

**At a meeting of the EAST SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER on MONDAY, 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2021 at 5.30p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor E. Gibson in the Chair

Councillors Bewick, M. Dixon, Fagan, PWL Gibson, Hodson, McClennan, Morrissey, Potts, Reed, A. Wood and P. Wood

**Also Present:-**

Trish Cornish	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Victoria Gamblin	-	Gentoo
Matthew Jackson	-	Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Shaun Makin	-	TWFRS
Allison Patterson	-	Area Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council
Helen Peverley	-	Sunderland City Council
K. Ramanathan	-	East Area VCS Network Representative
Jon Ritchie	-	Executive Director of Corporate Services, Sunderland City Council
Jamie Southwell	-	Neighbourhood Inspector, Northumbria Police
Claire Tulley	-	Nexus

**Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received on behalf of Councillors Ali and Scanlan together with Jo Bell, Joanne Cooper, Julie Maven and Nicol McConnell.

**Declarations of Interest**

Item 4 – Area Budget Report

Councillor M. Dixon declared that he was a member of St Michael's Community Centre and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the funding request.

Councillor McClennan declared that she was a member of the committee of Young Asian Voices.

### **Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2021**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **VCS Area Network Progress Report**

Trish Cornish provided the Committee with an update on the work of the VCS Area Network since the last meeting of the Committee. She advised that the network had held two meetings where a number of presentations had been received including from Back on the Map in respect of the Go Get Online project; from Nicol McConnell in respect of the Community Wealth Strategy; from Love Amelia relating to the Baby Bank; from the Sunshine Co-operative; and from Groundworks.

The meeting in September had been the first face to face meeting held since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and this had been held at Ryhope Community Association and had been better attended than the virtual meetings had been. Special thanks went to Paula Hunt for her hard work in setting up this face to face meeting.

The next meeting would be held on 7<sup>th</sup> October at Bethany City Church and everyone was invited to attend.

The Chair thanked the VCS organisations and their volunteers for all of their hard work.

2. RESOLVED that the update from the VCS Network be noted.

### **Northumbria Police Update**

A report was submitted in respect of the West Area which covered Doxford Ward.

Neighbourhood Inspector Jamie Southwell provided the Committee with an update on the crime statistics for the East area and of the work done by Northumbria Police. In the A1 area which covered the City Centre, Millfield and Ashbrooke there had been an increase in total crime of 10 percent; assaults had increased which was due to the reopening of the night time economy and the high footfall in the city centre that had resulted; there was an operation running on Friday and Saturday nights to tackle this issue. Vehicle crime had reduced by 39 percent. Burglaries of dwellings had reduced by 8 percent while burglaries of properties other than dwellings had reduced by 14 percent. Antisocial behaviour had reduced by 58 percent while youth

antisocial behaviour had increased by 31 percent which was 15 additional incidents.

In the A2 area which covered Hendon, Grangetown and Ryhope there had been a reduction in total crime of 20 percent. Vehicle crime had reduced by 54 percent. Burglaries of dwellings had reduced by 54 percent while burglaries of properties other than dwellings had increased by 11 percent which was 2 additional offences; there had been 15 in total. Antisocial behaviour had reduced by 57 percent; youth antisocial behaviour had remained the same while adult antisocial behaviour had reduced by 66 percent.

There was an operation ongoing with colleagues from the North Sunderland Neighbourhood Police Team and from British Transport Police to tackle youth antisocial behaviour and violence in the city centre; the ringleader of the group had been identified using CCTV and had been arrested; there was information that some of the culprits were travelling into the city centre from the North Sunderland area. Work was also being done with Together For Children on this matter.

There had been two cannabis farms found in Hendon, one had been discovered following intelligence received from the community while the other had been found by officers who had identified people acting suspiciously.

The students had now arrived at the university and an operation was now running which would continue for the next few weeks in order to safeguard the students and to prevent them from becoming victims of burglaries.

The Hendon team were currently running an operation in conjunction with Young Asian Voices to tackle youth antisocial behaviour issues which had been successful.

Work was taking place to address the adult antisocial behaviour issues in Sunnyside and over 1300 hours of resources had been put into the area. 30 community protection orders had been issued and there had been arrests made for burglary and robbery which had seen the offenders imprisoned. The ringleader of the antisocial behaviour had also been arrested and since his imprisonment the number of issues had reduced.

Councillor McClennan thanked the police for taking Members concerns seriously, when emails were sent there was always a quick response; it was good to see that the issues around antisocial behaviour in Sunnyside were being addressed as these had been the cause of complaints from residents.

Councillor Bewick referred to issues around antisocial use of off road bikes in the Ryhope Bank area which was causing a nuisance at a shop; to queried whether the police had been made aware of this issue. Inspector Southwell advised that he would speak to the police team responsible for this issue to get an update.

In response to a query from Councillor M. Dixon, Inspector Southwell advised that a lot of the antisocial behaviour issues in Sunnyside were caused by associates of ex tenants of the HMOs in the area; the HMO operators did work with the police to ensure that tenants were managed and vetted.

Councillor Hodson advised that there were a lot of complaints about people loitering around the train station who were drinking and harassing people. Inspector Southwell advised that displacement of the issue was an inevitable effect of the work being done in Sunnyside; the HMOs did not allow tenants to drink on the premises which resulted in the residents drinking elsewhere and this was a constant issue for the police and their partner organisations. When there was antisocial behaviour, disorder or other offences then the police would deal with this however when people were simply sat drinking there was not a lot that could be done. All city centres had the same problems.

Councillor Hodson then referred to the ongoing issues around speeding traffic and asked whether a representative from roads policing could attend the meeting; it would be helpful to hear from them and would also help to strengthen relationships between them and the Council. Inspector Southwell agreed to speak to colleagues in roads policing and also advised of the email mailbox being operated by them for public to report issues; he would provide the details of this mailbox outside of the meeting.

Councillor M. Dixon commented that there had been a lot of residents complaints about speeding traffic on Essen Way and since the speed camera van had been operating on this road there had been a notable difference in speeds.

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

### **Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Update**

Shaun Makin was in attendance to provide the update from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. The figures related to quarter 2 which was the period July to September. In terms of deliberate fires there had been 66 in 2021 compared with 92 in 2020; the ward breakdown was:-

Doxford – 2 in 2021, 6 in 2020

Hendon – 31 in 2021, 42 in 2020

Millfield – 28 in 2021, 28 in 2020

Ryhope – 3 in 2021, 9 in 2020

St. Michael's – 2 in 2021, 7 in 2020

Vehicle fires had reduced from 7 last year to 3 this year.

Councillor Fagan referred to the issues around fires at Blakeney Woods; Mr Makin advised that a visit had been undertaken by the fire service; the fires were deep in the woods so were not seen by passers by which resulted in them not being reported.

4. RESOLVED that the update from Tyne and Wear fire and Rescue Service be noted.

### **Gentoo Update**

Vicky Gamblin was in attendance to speak to the written update report from Gentoo.

Councillor P.W.L. Gibson stated that there had been a lot of good work and queried which media outlets would be used for the campaign to support tenants on universal credit and also queried how many properties had been offered to refugees under the Afghan resettlement scheme. Ms Gamblin advised that all tenants who were in receipt of universal credit had been emailed and offered a referral to the Money Matters team; there were 8400 tenants in receipt of universal credit and the response had been astounding; there had also been promotion through Facebook and twitter. There had been 18 properties offered to the Afghan resettlement scheme across the city and 11 of these had been accepted; there was a need to consider access to services such as schools when offering these properties. It was not known how many people were covered by this allocation of properties as the Council were responsible for managing the resettlement scheme in the city.

Councillor Fagan queried how Covid had impact on Gentoo; there had been issues with contacting departments due to the staff having to isolate and there had been issues such as broken windows not being fixed. Ms Gamblin advised that there was a national shortage of glass which was impacting on the ability to repair broken windows. The grounds maintenance team had been affected by Covid as due to being a team of 6 working in close proximity if one received a positive test then the whole team needed to isolate. The allocations team had also been impacted as there were two staff working from the same office; additional resources had been put in place.

Councillor Bewick questioned maintenance of trees; there were overhanging trees at Trotter Terrace which needed to be cut back. Ms Gamblin advised that there was a maintenance plan which she would share with Members; when one off pruning requests were submitted these were put onto a 365 day response ticket; there were issues with needing to get cherry pickers and other specialised equipment to allow tree maintenance to take place.

In response to a query from Councillor Reed Ms Gamblin advised that there had been a freeze on tenants moving from one gentoo property to another over the last 6 months. All properties were allocated using the same allocations system.

Councillor McClennan queried what the Poverty Action Group would do and also expressed concerns over the Tenants Voice Team as this was digitally based and some residents were digitally excluded. Ms Gamblin advised that the Poverty Action Group was set up regionally pre-Covid and carried out activities such as helping with school uniforms or providing Christmas lunches

and providing youth provision during holiday periods; work was done with partners to identify what would make most difference within the community. The Tenants Voice Team was made up of mostly over 60s and other forms of contact were used to ensure that no one was excluded due to not being digitally included.

Councillor M. Dixon advised that it would be helpful for Members to know Gentoo's maintenance schedules for litter picking in communal gardens; the East Rangers did litter picks in the area and it would enable these to be done more effectively if they were worked into the routine followed by Gentoo.

5. RESOLVED that the update from Gentoo be noted.

### **Nexus Update**

Claire Tulley presented the update from Nexus. She advised that funding had been secured for an additional 4 new Metro trains on top of the initial 42 that had been ordered. The first trains would be arriving in 2022 and following testing would come into service in 2023. There had been £95m of funding secured to upgrade single tracks in South Tyneside to double track which would improve service reliability across the network. A new depot was also being built for the system.

Go Northeast had announced that due to driver shortages they were being forced to cancel services and these were being announced on their website. This was a short term problem. It was impacting Nexus who were unable to update the information screens to reflect these service cancellations.

Councillor P. Wood referred to the Metro cancellations due to driver shortages and asked whether these would continue. Ms Tulley advised that Covid had impacted on driver availability in addition to there being a national shortage of drivers.

Councillor Bewick asked for a list of the cancelled bus services and asked how the services to cancel were chosen; some of the least profitable routes were in fact the most important as they provided a lifeline for older residents who did not have any other way to travel. Ms Tulley advised that the decision for which services to cancel rested with Go Northeast and she would speak to them to get more information.

6. RESOLVED that the update from Nexus be noted.

### **East Area Committee Delivery Plan 2020/2023**

The Chair of the East Sunderland Area Neighbourhood and Community Board submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an update on the East Area Committee Delivery Plan for 2020/2023.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor M. Dixon introduced the report and advised of the work that had been undertaken against the delivery plan since the last meeting of the Area Committee which was set out in the report.

Councillor McClennan suggested that, in light of the recent announcement that gas prices were increasing, the fuel poverty priority needed to be prioritised over other area priorities. Ms Patterson advised that this could be discussed at the Area Board.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- a. Consideration be given to the progress and performance updates with regard to the East Sunderland Area Neighbourhood and Community Board Delivery Plan 2020-23 and the proposals outlined for future delivery in Annex 1 be agreed
- b. It be noted that future funding proposals were being produced and would be presented to future Board meetings on:-
  - i. Delivering five Private Landlord Roadshows across the East Area
  - ii. How best Area funding could be used to bolster the Environmental Enforcement Team
  - iii. Capital works which could enhance Hendon beach, taking into account the need to protect the wildlife, fauna and flora
- c. The support of the Neighbourhood and Community Board to approve the following be noted:-
  - i. £75,000 towards the Walk and Talk programme
  - ii. £50,000 towards St Michael's Community Centre
  - iii. £25,000 towards Maximising Community Assets
  - iv. £30,000 towards Stephenson Trail Educational and Arts programme and a further £20,000 towards the Task Group
  - v. Change the lead agent on the ICT Troubleshooting Helpline Project
- d. It be agreed to establish an In Bloom Task Group to oversee the Adopt a Planter, In Bloom Competition and Plant A Tree scheme, with nominees being:-
  - i. Cllr E Gibson representing Doxford Ward
  - ii. Cllr Scanlan representing Hendon Ward
  - iii. Cllr Hodson representing Millfield Ward
  - iv. Cllr Ali representing Ryhope Ward
  - v. Cllr Reed representing St Michael's Ward

- vi. Other members would include Council officers and partners.
- e. The Area Committee video update which summarised the Fancy a Day Out programme, delivered during the summer school holiday, be noted.

## **East Area Budget Report**

The Assistant Director of Community Resilience submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided financial statements in respect of the Area Committee's delegated budgets and presented proposals for funding requests.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Patterson presented the report and drew Members attention to the financial statements set out in the report and the applications for funding totalling £200,000 from the Neighbourhood Fund as set out in Annex 1; the request from the Board to use the underspend from the Volunteers Awards project of £5,682 to be used to enable the In Bloom Task Group to develop and implement the first East In Bloom Competition for 2022; There had been community chest grants approved and these were set out in annex 2.

### **8. RESOLVED that:-**

- a. The financial statements set out in tables 1, 2 and 3 be noted
- b. Approval be given to request for funding from the Neighbourhood Fund, as set out in section 2.3 and annex 1, of:-
  - i. £75,000 to SCC, Area Team for Walk and Talk Programme
  - ii. £50,000 to Blue Watch Youth Centre for St Michael's Community Centre
  - iii. £50,000 to Stephenson Trail Task Group
  - iv. £25,000 to Maximising Community Assets Programme
  - v. Change in Lead Agent for the ICT Tech Helpline
  - vi. Use the underspend from the Volunteers Awards Project of £5,682 to be used to enable the In Bloom Task Group to develop and implement the first East In Bloom Competition for 2022
- c. The 5 approved Community Chest grants from the 2021/22 budget, as set out in Annex 2 be noted.

## **Planning Applications – For Information Only**

Current Planning Applications relating to the East Sunderland Area for the period 1<sup>st</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2021 were submitted for Members information only (copy circulated).



(For copy report – see original minutes)

9. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(Signed) E. GIBSON,  
Chairman.