

At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber at City Hall, Sunderland on WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER, 2022 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Blackburn in the Chair

Councillors Dodds, Heron (Vice Chair), K. Johnston, Mason-Gage, Price, Rowntree, Scott, D. Snowdon, Speding and Thornton

Also Present:-

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| Jill Colbert | Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services | Together for Children Sunderland City Council |
| Pauline Hopper | Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield | Sunderland City Council |
| Emma Horsman | Project Director | Cultural Spring |
| Nic Marko | Local Democracy Reporter | |
| Andrew Nelson | Station Manager | Tyne and Wear Fire Service |
| Steve Passey | Inspector | Northumbria Police |
| Sandra Stephenson | VCS Community Support Officer | |
| Joanne Stewart | Principal Governance Services Officer | Sunderland City Council |
| Amy Swan | Area Network Representative | |
| Beth Wilkie | Head of Neighbourhoods | Gentoo |

Chairman's Welcome and Introductions

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

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Burrell and Eileen Bewick, Wendy Cook and Emerly Christie.

Declarations of Interest

The following declarations were received:-

Item 4 – Coalfield Area Budgets Report

Councillor Thornton made an open declaration in relation to application 2 from the Neighbourhood Fund towards the Coalfield Pride 2023 project as Chairman of the LGBT+ Support Group and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Speding made an open declaration in relation to the application towards the Herrington Colliery Pitch Fencing as a member of the Football Association.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 28th September, 2022 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Neighbourhood and Community Board Report

The Chairman of the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated), which provided an update on the progress against the Area Priorities associated with the Delivery Plan, which would be the focus for the Coalfield Area Committee during 2022-23.

The report also provided an update on Neighbourhood and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2022-2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board, Councillor Heron presented the report and highlighted a number of projects contained within the Delivery Plan and the work of the VCS Network.

Councillor Speding raised the issue of the playpark at Shiny Row and referred to the fact they were still outstanding. He referred to intervention plans that had been produced for other parks in the Coalfield area and asked that the park at Shiny Row be included in future programmes of work. Ms. Hopper advised that she could look in to who had produced the plan that Councillor Speding referred to and the Chairman commented that the issue could be followed up by Officers outside of the meeting.

Councillor Mason-Gage also asked if she could be provided with an update on the accessible play equipment for Barnwell Park.

At this juncture, the Chairman of the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board welcome Ms. Emma Horsman, Cultural Spring to provide a project update on the Stephenson Trail Project. Ms. Horsman advised that Marty Longstaff of the Lake Poets had commissions a piece of music called Stephenson's Engine and shared the video that had been produced. She advised Members that she would circulate a link to the resource packs that had been referred to.

The Chairman thanked all of the Officers supporting the Area Committee and praised Cultural Spring for the impressive presentation and outcomes of the photography project.

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

2. RESOLVED that the progress and performance update regarding the Coalfield Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020/23 be noted and the proposals for future delivery as contained within Annex 1, be agreed.

Northumbria Police Update

Inspector Passey, Northumbria Police provided a verbal update to the Committee, giving an overview of crime in the Coalfield area in relation to burglary, criminal damage, anti-social behaviour and motorcycle disorder.

Inspector Passey informed the Committee that ASB had reduced by 31% compared to the last reporting period and that this was an exceptional achievement. He advised that the current ASB hotspots were Easington Lane, Fencehouses and Houghton.

Motorcycle disorder had also reduced by 38% and since the last Area Committee overall burglary rates had reduced by 10%; which was a 27% reduction when compared to the same time the previous year.

Inspector Passey advised that the HALO team continued to evolve and innovated to tackle issues in the Hetton ward and that they had recently forged new links with Sunderland AFC's Beacon of Light Project with a view to increase provision to the area.

Councillor Speding referred to issues with ASB in the Hedworth Terrace, Shiney Row area and explained that this was a longstanding problem for residents and asked how this could be resolved as they were not seeing any reductions in ASB. Inspector Passey commented that he was aware that team had visited the area and that they had strong links with the Council ASB Team so he could ensure that this could be picked up. The Area Committee had funded a post to proactively target ASB hotspots and the area was not on the radar for them but he could speak with the team to tackle an approach to the issues he had raised.

Councillor Thornton referred to an issue she had reported through the 111 service and with the Council ASB Team regarding the driving of vehicles which were chasing each other and churning up grass. She had the details of the two vehicles and they were both unregistered and asked what further could be done. Inspector Passey advised that if she could provide all of the details he could ask the team to look into the issue further.

The Committee having discussed the report, the Chairman thanked Inspector Passey for his attendance and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.

Tyne and Wear Fire Service Update

Station Manager Andrew Nelson, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) submitted a report (copy circulated), providing Performance Monitoring details in relation to the Local Indicators for the Coalfield Area Committee area from 1st April 2022 to 14th December 2022 compared with the same period the previous year.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Speding commented that he was not surprised to see the 163% increase in incidents in the Shiney Row ward and commented that it had been a hotspot for a long time. Mr. Nelson advised that he could provide a direct link to the Watch Manage to discuss any areas of concern.

Councillor Mason-Gage referred to issues in Maple Terrace and commented that it was frustrating for residents in that area that no improvements were ever made and was informed that the area had been flagged through recorded incidents and the service were aware of the issues.

She also asked how worried the service were about residents making the decision to heat their own homes during the cost of living crisis and potentially putting themselves in danger and Mr. Nelson advised that crews were more vigilant and passing on advice to residents. If they saw seeing a family that may be struggling they could help advise where they could look to get additional support and help.

Full consideration having being given to the report, the Chairman thanked Mr Nelson for his attendance and it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the content of the report be received and noted.

Coalfield Voluntary and Community Sector Network Update

The Coalfield Voluntary and Community Sector Network submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide the Committee with an update on the work of the Sector to date.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Amy Swan, Area Network Representative presented the report and was on hand to answer Members queries.

Ms. Swan advised that meetings had taken place in October and November where they had focussed on the following areas; Warm Spaces, Holiday Activities, Findaway. The Well Bean Machine, The Household Support Update and Community Chest.

The Committee having discussed the report, the Chairman thanked Ms. Swan for her attendance, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.

Gentoo Update

Gentoo submitted a report (copy circulated) providing an update on their work from September to December 2022.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Beth Wilkie, Head of Neighbourhoods briefed the Committee on Neighbourhood Services and the proposed Investment and Renewal programme the area.

Councillor Thornton enquired how long a require should take in a property in East Rainton as residents had been advised it would be three months. Ms. Wilkie advised

that it would usually take 4 to 5 days but could look in to the matter further if the specific details were provided outside of the meeting.

In response to a query from Councillor Snowdon in relation to damp in homes, Ms. Wilkie advised that they had always had technical inspectors but due to the profile being raised they had put more resource into this area. They were dealing with the issue of damp in the same way as any other housing repairs but should Members have any specific concerns they could contact their local co-ordinators or raise the issue direct with herself and they could look to visit the property and explain how best to manage each case.

With regards to a question from Councillor Scott regarding the number of inspections outstanding and being undertaken, Ms. Wilkie advised that a team of advisers had received more training to ask more questions to better understand issues that residents were experiencing and explained that she could check on the current numbers and come back to Members with that information. The team were working with residents to get through as many inspections as they could and quickly diagnose where there were issues and concerns to be addressed as soon as possible.

Councillor Johnston asked if future reports could include the number of reported incidents and works being carried out so that Committee could look to monitor them and Ms. Wilkie advised she could provide these figures to the Area Officer.

The Committee having discussed the report; Ms. Wilkie was thanked for her attendance and it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the above information be received and noted.

Coalfield Area Budget Report

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

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Community Development Lead, presented the report, drawing the Committee's attention to the current financial position of the Area Committee Neighbourhood Fund 2022/2023 as set out in paragraph 2.1, the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme 2020 – 2023 in paragraph 3.1 and the Community Chest approvals in paragraph 4.1.

Ms Hopper briefed the Committee on the applications for funding set out in the report and full consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the financial statements set out in sections 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1, be noted;

- (b) approval be given to the allocation of £3,500 from the Neighbourhood Fund 2022/23 towards the Buddies Toddlers project;
- (c) approval be given to allocation of £11,325 from the Neighbourhood Fund 2022/23 towards the Coalfield Pride 2023 project;
- (d) the Neighbourhood and Community Board in February 2023 review and approve the ward based youth project applications from the previously aligned Neighbourhood Fund budget and report to the Area Committee at its meeting in March, 2023;
- (e) approval be given to the allocation of £40,000 from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme towards the enclosure of the Class A football pitch at Herrington Colliery Welfare Ground; and
- (f) the Community Chest approvals supported from the 2022/23 budget as set out in Annex 3 to the report be noted.

Current Planning Applications (Coalfields Area)

A schedule (copy circulated) of current planning applications lodged during the period 1st October and 24th November, 2022 was submitted for Members' information only.

(For copy schedule – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED that the schedule be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and participation and closed the meeting.

(Signed) J. BLACKBURN,
Chairman.