

At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 7th APRIL, 2014 at 5.30p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Ball in the Chair

Councillors Emerson, Farr, E. Gibson, Kay, Marshall, McClennan, T. Martin, Mordey, Price and Scanlan

Also Present:-

Chris Alexander	-	Chief Operative Operator, Sunderland Live
Hazel Clark	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Nonnie Crawford	-	Director of Public Health, Sunderland City Council
Joe Cummings	-	Station Manager, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
David Groark	-	Area Response Manager – City Centre, Sunderland City Council
Mick Hall	-	Inspector, Northumbria Police
Simon Hilton	-	Acting Sergeant, Northumbria Police
Matthew Jackson	-	Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Sarah Reed	-	Assistant Chief Executive & Area Lead Executive, Sunderland City Council
Jessica Regnart	-	Creative Development Manager, Sunderland Live
Gillian Robinson	-	Area Coordinator, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	-	Inspector, Northumbria Police
Nicol Trueman	-	Area Community Officer, Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillors Errington, Forbes and Wood along with Paula Hunt, Chris Marshall, Jen McKevitt and Nicky Rowland.

Declarations of Interest

Sunderland Live Presentation

Councillor Scanlan declared that she was a member of Sunderland Live

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 20th January, 2014

Councillor Mordey stated that it had been brass taps which had been removed from the Cemetery rather than brass plaques as had been recorded.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th January 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the above amendment.

Sunderland Live Presentation

Chris Alexander and Jessica Regnart provided a Powerpoint Presentation on the background of the Sunderland Live Company and the services they catered for and could offer in the future.

(For copy of PowerPoint presentation – see original minutes)

Councillor Scanlan referred to the work that was being done around Festival Park and Galleys Gill; there had been significant cleaning up of the area and it was hoped that the area could be used to hold events. She asked whether events needed to be large scale or whether smaller events could be held.

Ms Regnart stated that events could be any size; she referred to the ComicCon event which was a niche event and was not expected to attract a huge crowd, it was however a high quality event which would show off Sunderland in a positive light.

Councillor Scanlan then asked whether there were any plans for events at Magistrates Square. Ms Regnart advised that they were looking to develop events and there was already a lot of interest from event organisers.

Councillor Mordey asked whether it would be feasible for giant screens to be installed within the city centre during the upcoming World Cup and other international football events. Ms Regnard stated that it was proposed that there would be a programme of events held around the World Cup. Mr Alexander advised that it was difficult to find an appropriate location for such a screen as within the city centre there was not a large square which would be suitable. He suggested that Festival Park could be a suitable location for this sort of event.

Councillor Price asked how quickly a giant screen could be procured in the event of England reaching the finals of the cup. Mr Alexander advised that availability of the equipment could be a problem at that time; it would not be

possible to commit to a booking in advance due to the high cost of hiring the equipment; it had been looked at but had not been considered to be feasible for this year.

Councillor Scanlan then queried whether any consideration had been given to the possibility of buying a giant screen rather than hiring one. Mr Alexander advised that they were very expensive pieces of equipment and the technology involved changed quickly. If any equipment was purchased it would need to be hired out to other organisations when not in use to cover the costs of ownership but due to the regular advances in technology the equipment would be outdated quickly and would be difficult to hire out. A deal had been negotiated with a provider of hired equipment which would see the council being able to access this equipment at a discounted rate for the next 3 years.

Councillor McClennan queried how many corporate partners there were and asked whether Sunderland Live worked with the Economic Team to liaise with new businesses. Mr Alexander advised that during year 1 the targets for partnerships had been achieved and there were currently 7 corporate partners who paid Sunderland Live a total of £35,000 last year. For this year there had been 6 partners confirmed and it was intended that there would be 10 partners with each paying £7,500. It was acknowledged that £7,500 was a significant sum of money for businesses and there needed to be a good business case put forward to encourage people to contribute. It was the responsibility of Sunderland Live to engage with the council.

Councillor McClennan then stated that there was a need to help the VCS use events to reach a larger audience and fundraise by allowing them to have stands at events at a subsidised rate. Mr Alexander advised that this was an important issue; there were currently 10 charity partners. The charges for space at events had been capped and had not increased since last year. Corporate social responsibility was important for Sunderland Live.

2. RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

VCS Area Network Progress Report

The East Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Network submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with the Annual Report on the activities of the East Area VCS Network during 2013/14.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Hazel Clark introduced the report and advised the Committee of the work that had been done over the 9 meetings hosted by the VCS network over the last year.

Councillor T. Martin advised that a local resident had suggested that the disused railway tracks at the port could be used to create signage for the coastal path where it followed the route of the old railway lines. Ms Clark advised that this would be given consideration although it was currently not known what could be done as the procurement of the works had not been carried out yet.

3. RESOLVED that the Annual Report be noted.

Northumbria Police Update

Inspector Mick Hall presented the crime figures for the Central Area and City Centre. He advised that a lot of work had been done however this year had been a difficult year. There had been a lot of acquisitive crime and there were a number of factors had caused this including the welfare reforms; offenders coming into Sunderland from other areas due to the large number of hostel spaces and also due to offenders not being sent to prison.

Burglaries had been an issue with 54 additional burglaries of dwellings and 57 additional burglaries of properties other than dwellings when compared with last year. Last year had been extremely quiet due to there being a lot of offenders imprisoned; they had now been released from prison.

Shoplifting was a problem and the whole force area had seen an increase in offences.

There had also been an increase in thefts of pedal cycles and thefts from motor vehicles; this was partially due to opportunist thefts where people had left bikes unsecured or had left sat-navs and other valuables on display in the car.

There had been some reductions in the area; antisocial behaviour had reduced by 16 percent with 590 fewer reports. Youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 30 percent. Criminal damage had also reduced by 5 percent.

There had been a focus on violence in the city centre and a lot of work had been done around intervening and stopping fights before injuries occurred. This had resulted in a decrease in the amount of violence where injury was caused but had resulted in an increase in recorded violence where there was no injury.

There had been a 29 percent increase in drugs offences however this was due to increased partnerships with pubs and clubs to ensure that people were searched for drugs when entering the premises. There had also been an increased number of stop and searches while tackling burglaries and drugs had been found on a number of these people.

Total crime had increased by 13 percent however the year before there had been a reduction of 22 percent and the long term trend was for a reduction in crime.

The protest at the site of the mosque in Millfield had been a success from a policing viewpoint; there had only been 6 arrests made. Five of these had been preventative arrests before offences were committed and the sixth took place after the protest and was for criminal damage.

Inspector Jamie Southwell then presented the figures for the East Area. He advised that there had been an increase of 5 percent over last year however with the 24 percent reduction the year before the average over the 2 years was a 19 percent reduction.

Burglary of dwellings was an issue at the moment; over the last week there had been a spate of burglaries in the area. Arrests had been made and an offender had been imprisoned. There had been 2 more offences than last year which was an increase of 3 percent. Burglary of dwellings was always a priority for the police due to the impact of the offence on the victim.

Theft from motor vehicles was also a concern. There had been 31 offences more than last year and a number of these had been opportunist thefts when people had left vehicles unlocked. There had also been delivery drivers targeted in Hendon and Grangetown and work was being done to educate drivers on the risks of leaving valuables on show and leaving their vehicles unsecured.

There had been an increase in shoplifting with 19 more offences recorded; this was partially down to offenders travelling into the area from other areas and also due to people who were banned from the city centre targeting out of town shopping areas. Operation Soundwave was ongoing and was focussed on tackling shoplifting.

Burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 10 percent.

Youth antisocial behaviour had reduced by 134 incidents which was a reduction of 11 percent. The community support officers had been involved with tackling youth antisocial behaviour and there had been a lot of hard work done.

Thefts of pedal cycles had reduced by 11 crimes.

There was an ongoing campaign to tackle bogus callers and an event was to be held at the Winter Gardens to speak to people about the issue.

Councillor Mordey stated that it had been anticipated that people were going to meet at the Ivy Leaf pub prior to the demonstration at the mosque. He asked whether there had been any issues. Inspector Hall advised that they had not been at the Ivy Leaf that weekend although they had been there

previously and while there had been some minor issues there had been nothing serious.

Councillor Mordey then stated that fear of crime remained high and asked what could be done to address this. Inspector Southwell stated that there was a need to publicise the successes the police have. Inspector Hall added that there was a need to know what fears residents had.

Councillor Mordey then referred to the community police stations and was informed by Inspector Hall that Gill Bridge and Farringdon police stations would be closed and once they were closed the community policing teams would need to find a new community base; there was currently a scoping exercise being undertaken to identify buildings that could be used. There would be the same services as there currently are and there would be the benefits of the community police teams being based within the community.

Councillor E. Gibson referred to the welfare reforms and stated that it seemed that this had caused an increase in crime; there were people who were going for weeks without getting paid their benefits. Inspector Hall advised that there were an increasing number of first time offenders being arrested. The punishments for these people were not as severe as the punishments for repeat offenders.

Councillor Emerson expressed concerns that there was a lack of promotion of the PACT meetings; often the only way to find out about the meetings was to have attended the meeting before. Inspector Southwell agreed to ensure that the meetings were advertised on the website.

Councillor Price expressed his thanks to the police for their work in ensuring that there were no problems during the demonstrations at the site of the new mosque in Millfield.

Councillor T. Martin queried where the boundary between the neighbourhood policing areas was. It was agreed that a map would be provided to Councillor Martin showing this information.

4. RESOLVED that the update from Northumbria Police be noted.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update

Joe Cummings presented the report and advised that 4 of the 5 most problematic wards for anti social behaviour fires in the service area were in Sunderland. Hendon was top of the list again with 11 more incidents than last year. The long streets area was a major hotspot with an increase in the number of wheelie bin fires. There was a need to ensure that people put their bins out at the right time and brought them back in as soon as possible after they were emptied.

Accidental dwelling fires in the area had reduced.

Councillor Mordey referred to the issues of bins being left out in the long streets area and the dumping of waste; he was concerned that some residents were placing their bins out on the wrong day following the changes to the collection days.

The Chairman commented that the announcement that had been placed in a previous issue of the Community News had reduced the amount of problems in the area.

Councillor T. Martin stated that he felt there was a need for notices to be provided regarding the new bin collection days. He also praised the work done by the Phoenix Project with young people.

Councillor E. Gibson commented that the Princes Trust had done a lot of good work with young people in Doxford ward; the project was based at Farringdon fire station.

Councillor Scanlan stated that everyone was concerned about the potential loss of the central fire station; the announcement that the fire station would not be closing immediately was very welcome.

5. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service be noted.

Maximising the Use Made of Green and Other Space in Area to Improve Health and Happiness

The Director of Public Health submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with background information to assist Members with considering the future use of the £20,000 allocated to the area by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), formerly the Sunderland TPCT, to support improvement to physical and mental wellness through facilitating local people's access to local greenspace.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Crawford presented the report and stated that a lot of the greenspace in Sunderland was underused. It was recommended that the funding provided by the CCG be used to improve access to, and use of, greenspace in the area. She recommended that the allocation of the funding to projects be delegated to the area boards.

Councillor T. Martin commented that there had been a shelter in Backhouse Park which had provided a meeting point for people; the installation of shelters for teenagers would provide somewhere for them to go. He also referred to Mental Health problems especially the increasing number of

people who suffered from problems and the major concern that these people were often isolated.

Councillor Price queried how the funding could be used and whether it would be restricted only to community organisations. He also stated that it was often difficult to find the right people to help residents with mental health issues. Ms Crawford stated that it was up to the area committee to decide how the funding could be used. She also advised that the GP should be the first contact for people with mental health issues.

Ms Clark advised that the VCS network had discussed this at a series of workshops and had put forward their suggestions.

6. RESOLVED that consideration be given to how the committee could enhance and facilitate local people engaging in the five ways to wellbeing looking specifically at action around greenspace accessibility, availability and utilisation and using the £20,000 budget to achieve this.

Area Committee Annual Report 2013/14

The Chair of the East Area Committee submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested Members to approve the Area Committee's Annual Report for 2013/14 which would then be submitted to full Council.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair introduced the report and advised of the work that had been undertaken over the last year.

7. RESOLVED that approval be given to the inclusion of the annual report in the combined Area Committee Annual Report 2013/14.

Place Board Progress Report

The Chair of the Place Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the progress against the board's work plan for 2013/14.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair of the Place Board introduced the report and drew Members attention to Annex 2 which contained the list of proposals for Highways Maintenance which had been recommended by the board which Members were asked to approve.

8. RESOLVED that:-
 - a. The report and the work plan update included at annex 1 be noted

- b. The board's recommendations for the Highway Maintenance Capital Programme 2014/15 as set out in annex 2 be approved.

People Board Progress Report

The Chair of the People Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the progress made against the People Board's work plan for 2013/14.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chair of the Place Board introduced the report and advised the Committee of the work that had been done since the last update. He advised that Ofsted had inspected the Children's Centres and had rated them as inadequate; their main concerns were that there was a lack of information collected by the centres and there was also a lack of people who were able to log the collected information.

Councillor Mordey stated that he attended the Cabinet Briefings and Councillor P. Smith, the portfolio holder for Children's Services, was looking at how to address the information recording problems at the children's centres. He also stated that people associated the Hudson Road centre with Hudson Road Primary School and assumed that the school was involved with the centre although they were actually separate entities.

9. RESOLVED that the report and work plan be noted.

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB), Community Chest Financial Statement and Proposals for Further Allocation of Resources

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the financial statement which detailed the current position on progress in relation to allocations of SIB and Community Chest funding and which sought Members approval of proposals for funding.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Trueman advised that the SIB allocation for the 2014/15 financial year had been approved and the Committee had £307,282 of SIB funding available to it for the coming year.

There were two projects which Members were asked to consider which had been resubmitted following the January 2014 meeting which totalled £100,000 and which would be funded from the 2013/14 allocation should Members approve the projects. These projects were detailed in Annex 1 to the report.

There was also a proposal to approve £17,334 of SIB funding from the 2014/15 budget to develop vehicle passing points in Sunderland Cemetery;

this had been requested by the Place Board. Should the application be approved there would be £289,948 of SIB remaining for 2014/15.

Councillor Mordey commented that the passing points were needed to help reduce the amount of vehicles which were being driven across graves.

Ms Trueman then informed the Committee of the Community Chest allocation for the 2014/15 year which totalled £68,328.41 for the area. The 15 projects which had been approved between January and March 2014 were detailed in annex 2 of the report and Members were asked to note the approvals and also the returned funding from the 2013/14 budget.

10. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The financial statements set out in sections 2.1 and 3.1 of the report be noted
- b. The three requests for SIB funding totalling £117,334 as set out in section 2 and Annex 1 of the report be approved
- c. The 15 Community Chest approvals and the returned funding from 2013/14 as detailed in Annex 2 to the report be noted.

Planning Applications – For Information Only

Current Planning Applications relating to the East Sunderland Area for the period 1st March to 24th March 2014 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor McClennan requested that future reports include information relating to controversial pre applications.

11. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(Signed) E. BALL,
Chairman.