

**Item 2**

**EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE**

**23 September 2019**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

**Area Arrangements Update**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members an update on the outcomes of a recent workshop where the Portfolio Holder and Deputy Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture, Area Committee Chairs, and People and Place Board Chairs discussed opportunities to strengthen the Council's Area Arrangements.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In July 2019 the Portfolio Holder and Deputy Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture, Area Committee Chairs, and People and Place Board Chairs met to discuss opportunities to strengthen the Council's Area Arrangements. Members analysed information in the context of: -
- a. Key messages from the most recent Residents' Survey.
  - b. The Corporate Peer Review which took place in April. The review suggested that Area Arrangements could play a much stronger role in re-engaging with residents and shaping a new relationship with the council which is less reliant on traditional methods of service delivery and which has a sharper focus on value for money.
  - c. Consideration as to where Area Committees can influence and support delivery of emerging priorities for the City Plan focussed on the key priorities of Healthy, Vibrant and Dynamic city.
  - d. Changes to the Council's structure and the move away from People and Place Directorates to Neighbourhoods and City Development.
- 2.2 A range of opportunities for improvement were discussed including the role and function of Area Committees and other meetings and boards, area budgets, measuring impact, communications and resident engagement and the Voluntary and Community Sector. As an outcome of those discussions the following was agreed for action.
- 3. Agreed Actions**
- 3.1 To increase the number of Area Committee meetings from 3 to 4 per year to support more responsive decision making.
- 3.2 To review the Area Committee Agenda to make best use of the time available. Splitting the agenda into 2 distinct sections to allow enough time for action and discussion items (forward thinking/planning) and a section purely for information (reflection/updates).

- 3.3 Review People and Place Board arrangements to maximise achievement. Ensure the boards are linked to the development and priorities emerging from the Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.4 Rename the Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) to Neighbourhood Fund. The funding is awarded by Area Committees to deliver projects at a local level to meet agreed area priorities members agreed it more fitting to re-name to the Neighbourhood Fund a title more in keeping with its purpose.
- 3.5 Review the rules and procedures of the Neighbourhood Fund for improved clarity, consistency and efficiency with the aim of getting things done more quickly.
- 3.6 Re-invigorate the performance management arrangements for action delivered through the Neighbourhood Fund to demonstrate impact and 'you said – we did'.
- 3.7 Produce a Resident Engagement Strategy and ensure linkages to the development of Neighbourhood Plans to include Area Consultation Events and encourage more residents to attend Area Committees.
- 3.8 Develop and manage Area Communication Plans, utilising a package of opportunities that are already available, as well as, Area Committees considering feeding into a 'you said, we did' leaflet for circulation at an area level and including the introduction of Community Facebook Pages for each of the 5 areas in advance of the summer holidays.
- 3.9 Continue to support the Area VCS Networks to reach more groups and widen support.
- 3.10 Develop a volunteering strategy and implementation plan for the Neighbourhood Directorate to try to harness some of those residents who are keen to get involved in Social Action.

#### **4 Summary/progress**

- 4.1 Progress has been made in relation to all of the activities described in Section 3 of the report, some of which are detailed in another report on this agenda. Some actions have been fully implemented already e.g. additional Area Committee meeting and area Facebook pages. The Portfolio Holder and Deputy Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture, Area Committee Chairs, and People and Place Board Chairs have agreed to meet up again in October to discuss progress on the above actions.

#### **5. Recommendations**

- 5.1 Note the content of the report.