

**At a meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held remotely on
WEDNESDAY 15th JULY, 2020 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present:-

Councillor Blackburn in the Chair

Councillors Cunningham, Heron, Johnston, Lawson. N. MacKnight, Rowntree, Speding, Thornton, Turner and G. Walker

Also Present:-

Jill Colbert	Chief Executive of Together for Children and Director of Children's Services	Sunderland City Council
Wendy Cook	Area Network Representative	Sunderland North Community Business Centre
Pauline Hopper	Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield	Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	Neighbourhood Investment Plan Project Manager	Sunderland City Council
Kay Rowham	Councillor	Hetton Town Council
Christine Tilley	Community Governance Services Team Leader	Sunderland City Council

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting introducing himself, the Vice Chairman and Officers supporting the meeting.

The Chairman outlined how the meeting would be held remotely and streamed for the public to view.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Kevin Burns, Station Manager Tyne and Wear Fire Service, Paul Finch, Ellen Bewick and Christine Willis, Area Network Representatives, Debbie Hall, Environmental Services Manager, Sunderland City

Council, Inspector Nick Gjorven, Northumbria Police, Michael Donachie, Head of Operations, Gentoo Group and Allison Patterson, Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council.

Declarations of Interest

Item 4 – Area Budgets Report

Councillor Heron made an open declaration as a Board Member of the Kepier Trust, detailed in Annex 1 of the report. She left the meeting prior to any discussion on the project from the organisation and took no part in any decision on funding.

Councillor Cunningham made an open declaration as a Board Member of Houghton Racecourse Association in relation to the project Copt Hill Holidays 2020, detailed in Annex 2 of the report. He left the meeting prior to any discussion on the project and took no part in any decision on funding.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 24th June, 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Area Committee Annual Update; Coalfield Area Neighbourhood Investment Plan Delivery Plan 2020-2023 and Neighbourhoods and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2020-21

Councillor Heron, Chair of Coalfield Area Neighbourhood and Community Board, presented the report (copy circulated) which:-

- i) provided the annual update in respect of the 2019/20 Work Plan, including the Neighbourhood funded projects;
- ii) presented the Coalfield Neighbourhood Investment Plan Delivery Plan 2020-2023 and;
- iii) provided an update on the Neighbourhood and Community Board Governance Arrangements for 2020/2021.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Heron highlighted that the work plan had been populated with the priorities identified in consultation with residents via Let's Talk Sunderland and that the document was a living document which meant that new priorities could be added.

Councillor Heron drew attention to the flowers installed in Hetton Centre which were very attractive and to the work undertaken at the King George V Play Park which

included inclusive play equipment which would also be installed at the Flatts and Newbottle play parks.

Ms Pauline Hopper, Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield highlighted that any outstanding actions from the previous year would be carried over to the current year.

Ms Hopper referred the Committee to the new delivery plan and the specific actions which the Board would be looking at and advised that these would grow and develop as part of this process. Ms Hopper pointed out that at the next meeting of the Board the Members would prioritise what issues they wished to consider first. She pointed out that the Board was really a Task and Finish Working Group and Officers and Partners would be invited to attend as and when requested by the Board, which was made up of Councillors from the four wards of the Coalfield Area, however any decisions on funding and actions would be brought back to the Area Committee for approval.

Ms Jill Colbert, Chief Executive of Together for Children and Director of Children's Services referred to the Call for Projects for Holiday Activities. She highlighted the need to communicate back what provision was going to be made in order to have a joined-up approach to provision for children and young people in the Council and therefore to ensure that there was no duplication and that best use was made of the Council's financial resources.

Ms Hopper advised that the project was an ongoing project from the previous year and that full details of the Call for Projects and projects recommended for approval by the Committee was detailed under item 4 of the agenda for consideration.

Councillor Lawson referred to paragraph 5.7 of the report concerning Elected Member representation on other local groups and boards, advising that in the past the Chair of the People Board usually attended the Corporate Parenting Board on behalf of the Coalfield Area. This was not included in the report and she enquired who would be attending the meeting on behalf of the Area Committee.

Councillor Heron advised that she had attended a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board that day and had been appointed to serve on the Board.

Ms Colbert advised that work was being undertaken with the Lead Member and the Assistant Director of Law and Governance to review the terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Board. The Corporate Parenting Board was not a statutory committee of the Council and she was of the view that it should operate in terms of having a broad representation of Members but should be principally focussed on bringing partners around the table to deliver improvements in outcomes for Looked After Children. Ms Colbert commented that at the moment she felt that the balance was not quite right, therefore she had asked for some work to be done in advance of the Ofsted full inspection, so that there was blend of membership of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Ms Colbert went on to say that in a typical Local Authority there would be 2 or 3 Members at the meeting. She understood the Committee wished to understand what they were delivering as outcomes for vulnerable children, however this had to be balanced against what benefit it was serving. More importantly, Children and Young People attended the meetings and she felt that that they should not be public meetings

and the privacy and the confidentiality of those children's contributions should be heard in a closed meeting. A further report on the work they were seeking to do might come back to the Committee.

In response, Councillor Speding stated that his understanding was that every Member of the Council was a corporate parent and therefore that any Member was entitled to attend the Corporate Parenting Board meetings.

Ms Colbert commented that she understood the point Councillor Speding was making about wanting to express his commitment as a corporate parent but did not agree that the Corporate Parenting Board was an open meeting for any Member to attend. Children and Young People came to the Board and sometimes shared their most difficult experiences of life and this was not easily done and was not done for the purposes of securing scrutiny of children's services or scrutiny of the Council. The Corporate Parenting function was to secure improvement for Children and Young People who were cared for by the Council. The purpose of having a range of partners on the Board was to ensure that they were able to secure the right support, for example getting access to good quality housing provision and about mental health assessments. There had been a huge amount of work done on this issue nationally and she had asked the Council to benchmark and consider how it was managing that function against other Local Authorities. When the Council had its next full Ofsted inspection they would seek to judge how effectively the Corporate Parenting function was delivering the sort of outcomes which she had described. Ms Colbert stated that she was happy to discuss the issue further offline.

Councillor Speding stated that he did not disagree with anything Ms Colbert had said, however it was a Member's corporate responsibility and those Members that had an interest in corporate parenting should be encouraged to do that, however he did accept the points Ms Colbert was making.

Mrs Christine Tilley, Community Governance Services Team Leader confirmed that Councillor Heron had been appointed as the representative of the Coalfield Area on the Corporate Parenting Board at the last meeting of the full Council in June.

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

2. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the Annual Performance Update with regard to the Coalfield Area Committee's Work Plan for 2019/20, attached at Annex 1, be noted;
- ii) approval be given to the Coalfield Neighbourhood Delivery Plan 2020-23 as detailed at Annex 2 and that Members work together as a Committee alongside partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver the priorities within the Plan over the next three years; and
- iii) the Area Governance arrangements for 2020/21 as outlined in Section 5 and Annex 3 of the report, be noted.

Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network Update

Ms Wendy Cook the Coalfield Area VCS Representative and Co-Chair of the VCS Network thanked Councillor Lawson on behalf of the VCS representatives for all her support over the years and to the VCS Network. Ms Cook welcomed the new Chairman of the Coalfield Area Committee, Councillor Blackburn and Vice Chairman, Councillor Heron stating that the representatives were looking forward to working with them.

Ms Cook then proceeded to provide the Committee with a verbal update advising that there had been no meetings of the VCS Network since February. However, over the last three months the VCS had continued to be very active playing a large role in supporting the local community, especially ELCAP which had done a fantastic job. The volunteers had been amazing and had been recruited both locally and through the Local Authority. The food banks through Space4, SHaRP, the Bethany Centre and St John's had fed numerous families and supported the local community. With regards to the Holiday Hunger Project the foodbanks were going to be available to support families through that time as well. They had also been grateful for the opportunity to tender for funding as a lot of the organisations would have gone under and ceased operating if the Council hadn't stepped in and made grants available.

Ms Cook stated that on behalf of the Network that she would like to thank the Councillors for all of their support delivering food parcels, activity packs etc. and they were also grateful for the opportunity to feed into the Let's Talk event and the new Area Plan which she thought had some fantastic new priorities.

Ms Cook stated that they would continue to consult regularly through the VCS Network to support the Local Area Committee.

Councillor MacKnight thanked Ms Cook for the work done through the Voluntary sector since March which had been a huge task for everyone. He paid tribute to some of the local charities both he and Councillor Heron had had contact with, particularly Space4 and ELCAP, SHaRP and Loaves and Fishes. They had referred lots of people, some of whom had been in dire straits onto the foodbanks and they had received a prompt response. He thanked everyone who had contributed within the voluntary sector which had been greatly appreciated.

Councillor Heron thanked the drivers of the minibuses for the work they had done in delivering parcels and asked Ms Cook to pass this on to them.

Councillor Lawson thanked Ms Cook for her kind words. Councillor Lawson stated that she had been a great advocate of the Voluntary Sector in the Coalfield Area and over the last few weeks and months, especially, they had seen how the VCS Network in Coalfields had come into its own. Councillor Lawson thanked them for the work which had been done for the local community and vulnerable people and endorsed the comments of Councillor MacKnight.

Ms Cook added that they were hoping to re-establish the VCS Network meetings virtually from September and they would keep the Area Committee updated on this.

The Chairman having thanked Ms Cook for her report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.

Partner Agency Reports – Coalfield Crime and Disorder Report

Inspector Nick Gjorven, Northumbria Police submitted a report (copy circulated) providing data in respect of crime and disorder in the Coalfields comparing year to date figures with the preceding year for the period 1st April to 5th July 2020.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman having asked Members to forward any questions or observations on the report to Ms Hopper for onward submission to Inspector Gjorven, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Partner Agency Reports – Tyne and Wear Fire Service Update

Station Manager Kevin Burns, 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, 2020 to 30th June, 2020 compared with the same period in 2019.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman having asked Members to email any queries on the report to Ms Hopper for onward submission to Station Manager Burns, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Partner Agency Reports – Gentoo Update Report

Mr Michael Donachie, Head of Operations, Gentoo provided an update from Gentoo for the Coalfields Area Committee from March to July 2020 to enable members to be up-to-date on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman having asked Members to email any queries and observations on the report to Ms Hopper for onward submission to Mr Donachie, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the report 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 update position on progress in

relation to allocating Neighbourhood Fund 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 financial position as set out in paragraph 2.1. Ms Hopper advised that the Community Chest allocation in the Area Budget was a total of £40,000, £10,000 per ward and not £50,000 as set out in the report.

Ms Hopper advised that any projects put forward by the Neighbourhood and Community Board would come to the Area Committee for approval. At the June Board meeting Members agreed to allocate £10,000 towards Christmas Lights across the area. Consultation on this was underway and Members needed to agree the locations before it went ahead.

Ms Hopper drew the Committee's attention to one funding proposal to consider from the Neighbourhood Fund from the Kepier Trust for £10,000, as outlined in Annex 1 of the report. This was for reburbishment and updating on the Kepier Hall.

Ms Hopper highlighted at paragraph 4.3 that there were 8 projects recommended for approval from the previously approved 2019/20 Youth Activity budget totalling £22,274. A summary of each of the projects was provided at Annex 2 in the agenda papers.

Ms Hopper referred Members to Annex 3 and Annex 4 detailing the Community Chest funding awards made up to March 2020 and between April and June 2020 respectively. These were submitted for information as they had been approved by each of the wards by the Members concerned collectively.

The Chairman thanked Ms Hopper for her report and it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the financial statements set out in table one and two, after taking on board the correction to the Community Chest fund as being £40,000 as detailed above, be noted;
- b) Approval be given to a £10,000 contribution towards festive lighting from the Neighbourhood Investment Capital Programme;
- c) Approval be given to the £10,000 application to the Neighbourhood Fund from the Kepier Trust;
- d) the 8 projects, totalling £22,274 for holiday activities from the previously allocated 2019/20 youth budget, as set out in Annex 2, be approved; and
- e) the approved Community Chest grants between March 2019 and June 2020, as set out in Annex 3 and Annex 4, be noted.

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

(Signed) J. BLACKBURN,
Chairman.