

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held remotely on MONDAY, 15th MARCH, 2021 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor E. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors Bewick, M. Dixon, Fagan, Hodson, Hunt, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, Oliver, Potts, Scanlan, A. Wood and P. Wood

Also Present:-

Jo Bell	-	Gentoo
Alan Duffy	-	Gentoo
Matthew Jackson	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Shaun Makin	-	TWFRS
Julie Maven	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Nicol McConnell	-	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council
Allison Patterson	-	Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	-	Sunderland City Council
K. Ramanathan	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Jon Ritchie	-	Executive Director of Corporate Services, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	-	Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Joanne Cooper and Claire Tulley.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hunt declared that she was employed by Ryhope Community Association.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 30th November, 2020

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th November, 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

VCS Area Network Progress Report

Julie Maven provided the Committee with an update on the work of the VCS Area Network since the last meeting of the Committee. She advised that the network had held three virtual meetings where a number of presentations had been received including from the CAB, the Little Company of Calm, ICOS and Good Vibes. There was also a lot of good information sharing. There had also been a meeting regarding the VCS Alliance and the 5 new workers that would be provided through CLLD.

The Chair thanked the VCS organisations and their volunteers for all of their hard work.

2. RESOLVED that the update from the VCS Network be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

A report was submitted in respect of the West Area which covered Doxford Ward.

Neighbourhood Inspector Jamie Southwell provided the Committee with an update on the crime statistics for the East area and of the work done by Northumbria Police. In the A1 area which covered the City Centre, Millfield and Ashbrooke there had been a 33 percent reduction in all crimes; violent crime had reduced by 37 percent; vehicle crime had seen a reduction of 48 percent. Burglaries of dwellings had reduced by 28 percent while burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 32 percent. Youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 20 percent while adult antisocial behaviour had increased by 29 percent. There had been increases in cases of harassment and also of thefts of bicycles.

In the A2 area which covered Hendon, Grangetown and Ryhope there had been a decrease of 1 percent for all crimes; violent crime had increased by 17 percent which was mostly domestic incidents. Vehicle crime had reduced by 31 percent. Burglary of dwellings had increased by 2 percent which was 5 additional offences; burglaries other than dwellings had reduced by 49 percent. Both youth and adult antisocial behaviour had seen an increase; of 59 percent and 107 percent respectively. The increase in antisocial behaviour was due to how incidents of breaches of the covid-19 regulations were recorded.

Burglaries were a priority and Operation Decipher was ongoing to tackle these and also vehicle crimes.

Operation Eagle, which targeted off road motorcycle use, was ongoing.

Other priorities included enforcement of the covid 19 regulations and the associated adult ASB and also tackling the emerging issue of commercial burglaries.

Councillor A. Wood commented that it was good to see the reductions in ASB in the city centre however he was aware of an increase in complaints of skateboarding in the Minster Park; he queried how these were logged as this did not seem to tally with the recorded reduction. Inspector Southwell advised that there had been an issue around the Christmas period and into January; meetings had been held to deal with the problem through engagement and education and he was not aware of there being any complaints over the last two months.

Councillor McClennan referred to an article she had seen on the BBC website regarding modern slavery in relation to drugs; this article had mentioned Sunderland. She referred to a cannabis farm that had been discovered in Millfield and asked whether there was any information about this and whether there should be concerns over modern slavery in Sunderland. Inspector Southwell advised that slavery could take many guises and that he had been through training regarding what to do if victims were found in trucks. Support was given to victims where possible. Cannabis farms were sometimes linked to slavery but in other cases were locally operated enterprises. Community intelligence was vital in tackling cannabis farms.

Councillor Hodson queries whether officers would be able to attend residents association meetings held using Zoom; there were issues these groups wished to raise. Inspector Southwell advised that officers could attend the meetings however due to security concerns regarding Zoom it would not be possible to disclose much information.

Councillor Fagan referred to the issue of off road motorbikes in the Doxford Ward; this was still a major issue, especially on Sundays; she asked whether there was progress being made on tackling the issue. Inspector Southwell advised that this was an issue across the whole force area and discussions were taking place with Durham Constabulary's off road bike team; which had their own off road bikes; to look at setting up a weekend of targeted action. He could not explain why there had been such an increase in this issue over the last year. There were different groups of offenders including the local element who were using illegal or stolen bikes; parents taking children to ride in places where it was not permitted; and people from outside of the area who were coming into the area on expensive bikes with the intention of tearing around. There had been use of long lens cameras which had been effective in identifying offenders and petrol stations were also being spoken to. There would be large scale action over 3rd and 4th April and robust action would be taken against offenders.

Councillor Bewick advised that he had reported some off road bikes using the 101 service; he had subsequently received a call asking him to give feedback on how he thought the response was. Residents often stated that they did not hear anything back. He queried whether this had been a random callback or whether everyone should receive one. Inspector Southwell advised that these were random survey callbacks which were intended to identify how to improve on updating callers; there was a desire to keep callers informed of the progress made on issues they had reported.

Councillor M. Dixon stated that he knew a repeat offender had been released from prison; he asked whether there had been any issues since. Inspector Southwell advised that there were a small number of offenders who were responsible for a large proportion of crimes; a lot of effort was put into getting evidence to attribute offences to them.

3. RESOLVED that the update from Northumbria Police be noted.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Shaun Makin was in attendance to provide the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. He advised that the figures were from January and reflected the last 12 months. In terms of deliberate fires there had been 12 in 2021 compared with 41 in 2020; the ward breakdown was:-

Doxford – 0 in 2021, 1 in 2020

Hendon – 4 in 2021, 19 in 2020

Millfield – 4 in 2021, 16 in 2020

Ryhope – 2 in 2021, 3 in 2020

St. Michael's – 2 in 2021, 2 in 2020

This 60 percent reduction had been good to see however it was important to consider that antisocial behaviour fires started to increase with the lighter nights so an increase was expected.

4. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear fire and Rescue Service be noted.

East Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020/2023

The Chair of the East Sunderland Area Neighbourhoods and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the East Area Committee Delivery Plan for 2020/2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Marshall introduced the report and advised of the work that had been undertaken against the delivery plan since the last meeting of the Area Committee which was set out in the report.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The endorsements listed by the Neighbourhood and Community Board relating to the: East Street and Park Rangers, Investment in Highways, Investment in Parks, Highways Maintenance Programme 2021 / 2022, CHANCE's car park developments, Fancy a Day Out call for projects funding opportunity, the Get Online (G.O.!) digital project and the Stephenson Trail Task Group, as set out in Annex One and the Area Budget Report be noted.
- b. It be noted that the Walk and Talk Programme and budget will be rolled over into 2021 / 2022 and continue, as is.
- c. All relevant updates set out in **Annex 1** relating to: Ryhope Task Group; More Males Project, Positive Parenting Project, Maximising Community Assets and the Heritage Action Zone be noted.
- d. The Highways Capital Maintenance programmes 2021/2022, set out in **Annex 2** be agreed.
- e. The Area Committee video update be noted.

East Area Budget Report

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided financial statements in respect of the Area Committee's delegated budgets and presented proposals for funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms McConnell presented the report and drew Members attention to the financial statements set out in the report and the applications for funding totalling £211,663 from the Neighbourhood Fund as set out in Annex 1; the projects for the alignment of £90,000 from the Neighbourhood Fund as set out in Annex 2; the applications for funding totalling £420,686 from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme as set out in Annex 3. There had been community chest grants approved and these were set out in annex 4; since the publication of the report there had been further grants awarded. The outstanding Community Chest Balances were now:-

Doxford - £388

Hendon - £1,965 (pending the approval of some outstanding grants)

Millfield - £0 (pending the approval of outstanding grants)

Ryhope - £2,395

St Michaels - £0

Should all of the pending applications be granted then there would be a total balance remaining of £4,748. There was a further application for Hendon ward for the Hendon Gardening Project which was not included in these figures so would further reduce the outstanding balance.

Since the publication of the report there had been requests from Members for funding which would have approval sought once all of the necessary work had been done around the application process; these included Councillor Scanlan requesting funding to replace a fence which had been damaged by the wind; Councillor Hodson requesting funds for highways works at Hadrian Street; and Councillor Hunt requesting funding for Ryhope Community Association FC for essential works to the grandstand and pitch which would total around £6,000. Members expressed their support for these projects.

Councillor P. Wood referred to the fixed speed cameras for Essen Way and Stockton Road and queried when there would be a known timescale for this work. Ms McConnell advised that the partnership would be meeting in April and that it was thought that it would be known when the work would be done during the first quarter of the financial year.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial information detailed in sections 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1 be noted
- b. Approval be given to £211,663 from the Neighbourhood Fund to deliver three projects, as set out in Section 2.2 and Annex One, and listed below:
 - i) East Street and Park Rangers £95,913
 - ii) Car Park Transformation at CHANCE £16,500
 - iii) Get Online (G.O.!) Project £99,250
- c. £90,000 be aligned against two projects from the Neighbourhood Fund, as set out in Section 2.4 and Annex Two, and listed below:
 - i) Fancy a Day Out Programme 2021 £40,000
 - ii) Stephenson Trail Task Group £50,000
- d. Approval be given to £420,686 from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme to deliver two projects, as set out in Section 3.2 and Annex Three, and listed below:
 - i) Invest in Highways £214,800
 - ii) Invest in Parks £205,886
- e. The approved Community Chest grants from 1st April 2020, as set out in Annex Four be noted.

Community Wealth Building Champions

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated Members on the Community Wealth Strategy Delivery Group and the Community Wealth Champion role.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Helen Peverley presented the report and advised that following the discussions at the last meeting of the Area Committee it had been agreed to

appoint an opposition Member to the group and as such Councillor M. Dixon had been appointed to the group to represent the opposition.

Councillor M. Dixon advised that he had received a warm welcome from the group and he was looking forward to playing a constructive role as part of the group.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The contents of the report be noted and the work undertaken to support the growth of Community Wealth across Sunderland be acknowledged and it be agreed to continue to support the delivery of the Sunderland Community Wealth Strategy.
- b. Agreement be given to supporting the Area Committee Chair and Councillor M. Dixon to deliver their Community Wealth Champion role on behalf of the residents of Sunderland, demonstrating the commitment of East Sunderland Area Committee to support growth.

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

(Signed) E. GIBSON,
Chairman.