the WASHINGTON MILLENNIUM CENTRE on THURSDAY 15th, 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Williams in the Chair

Councillors Fletcher, Farthing, Kelly, Lauchlan, F. Miller, G. Miller, Scaplehorn, D. Snowden, D.E. Snowden, D. Trueman, H. Trueman and P. Walker.

Louise Butler	-	Chief Executives
Karon Purvis	-	Chief Executives
Paul Wood	-	Corporate Services Directorate
Colin McCartney	-	Gentoo
Ev Ripley-Day	-	Foundation of Light
Jemma Amer	-	VCS Representative
Mark Witherspoon	-	TWFRS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Middleton, Taylor and Ms Jacqui Reeves and Inspector Quinn.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

Minutes of the last meeting held on 16th March, 2017

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 16th March, 2017 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Washington Area Committee Annual Report 2016-17

The Chair of the Washington Area Committee submitted a report (copy circulated) for the Committee to approve the Washington Area Committee's Annual Report 2016-17

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Farthing enquired how any evaluations were arranged in terms of schemes and projects submitted by the other Area Committees as part of the joint report to Council and if there was a way to become involved in those.

Louise Butler, Area Co-ordinator advised that the Area Community Leads did meet to discuss the best practices and if other areas could utilise the approach.

The Chairman suggested this could be something further discussed at group meetings.

2. RESOLVED that Members considered and approved the Washington Annual Report for inclusion in the combined Area Committee Annual Report for 2016-17

Partner Agency Reports

(a) TWFRS

Mark Witherspoon, TWFRS was in attendance to introduce himself to the Committee having recently replaced Steve Graham in the role and that he would forward his contact details onto Ms Butler for circulation.

Mr Witherspoon informed the Committee that unfortunately there had been a dramatic increase in fires across the Tyne and Wear region starting from the month of April and the force were starting to feel the pressures of the cuts. There had been more than a 100% increase in Ward areas which could be attributed in part down to the warm weather which brought out the young people causing ASB fires.

Spikes in the Washington West Ward were mainly around Armstrong Industrial Estate and the force was speaking with the Businesses in the area on this. Washington South Ward appeared to be around Holley Park Primary School, Washington Central was focussed in Princess Anne Park and Washington North had been sporadic but whilst there had been the fire at Junglerama some positives had been gained from this by enabling a community event to take place which lead to 72 smoke alarms being fitted.

Mr Witherspoon advised that the football club in Albany Park had been targeted and a tactical plan was carried out but they were still waiting for access to the building. Washington East Ward had also been sporadic with a couple of fires within Fatfield Park.

The lighter night's campaign had been completed and it was hoped this would have an impact on instances for the next few months.

Positives could be made of a decrease in more significant fires across the area and proactive approaches had been taken in conversing with residents in relation to overfilled skips and such like.

Mr Witherspoon advised that overgrown grass land was creating the opportunity for more fires being set and that unfortunately this indicated the sign of the times in terms of cuts to services.

In response to Councillor Dianne Snowdon's query over a local organisation wanting to book out Fire Authority room facilities, Mr Witherspoon advised that organisations that would be making a profit from the meeting would be expected to pay for use of the room but if it were a community event then the room would be free. Mr Witherspoon advised that he would look into the matter and liaise through Ms Butler.

In relation to the overgrown grasslands and plantations, Councillor Scaplehorn raised concerns that they were hiding combustible items that had been discarded which increased the risk of fires being started.

With regards to proactive approaches, the Chairman suggested that the fire authority may wish to visit other schools as many children crossed boundaries to attend a school. Mr Witherspoon advised that this was something on their radar to consider.

In response to Councillor Farthing's enquiry over the Grenfell Tower tragedy, Colin McCartney, Gentoo advised that there were no multi-storeys in Washington but they were visiting the sites across the city and they had robust fire safety inspections in place so until more was known about the cause of the fire in London, they would continue to monitor and react if necessary.

Councillor G. Miller advised that Gentoo had released a strong message to the media that they were proactive and ahead of the required standards for checking fire safety.

3. RESOLVED that the comments be noted

(b) Report of the Washington Area Community Voluntary Sector Network

The Washington Area Community Voluntary Sector Network submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform the Committee of activity, progress, issues and concerns of the sector.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Jemma Amer, VCS Representative presented the report and was on hand to answer Members queries.

Councillor Kelly wished to place on record his thanks to John Rostron and all of the work he had undertaken. Councillor Kelly commented that he was very supportive of the VCS and was concerned at how much they were under pressure and queried if consideration could be given with an analysis of what was left in the service and a register of what was available.

Karon Purvis, Area Officer advised that the VCS Network had a membership list with a hierarchy of the groups. The network had a real core membership and she could provide information to Councillor Kelly as to who was active.

The Chairman wished to congratulate the group on their work and to thank John Rostron on behalf of the Committee.

4. RESOLVED that Members noted the contents of the report and considered the opportunities and issues raised by the Washington ACVSN.

People Board Progress Report

The Chair of the People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the 2016/17 work plan, including SIB funded projects.

The report sought the Area Committees approval for priorities to be taken forward as part of the Work Plan for 2017/18 and also provided an update on People Board Governance Arrangements for 2017/18.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman advised that in relation to the Children's Local Advisory Board (CLAB) representation, that she was unsure as to the status of this as it was under review at present.

5. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) Considered the Annual Performance Update with regard to the Washington Area People Board's Work Plan for 2016/17 as detailed in Item 4 Annex 1 of the report;
- (ii) Considered and agreed the Washington Area People Board Work Plan Priorities for 2017/18 as detailed in Item 4 Annex 2 of the report; and
- (iii) Noted the Area Governance arrangements for 2017/18 outlined in Section 5 and Item 4 Annex 3 of the report

Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the 2016/17 work plan, including SIB funded projects.

The report sought the Area Committees approval for priorities to be taken forward as part of the Work Plan for 2017/18 and also provided an update on People Board Governance Arrangements for 2017/18.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Members having considered the report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that Members:-

- a. Considered the Annual Performance Update with regard to the Washington Area Place Board's Work Plan for 2016/17 as detailed in Item 5 Annex 1 of the report
- b. Considered and agreed the Washington Area Place Board Work Plan Priorities for 2017/18 as detailed in Item 5 Annex 2 of the report
- c. Noted the Area Governance arrangements for 2017/18 outlined in Section 5 and Item 5 Annex 3 of the report.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) Community Chest – Financial Statement and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources

The Head of Area Arrangements, Scrutiny and Member Support Service submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statements as an update on the progress in allocating SIB and Community Chest and which presented proposals for further funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

In relation to paragraph 3.2 and provision for children and young people programme, Councillor Kelly requested that smaller, grass route groups be included in any plans.

Councillor Kelly proposed that £10,000 be allocated per ward, for call for projects to the wider sector to deliver 10 holiday weeks across the year for both age groups so long as they could demonstrate that they could work with the smaller groups and for Ward Councillors to be given recommendations/input. Councillor Scaplehorn seconded the proposal.

Mrs Purvis advised that £5,000 would have to be allocated to each age group so that the small grant process could be implemented on the project and sought clarification that if the partnership could not carry out the new proposal, Members were in agreement for the programme to be released for a general call for projects with the proviso that whoever was driving the project forward would consult with Ward Members. The Committee agreed the proposal.

With regard to paragraph 4.1 of the report and the ward based Walk and Talk Programme for 2017/18, Councillor Kelly advised that he had no issue with aligning the £50,000 as recommended but requested the operational aspects of the project be taken back to the Place Board for further discussion.

Councillor Scaplehorn referred to paragraph 4.4 and the Neighbourhood Improvement Project and wished to thank the Area Committee Members for their assistance on the Ward projects that had been troublesome.

Members having fully considered the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- a. Noted the financial statement set out in the report;
- b. Considered and approved £40,000 from the 2017/18 SIB budget for the Washington Volunteer and Community Support Project;
- c. Considered and approved £50,000 (amended from report) from the 2017/18 SIB budget for the Washington Holiday Activities Programme 2017;
- d. Considered and approved the alignment of £100,000 from the SIB 2017/18 budget to progress a VCS collaboration to deliver a CLLD Social Capital Enterprise and Employment approach.
- e. Considered and aligned £50,000 from the 2017/18 SIB budget for the Washington Walk and Talk 2017 Programme
- f. Considered and agreed to align £60,000 from the 2017/18 SIB budget to develop the Events 2018 project
- g. Considered and agreed to align £17,500 from the 2017/18 SIB budget to support the Tall Ships 2018 Programme
- h. Agreed the return of £359 (amended from report) from the Neighbourhood Improvement Project
- i. Noted the Community Chest balances as detailed in Annex 5 of the report

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the Washington Area for the period 1st April, 2017 to 11th May, 2017 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) L. WILLIAMS,
Chairman.