

**At a meeting of the WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE held at the MILLENNIUM CENTRE, WASHINGTON on THURSDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2010 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Kelly in the Chair

Councillors Chamberlin, Fletcher, Padgett, I. Richardson, Scaplehorn, Snowdon, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, Wake, Walker and Williams.

Mike Poulter	-	City Services
John Rostron	-	City Services
Carol Lewis	-	City Services
Rachel Cowley	-	City Services
Sarah Grey	-	City Services
Karon Purvis	-	Chief Executive's
Leanne Davis	-	Chief Executive's
Dave Leonard	-	Chief Executive's
Janet Snaith	-	Chief Executive's
Linder Pott	-	Chief Executive's
Sue Morgan	-	Children's Services
Meg Boustead	-	Children's Services
Sgt Ron Hyde	-	Northumbria Police
PC David Scott	-	Northumbria Police
PC John Robinson	-	Northumbria Police
Neil Revely	-	Health, Housing and Adult Services
Marion Marshall	-	Office of the Chief Executive
Paul Wood	-	Office of the Chief Executive
Nonnie Crawford	-	Sunderland TPCT
John Chapman	-	Gentoo
Sarann Valentine	-	Sunderland Carers Centre
Phil McAloon	-	Oxclose & District YPP
Jacqui Reeves	-	Washington Mind

Members of the Washington Community.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cuthbert, Miller and Timmins.

## **Declarations of Interest**

### **Item 3 – Community Action: Reviewing Progress and Agreeing Next Steps**

Councillor Fletcher declared a personal and prejudicial interest 1 on the SIB application for the Catch 22 Project as a board member and 2 on the SIP application for the Usworth Colliery Primary School as Vice Chair of Governors and left the room during consideration of these items

Councillor Williams declared a personal interest on the SIB application for the Catch 22 Project as Chair of the Oxclose and District Young People's Project.

## **Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2010**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2010 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **Community Action: Identifying New Issues and Agreeing Actions**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to ensure that the Area Committee be kept up to date with current events and developments affecting their neighbourhoods via an intelligence hub which had been established to act as a repository for information available and to identify new issues.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

In relation to the issue of planning and open space, sport and recreation, Councillor Wake enquired if low condition land could be earmarked for allotment usage.

Karon Purvis, Area Officer, advised that there was already a review of allotments underway and this could be included as part of the evidence gathering.

In relation to the issues of co-ordination and support available to volunteers in Washington, Councillor Wake enquired as to the Council's responsibility in funding training for the voluntary sector.

The Chairman advised that a great number of organisations did not have the capacity to provide training and CRB checks etc.

John Rostron, Area Community Manager commented that a number of organisations were struggling, with no funding to support and coordinate training. Mr Rostron also advised that due to funding issues they no longer had the capacity for voluntary sector coordinators.

Councillor Williams commented that the volunteering and co-ordination was vital and that it was about getting the right people to help train volunteers so they were not overloaded with information.

The Chairman commented that the number of people who volunteer was high, but there was also a high number of people who leave due to being overwhelmed.

On a separate issue, the Chairman requested officers notify the relevant Ward Members of any petitions received to enable them to feed into any investigations at an early stage.

2. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) note the 'next steps' as included in Annex 1, i.e. referring key decisions made at Cabinet to the relevant Task and Finish Groups for consideration;
- (ii) consider leading a two stage approach to refresh the Local Development Framework (LDF) Green Space Topic Paper Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation;
- (iii) recommend Area Committee be consulted with regard to the Sunderland Partnership Volunteering Strategy.

### **Community Action in Washington – Progress Review**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with details of issues previously identified through 2009/10 and provided an update with regards to progress or completion. The report also identified any unresolved issues and actions where Area Committee could consider a SIB or SIP application for funding to address their work plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Nonnie Crawford, Director of Public Health, Sunderland PCT, gave a progress report in relation to the Healthy theme and informed the Committee of the two identified proposals to support the reduction of health inequalities in Washington by tackling social determinants of health. The proposals were for Washington Health Champions and Tackling Health with SAFC.

Ms. Crawford advised that work was underway with Adult Services in using a range of partners to deliver services on Health Improvement and that she would like to see a greater roll out of the money management programmes.

Ms. Crawford also advised that SAFC were taking their programmes and enhancing them specifically to the Washington area.

Councillors Chamberlin and Snowdon raised concerns that the Oxclose, Glebe and Biddick areas had not been included in the proposed programmes.

Ms. Crawford advised that the worst areas for health inequalities had been picked to form the proposed programme and whilst extra areas could be included, extra resources would be needed.

Councillor Chamberlin commented that Oxclose was one of the worst areas for health inequalities.

The Chairman commented that further investigations would be made into including Members' suggested areas and the financing involved.

In relation to Annex 1b, Karen Alexander, Acting Employment and Training Manager, presented a report informing Members of the services Job Linkage provided and the Government's plans to radically reform the welfare to work system and the effects this was envisaged to have on Job Linkage.

Councillor Scaplehorn enquired as to how long the gap would be between Job Linkage funding ending to the implementation of the Government's proposals.

Ms. Alexander advised that the Job Linkage funding would end on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011 and the Government's Welfare to Work Scheme was not due to start until Summer 2011, but this was not certain.

In response to Councillor Williams' query the Chairman advised that funding proposals would come to the Area Committee for consideration once the Comprehensive Spending Review had been released. The Chairman also enquired if the gap funding required would result in Washington losing one of its two centres.

Ms. Alexander advised that the number of centres would depend on the amount of funding obtained but realistically they would not be able to provide the level of service they currently do.

The Chairman raised concerns that due to contractors being paid on results, that they might only tackle the 'quick wins' and enquired if there was any additional responsibility that could be implemented so that those prime contractors were required to tackle the harder issues.

Ms. Alexander advised that major consideration would be required to ensure everyone received an appropriate level of service.

Councillor Wake referred to paragraph 5.1 of the report and raised concerns that there was a duplication of services.

Ms. Alexander advised that the centre worked with those that had issues around housing etc. to enable them to achieve a level footing and gain employment. The centres were not providing a duplication of service, they provided a signposting to the services already available.

Councillor I. Richardson felt that there was a need to look at a diversity of employment rather than just having a large number of positions in Pizza establishments for example. If we could achieve this, we may be able to capture the imagination of the public in wanting to gain employment.

The Chairman agreed and expressed concern that some jobs did not provide attractive wages resulting in some people potentially being financially better off on benefits and if the area was to lose the Job Linkage service, we would lose another avenue into employment.

Councillor Snowden commented that the Job Linkage was an essential service in providing advice and she was terrified it could be lost, to be replaced with a token service when there was the possibility of many more people becoming unemployed.

Councillor Chamberlin commented that she felt the Government would have considered all factors when implementing such programmes.

The Chairman commented that the report had been included to make Members aware of the issue and was something to monitor.

Janet Snaith, Head of City Business and Investment Team, briefed the Committee on the work of the Employment and Business Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Wake referred to the paragraph on Washington Workspace and commented that there were a substantial number of vacant premises already in the area and asked if investigations could be made into using those rather than build new premises.

The Chairman advised that initial approaches had been made to the companies who owned the vacant premises and they were not willing to work with the Council. Also the premises came with a 3 year lease which new businesses may find problematic.

The Chairman informed the Committee that these proposals included easy in, easy out leases along with additional support for new businesses.

The Chairman also expressed his approval over the proposals for possible investment in the Washington area.

Councillor Snowden welcomed the report and commented that she would love to see new start-up businesses in the area.

In relation to the Safe theme, the Chairman commented on the issues Members had in not being able to impose conditions or have input on the saturation of take-away establishments in a particular area.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that he believed a change to the policy which allowed Members to consider how many establishments were already in the area as a material consideration may be introduced in future proposals.

Councillor Scaplehorn advised that the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee were also reviewing the issue.

### Financial Statements and Funding Requests

In relation to the Community Chest funding proposals detailed in Annex 2D of the report, Ms. Purvis informed the Committee that the South Tyneside Mesothelioma Self Help Group contribution from the Washington West ward was £300 and not £500, as stated in the Annex.

In relation to the SIB application from Northumbria Police to implement Operation Horizon, The Police representative responded to Councillor Chamberlin's query that

Members would be given access to the results which would be monitored on a monthly basis.

Councillor Walker welcomed the application and queried if the operation was to focus on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Police representative advised that the operation would mainly focus on Friday and Saturday nights for when the Neighbourhood Teams were directed to other areas such as outside late night off licences.

The Chairman commented that he was aware of the work they were doing with Oxclose Youth Project and hoped this would continue.

Councillor Snowden commented that this Project was ongoing from a recently funded project through LMAPS, which had achieved great results and it was nice to see this continue.

A member of the public suggested that the project start at the earlier time of 3 o'clock as many of the youths were obtaining alcohol once school had ended.

The Police representative advised that the statistics did identify an issue with the supply of alcohol to the underage, mainly due to parents purchasing alcohol for their children and this was being investigated under a separate programme.

The Police representative also advised that if Operations Horizon's hours were brought forward to 3 o'clock, with the end time remaining till 11 o'clock, this would result in an increase of finance required.

The Chairman commented that he had recently witnessed underage youths drinking alcohol near the skate park, which must have been purchased by adults and was an issue that needed to be addressed.

In relation to the SIB application for the Catch 22 Youth Inclusion Project, the Chairman raised concerns that this organisation had already received funding and the Area Committee had also funded the Police Project to tackle anti social behaviour along with the Oxclose and District Youth project.

Councillor Williams proposed that the application be withdrawn as no hard data on success rates had been provided and there was no representative from the Project to help make an informed decision on the application.

Phil McAloon, Oxclose and District Youth Project, commented that the organisation was capable of providing good quality work in an area where this service was needed, but had concerns over the people they proposed to reach.

Councillor I. Richardson requested that should the application be deferred, that a strong recommendation be made for a representative of the project to attend the Area Committee meeting when the application would be heard.

In relation to the lighting and CCTV at wheeled sports park, Ms. Purvis informed the Committee that the application was for £27,000 funding and not £49,000 as stated in the report.

Councillor I. Richardson queried why the lighting and CCTV had not been included in the original application.

The Chairman commented that the need for lighting had arisen due to the popularity of the site and there were issues of the selling of drugs and alcohol nearby. Initial investigations had been made into providing street lighting on the site of which the Council would have been liable for, which is why floodlights are being sought that could be controlled to set times.

Mr. McAloon commented that the lighting was at young people's request as they wanted to use the actual skate park more and was very popular.

Councillor Williams commented that she fully accepted the need for the lighting, which was vital, but felt the continual costs required should come out of mainstream funding as part of the City's stock and not have to keep being funded by this Area Committee.

The Chairman advised that Carol Lewis, Play Pathfinder Programme Manager, and Rachel Cowley, Senior Project Officer, were working very hard to resolve issues regarding long term revenue costs.

In response to Councillor Chamberlin's comment that the issue of lighting was brought up during the original consideration of the item, Ms. Lewis advised that historically, all other skate parks in Sunderland had not required lighting.

Councillor Snowdon clarified that the application covered the implementation of a pole suitable to house a 3G camera which would be provided through LMAPs.

3. RESOLVED that Members:-

- (i) note the contents of the report and agree next steps and actions detailed in Annex 1a;
- (ii) note the content of the Health Inequalities Task and Finish Group Report and agree to invite a SIB application to deliver the Washington Health Champions and tackling health with SAFC;
- (iii) consider recommendations contained within Annex 1b;
- (iv) Members receive a more detailed presentation with regard to the Sunderland Safer Partnership and Delivery Plan and the Alcohol Strategy Action Plan, to a future meeting.
- (v) consider inviting a SIB application to enhance the Citywide Employer's Survey;
- (vi) note the financial statement for Area Committee funding for 2010/11;
- (vii) approve £40,150 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIB budget for the Operation Horizon Project;

- (viii) defer the proposal to contribute £19,000 from the 2010/11 SIB budget to the Catch 22 Project, until a representative of the Project could attend a meeting of the Committee and address Members' concerns;
- (ix) approve £27,000 (amended from report) as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIB budget for the lighting and CCTV @ Wheeled Sports Park Project;
- (x) approve £6,315 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Safeguarding the School Community and Developing EYFS Outdoor Play Project at John F. Kennedy Primary School;
- (xi) approve £14,632 (amended from report) as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Early Years School and Community Play Facilities Project at Biddick Primary School;
- (xii) approve £11,500 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Glebe Park Lighting Project;
- (xiii) approve £7,000 (amended from report) as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Wormhill Terrace Fencing Project;
- (xiv) approve £16,000 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget for the Dropped Crossings Project;
- (xv) approve £1,500 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget towards the making Children Heard Project;
- (xvi) approve £5,000 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget towards the Beverly Court Project;
- (xvii) approve £19,220 as a contribution from the 2010/11 SIP budget towards the Bonemill Lane Roundabout Project.

### **Influencing Practice, Policy and Strategy**

The Office of the Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which offered Members the opportunity for consultation on plans and strategies relevant to the Washington area. It also provided information and updates to encourage Members to feed into proposals for service or policy change and facilitate the referral of outcomes of issues previously identified.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Andrew Jackman, Interim Assistant Head of Traffic Road Safety, updated the Committee in respect of progress made regarding the Washington Road Safety Scheme (Annex 1).

The Chairman commented there may need to be a meeting arranged so that Members could discuss in depth Road Safety Issues with Officers of Highways.



Mr. Jackman requested Area Committees' approval to make the experimental Traffic Orders at Dunnock Drive and Parsons Road into permanent Orders, which was duly agreed.

In respect of Brandy Lane, Albany, the Chairman commented that the Ward Councillors had serious concerns over the issue.

Councillor H. Trueman commented that every effort had been made by both Members and Officers to address the issue, yet still problems occurred, therefore, he believed Brandy Lane should be closed.

Councillor Chamberlin enquired if a pedestrian crossing had been considered.

The Chairman advised that speed measures had been implemented yet drivers had ignored them.

Mr. Jackman advised that a pedestrian crossing had been considered but the usage of the area was well below the criteria. It was a possible option but it was Officers' opinion that it would not solve the problem.

Councillor Snowden agreed with Councillor Trueman's proposal to close Brandy Lane as she too had received many complaints from concerned constituents over possible accidents.

Mr. Lodge, a local resident, advised that 91% of residents in Albany wished for the road to be closed and informed the Committee that the Police had recorded motorists driving up to speeds of 50 mph on the road.

Councillor Williams commented on the need for a consistent approach in dealing with bus lanes.

The Chairman suggested this be discussed in the meeting between Members and Highways Officers and also proposed that Albany Lane be closed.

Mr. Jackman advised that the necessary consultations and due process would have to be carried out before a closure of the road could be implemented.

In response to Councillor Walker's query, Mr. Jackman advised that the consultations would only include the local residents in the area plus the statutory authorities such as Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade. There would also be a public notice published in the local papers.

The Chairman recognised that legally, due process needed to be completed but was concerned at the length of time this issue had gone on for and felt a resolution was needed quickly.

Mr. Jackman proposed that discussion of the accident hotspots also be considered during the proposed meeting between Members and Highways Officers.

#### Play and Urban Games Strategy Update

Ms. Lewis and Ms. Cowley presented a report on the Play and Urban Games Strategy (Annex 2) which highlighted the progress achieved against priority actions within the Play and Urban Games Strategy (PUGS) – moving forward 2007-2012. The report outlined the process to be undertaken to review the existing strategy and identified the priorities for investment for the period 2010-2012 for inclusion within an addendum to the strategy.

Councillor Chamberlin commented that the goalposts had been installed at Dunstanburgh and had proven very popular, now a multi use games area was needed.

In response to Councillor Scaplehorn's query over additional funding, Ms. Lewis advised that a number of projects had been priorities and there was funding from sources such as Section 106, but there was a need to look at various resources and identify different funding streams.

Councillor Chamberlin raised concerns that the deadlines to provide costings for possible projects to be funded through SIP had passed.

The Chairman acknowledged that City Services had staffing issues, but Members had wanted to allocate SIP funding and there was a need for Members and Officers to work closer on such projects. The Chairman also appreciated that the directorate had been extremely busy in delivering a number of parks throughout the area and wished to thank Officers for their work but requested conversations between Members and Officers be initiated earlier.

#### Sunderland Volunteering Strategy Draft Action Plan

Ms. Purvis briefed the Committee on the Sunderland Partnership Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan consultation process which was currently ongoing. A draft document had been produced to seek views through a formal consultation process, which was attached as Annex 3 to the report.

#### 4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Members consider the contents of the report and offer support or otherwise to the proposals of the Executive Director of City Services.
- (ii) The remaining SIP budget of £183,000 is used to complete the bus link removal pilot schemes, the footway links in Ayton Road and Columbian Way and develop schemes for the remaining 12 bus links in the Washington area, subject to satisfactory consultations and the availability of finance.
- (iii) The Executive Director of City Services is requested to make a delegated decision instructing the Council's Chief Solicitor to make the bus link removal schemes in Dunnock Drive and Parsons Road permanent at the earliest opportunity.
- (iv) The bus link removal pilot scheme for Brandy Lane, Albany to be subject of a further public consultation exercise in the autumn at which the following three options would be offered to the residents of Albany:-

- restoration of the bus link;
  - retain bus link removal pilot scheme;
  - full closure of the through traffic route to motorised traffic.
- (v) Permanent schemes to target the remaining bus links in the Washington area be developed and subject to further public consultations in the autumn.
- (vi) The results of the evaluations for the pilot link removal pilot scheme at Brandy Lane, Albany and the 12 remaining bus links in the Washington area be reported to a future meeting of the Washington Area Committee.
- (vii) The Executive Director of City Services be asked to report to a future meeting on the delivery of the 10 schemes to target the accident cluster sites previously identified.
- (viii) A further meeting be set up between Members and Highways Officers to discuss issues.
- (ix) Members consider the recommendations contained within the report on Play and Urban Games Strategy (Annex 2).
- (x) Members consider the Sunderland Partnership Volunteering Strategy and participate in the consultation process to ensure that the strategy would effectively address the volunteering needs of the Washington Area (Annex 3).

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

(Signed) J. KELLY,  
Chairman.