

At a Meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held at HOUGHTON HOUSING OFFICE, THE SKYLINE CENTRE, 88 NEWBOTTLE STREET, HOUGHTON-LE SPRING, on WEDNESDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER, 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Lawson in the Chair

Councillors Allen, Blackburn, Cummings, Heron, Johnston, Scullion, Speding, Turner, M. Turton and W. Turton.

Also in Attendance:-

Debbie Ainscow	VCS Representative, Carer Locality Lead	Sunderland Carers Centre
Carole Davies	Community Development Worker	SNCBC
Debbie Hall	Area Response Manager for the Coalfield area	Sunderland City Council
Bob Heron	Member of the Public	
Pauline Hopper	Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield	Sunderland City Council
Sam Humble	Head of Operations	Gentoo
Amelia Laverick	Member of the Public	
Paul McKinnell	Community Development Worker	SNCBC
Shaun Newton	Centre Co-ordinator, ELCAP	
Gillian Robinson	Area Co-Ordinator	Sunderland City Council
Donna Thomas	Member of the Public	
Christine Tilley	Community Governance Services Team Leader	Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

On the instance of the Chairman, the Committee stood in silence for a minute as a mark of respect for the passing of the Leader of Sunderland City Council, Councillor Paul Watson, who had died on 7th November having fought a battle against cancer.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor G. Walker together with Mr Steve Burdis, Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, Ms Wendy Cook, VCS Representative, Youth and Community Co-ordinator, Sunderland North Community Business Centre and Acting Inspector Simon Marshall, Northumbria Police.

Declarations of Interest

Item 5 – Area Budgets Report

Councillor Turner made an open declaration as a member of the Management Committee of Hetton New Dawn in respect of the organisation's application for SIB funding for the Welcome Café project and their Community Chest application to purchase resources to set up a new craft group.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Committee held on 14^h June, 2017 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as correct record subject to it being noted that the environmental work undertaken in Shiney Row was not as a result of Big Local.

The Chairman pointed out that Inspector Quinn, Northumbria Police had now moved back to work nearer to where she lived and Acting Inspector Simon Marshall would be taking up the role for the Houghton and Washington areas until an appointment was made.

The Chairman paid tribute to the work Inspector Quinn had undertaken in the Coalfield Area.

Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update of progress against the current year's Place Board Work Plan and providing an update on performance.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair of the Place Board, Councillor Cummings briefed the Committee on the report highlighting key areas of influence and achievement in relation to the highways capital maintenance budget, development of the Place Management service schedule and the area priority to support local shopping centres by providing support to independent traders.

Councillor Cummings also drew attention to the success of the Stephenson Project and to the need to find a permanent location to house the Coal Tub.

The Chairman of the Area Committee, Councillor Lawson drew attention to the switch on of the Shiney Row Christmas Lights taking place on 7th December and the activities that would be taking place.

Councillor Lawson commented on the need for the Coal Tub to be displayed in a location that attracted a lot of footfall so that as many people as possible had the opportunity to see it and invited suggestions to be submitted by the end of the week.

Councillor Scullion suggested the Houghton Primary Care Centre as a possibility and the Committee were in agreement that this was a good idea and for enquiries to be made as to whether this would be possible.

Councillor Lawson pointed out the Call for Projects in respect of the Tall Ships Races 2018 and informed the Committee that 8 responses to take part had been received from schools so far. She also advised that she had, together with the Hetton ward councillors, judged displays of work from schools taking part in the 'From Me to Sea' project. Each school which had participated had received a small reward, however Hetton Primary school was the outright winner.

Members of the Committee having fully considered the report; it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the progress and performance update with regard to the Coalfield Place Board's Work Plan for 2017/18 be received and noted and that the proposals for future delivery be approved.

People Board Progress Report

The Chair of the People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update of progress against the current year's People Board Work Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair of the People Board, Councillor W. Turton briefed the Committee on the report drawing the Committee's attention to the project to increase digital inclusion in communities, the SIB Craft Academy project to deliver training and support to reduce barriers to employment and the ELCAP Community Transport and

Shopping Bus service to reduce isolation and improve social participation in older and vulnerable adults. Councillor Turton also mentioned the 'Step up' project delivered by SNCBC which trains and delivers on-going support to individuals and community groups to develop and sustain their volunteering programme, as well as the holiday activity SNCBC had delivered in all 4 wards in the Coalfield over the summer from July to September 2017.

The Chairman of the Area Committee, Councillor Lawson advised that she had had the pleasure of meeting up with Coalfield volunteers at events recently and would be doing so again later that week.

Mr Shaun Newton, Centre Co-ordinator, ELCAP briefed the Committee on the activities the Centre were delivering and emphasised the importance of not duplicating what was already being provided by other groups.

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

3. RESOLVED that the progress and performance update with regard to the Coalfield People Board's Work Plan for 2017/18 be received and noted and that the proposals for future delivery be approved.

Partner Agency Reports – Coalfield Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network Progress Update

Ms Wendy Cook, Ms Debbie Ainscow and Mr Paul Finch, Area Network Representatives submitted a report (copy circulated), providing an update with regard to the Coalfield Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Network.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Debbie Ainscow, Area Network Representative briefed the Committee on the activities of the Network which had met three times since the last report to the Area Committee in June. The update included details of a cookery demo and tasting session which took place at the July meeting, a presentation on the Tall Ships Races in 2018 and a visit from Houghton Job Centre staff wanting to build relationships with the local community and find out what other support was available at the September meeting, as well as an update on the SIB call for projects for Digital Inclusion, discussion on the Coalfield Area Priorities and the volunteer celebration event at the October meeting.

The Chairman thanked the VCS network for the work it was doing on behalf of the Committee.

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

4. RESOLVED that:-

(i) the contents of the report be received and noted; and

- (ii) the Area Committee continue to support the Sector when developing and implementing actions against local priorities.

Partner Agency Reports – Northumbria Police

Acting Inspector Simon Marshall, Northumbria Police submitted a report (copy circulated), providing an update on antisocial behaviour and crime in Houghton and Hetton and information regarding resourcing following a further review after the restructuring of the Neighbourhood Teams.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman reported that Acting Inspector Simon Marshall, Northumbria Police had been unable to attend that evening, although he had circulated a report on current issues in the Coalfield Area.

The Chairman advised that she would like to propose that Members ask for a meeting with Acting Inspector Marshall to discuss the issues raised in his report. She acknowledged that like all public sector organisations, funding for the Police Service had been cut but there were antisocial issues occurring throughout the Coalfield.

Councillor Lawson referred to the recent youth disorder reported by Go Ahead Northern on the Broadway in Houghton and the threat of attack bus drivers had experienced which had resulted in the Bus Company seriously considering not operating a service in this area. Councillor Lawson also mentioned the vandalism taking place at Shiney Row where lights had been ripped out of the subways.

Councillor Speding advised that the Police were represented at a senior level on the Safer Sunderland Partnership Board and he encouraged Members to write to the Board to express their concerns about the youth disorder and antisocial behaviour being experienced in the Coalfield area.

The Chairman welcomed the suggestion.

Councillor Scullion advised that he had been told that the Police had been told not to organise any more Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings after December. Councillor Scullion considered this to be shame if they were not continued as they provided valuable information as to what was happening on the street.

Councillor Speding commented that he supported the PACT meetings however it was a matter of having the resources to hold them. He reported that at the last meeting the issue had been raised that Members were not being advised of the crimes being committed in the area.

The Chairman commented that Members did not want to hear of crime issues only through Facebook but would rather it was through official channels.

The Chairman invited Ms Donna Thomas, Member of the Public, who had attended the meeting as she was concerned about the antisocial behaviour taking place in Houghton, to speak on the issues raised.

Ms Thomas stated that people in Houghton were feeling let down by the Police. She asked the Committee to consider bringing into operation a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for the area, enquired as to what the threshold for a community trigger was and whether it would be possible to have CCTV in Newbottle street.

The Chairman stated that a PSPO was something which could be considered should the youth disorder issues continue, together with CCTV, if funding was available, however the difficulty with this was that it would need to be monitored and whether there were the resources available to do this.

Full consideration having being given to the report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the update be received and noted and the issues raised during the discussion be looked into including arrangements for a meeting between Members and the Police to discuss what is being done to reduce youth disorder in the area.

Partner Agency Reports – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Station Manager Steve Burdis, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Performance Monitoring details in relation to the Local Indicators for the Coalfield Area Committee area from 1st May, 2017 to 30th October, 2017 compared with the same period in 2016.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman advised that Station Manager Burdis was unable to attend the meeting to present his report as he was attending the West Sunderland Area Committee that evening, however if the Committee had any questions on the report they would be reported back to Mr Burdis for a response.

Councillor Blackburn referred to the three caravan fires reported under 'LI 15 Number of Deliberate Primary Road Vehicle Fires' and enquired whether there was anywhere to take caravans at the end of their 'life'.

Ms Sam Humble, Head of Operations, Gentoo advised that there wasn't anywhere to take them and that it was the owner's responsibility to dispose of their caravan.

Councillor Speding commented that the Fire Service was not informing Councillors of the incidents taking place in Shiny Row and he felt that as a partner organisation to the Council that information should be shared. Councillors were receiving complaints from residents due to increased activity. He stated that when Members met up with the Police this would be an opportunity to highlight the issue again.

Councillor Scullion referred to the theft and setting on fire of wheelie bins and stated that it might be worth thinking about issuing a device to secure wheelie bins to prevent them from being stolen.

Full consideration having being given to the report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be received and noted.

Partner Agency Reports – Gentoo Update

Ms Sam Humble, Head of Operations, Gentoo provided an update for the Coalfield Area to November 2017.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Humble briefed the Committee on the report highlighting the new allocation system which went live in September 2017. She advised that there were now over 7,000 customers registered on the new system and positive feedback from customers had been received.

Ms Humble offered to provide Members with a demonstration of the new allocations system if they felt they would find it useful to see the prioritisations.

Ms Humble highlighted the referrals to the Money Matters Team who help customers manage their money and work with a wide range of partners to offer practical tips, who continued to track the impact of welfare reform measures including Universal Credit and were training more staff up as UC experts in preparation for the full roll out. Ms Humble added that they were starting to see rent arrears suggesting claimants were not using the money it was intended for.

Ms Humble advised that Gentoo continued to work with the Council in respect of flytipping in that where offenders were identified, they would take action against either their tenancy or in conjunction with the Council where they were not tenants. Gentoo were also working with the Council and the Police in respect of youth disorder around the Youth Centre area of Easington Lane. A number of the youths involved had been identified and a meeting was taking place that week to address next steps which might involve taking action against the parents.

Ms Humble reported that there were allegations of drug dealing and drug use in the Lime Avenue area of Houghton and Gentoo were working with the Police on the matter.

Ms Humble advised of the appointment of the new interim CEO David Jepson following the resignation of John Craggs.

In relation to Community Partnership Coordinator activity, Ms Humble reported on the transfer of the After School club at Nidderdale to the local Hetton Primary

School and the three successful community clean up days Gentoo had been involved with in partnership with the Council.

Ms Humble also briefed on the progress of 'Big Local' which had recently changed its name to '3 Together' and the works scheduled for the first year of the Asset Plan in the Easington Lane and Racecourse areas.

The Chairman thanked Ms Humble for the comprehensive report.

Members discussed the youth disorder and antisocial behaviour being carried out in various hotspots in the Coalfield and the efforts being made to reduce this including the support being provided to parents.

Members enquired as to the reason given by those committing the disorder and antisocial behaviour, to which Ms Humble stated that the reason often given was that there was nothing to do. Members commented that they were of the opinion that there were lots of activities available for people to get involved in. However there was a small percentage of young people, who were the ones causing the disorder, who did not want to engage with what was available.

Full consideration having being given to the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the information brought out during the discussion be received and noted.

Area Budgets Report

The Head of Member Support and Community Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated) providing a financial statement as an update position on progress in relation to allocating Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) and Community Chest funding and presenting proposals for further funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Pauline Hopper, Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield presented the report drawing the Committee's attention to the financial position as set out in paragraph 2.1 which showed an SIB total balance of £112,595.

Ms Hopper referred to paragraph 2.2 which provided details of the call for projects to address Digital Inclusion which were recommended by the People Board. Ms Hopper advised that consideration was being given to having a mobile provision to take up the small amount of funding leftover.

Ms Hopper referred Members to the recommendation for additional SIB funding totalling £10,000 for Celebrations, Events and Heritage detailed in paragraph 2.3 and Annex 1 of the report and to the approvals for Community Chest funding supported in June to October 2017, detailed at paragraph 3 and set out at Annex 3. She confirmed that the projects approved for the Hetton and Copt Hill wards for November needed to come off the balances detailed in the report and when this

had occurred that the balances for Copt Hill and Hetton would be £3,674 and £1,869 respectively.

Councillor Speding thanked Officers for the work done in processing the Community Chest applications and supporting organisations to access the funding.

The Chairman reminded Members of the need to respond in a timely manner to applications for Community Chest funding circulated to them by Officers so that community groups could be informed whether their funding has been approved and Officers were not wasting time repeatedly contacting Councillors about the same applications.

Consideration having been given to the report it was:-

8. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the financial statements set out in sections 2.1 and 3.1 of the report be noted;
- b) the 7 projects from the previously allocated £100,000 SIB Digital Inclusion budget as set out in paragraph 2.2 and detailed in Annex 2 of the report be approved;
- c) the allocation of £10,000 SIB for Local Events and Celebrations detailed in Annex 1 of the report, be approved; and
- d) the 40 Community Chest approvals supported from 2017/2018 Community Chest as set out in Annex 3, be approved.

Current Planning Applications (Coalfields Area)

A schedule (copy circulated) of current planning applications lodged during the period 1st October and 2nd November, 2017 was submitted for Members' information only.

(For copy schedule – see original minutes).

9. RESOLVED that the schedule be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked Members for their contributions and the Members of the Public for their attendance commenting that they were always welcome.

The Chairman reminded Members that they were welcome to attend meetings of the Coalfield Area Boards regardless of whether or not they had been appointed to the Board and closed the meeting wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

(Signed) A. LAWSON,

Chairman.