

At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at the MILLENNIUM CENTRE, WASHINGTON on WEDNESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2008 at 5.30 P.M.

Present:

Councillor Walker in the Chair

Councillors Chamberlin, A. Cuthbert, I. Cuthbert, Kelly, I. Richardson, Scaplehorn, Snowdon, Timmins, Trueman, Wake and Whalen.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Fletcher, Miller and Stephenson.

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday, 1st October, 2008

Independence Day Celebrations

It was clarified that there had been significant support from the Friends of Washington Old Hall Trust and Volunteers in the organisation and staging of the celebrations and it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 1st October, 2008 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

Item 4 – Presentation from Northumbria Police on Crime Rates Relating to the Washington Area.

Councillor A. Cuthbert declared a personal interest as an employee of Northumbria Police.

Councillor I. Cuthbert declared a personal interest as his wife is an employee of Northumbria Police.

Item 5 – Minutes of the Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving Groups (LMAPS).

Councillor A. Cuthbert declared a personal interest as an employee of Northumbria Police.

Councillor I. Cuthbert declared a personal interest as his wife is an employee of Northumbria Police.

Item 6 – Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report - Pattinson South Pond

Councillors A. Cuthbert and I. Cuthbert declared personal interests as Members of Washington Wetlands Trust.

Item 8 – Strategic Initiatives Budget: 2008/2009 Ward Based Community Chest

Councillor A. Cuthbert declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Fatfield Primary School as a Governor and as a parent of a child attending the school and took no part in any discussion on the application.

Councillor I. Cuthbert declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Governor and as a parent of a child attending Fatfield Primary and took no part in any discussion on the application.

Councillor Kelly declared a personal and prejudicial interest in 2214 Usworth Squadron as a Member of the civilian committee and took no part in any discussion on the application.

Councillor Scaplehorn declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Blackfell Neighbourhood Watch as Chairman and took no part in any discussion on the application.

Councillor Scaplehorn declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Springwell Village Hall as a Board Member and took no part in any discussion on the application.

Presentation from Northumbria Police on Crime Rates Relating to the Washington Area

PC Gary Fee was in attendance and provided details of actual crime numbers committed in the Washington Area for the period 1st April to 23rd November, 2008 in comparison with the same period in 2007.

In relation to the specific crime categories PC Fee reported that there had been a reduction as follows:-

	Increase/Decrease	No. of crimes
Burglary dwellings	-28.3%	76
Burglary OTD	-11.8%	134
Robbery	- 6.3%	15
Theft motor vehicle	-21.8%	179
Taking motor vehicle	-11.0%	97
Shoplifting	-13.6%	140

He advised that total crime in Sunderland was currently showing a decrease of 2.2% for the year to date compared to 2007.

The Chairman stated that issues had been raised by the Police regarding anti social behaviour in the Albany Park Area and that this needed to be looked at. Councillor Scaplehorn enquired whether the problems had contributed to the proposed relocation of the skate park.

PC Fee advised that the police did patrol the area, however, it was vast and the lighting was poor which hampered visibility but it would continue to be monitored. He added that Glebe Park had been highlighted as a more appropriate location for the skate park as it was easier to access and monitor as the police could observe by driving past the facility.

Councillor I. Richardson raised the issue of anti social behaviour taking place around the Barmston play park and PC Fee advised that he would raise the issue back at the station and monitor the situation.

Councillors Wake and Chamberlin reported that they had not been contacted in connection with walkabouts in the Washington South and Oxclose area and PC Fee agreed to take this back.

Councillor Kelly commented that patrols in the Sulgrave area were not as regular and raised the issue of speeding on the ring road and concern being expressed from residents.

PC Fee agreed to raise the matter back at the station.

2. RESOLVED that the information be received and noted.

Minutes of the Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Group

A copy of the Minutes of the meetings of the Local Multi Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) Group held on 27th August and 1st October, 2008 (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

Members gave consideration to the information contained.

Councillor Snowden confirmed that as the representative for the Washington Area on the LMAPS she would be happy to be copied into any issues and take them forward.

In response to Councillor Trueman, PC Fee confirmed that much of youth disorder was alcohol related. In response to Councillor Richardson, PC Fee confirmed that a ward breakdown of incidents could be provided to all Members.

3. RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the LMAPS Group held on 27th August and 1st October, 2008 be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) Regeneration Issues Report

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) on the proposed allocation of SIB funding to support the following initiatives of benefit to the area:-

- (i) roof repairs for Bowes Railway Museum;
- (ii) a contribution to the Area Committee Events Budget;
- (iii) an initial walkover survey of Pattinson South Pond;
- (iv) reinstatement of Washington Usworth Football Pitch.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, presented the report, advising that following the last meeting £137,997 remained to be allocated from 2008/09.

The applications to be presented were requesting a total of £43,187 from the 2008/09 budget. Should the Committee grant these allocations £94,810 would remain in the 2008/09 budget with one meeting remaining.

Bowes Railway

Mr. John Young was in attendance and answered Members' questions in relation to the application. He advised that in relation to the repairs to the roof everything that could be re-used would be and he anticipated a 40% salvage. The remainder of the slates would need to be matched up. He confirmed that the emergency repairs were needed due to old age and not vandalism and that damage to the roof would lead to rain water and weather elements damaging the machinery inside the building which was currently in pristine condition.

Members of the Committee expressed support for the application in view of the historical and technological importance of the railway to the City as a

whole and queried whether financial support should not be apportioned from all six area committees. It was also queried whether financial support was being requested from Gateshead Council on this occasion.

Ms. Trueman advised that procedures in relation to applications with Citywide significance were currently being looked at and that she would take back Members' comments in relation to this application.

In connection to the enquiry concerning a request to Gateshead Council for funding, Mr. Young advised that the Hauler House for which the funding was being requested sat firmly within the boundaries of Sunderland City Council.

Mr. Young advised that efforts were being made to increase visitor numbers to the site in order to increase revenue for the museum. He invited Members to contact him and he would set up a visit to the railway.

Pattinson South Pond

Ms. Trueman advised that Councillor Wake was no longer a Member of the Group.

Mr. Jonathan Wells, Chairperson, was present to answer Members' enquiries.

Usworth Football Pitch

Mr. Kieran Downey, Manager, was in attendance and confirmed that the pitch would be reinstated to the standard required by the Football Leagues. He stated that the pitch was still one of the best in the area and was always playable. In response to Members he confirmed that he would be contacting teams from other areas to encourage use of the playing field.

Councillor I. Cuthbert expressed his support for the application as it was a community based scheme, however, stated that he was disappointed that it was not funded from mainstream Council budgets.

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

4. RESOLVED that approval be given to:-
 - i) £20,000 from the 2008/09 budget, as a contribution towards emergency roof repairs for Bowes Railway Museum;
 - ii) £10,000 from the 2008/09 budget, as a contribution towards the Area Committee Events Budget;
 - iii) £3,822 from the 2008/09 budget, to enable an initial walkover survey of Pattinson South Pond lead by the Friends of James Steel Park; and

- iv) £9,365 from the 2008/09 budget, to reinstate Usworth Football Pitch lead by Washington Usworth Football Club.

(N.B. Councillor Timmins abstained from this application.)

Strategic Initiatives Budget Update

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) providing an update on live projects for which the Area Committee had previously approved funding through its Strategic Initiatives Budget.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, advised that where the funding had not been spent the Committee could recall the money or extend the period.

In relation to the Area Committee Marketing Project, Ms. Trueman confirmed that funding had been spent on communications and press coverage, however, as the claims had not been received the available funding allocated for the project had not reduced, nevertheless, she was sure that all of the funding would be used by the expiry date of the project.

The Committee having given full consideration to the report, it was:-

- 5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget: 2008/09 Ward Based Community Chest

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) to bring forward 29 recommendations relating to 2008/2009 Community Chest Scheme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, advised that the application from Lambton CA had reduced from £6,500 to £500 bringing the total requested for all projects to £9,170.

It was noted that Washington Town FC was shown on Annex 1 to receive £200 per ward. Members, having considered the application, it was:-

- 6. RESOLVED that approval be given to:-
 - i) an allocation of £500 being made to Lambton CA;
 - ii) a total allocation of £500; £100 from each ward being made to Washington Town FC; and

- iii) the remaining applications as detailed on Annex 1 to the report at a total value of £8,670.

Sport and Leisure in Washington

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) providing the Area Committee with information relating to provision of sport and leisure services in the area.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Carol Lewis, Play Pathfinder Programme Manager, and Mr. Tony Mullen, Centre Manager, Washington/Northumbria Centre, were in attendance and briefed Members on the report.

In relation to play and urban games, Councillor Kelly expressed concern at the way consultation had taken place with regard to the location of a new wheeled sports provision in the area, in that this had been held at one location only and Members had not been kept informed that the consultation was taking place. He felt that the consultation should have been staged in all areas of Washington in order to receive wider feedback on the preferred location of the facility from young people in the area where they lived and that this might have resulted in them expressing their views more freely. He was aware that a number of young people had not been able to take part in the consultation as their parents had objected to them travelling out of the area to visit proposed locations for the facility.

Ms. Lewis advised that 68 young people had attended the consultation event held representing each of the five Washington wards. A visit had also been undertaken to look at a facility in South Tyneside where 16 young people had been taken along. She stated that a memorandum had been sent out to all Members to consult them on the issue and seeking their views and the matter had been discussed at a recent Washington Pride meeting. A further consultation event was to be held on Saturday, 6th December, details of which would be posted out to all Councillors.

In response to Councillor Kelly, Ms. Lewis advised that Albany had been presented as a location for the facility, however, feedback from the consultation undertaken had identified Glebe as the preferred location. Under the Play Pathfinder Award the facility needed to be built by 31st March, 2009 and therefore the element of timing of the consultation process had come into play. She confirmed that a decision had been taken to locate the facility in Glebe and the consultation now being undertaken was to determine what people would like it to contain.

The Chairman stated that he felt this report should have been submitted to the Area Committee at the beginning of the consultation process. The matter had been discussed at a meeting of Washington Pride however he had no

recollection of anyone objecting to Albany as a location for the facility. He commented that it was good news for Washington to get a wheeled park facility but he felt the consultation process had not been undertaken properly.

Members of the Committee welcomed the Pathfinder funding, however, commented that they felt they should have been provided with more notice of the consultation event and more information and that it should have been submitted to the Area Committee for discussion.

Ms. Lewis reiterated the time constraint of the Pathfinder Project in that if the facility was not built the funding would be lost. She advised that they were in the process of designing the park and appointing contractors. She apologised to Members that they felt they had not had the opportunity to comment and had not received the information earlier in the process.

In response to Councillor Snowdon, Mr. Mullen advised that the Washington Leisure Centre had needed to be patched up where necessary in order to keep it in use, however, it would be the next facility planned for refurbishment.

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

7. RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the comments brought out during the discussion be received and noted.

Festivals and Events in Sunderland

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an update regarding events activity that took place within the City, including Washington Area, for the period 1st April – 31st August, 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Vicki Medhurst, Principal Librarian – Library Development and Information, briefed the Committee on the report.

In relation to the International Friendship Festival, incorporating the Kite Festival, Councillor Trueman commented that as far as he was concerned, and many others in Washington, the event should be entitled the other way round. The Kite Festival was well established and therefore the event should be referred to as the “Kite Festival incorporating the International Friendship Festival”.

Councillor I. Cuthbert commented that whilst he supported events he felt that there were occasions when the Council overspent on such activities and he quoted the launch of the Aquatic Centre as an example of where he felt this had occurred.

Councillor Cuthbert also commented that he felt the cost of car parking at the International Friendship Festival was too high and was resulting in deterring people from attending the event.

Ms. Medhurst advised that she would refer Members' comments to the Events Team; and it was:-

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

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

(Signed) P. WALKER,
Chairman.