

**At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held in the WASHINGTON FOOTBALL HUB, NORTHERN AREA PLAYING FIELDS on TUESDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2021 at 6.00p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Lauchlan in the Chair

Councillors Farthing, Fletcher, Laws, F. Miller, D. E. Snowdon, Taylor, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, M. Walker and P. Walker.

**Also in Attendance:-**

Mrs. Karon Purvis	-	Area Officer – Sunderland City Council
Mr. Jon Ritchie	-	Executive Director of Corporate Services, Sunderland City Council
Mr. Paul Wood	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Ms Denise Gilhome	-	Washington Community Support Worker
Ms Sylvia Copley	-	VCS Representative
Mr. Alan Duffy	-	Gentoo
Mr Phil Sowerby	-	TWFRA
Mr Paul Thompson	-	TWFRA

**Announcement**

The Chairman informed the Committee of the Washington based volunteers and organisations that had been successful at the recent awards ceremony and wished to place on record the Area Committees congratulations and thanks to all involved.

Organisation of the Year – Nightingale Hospital volunteers  
Outstanding Contribution (over 18) Bernie Scaplehorn  
Outstanding Contribution (under 18) Washington Youth Council  
Neighbourly Neighbour Sandra Noble  
Best use of Technology Toukon Martial Arts

Community Group supporting residents mental health and wellbeing  
Washington Area Hub Volunteers  
Community Fundraising Champion PCN Group

### **Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Donaghy, G. Miller, Warne and Williams and from Acting Inspector Steven Passey.

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **Minutes of the last meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record

### **Washington Area Neighbourhood Investment Plan Delivery Plan 2020-2023**

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

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Laws presented the report, highlighting the key points of action with the relevant Task Groups and was on hand to answer any queries raised by Members.

Councillor Laws introduced Jon Ritchie, Executive Director of Corporate Services to elaborate on the circulatory report (copies circulated) which provided a summary of the findings of the public consultation over the equality impact assessment for the Enforcement Safety measures proposed.

Councillor Farthing commented that whilst £120,000 was a lot of money, the costs of cleaning up after anti social behaviour, illegal encampments and such like was very dear along with the public outcry, which was not always understood by officers as to how this could upset residents. Therefore if these measures deter and reduces the impact on services they would be value for money in the longer term.

Councillor Taylor commented that he absolutely welcomed these proposals and that we should have been in this position last year. Councillor Taylor also welcomed the Council's intention to look at the unauthorised encampment

policy with two meetings planned which would hopefully give the opportunity to rectify any issues they had with it.

Councillor Taylor referred to the issue of car parks being used by HGV drivers as a waiting area and commented that businesses needed to get their own houses in order rather than blaming the drivers and that Nissan had concrete bollards and double yellow lines surrounding the facility so there was nowhere for the HGV drivers to go. Councillor Taylor also commented that hopefully the proposed truck park as part of the IAMP would alleviate this but as an authority we had a duty of care to provide facilities.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that the report was a step in the right direction and that we had a policy on illegal encampments 12 years ago but this went hand in hand with a dedicated transfer site, which we don't have.

Councillor Trueman also stressed that the issues of antisocial behaviour via quad bikes and motorbikes in these areas needed tackling.

Councillor Taylor advised that he had approached the Chief Fire Officer about collaborative work with the Police and whilst there had been a delay, this was being looked at so was a work in progress.

Councillor Dianne Snowdon commented that she welcomed the report and the observations made by residents and that whilst it was a great deal of money quoted, the amount having to be spent rectifying the damage caused from ASB meant this would be value for money for residents and she thanked Mr Ritchie and the team for their work on this.

The Chairman commented that £120,000 was a lot of money and the Committee needed to realise that this would only be the start as the measures wouldn't address the issues the residents had with alcohol consumption and drug taking or motorbikes in the area and more money would be required so this needed to be considered in the future.

With regards to timescales of when the Safety Measures would be implemented, Mr Ritchie advised Councillor Taylor that the team were confident they would be fully installed next spring, subject to the caveat on availability of materials.

In relation to Councillor Farthings enquiry over updates on the procurement of CCTV and where these would be situated, Mrs Purvis advised that this was a citywide scheme for street cams which wouldn't be purchased separately but she would check with Michelle Coates on the current situation as to where they were with the project.

Councillor Taylor commented that it took a great deal of time to get through to the police to report instances of ASB with Quad/motorbikes and that the Police did not have a dedicated motorcycle section anymore so it was even more important to work collaboratively with the Fire Authority in the use of their drone which could target specific areas rather than just one area.

Councillor Taylor also expressed his disappointment that there was no presence from the Police at the meeting once again.

Councillor Fletcher also wished for it to be noted adding that it was most disappointing the police weren't attending the meetings and advised of issues occurring in her ward where she was unable to contact Officers as Members did not know who were on the teams anymore as they were nowhere to be seen.

Mrs Purvis advised that the Inspector was on sick leave at present and the Acting Inspector had been required to cover another task at the same time as this meeting but they were looking to arrange a joint Councillor/Police meeting and she would ask for an up to date contact list of the Washington Team Police Officers for the circulation to Members.

Mrs Purvis proposed that an item be added to the agenda for the next Washington Neighbourhood and Community Board meeting to discuss the consultation and the elements that the public had raised which were not covered by these measures.

The Committee agreed to allocate the £120,000 funding for the access control measures as described in the agenda and the circulatory report

At this juncture, the Committee viewed a short video on the Delivery of the Washington Area Committee Delivery Plan

## 2. RESOLVED that the Committee

- i) Considered the progress and performance update with regards to the Washington Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020- 2023, and agreed the proposals for future delivery as contained within Annex 1 of the report
- ii) Supported the recommendation to extend the Clean and Green Local Action Scheme
- iii) Supported the recommendation to extend the Usworth Park Development Plan Project
- iv) Support the recommendation to agree the Washington Creative You Project Brief and Call for Project
- v) Support the recommendation to extend the Washington Can Do fund

## **Washington Area Budget Report**

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

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mrs Purvis presented the report and was on hand to answer any queries raised by Members.

In relation to the Washington Creative You Project, Councillor Farthing commented that it was a shame Councillor Williams was not in attendance to speak on this as she had led on this and it should be a very successful project and she looked forward to see this move forward.

### 3. RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- i) Noted the financial information detailed within Tables One, Two and Three of the report;
- ii) Considered and Approved the NF Funding of £11,000 to Community Resilience to extend the Clean and Green Local Action Plan (small grants) project as set out in Section 2.3 and Item 3 Annex 1 of the report;
- iii) Considered and Approved the NF Funding of £10,000 to Community Resilience to extend the Washington Can Do fund (small grants) as set out in Section 2.3 and Item 3 Annex 1 of the report;
- iv) Considered and approved the NF Funding of £100,000 and the Project Brief and Call for Projects for the Washington Creative You project as set out in Section 2.3 and Item 3 Annex 1 of the report;
- v) Considered and Approved NI Capital funding £50,000 to Community Resilience to extend the Usworth Park Development Plan as set out in Section 3.4 and Item 3 Annex 2 of the report;
- vi) Considered the alignment of NI Capital funding of £2,000 as set out in Section 3.4 and Item 3 Annex 3 of the report
- vii) Noted the approved Community Chest grants from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 as detailed in Annex 3 of the report;
- viii) Noted the Community Chest approvals supported from 2021/2022 as detailed in Item 3 Annex 4 of the report.

## **Partner Agency Reports**

### **a) Washington Area Community Voluntary Sector Network**

The Voluntary and Community Sector Network submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update with regard to the Washington Area Community and Voluntary Sector Network.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mrs Purvis presented the report on behalf of the VCS Network.

Councillor Farthing referred to paragraph 4.6 of the report and the partner update form the Washington Forge Rotary on their defibrillator programme. Councillor Farthing advised of another possible person fundraising for this and enquired if had been linked.

Mrs Purvis advised that they have been contacted and this involved an ongoing commitment from the organisations to maintain the defibrators so it was about getting them lined up to progress the schemes. Mrs Purvis also advised that she had a list she could circulate to Members so they were aware of where the gaps were.

Councillor Farthing suggested that this be an agenda item for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee/Board.

Members having considered the report, it was: -

4. RESOLVED that the content of the report and the opportunities and issues raised by the Washington Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network be received and noted.

#### **b) Gentoo**

Gentoo submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update to the Committee on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr Alan Duffy, Head of Operations, Gentoo presented the report and advised that in relation to paragraph 3.1 of the report, they had received over 1000 responses on the campaign to support tenants affected by the removal of £20 universal credit uplift and they were busy working through those.

In relation to the Afghan Resettlement Scheme, they were working in conjunction with Sunderland Council and had offered 11 properties within the city.

In response to Councillor Dianne Snowdon's enquiry on paragraph 3.3 and how the furnished tenancy package would work and if there was an interest charge for residents. Mr Duffy advised that the furniture and white goods could be charged in addition to rent but if on benefits most would be funded by housing benefit. There had been 76 tenants taken up the scheme already and they did not get charged interest.

Councillor Farthing queried if those contacting the money matters team were being referred to the Councils Credit Union for help, Mr Duffy advised that 75% of their customers were not in arrears but yes the Councils credit union was one of the areas customers were referred to.

Councillor Taylor commented that the impending decision to close the furlough scheme which would result in some employers deciding whether to reemploy or make staff redundant could have a huge impact on the Washington area and Gentoo should work collaboratively with the VCS on this.

Mrs Purvis advised that they do work closely as part of the Washington REACT project, which was working very hard and were in contact with employers, with regular reports which also could be looked at.

Sylvia Copley, VCS Representative advised that if any Members had residents struggling over debt and required signposting if they could direct them to her as they work with money matters and provided a rounded approach to crisis intervention. Mrs Purvis advised that she would circulate Ms Copley's contact information for Members to pass on.

The Chairman thanked Mr Duffy for his report and his attendance at the meeting.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

**c) TWFRS**

The Tyne and Wear Fire Service submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided performance-monitoring details in relation to the Local Indicators for the Washington Area Committee from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, compared with the same period in 2020

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr Phil Sowerby, Station Manager presented the report and expanded on the figures provided. Mr Sowerby also introduced Paul Thompson, Group Manager to the Committee

Councillor Taylor raised the issue of fly tipping and the setting fire of waste which could not be collected by the Council when on privately owned land and enquired if there was any update on this. Mrs Purvis advised that she would check with the Safer Communities Officer for an update.

Councillor Farthing referred to paragraph 5.1 of the report and commented that it was deplorable that Officers had to wear body cameras in the first place and had suffered from any violence/abuse at all.

In response to Councillor Dianne Snowdon's query over the inclusion of non fire related call outs, such as residents being stuck in swings, which had occurred in her ward recently, Mr Sowerby advised that he could look to include such instances in future reports.

The Chairman thanked Mr Sowerby and Mr Thompson for their attendance.

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

**d) Northumbria Police**

Northumbria Police submitted a report which provided data on crime and disorder in the Washington area comparing 'Year to date' figures with the preceding year.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair advised that as the Acting Inspector was not in attendance it was requested that any queries be emailed and that a joint Councillor/Police meeting was being pursued.

Councillor Farthing commented that it was disappointing as she would have liked to raise an LMAP's issue within her ward which was related to Police and Fire and particularly the arson occurred in the play parks across Washington and if there had been CCTV footage.

7. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

**Planning Applications – For Information Only**

Current Planning Applications relating to the Washington Area for the period 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2021 to 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2021 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(Signed) L. Lauchlan,  
Chairman.