

At a meeting of the WEST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held remotely on TUESDAY 16 MARCH, 2021 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors, Atkinson, Blackett, Crosby, D. Dixon, Greener, Haswell, Mann, McDonough, Noble, G. Smith, P. Smith, Tye, Waller, Watson and A. Wilson.

Also Present:-

Jo Bell	Head of Operations, Gentoo
Fiona Brown	Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Sunderland City Council
Alan Duffy	Head of Operations, Gentoo
Joanne Laverick	VCS Network Representative, Youth Almighty
Bill Leach	VCS Network Representative, Pennywell Com. Centre
David Noon	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Alison Patterson	Area Coordinator, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	Area Arrangements Strategic Manager, Sunderland City Council
Dave Pickett	Chief Inspector, Northumbria Police
Marie Pollock	Inspector, Northumbria Police
Gilly Stanley	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the protocols in respect of holding the meeting remotely.

Prior the start of the formal business the Chair paid tribute to the West Area Network for its efforts in supporting the community throughout the CoVid19 pandemic and especially in relation during the pain and sorrow it had caused over the last twelve months. The key workers, the Council and its partners, local traders, schools, the voluntary sector, Pallion Action Group, Youth Almighty and Active Families North East.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Kevin Burns (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service).

Declarations of Interest

Item 4, West Area Budget Report – Holiday Hunger Projects

Councillors Tye and Noble declared interests in the above matter as Chair of Youth Almighty and Manager of the Pallion Action Group respectively and withdrew from the

meeting at the appropriate point on the agenda taking no part in any discussion or decision thereon.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 16th December, 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

West Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020-2023

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

- i) Presented the West Area Committee 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)

Councillor P. Smith referred to the improvements to the walking routes and the Stephenson trial and advised the Committee that Silksworth ward members had received numerous complaints from residents, over a considerable period of time in respect of the amount of litter in the ski slope area. She warned that similar levels of complaints could be expected in respect of the walking routes unless the cleansing teams kept on top of the issue.

Councillor Mann commended the £120,000 being spent on improvements to the local play areas. Work was scheduled to commence on the programme in February with an expected completion date of summer 2021. She asked if the scheduled completion date had been impacted by any covid related delays and also if she could have details of the various play sites where improvements were being made. Ms Stanley advised that she would check the extent of any delays following the meeting and would circulate the information to the Committee along with the locations of the play sites.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Councillor Watson for her report and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the progress and performance update with regard to West Area Committee 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) approval be given to the recommendations of the Place Board in respect of the Highways Maintenance Capital Programme for the West for 2020 / 2021, as set out in Annex 2 of the report.

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.

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 William Leach which highlighted the following VCS Network activity undertaken since its last report to the Committee:-

- i) The use of a What's App group for West area organisations who were involved in the Winter Covid 19 delivery set up, which had proven to be a very successful method to share information.
- ii) A collaboration between West Area VCS groups to submit an application to Community Resilience for theme 2 of the Covid 19 Mental Health support.
- iii) The continued work undertaken by Pallion Action Group and Youth Almighty Project with the Council, CCG, Gentoo and volunteers to provide support for local residents in the West who were Clinically and Extremely Vulnerable in respect of shopping and prescriptions
- iv) The operation of organisations from across the network throughout lockdown, often working with support bubbles of individuals or remotely, working within government guidelines to keep everyone safe by respecting social distancing and implementing rigorous hygiene procedures.
- v) The use of Community Chest and Walk and Talk budgets to support the VCS to deliver activities and support to residents across the West Area.
- vi) The recruitment of 5 Community Support Workers by the Council to bring additional capacity to the sector demonstrating its continued commitment to support a thriving VCS in the city.

There being no questions or comments for Mr Leach, the Chairman thanked him for his report, and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of Gentoo

Alan Duffy, Head of Operations, Gentoo Group presented a report (copy circulated) which briefed the Committee on:-

- i) The renewal of the intercom system at all multi-storey and sheltered blocks in the next 3 months, including the 7 tower blocks in Lakeside as well as High Grindon House and Tom Urwin House.
- ii) The investment and renewals process with particular reference to the delivery of the first phase of the Chester Gate development to provide 118 new homes and also the current position with the Prestbury Road site.

In addition, Mr Duffy introduced Jo Bell the new Gentoo Head of Operations for the Central Area who was attending her first meeting of the Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

In response to enquiries from Councillor Mann regarding the provision of affordable homes for rent in phase two of the Chester Gate development, Mr Duffy advised that the development of the site had originally been planned around 6 phases and this was likely to remain the case. The housing market however was a sensitive one. Building homes for sale on the Chester Gate site would assist Gentoo in funding the provision of affordable homes for rent. This was still a Gentoo commitment however the site would need to establish itself first and therefore Mr Duffy was unable to provide definitive timescales.

Councillor Haswell stated that when the Chester Gate site originally received planning approval, the planning committee was told that as part of the conditions, Section 106 money was to be made available in respect of the Children's Forest and to offset the loss of green space. He asked Mr Duffy to give a guarantee that the Section 106 money would be made available. Mr Duffy replied that he was not familiar with all the conditions attached to the planning permission however if this was one of them then Gentoo would certainly honour it. He would investigate and reply to Councillor Haswell via email following the meeting.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Mr Duffy and Ms Bell for their attendance and it was :-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

A report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) (copy circulated) was submitted which provided the Committee with an update on the Service's performance indicators for the period ending 25th November 2020 with particular reference to the L133 Incidents (deliberate fires) broken down by property type.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair advised that in the absence of the presenting officer, the report was submitted for information only. If members had any questions on the report they should be emailed to Ms Stanley who would ensure that they received a reply in writing.

5. RESOLVED the report be received and noted

Report of Northumbria Police

Inspector Pollock presented the report of the Northumbria Police Service (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on and key performance information in relation to the Sunderland West area for the period December 2020 and February 2021

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Noble placed on record her thanks to Inspector Pollock and her team for the sterling job they were doing in the West Area at a time when the Northumbria Police resources were being additionally stretched in dealing with Covid breaches.

Councillor P. Smith welcomed the results of the successful work undertaken in respect of vehicle crime in Silksworth.

Councillor Crosby referred to the mention of ‘Harm Plans’ on page 35 of the agenda papers and asked if Inspector Pollock could explain what they were. Inspector Pollock replied that for operational reasons she was unable to provide any detail however they were essentially procedures instigated to protect vulnerable people.

On behalf of the St Anne’s Ward Councillors, Councillor Mann thanked Inspector Pollock for the work undertaken in the Ward during the pre-Christmas period and in particular for dealing with the issues centred on St George’s playing fields.

There being no further questions or comments for Inspector Pollock and Chief Inspector Pickett, the Chairman thanked them for their attendance and it was:-

6. RESOLVED the report be received and noted.

Community Wealth Building

Ms Helen Peverley, Area Arrangements Strategic Manager, presented a joint report of the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture (copy circulated) which updated the Committee regarding the Community Wealth Strategy Delivery Group and the Community Wealth Champion role following the extensive discussion of the issues at the previous meeting.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

There being no questions or comments for Ms Peverley, it was:-

7. RESOLVED the report be received and noted, the work undertaken to support the growth of Community Wealth across Sunderland be acknowledged the delivery of the Sunderland Community Wealth Strategy continue to be supported.

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 2020/21 Community Chest budget, 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:-

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Area Committee's funding statement as detailed in paragraphs 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1 of the report be received and noted;
- (ii) approval be given to the granting of the following funding from the Neighbourhood Fund as detailed in section 2 and Annex 1 of the report;
 - £48,000 to extend the holiday hunger programme
 - £150,000 in respect of the welfare rights project
 - £100,000 in respect of the Improve Access to ICT to reduce Social Isolation Programme
- (iii) approval be given to the granting of the following funding from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Fund as detailed in section 3 and Annex 1 of the report;
 - £36,529 in respect Environmental Services, Bins and Benches programme
 - £17,500 in respect of the Silksworth and Albany Pit Wheel project
- (iv) approval be given to the alignment of £50,000 funding from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Fund in respect of the Stephenson Trail as detailed in section 3 and Annex 1 of the report
- (v) the approval of the Community Chest applications from the 2020/21 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.