

Item 1d

At a meeting of the WEST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the FARRINGTON YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE, on TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors, Blackett, Burnicle, Crosby, Dunn, Edgeworth, Greener, Haswell, Mann, McDonough, Nicholson, O'Brien, Peacock, G. Smith, P. Smith and Tye

Also Present:-

Kelly Brougham	VCS Network Representative, Active Families N.E.
Victoria Gamblin	Head of Operations, Gentoo
Sarah Lattaway	Sunderland VCS Alliance Community Support Worker
Joanne Laverick	VCS Network Representative, Youth Almighty
Bill Leach	VCS Network Representative, Pennywell Com. Centre
Andrew Nelson	Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Service
David Noon	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Phil Baker	Inspector, Northumbria Police
Helen Peverley	Area Arrangements Strategic Manager, Sunderland City Council
Gilly Stanley	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mullen and Noble.

Declarations of Interest

Item 3b – Gentoo

Councillor Burnicle made an open declaration in the item as his firm had undertaken contract work for Gentoo.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 8th December 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

West Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020-2023

Councillor Haswell, Chair of the West Area Neighbourhoods and Community Board, presented the report (copy circulated) which:-

i). Presented the West Sunderland Neighbourhood Delivery Plan 2020-2023; and

ii). Provided an update of progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman thanked Councillor Haswell for his report and invited questions from Members. Councillor Mann having expressed concern at the condition of the Portsmouth Road Play Area and that the promised piece of inclusive play equipment had not been installed, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

i) the progress and performance update with regard to the West Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plan 2020/23 be noted,

ii) approval be given to the proposals for future delivery as contained within Annex 1 of the report.

iii). the recommendation of the Board to approve the West Highway Improvements be supported

iv). the recommendation of the Board to approve the Neighbourhood Capital Improvements and Neighbourhood Fund Highways Improvements Project be supported.

The Committee then received and noted a short video presentation detailing the work undertaken to deliver the various components of the West Area Delivery Plan.

Change in the Order of Business

The Chairman advised that he would take Item 3d on the Agenda (Northumbria Police Report) at this juncture to allow Inspector Baker to leave the meeting thereafter to celebrate his birthday. The Committee wished Inspector Baker a happy Birthday.

Report of Northumbria Police

Inspector Baker presented a report of the Northumbria Police Force (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with a community update together with key performance information in relation to the Sunderland West area during the period December 2021 to February 2022.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Mann offered her thanks in respect of the Dark Nights campaign which had resulted in a marked improvement in St Anne's ward. She advised that there had been major problems in the area during November which Councillor Tye had also helped to address via Youth Almighty.

Cllr Mann also thanked the Police for their dispersal operations around South Hylton Metro Station but highlighted that Anti-Social Behaviour continued to occur in the shopping area focusing on Iceland in particular. In conclusion, Councillor Mann asked if Inspector Baker could circulate contact details for the West Area Police Team to members of the Committee.

Councillor Crosby highlighted the growing issue of off road 4 wheel drives in Sandhill and asked if the Police would be able to address residents concerns. Inspector Baker advised that Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland were looking at a possible initiative to tackle the problem.

Councillor Greener referred to a recent machete attack in Millfield which she believed to be drug related. Given that drugs were often a gateway to more serious crime she suggested that it was an area which the Police should give a particular focus. Inspector Baker replied that he was unable to comment on this specific case as it was an ongoing investigation however he advised that the Police always acted on intelligence. Councillor Greener further commented on the lack of a visible PCSO in Barnes and the reluctance of commercial businesses to report crime because of the amount of paperwork involved. Inspector Baker replied that currently one of the Area's PCSOs was on sick leave and that the documentation involved in reporting crime was required under Force policy.

With regard to targeting potential hotspots for the Lighter Nights Campaign, Councillor Dunn suggested Barnes Park and potentially Eden Vale.

Councillors Burnicle and Peacock referred to the ongoing issue of arson in Sterling Close and advised that incidents tended to occur within the 7pm to 8pm time frame. Councillor McDonough added that fires were a big problem in Middle Herrington play park and he believed that Youth Almighty would have a presence there this evening as a result. Inspector Baker replied that it was often the case that fires were not reported to the Police and he would raise the issue at LMAPS to find the best way to address the issue.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Haswell, Inspector Baker confirmed that he would be happy to arrange meet and greet sessions with Ward Councillors.

There being no further comments or questions for Inspector Baker, the Chairman thanked him for his attendance, and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the West Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network

The Network submitted a progress report (copy circulated) which briefed members on issues pertinent to the Committee and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Consideration was given to the report presented by Kelly Brougham which highlighted the following VCS Network activity undertaken since its last report to the Committee:-

- i) The receipt of presentations on Crowd Fund Sunderland
- ii) Action to address the results from the recent VCS survey which had shown that people wanted to meet in person and have a large venue with parking. Meetings would be held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and would be in different locations across the area. Dates would be set in advance and topics informative.
- iii) The receipt of an update from the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance. The update included a summary of actions since their event at Bede Tower, the progress on creating an independent organisation, and Training opportunities. In addition Sarah Lattaway provide an update on the work she has been doing to support West area organisations together with a workshop which focused on the future governance of the VCS Alliance.
- iv) The invitation issued to Local VCS organisations to apply to deliver targeted activities across Sunderland during 2022, within neighbourhoods, to support older residents at risk of falling, to improve their strength and balance and reduce their social isolation and also to deliver targeted activities across the west to support older residents in reducing social isolation and loneliness.
- v) The ongoing collaborative work of organisations from the West area to provide support to vulnerable households in most need with Food, Fuel and Other Essential Needs.
- vi) the attendance of Joanne Laverick at various Strategic and operational meetings with the VCS Alliance.

The Chairman thanked Ms Brougham for her report and invited questions from Members.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor McDonough regarding the uptake of support for the elderly, Ms Brougham and Ms Peverley informed the Committee that initially support would be allocated based on already existing, targeted data. Going forward, use would be made of the Council's intelligence data eg missed bins etc. Regular meetings would be held to ensure the data was being understood correctly. A door to door newsletter drop would be undertaken to highlight the support available.

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of Gentoo

Victoria Gamblin, Head of Operations, Gentoo Group presented a report, (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

In addition to the items detailed in the report, Ms Gamblin briefed the Committee on the response to Gentoo's consultation launched in December 2021 on its proposals to build 100 new affordable homes across 3 sites in Farrington, Grindon and Carley Hill.

The Chairman thanked Ms Gamblin for her report and invited questions from Members

Councillor O'Brien expressed his concerns and objection to the proposals to build 17 homes on the site in Grindon off Gartland Road. He questioned the purpose of the consultation if Gentoo was prepared to press on regardless of the negative feedback received. Whilst acknowledging the need for affordable homes in the city, he also expressed concern that the chosen site was publicly accessible open green space that was not earmarked for housing in the Council's Development Plan.

Councillor Mann thanked Ms Gamblin for her report and in particular welcomed the 'fantastic' developments at Chester Gate and Prestbury Road.

Councillor Peacock advised that he was constantly receiving queries from residents regarding overgrown trees and asked who was the most appropriate contact? In addition he had also received complaints from residents regarding construction vehicles at Chester Gate dragging dirt out into the street. Ms Gamblin replied that he should contact her in the first instance.

Councillor Crosby highlighted the parking problems in Lakeside which had recently caused a fire engine to become boxed in.

Councillor McDonough referred to the rising energy costs and asked if this would lead to rent rises in the future. Ms Gamblin replied that Gentoo's costs would increase in line with everyone else's. Gentoo in common with other Social Landlords reviewed their rents on an annual basis each March.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Ms Gamblin for her attendance and it was :-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Station Officer Nelson presented a report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on the Service's performance indicators for the period 1st April, 2021 to 1st March, 2022.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman thanked Mr Nelson for his report and invited questions from Members

In response to an enquiry from Councillor P. Smith regarding the current status of the Phoenix Project, Mr Nelson advised that there was a restructure underway in the Service's Prevention and Education Section. He stated that he would establish who had responsibility for the Project and report back.

Councillor Tye having briefed the Committee on proposals in respect of the Farrington Hall site, the Chairman thanked Station Officer Nelson for his attendance, and it was:-

6. RESOLVED the report be received and noted

West Area Budget Report

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience submitted a report (copy circulated) in respect of the above matter.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Gilly Stanley Area Community Development Lead, presented the report highlighting the Committee's financial statement, details of projects approved under delegated powers for support from the 2021/22 Community Chest budgets, together with details of proposals for the allocation of funds from the Neighbourhood Fund and the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Fund.

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

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Area Committee's funding statement as detailed in sections 2.1 and 3.1 of the report be received and noted;
- (ii) approval be given to the granting of NF funding of £17,913 to, Invest in Highways, Traffic Improvements Sunderland City Council as detailed in Section 2.3 and Annex 1 of the report
- (iii) approval be given to the granting of £187,587 from the West Neighbourhood Capital Investment Fund to Invest in Highways, Traffic Improvements Sunderland City Council, as detailed in Section 2.3 and Annex 1 of the report
- (iv) approval be given to the granting of £53,709 from the West Neighbourhood Capital Investment Fund to Vehicle Activated Signs, Sunderland City Council as detailed in Section 3.4 and Annex 1 of the report.
- (v) Approval be given to the granting of £29,675 from the West Neighbourhood Capital Investment Fund to Invest in Highways, Highway Improvements – Sunderland City Council as detailed in Section 3.4 and Annex 1 of the report
- (vi) the approval of the 5 Community Chest applications from the 2021/22 budget as detailed in Annex 2 of the report be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) P. GIBSON,
Chairman.