

**At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held at the Civic Centre on WEDNESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 2021 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Blackburn in the Chair

Councillors Dodds, Heron (Vice Chair), Johnston, N. MacKnight, Mason-Gage, Price, Rowntree, D. Snowdon, Speding and Thornton

**Also Present:-**

Chris Binding	Local Democracy Reporter	
Wendy Cook	Area Network Representative	Sunderland North Community Business Centre
Bob Heron	Member of the Public	
Pauline Hopper	Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield	Sunderland City Council
Sandra Stephenson	VCS Community Support Officer	
Christine Tilley	Community Governance Services Team Leader	Sunderland City Council

**Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Coalfield Area Committee meeting and in particular the new Members to the Committee, namely, Councillors Dodds, Mason-Gage, Price and D. Snowdon, who had been elected in the Local Government Elections the previous month and also Sandra Stephenson, the recently appointed VCS Community Support Officer.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Turner, Kevin Burns, Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire Service, Jill Colbert, Chief Executive of Together for Children and Director of Children's Services, Sunderland City Council, Michael Donachie, Head of Operations, Gentoo, Nick Gjørven, Inspector, Neighbourhood Policing Southern, Northumbria Police and Kay Rowham, Councillor, Hetton Town Council.

## **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations were received:-

### **Item 4 – Area Budgets Report**

Councillor Dodds made an open declaration as the Local Authority appointed representative on Houghton Racecourse Community Association as the application from SNCBC Copt Hill Kids Club would be delivered from the Community Association and she left the meeting prior to any discussion on the application and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisation.

Councillor K. Johnston made an open declaration in the application from Coalfield Healthy and Active Teens as an employee of Everyone Active, working at Houghton Sports Centre, which was a key delivery partner of the project and he left the meeting prior to any discussion on the application and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisation.

Councillor N. MacKnight made an open declaration in the application from Philadelphia Cricket and Community Club as he is a Member of the Club and he left the meeting prior to any discussion on the application and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisation.

Councillor Mason-Gage made an open declaration in the applications 'Out and About', 'Shiney Row Kids Club', Elba Park Social and Penshaw Pals, as she worked for Groundwork SaNT which was in the Groundwork Federation and as she used to be on the Committee of Penshaw Community Association and still volunteered at the Centre. Councillor Mason-Gage left the meeting prior to any discussion on the applications and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisations.

Councillor Rowntree made an open declaration in the 'Our Day Out' application from ELCAP as the Local Authority appointed Member on the Board of the organisation and she left the meeting prior to any discussion on the application and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisation.

Councillor D. Snowdon made an open declaration in the 'Down the Pit' application from Springboard as he worked for ShARP which was identified as a key partner and he left the meeting prior to any discussion on the application and took no part in any decisions on funding which might affect the organisation.

## **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **Neighbourhood and Community Board Report**

The Chair of the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated), which provided an annual update of the Coalfield Neighbourhood Investment Plan Delivery Plan 2020-2023 and provided an update of progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Committee viewed a short video setting out the achievements detailed in the Annual Report.

The Chair of the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board, Councillor Heron highlighted the Digital Learning Resources Loan Scheme to purchase devices for loan to pupils who were resident in the Coalfield area attending Hetton, Kepier, Biddick and St Robert's schools.

Councillor Heron highlighted the priority for social prescribing and reducing social isolation which included providing a befriending service and welfare support to local residents via the telephone, facetime or 1-2-1 in person.

Councillor Heron highlighted the Bloom Activity and Grow Your Own project commenting how fantastic the additional flower tubs and barrier troughs were which had now been installed in Shiney Row, Easington Lane, Rainton Bridge and Moorsley. She drew attention to the project to Preserve and Celebrate Local Heritage including the improvements to the Stephenson Trail and the allocation made to make improvements to Rectory Park.

Lastly, Councillor Heron referred to the Vehicle Activated Signs which were being rotated around the Coalfield Area to encourage drivers to reduce their speed.

Councillor Heron thanked all the Voluntary Organisations and all the volunteers for the work which they had carried out during the year, mentioning ELCAP, Space4 and ShARP in particular and also Council Officers for providing assistance to those organisations to access funding.

Councillor Speding commented that it was an excellent report, however he expressed disappointment that there were no Senior Officers of the Council present at the meeting. Whilst he recognised, as the Chairman had stated, that some Senior Officers might have another more important commitment and therefore had been unable to attend, he pointed out that substitutes could have been sent to the Coalfield meeting.

Councillor Heron commented that there was a number of Task Groups that would continue to work during the year to look in detail at the Area Committee's priorities.

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

2. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the progress and performance update regarding the Coalfield Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020/23 be noted and the proposals for future delivery as contained within Annex 1, be approved;
- ii) the Terms of Reference of the Neighbourhood and Community Board at Annex 2, be noted; and
- iii) the Area Committee video update be noted.

## **Coalfield Voluntary and Community Sector Network Update**

The Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Representatives submitted a report (copy circulated), providing an update from the Coalfield VCS Network from March 2021 to May 2021, advising that the Network had met on three occasions via Teams and had welcomed guest speakers from a range of projects since the last Coalfield Area Committee meeting in March.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Wendy Cook, Area Voluntary and Community Sector Representative briefed the Committee on the report highlighting some of the projects discussed at the meetings and advised that the Coalfield VCS Network had met a further time since the report had been written, details of which would be included in the next report to the Area Committee.

Ms Cook introduced Ms Sandra Stephenson, the recently appointed VCS Community Support Officer to the Committee. Ms Cook advised Members that the VCS Network meetings continued to be well attended on Teams, however they were looking forward to getting back to meeting face to face.

The Chairman having thanked Ms Cook for her report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be received and noted.

## **Tyne and Wear Fire Service Update**

Station Manager Kevin Burns, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) submitted a report (copy circulated), providing Performance Monitoring details in relation to the Local Indicators for the Coalfield Area Committee area from 1 May 2021 to 31 May 2021 compared with the same period in 2020.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Community Development Lead offered to pass on any queries on the report to Mr Burns for a response. She advised that Station Manager Burns was due to retire the following week and had asked that his thanks to the Committee for the support Members had provided to him over the last three years be passed on, on his behalf, together with his hopes that the partnership with the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service continued to work well.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Mr Burns for the work he had done on behalf of the Committee, wished him a happy retirement and asked that Ms Hopper convey these sentiments to Mr Burns.

Full consideration having being given to the report it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the content of the report be received and noted.

## **Gentoo Update**

Mr Michael Donachie, Head of Operations, Gentoo provided an update from Gentoo for the Coalfield Area Committee from March 2021 to June 2021 to enable Members to be up to date on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor D. Snowdon referred to paragraph 4.1 of the report and enquired whether there was anyone due to move into the bungalows.

Ms Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Community Development Lead offered to pass on this query to Mr Donachie who had submitted his apologies for the meeting.

It was therefore:-

5. RESOLVED that the content of the report be received and noted.

## **Coalfield Area Budget Report**

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience, Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated), providing a financial statement as an update position on progress in relation to allocating Area Committee Neighbourhood Funds, Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme and Community Chest and presenting proposals for further funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Community Development Lead, presented the report, drawing the Committee's attention to the current financial position of the Area Committee Neighbourhood Fund 2021/2022 as set out in paragraph 2.1. She advised that there were eight funding proposals for consideration set out in paragraph 2.2 with further detail at Annex 1, to address the 'support young people and provide positive activities and opportunities' priority. The total Neighbourhood Fund budget requested was £37,431.

Ms Hopper referred the Committee to paragraph 2.3 of the report which detailed nine recommendations for funding, totalling £41,088, to address the 'reduce social isolation and improve health and wellbeing' priority from the available 2021/22 Neighbourhood Fund with further detail at Annex 2.

Ms Hopper referred the Committee to paragraph 2.4 of the report which detailed two recommendations for funding, totalling £13,369, presented to Area Committee for consideration from the available 2021/22 Neighbourhood Fund and one with funding already aligned from the 2020/21 Neighbourhood Fund budget; further detail was available at Annex 3 of the report. The total Neighbourhood Fund budget requested for approval was therefore £91,888 and if approved, the remaining balance would be £445,832.

Councillor Speding enquired whether any of the projects would be benefitting from Section 106 agreement funding, commenting on the number of housing developments currently being undertaken in the Coalfield Area and whether any information was available on this. He added that funding from Section 106 agreements had been used previously to provide play areas and community facilities in the Coalfield area. Section

106 funding allocation had been an issue for a number of years and there were organisations which could be benefitting from this funding.

The Chairman and Vice Chair both confirmed that Members in their wards were being consulted on Section 106 funding spend in the wards and play areas were benefitting from this.

The Chairman advised of a future meeting with the Area Chairs and the Assistant Director of Community Resilience, Neighbourhoods and that he would raise the matter at this meeting.

Councillor D. Snowdon advised that the topic of Section 106 funding had been discussed at a meeting of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee a couple of years ago and the Committee had been advised that the policy had been overhauled so as to involve local Councillors.

On returning to the report, Ms Hopper advised that £500,000 had been allocated for capital investments which complemented the Coalfield Area Investment Delivery Plan. The table at 3.1 detailed the projects already funded and she pointed out that there was a remaining balance of £243,961. There were no funding proposals presented to Area Committee for consideration that evening from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme.

Ms Hopper referred Members to paragraph 4 of the report detailing the Community Chest budget approvals and balance remaining. She pointed out that since the report had been written further approvals had been made and that this information would be included in the report to the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Speding referred to the projects for approval to be provided by Groundwork NE and asked that it be made clear that the Council did not have any responsibility in relation to Groundwork NE and therefore for the projects it was providing, as complaints had been received in the past.

Ms Hopper confirmed that something could be put in the offer letter and terms and conditions and it made clear that the projects were being run by Groundwork NE.

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

6. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the financial information detailed in sections 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1, be noted;
- b) the eight Holiday Activity projects, detailed in section 2.2 and Annex 1, from the Neighbourhood Fund be approved;
- c) the nine Social Isolation projects, detailed in section 2.3 and Annex 2, from the Neighbourhood Fund be approved;
- d) the three projects, detailed in section 2.4 and Annex 3, from the Neighbourhood Fund be approved;

and

- e) the approved Community Chest grants from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, as detailed in Annex 4, be noted.

## **Current Planning Applications (Coalfields Area)**

A schedule (copy circulated) of current planning applications lodged during the period 1<sup>st</sup> May and 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 was submitted for Members' information only.

(For copy schedule – see original minutes).

7. RESOLVED that the schedule be received and noted.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and participation.

(Signed) J. BLACKBURN,  
Chairman.