

Item 1d

At a meeting of the WEST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL, on TUESDAY 14TH MARCH 2023 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors, Burnicle, Crosby, Edgeworth, Greener, Haswell, Mann, Mullen, Nicholson, Peacock, G. Smith, P. Smith, Tye and Watson.

Also Present:-

Kelly Brougham	VCS Network Representative, Active Families N.E.
Vicky Gamblin	Head of Operations, Gentoo
Jill Laverick	Director of Strategy & Corporate Affairs, Sunderland City Council
Joanne Laverick	VCS Network Representative, Youth Almighty
Andy Nelson	Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Karen Noble	VCS Network Representative, Pallion Action Group
David Noon	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Steven Passey	Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Gilly Stanley	Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Ayre, Dunn, and O'Brien.

Councillor Peter Gibson

Councillor Tye referred to the impending retirement of Councillor Peter Gibson at the forthcoming Local Government Elections and on behalf of the Committee paid tribute to his outstanding service to the Council during an unbroken term of office stretching back to 1985. During this time, Peter had served on many committees and outside bodies with key former appointments including the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, the Empire Theatre Trust and Newcastle International Airport Limited. Peter also had the privilege of serving as the Mayor of the City from 2002 to 2003. In particular Councillor Tye paid tribute to Peter's service to his local community through his membership of various groups, trusts and forums, and through his Chairmanship of the West Area Committee had overseen the investment of £11 million into the area.

On a personal note, the Vice Chair, Councillor Haswell as an opposition Member, paid tribute to Peter's stewardship of the Committee's meetings in always allowing everyone to have an input. In particular he thanked him for all the advice, patience and guidance he had offered him both as a new member of the Council and on taking up his role as Vice Chair.

Councillor Gibson responded suitably.

Declarations of Interest

Item 4 West Area Budget Report.

Councillor Tye declared an interest in applications 3 and 4 in respect of the Neighbourhood Fund as Chair of Youth Almighty and Chair of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service respectively. Councillor Tye left the room during the consideration of the applications taking no part in the discussions and decisions thereon.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 7th December, 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of Northumbria Police

Inspector Passey presented the Northumbria Police report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on key performance information in relation to the Sunderland West area.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Inspector Passey introduced himself to the Committee advising that whilst he may be a new face to some Members, he had experience of working previously in the West Area and was likely to remain as the Neighbourhood Inspector in the Area for the foreseeable future. He was focused on a community approach to Policing and working with partners. He informed Members that he would circulate his contact details and seek to arrange regular meetings with Councillors in order to share information and discuss issues and ideas. It would also enable him to answer some of the Members' questions raised in Committee about operational issues that he was unable to answer given the public nature of the meeting.

Councillor Greener stated that one of her major concerns was drug crime and she felt the public would appreciate the sight of a Community Police Officer in the Chester Road area as had been the case in the past. Inspector Passey replied that the Police had had some notable successes across the city in relation drug crime, details of which he could supply if required. It was his aim to try and align beats to wards to ensure Police Officers were seen, however this would always be possible as resources may need to be diverted elsewhere as circumstances dictated.

Councillor Burnicle raised the persistent issue of motorcycle disorder and asked what the Police intended to do about it. Inspector Passey advised that he could not discuss the operational details of his plans in Committee but would do so in his private meetings with Councillors. He stated that it was his intension to put the perpetrators on the back foot and would seek to prosecute everyone found to be responsible. He noted that it was a nationwide issue and no force had successfully cracked the problem. He

appealed that Councillors did not hesitate to email him in confidence if they had any concerns regarding the issue.

Councillor Mann welcomed the offer of regular meetings with Councillors and stated that regular updates on personnel changes would be welcome as the Police Officers and PCSOs seemed to change so often across wards. She paid tribute to Jim Tuckwell who would be retiring in May and worried that there would be fewer 'feet on the beat' across the West Area.

Inspector Passey replied that levels were now better than they had been recently, and two new officers would be joining from April. The number of PCSOs had reduced and this had had an organisation wide decision. He confirmed that Jim Tuckwell would be a huge miss.

Councillor Edgeworth welcomed the approach outlined by Inspector Passey regarding the sharing of information and like Councillor Burnicle confirmed that the primary concern of residents in Thorney Close was motorcycle disorder.

Councillor P. Smith referred to the 30% decrease in drug crime referred to in the report and asked for a break down. It was her believe that certainly drug use was on the increase and this was also the public perception. Inspector Passey replied that he was unable to so as he did not have the figures to hand but would respond via email after the meeting.

There being no further questions or comments on the report, it was:-

2. RESOLVED the report be received and noted.

Report of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Station Manager Andy 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, 2022 to 28th February 2023 with particular reference to the L133 Incidents (all deliberate fires).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

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

Councillor Tye stated that it would be remiss of him not to mention the work undertaken to combat incidents of anti-social behaviour in relation to the former Farringdon Hall Police Station. Despite incidents still occurring there had been a great improvement. The issue was inching towards a solution with an application in respect of the site being close to submission to the Planning and Highways Committee. The building was a blight on the city, being located on a major gateway and residents were sick of the problems it generated. In conclusion Councillor Tye reiterated his previous concerns regarding the growing trend of people who believed it was perfectly acceptable to attack 'Blue Light' Officers attending the scene of a fire. He condemned such behaviour as disgusting, cowardly and absolutely unacceptable and would continue to lobby nationally for stiffer sentences for perpetrators.

Station Manager Nelson thanked Councillor Tye for his support. He confirmed that massive efforts had been made to combat the incidents of anti-social behaviour on the Farringdon Hall site but agreed that they were unlikely to cease until the building was demolished.

There being no further questions or comments for Mr Nelson, it was:-

3. RESOLVED the report be received and noted

Report of Gentoo

Vicky 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 the period December 2022 to March 2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman thanked Ms Gamblin for her report and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

Councillor Haswell referred to the new Housing Register system and noted that it was not immediately clear from the explanatory note that you should use the same login details as previously, and asked why the change had been made. Ms Gamblin replied that it had become increasingly difficult to pull down data from Home Hunt, whereas the reporting mechanisms were now much faster on the new system.

Councillor Mullen stated that the report provided and presented by Ms Gamblin was very good and added that he would also like to see Home Group attend and provide a report to the Committee.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Crosby, Ms Gamblin confirmed that she would find out the purpose of undertaking a ground penetrating radar survey in relation to the repairs to the roof of Australia Tower.

Councillor Watson welcomed the report and the support that Gentoo was providing for residents. She also highlighted the Pennywell regeneration work which residents really appreciated and in particular the addition of the brick walls which had made a big difference.

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

4. 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 Karen Noble which highlighted the following VCS Network activity undertaken since its last report to the Committee:-

- The receipt of presentations on Next door neighbour, Household Support Fund, West Area Event 2023 and the Falls Prevention programme at the Network's February meeting.
- The commencement of the Bread and Butter Thing at Silksworth Youth and Community Centre from March 7th was welcomed by the Network given it was seeing a significant increase in the number of residents accessing the support available, particularly in relation to the availability of food.
- The success of the Warm Spaces across the West with some organisations having secured additional funding to offer activities and one to one support.
- The unprecedented demand for Household Support round 3 which was currently on offer till end of March 2023. Priority had been given to those who had not received a significant cost of living payment from the Government. The VCS recognised the need for additional support through the cost-of-living crisis and would work with Sunderland City Council to support those who were struggling financially.
- The operation Sunderland's Strength and Balance programme organised by Active Families NE which would run across the West Area for one year.
- Preparations for the West Area Community Event in Barnes Park which would be hosted by the Youth Almighty Project and take place 29th June – 1st July with a focus on improving the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.
- The delivery of the Holiday Hunger programme during the February half term.

The Chairman having thanked Ms Noble for her report and attendance it was :-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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 a performance update on the West Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plan 2020-2023
- ii) Provided an update of progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan which would be the focus for the West Sunderland Area Committee during 2022 /23 and;
- iii) Provided an update on the Neighbourhood and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2022 /23

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Committee's attention was drawn to paragraph 4.4 of the report which detailed the Committee's project to improve access and knowledge of ICT as a means to reduce social isolation. Representatives from Media Savvy who had been delivering the programme since April 2021 were welcomed and introduced to the meeting and

provided the Committee with a comprehensive presentation highlighting progress made to date.

The Chairman having thanked Councillor Haswell for his report and Media Savvy for their update, it was:-

6. 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 the future delivery as contained within Annex 1 of the report, and

iii) approval be to the recommendation of the Board in relation to the West Highways Improvements as detailed in Annex 2 of the report.

West Area Budget Report

The Assistant Director of Housing and Communities 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 2022/23 Community Chest budget, together with details of proposals for the allocation of funds from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund and the Neighbourhood Capital Investment Programme.

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

7. RESOLVED that:-

(i) the Area Committee's funding statement as detailed in paragraphs 2.1 and 3.1 of the report be received and noted;

(ii) Approval be given to the granting of NF funding of £14,393 and NCIP funding of £10,607 in respect of Parking Improvements at Silksworth Ski Slope Complex as detailed in Annex 1 of the report

(iii) Approval be given to the granting of NCIP funding of £25,000 in respect of Parking Improvements at Bishopwearmouth Cemetary as detailed in Annex 1 of the report

(iv) Approval be given to the granting of NF funding of £49,760 to Sunderland All Together Consortium in respect of the Youth ASB project as detailed in Annex 1 of the report

(v) Approval be given to the granting of NF funding of £5,000 to Safetyworks in respect of transport costs as detailed in Annex 1 of the report

- (vi) the approval of the 45 Community Chest applications from the 2022/23 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.