

At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held at the HETTON CENTRE, WELFARE ROAD, HETTON-LE-HOLE on WEDNESDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2008 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor D. Richardson in the Chair

Councillors Anderson, Blackburn, Ellis, A. Hall, Heron, Rolph, J. Scott, D. Smith, Speding, Tate and Wakefield.

Apologies for Absence

All Members being present there were no apologies.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

i) Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report

Mr. Denis Napier, Financial Manager – Technical Services, City Treasurer's Department, advised the Committee that £74,000 would be returned to budget and made available in respect of the 4 Site CCTV Project and not £74,400 as stated in the minutes.

ii) The Chairman advised that the project name was 'Dubmire Environmental Community/Out of School/Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Project' and not 'Child and Adult' Mental Health Service Project as detailed in the minutes.

iii) In response to Councillor Rolph, Mr. Napier advised that with regard to the regeneration of Elemore Vale, the Development and Regeneration Directorate had agreed to fund the maintenance of the project.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 5th June, 2008 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the above clarifications.

Declarations of Interest

Item 5 – Minutes of the last Meetings of the Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving Group

Councillor Rolph declared a personal interest as the Council appointed representative of the Coalfield Area on the LMAPS Group.

Item 7 – Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report

i) Eco Schools Project delivered by Groundworks

Councillor Rolph declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Governor of Houghton Kepier School and a personal and prejudicial interest in the application as a parent of a child at the School and vacated the meeting before the Committee gave consideration to the application.

Councillors Blackburn and Tate declared personal interests as Council appointed Governors of Hetton Lyons Primary School.

Councillor A. Hall declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Governor of Our Lady Queen of Peace R.C. Primary School.

Councillor D. Richardson declared a personal interest as a Council appointed Governor of Dubmire Primary School.

ii) Learning Mentors at the Hetton Centre

Councillors Anderson and Heron declared personal and prejudicial interests in the application as Members of Hetton Town Trust and vacated the meeting before the Committee gave consideration to the application.

iii) Additional and Improved Security at Newbottle Primary School

Councillor Rolph declared a personal interest in the application as a Council appointed Governor of Newbottle Primary School.

Councillor D. Richardson declared a personal interest as a Governor of the school.

Councillor Wakefield declared a personal and prejudicial interest as his grandson attends the school and he vacated the meeting before the Committee gave consideration to the application.

Item 8 – Strategic Initiatives Budget: 2008/09 Ward Based Community Chest

Councillors Anderson and Heron declared personal and prejudicial interests in the application Hetton as a Learning Community as Members of Hetton Town Trust and vacated the meeting before the Committee gave consideration to the application.

Councillor Tate declared a personal interest in the application from Easington Lane Community Access Point as a Council appointed representative on the organisation.

Northumbria Police Crime Statistics Relating to the Coalfield Area

A copy of the crime statistics produced by Northumbria Police (copy circulated) showing all crime in Sunderland and detailing the figures for the Coalfield Area from March 07 to July 08 was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman introduced Community Inspector Graham Finlay to the Committee.

Community Inspector Finlay advised Members that he had 27 years service with the Police Force and had previously worked in Washington, Farringdon and South Shields.

Community Inspector Finlay preceded to brief Members on the crime statistics in the Houghton area highlighting that there had been an increase in dwelling burglary. He stated that it was too early to say whether this was due to the current economic recession or whether it might simply be a 'blip' or down to the release of a known burglary offender.

In response to Members' questions he advised that there had been one or two incidents of hate crime which had been reported in the press and arrests had been made. However, he did not see it as a major problem in the area.

Councillor Tate referred to the 4 Site CCTV project. In response, Community Inspector Finlay advised that two of the CCTV cameras had been installed, one in Houghton and one in Hetton, and were being monitored back at the Civic Centre.

Ms. Nicol Trueman advised that she would provide further information on the progress of the project to Members.

2. RESOLVED that the information be received and noted.

Minutes of the Last Meetings 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 20th May, 24th June and 29th July, 2008 (copy circulated), were submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

In response to Councillor A. Hall, Community Inspector Finlay advised that in relation to the anti social behaviour occurring at Monument Terrace there was an impending

prosecution against the owner of the shop for selling alcohol to young people and Police Officers were continuing to monitor the situation.

Councillor Speding referred to the petition raised on this and expressed concern that nothing had been done on the matter previously and that the issue was only now being looked at because of the involvement of the LMAPS Group.

Councillor Ellis raised concern that the issue of Gilpin Woods was to be closed.

Community Inspector Finlay advised that the LMAPS Group felt it was appropriate to close the issue around Gilpin Woods as only one incident had been recorded.

Councillor Rolph advised that Ward Councillors had been dealing with this issue for about two years and it had benefited from being dealt with on a multi agency approach. A 6 foot metal fence was to be installed as well as other measures implemented to resolve the problems with motorbikes in the area. She expressed her appreciation for the work the Police were doing to tackle the problems in the vicinity.

In response to Councillor Ellis, Community Inspector Finlay briefed the Committee on the work being undertaken to reduce the fear of knife crime in the Northumbria Police area. Initiatives such as every school being visited and Officers speaking to young people about the dangers of carrying a knife, as well as warning them that they would be arrested if they were caught doing so, together with the enforcement campaign.

Councillor Blackburn queried why the Batcave Public House had not been demolished as planned. In response, Councillor Rolph advised that there was a doubt now as to whether it would now be demolished and that its future was uncertain.

3. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meetings of the LMAPS Group held on 20th May, 24th June and 29th July, 2008 be noted.

Regeneration Issues Report: Feedback on Projects Previously Funded through Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB)

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with information on Into Work – Connecting the Coalfield Environmental ILM Project 2 which it was funding through its SIB allocation.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Bill Stafford was present at the meeting and reported back on the project in terms of how the money had been spent, the outcomes of the project and key issues and lessons learnt.

Councillor Rolph commented that at the last meeting she had requested that a feedback report be given by the Lambton Miners Memorial Project and asked that this be submitted to the next meeting.

Ms. Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, advised that she had been trying to contact the lead agent from the project and would attempt to arrange feedback on the project to be provided to the Committee at its next meeting.

4. RESOLVED that the feedback on the Into Work – Connecting the Coalfield Environmental ILM Project 2 be received and noted and that arrangements be made for feedback on the Lambton Miners Memorial Project to be provided to the Committee at its meeting to be held on 29th October, 2008.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Report

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) outlining proposals for the allocation of SIB funding to support initiatives of benefit to the area.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Nicol Trueman, Area Regeneration Officer, outlined the budgetary position to the Committee detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.

The Committee then proceeded to consider the applications for SIB funding.

i) Coalfield Events Budget

Councillor A. Hall commented that it would be useful to know what the events budget funding had been used for and enquired whether it would be possible to have this information in respect of projects recently funded.

Councillor Rolph stated that she felt the Committee should receive an update on how much and what the Events Budget had been spent on at every meeting of the Area Committee.

The Chairman added that he would like to have the information in respect of the spending allocated from the Events Budget over the last five years.

Ms. Trueman confirmed that she would be able to provide this information to Members.

ii) Eco Schools in Sunderland

Sam Palombella, Operations Manager, Sunderland, was present at the meeting and advised the Committee that since the application had been submitted a further three schools in East Sunderland had become involved and therefore East Sunderland Area Committee had agreed to contribute £10,000 and not £2,500 as stated in the application.

iii) **Gap Funding for the Learning Mentors at the Hetton Centre**

In response to Councillor A. Hall, Kit Fletcher, Hetton Town Trust Chair Person, advised that of the 25% engaging in first-step learning with the project, the majority were from the Hetton and Easington Lane area, however, there were people from other areas towards Houghton. He explained that people found coming into education very off-putting, however, they found the Hetton Centre reassuring. The aim of the project was not specifically to get people into employment but initially to get them back into the learning process and then look at the possibility of looking at employment. He confirmed that 99% of the people on the project were from the four wards of the Coalfield Area. He stated that Option 1 funding for the full time posts was the preferred option.

iv) **Mature Moves**

Ms. Lynn, Summerside Director of Sit 'n' 'b' Fit was present at the meeting.

In response to Members' questions, Ms. Summerside advised that the project was targeting 5 settings in 5 of the 6 areas of the City and hoped to get 25 people to participate in each class.

v) **Newbottle Primary School – Security Improvements**

Mr. Graham Stephenson, Head Teacher of Newbottle Primary School, was in attendance at the meeting. He outlined the project to the Committee advising that the new play area currently under construction immediately adjacent to the school would also benefit from the installation of extra CCTV cameras as it would be monitored and would provide a deterrent to any anti social behaviour.

Councillor Speding advised that with regard to the play area, there were 27 to go in across the City. There was no Council policy to install CCTV cameras on play areas. This project needed to be considered on merit and the Committee should not be influenced by the fact that the CCTV column would be adjacent to the play area.

Councillor Rolph commented that the benefit to the play area would be a bonus of the project.

Mr. Stephenson confirmed that the school would fund the annual maintenance costs of the security system.

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

5. RESOLVED that approval be given to the allocation of Strategic Initiatives Budget funding of:-

i) £10,000 from the 2008/09 budget to support the Coalfields Event Budget;

- ii) £7,500 from the 2008/09 budget and a further £5,000 from the 2009/10 budget to support the development of the Eco Schools Project delivered by Groundworks;
- iii) £18,154 for 2 full time posts from the 2008/09 budget to provide gap funding for the Learning Mentors at the Hetton Centre on the condition that should other funding be secured that the gap funding be returned to the Area Committee;
- iv) £5,000 from the 2008/09 budget to support the delivery of a multi area bid to improve mobility of older people in the City delivered by Mature Moves; and
- v) £9,000 from the 2008/09 budget to provide additional and improved security provision at Newbottle Primary School.

Strategic Initiatives Budget: 2008/09 Ward Based Community Chest

The Chief Executive (Acting) submitted a report (copy circulated) bringing forward 20 recommendations relating to the 2008/09 Community Chest Scheme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members having discussed the applications it was:-

- 6. RESOLVED that approval be given to the 20 proposals recommended for support from the 2008/09 Community Chest with a total value of £15,006 as detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

Housing and Council Tax Benefits Progress Report

The City Treasurer submitted a report (copy circulated) informing Members of the performance of the Benefits Section in the processing of new claims and changes in circumstance in accordance with the new National indicator (NI 181) for Housing and Council Tax Benefit. The report which covered the period 1st April to 31st July, 2008 also updated Members on developments relevant to the business.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Steve Atkinson, Benefits Manager, was present at the meeting and briefed Members on the report, referring them to the performance statistics.

- 7. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

Proposed Programme for Heritage Open Days 2008

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) updating Members on Heritage Open Days 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Julie Elliott, Assistant Head of Culture and Tourism, circulated copies of the Tyne and Wear Heritage Open Days 2008 booklet for the event which was planned to take place from Thursday, 11th to Sunday, 14th September, 2008.

8. RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and that further updates on Heritage Open Days throughout the year be submitted to the Committee for information.

Variation in the Order of Business

The Chairman proposed that the order of business be varied and that the update on the Hetton Pool be provided as the last item of business to allow a full discussion of the proposed new facility.

9. RESOLVED that the agenda be varied accordingly.

Integrated Youth Strategy 2008-2011: Consultation

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) informing the Committee of the Draft Sunderland Integrated Youth Strategy 2008-2011 and the associated consultation process.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Kath Butchert, Integrated Youth Officer, briefed the Committee on the vision of the Integrated Youth Strategy, the core youth offer, the key achievements and key challenges in developing a fully integrated youth support service.

Councillor Rolph commented that she would have liked a report specific for the Coalfield Area showing the youth facilities available and the profile of young people to have been submitted to the Committee.

Ms. Butchert stated that this information was available and would be provided to Members. The purpose of today's report was to inform the Area Committee of the Citywide Strategy that was being developed to deliver youth services across the whole of Sunderland. The findings of the consultation on the strategy would be submitted to all of the Area Committees and would support the Council in developing a fully integrated youth support service specific to the priorities and needs of all young people in the City.

10. RESOLVED that the Integrated Youth Strategy 2008 to 2011 consultation document and the associated consultation process be supported.

Hetton Pool – Update

Mr. Mike Poulter, Head of Project and Service Development, proceeded to brief the Committee on the Hetton Pool Development. He advised that Pellikaan Construction Ltd., a Dutch company, had been appointed to design and build the new facility based on the specification agreed by the Cabinet.

Mr. Poulter advised that public consultation had taken place on the planning and internal layout of the new pool and referred Members to the plans displayed at the meeting. He added that the planning application for the development had been approved at the Development Control meeting the previous day. Demolition of the existing facility would commence on 15th September. He added that in his opinion the new facility would be an iconic, high quality development.

In response to Members' questions, Mr. Poulter advised that there would be a public viewing area of the learner pool of approximately 12 metres in size and there would also be a viewing area for the main pool. However, the seating would not be tiered as it was important not to create blind spots. With regard to the internal decoration, the main circulation areas would be looked at as the project developed and he felt that it would be appropriate to include some memorabilia that was relevant to the local heritage and that Members would be consulted on this.

Mr. Poulter informed the Committee that one hundred and forty responses had been received in total as a result of the public consultation, however, he did not have a breakdown in relation to the different wards of the Coalfield area. Replies would be drafted to as many of the enquires as possible. Many of which were simply excited to be getting a new pool. Other issues raised included:-

- the wish for an Ice Rink;
- comments on the supervisory arrangements in relation to Group changing;
- the request for a sauna and steam room (this was already provided in the scheme);
- the call for 6 lanes rather than 5 (these were from Members of the Swimming Club).

In relation to the issue of the new pool having 5 lanes, Mr. Poulter advised that this did not prevent the swimming club from having swimming galas at the Hetton Pool and the point needed to be made that the scheme was for the wider population. To add an additional swimming lane would require more materials to be excavated resulting in an increase in the length of the scheme, the need to provide more changing facilities and increased costs. For larger events the new Sunderland Aquatic Centre could be used.

With regard to access to the pools, the learner pool would be stepped. The steps to the main pool would be removable and depending on access needs, they could be replaced with gentler ones.

Due to the design of the facility, the pool environment and changing area would be the same temperature and the facilities for changing would include some cubicles for private changing.

Mr. Poulter advised that the Hetton Pool would not be as big as the pool recently opened in Durham City or have the efficiency rating it had achieved. It would, however, have a 'very good' rating.

Councillor Anderson stated that she was very pleased with the project although she did sympathise with the Hetton Swimming Club. There was a great deal of enthusiasm for the new pool and it was pleasing to hear the comments received. She looked forward to the demolition of the old building and to see the new neighbourhood facility. She stated that she had every faith in Mr. Poulter to deliver the project and satisfy the needs and wishes of potential customers.

Mr. Poulter stated that he was sure the new pool would be a very good facility. He added that the way it had been configured on the site would mean it had a better relationship with the Hetton Centre whose facilities would not be duplicated in the new building. He advised the Committee that he would ensure they received an update as the development progressed and it was:-

11. RESOLVED that the information be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Poulter for attending the meeting and providing the update and closed the meeting.

(Signed) D. RICHARDSON,
Chairman.