

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held remotely on MONDAY, 16th JUNE, 2020 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor E. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors Bewick, M. Dixon, Fagan, Hodson, Hunt, Marshall, McClennan, Mordey, Oliver, Potts, Scanlan, A. Wood and P. Wood

Also Present:-

Trish Cornish	- East Area VCS Network Representative
Matthew Jackson	- Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Julie Maven	- East Area VCS Network Representative
Nicol McConnell	- Area Community Development Lead, Sunderland City Council
Allison Patterson	- Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	- Neighbourhood Investment Plan Project Manager
Sarah Reed	- Director of People, Communications and Partnerships, Sunderland City Council
Claire Tulley	- Nexus

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Shaun Makin and Jamie Southwell.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 16th March, 2020

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th March, 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Supporting our Communities and Finalising Neighbourhood Investment Plans

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised the East Sunderland Area Committee of the next steps, following Cabinet approval in March 2020, of the Article 10 Neighbourhood Investment Plans, which took into consideration the additional priorities required to support Sunderland through to recovery post Covid-19.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Peverley presented the report and drew Members attention to the background to the development of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans. On 24th March 2020 the Cabinet had approved the Neighbourhood Investment Plans and following consultation with local residents; the East Area priorities had been agreed at the meeting of the Area Committee on 16th March 2020. Following the introduction of the lockdown there had been further consultation with residents to ensure that the priorities were still fit for purpose given the changes which were being faced due to the current situation.

There had been a strengthening of the partnerships with the VCS during the lockdown; within a day of the lockdown starting there had been community hubs established. There had been an increase in the amount of volunteers during this time.

A number of main themes for the East Sunderland Area Committee had been identified and these were detailed in section 5 of the report; the delivery plans would be discussed at the next meeting of the Area Committee in July 2020.

Councillor P. Wood queried whether the vetting of tenants referred to in the Create Safer Streets theme would include Gentoo or whether it would just be tenants of private landlords. He also queried whether there would be further discussions around the delivery plans. Ms Peverley advised that there would be a workshop arranged to discuss the plans prior to the July Area Committee meeting and that work was being done to see what could be done at a city wide level to address the priorities.

Councillor M. Dixon referred to the increase in volunteering and commented that some volunteers who had recently signed up had not then participated in any activities as there had been an excess of volunteers; he asked what was being done to try and keep these volunteers following the covid-19 crisis. Ms Peverley stated that there was a desire to keep the volunteers and that there was regular communication with volunteers through the volunteer platform and there was the volunteer week to recognise the hard work of volunteers. A lot of the new volunteers would be returning to work in the coming weeks and it was hoped that they would continue to be involved in the community. The volunteers had made new friendships. Ms McConnell added that there were 220 volunteers within the East Area and that a lot of the groups in the area were run by older volunteers who would appreciate assistance; it was

necessary to raise awareness of the groups with the new volunteers and they would be asked if they wanted to become involved in these groups. Ms Patterson added that training would be provided and work would be done to match volunteers with organisations.

Councillor Fagan queried who stored the lists of volunteers and vulnerable residents and what steps had been taken to ensure that the lists were GDPR compliant. Ms Peverley advised that the list of shielded residents had been provided by central government and these people had been placed on the list by healthcare professionals. The NHS had made the initial call to the resident to place them on the list. The information was only held if the resident required the assistance of a volunteer and the only information received by the council was names and addresses. Ms Patterson added that there was a freephone number for residents to use to request support and there were GDPR questions to ensure that residents had given their permission for the information to be held.

Councillor McClennan expressed her thanks to volunteers and officers for all of their hard work and the commitment they had shown to the city. With regard to tenant vetting she stated that it was her understanding that Gentoo already did vigorous vetting of tenants and that registered landlords such as Back on the Map could access a vetting service although this was not mandatory. Unvetted tenants could cause antisocial behaviour and crime issues which impacted on the wider community and there was a need to ensure that the issues were tackled rather than just moved on to elsewhere. Within VCS organisations there were issues around funding running costs; the level of paperwork required to get grants was often too much for smaller organisations to manage; she referred to a local group which only had a few months of funds left to cover core running costs. She also queried what impact there would be on the work of the Committee now that there had been an announcement that free school meals would continue through the summer holiday. Ms McConnell advised that the Fancy a Day Out programme as agreed by the Area Committee was operational in holiday periods beyond the summer holiday. Discussions were being held with partners to see how they could deliver activities while observing social distancing or operating remotely; there would be activities delivered although it was not yet known what would be delivered.

Councillor McClennan then referred to the increased risk of contracting covid-19 within BME communities and questioned whether there were any projects being developed to help these communities access services. Ms McConnell advised that Young Asian Voices had approached her and there had been leaflets translated by them for distribution among this community. There were business grants available for businesses which could not operate including those in the hospitality sector and these businesses were being contacted. Ms Patterson added that there was £8million of government funding for VCS organisations which had encountered an increased workload.

Councillor Mordey welcomed the report and thanked the East Area residents for their participation. He also commented that Chance had done excellent

work in supporting residents who were shielding. He asked that Members be provided with the Neighbourhood Investment Plan as soon as possible before the Area Board to allow for the information to be considered in advance of the meeting.

Councillor Hodson commented that it would be good to hear from the partners at the next meeting of the Area Committee as the last update had been received at the meeting in December 2019. Ms McConnell advised that the partners were keen to attend the next meeting to provide updates.

Councillor Mordey asked that the Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to attend as well as the Neighbourhood Inspector to discuss her ambitions for policing in the East Area. The Chair welcomed this suggestion.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The content of the report be noted and the work undertaken through the Area Community Hubs during the Covid-19 pandemic be acknowledged.
- b. it be agreed that support be given to further resident consultation to finalise the detailed priorities for the East Sunderland Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plan which would be presented to the Community and Neighbourhood Board prior to the July meeting of the Area Committee.

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

(Signed) E. GIBSON,
Chairman.