

CENTRAL AREA COUNCIL

12th May, 2014

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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12th May, 2014 2:00pm

55. **Present:** Councillors D. Green (Chair), Barlow, P. Birkinshaw, D. Birkinshaw, Bruff, G. Carr, J. Carr, Clarke, M. Dyson, Mathers, Mitchell, Johnson, and Perrin.

56. **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests.**

No member wished to declare an interest.

57. **Minutes of the previous meeting of Central Area Council, held 14th April, 2014.**

Members received the minutes of the previous meeting of Central Area Council.

RESOLVED:- that the minutes of the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on the 14th April, 2014 be approved as a true and correct record.

58. **Notes of the Ward Alliances.**

The meeting received the notes from a number of Ward Alliance meetings held in February, March and April of 2014.

Kingstone Ward Alliance - it was noted that the Stop Smoking mentioned in the notes was being re-considered alongside other Public Health services.

Central - the meeting noted that Central Ward Alliance was still actively recruiting community representatives.

Dodworth - it was noted that 2 'friends of' groups had been established in the ward, and both were wanting to arrange galas.

Worsbrough - Members heard how an event had been held at the Olive Branch with approx 20 people in attendance.

RESOLVED:- that the notes from the Ward Alliance meetings, as submitted, be received.

59. **Use of Devolved Ward Budgets and Ward Alliance Funds.**

The report was introduced by the Area Council Manager, noting the amount of finance unallocated for 2013/14 and therefore earmarked to be carried forward to 2014/15.

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Members were urged to consider plans to expend the total amount in 2014/15, as the carrying forward of finance to future financial years was unlikely.

RESOLVED:- that the report on Devolved Ward Budgets and Ward Alliance Funds be noted.

60. Appointment of community representatives to the Ward Alliances.

The Area Council Manager presented the report which proposed two individuals to act as community representatives; one on Kingstone, and another on the Dodworth Ward Alliance.

RESOLVED:- that the representatives proposed be approved as community representatives on the respective Ward Alliances for the remainder of the municipal year.

61. Central Area Council commissioning and procurement update.

An update was provided by the Area Council Manager. It was noted that Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) had been selected as the preferred provider to deliver a service for reducing isolation in older people. Final details of the contract would be agreed once the 'standstill' period had elapsed.

With regards to the provision of a service for children aged young people aged 8-12 years, 62 organisations had expressed an interest, with 6 providing submissions. However it was noted that one was incomplete.

It was noted that the evaluation panel would be considering submissions over the next 6 weeks in line with the procurement strategy, and it was noted that the panel included 2 individuals from the Youth Council.

In relation to the provision of a service for children and young people aged 13-19 years, it was noted that 75 organisations had expressed an interest with 6 providing submissions. 1 of the submissions had been eliminated early, as it failed to provide all the required information. The evaluation panel had been scheduled to meet to consider the submissions and its membership included 2 members of the Youth Council.

It was noted that colleagues in Communities and Area Governance had recently held some very productive meetings with the Youth Council, and it was hoped that this would lead to further work.

The meeting discussed the progress being made in procuring a service to create a cleaner and greener environment in partnership with local people, noting their had been a slight delay in going out to tender in order to receive feedback from other Area Councils who had already done so. Support was given for this to proceed to advert as quickly as possible.

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Members discussed the need to ensure that all works commissioned within the Central area were scheduled appropriately to avoid duplication and overlap.

The meeting went on to discuss the progress being made in procuring an integrated environmental enforcement service, and whether the joint procurement with Dearne Area Council for 2.5 officers would be attractive to potential contractors. Members were reminded that other enforcement provision is provided in the town centre, which had resulted in the size of the service being put forward. It was noted that this was a niche market and small contracts could reduce any economies of scale. However, it was suggested that the procurement process continues with feedback from this and the experience from other Area Councils being discussed at a future meeting.

The Chair welcomed the Head of Community Safety and Enforcement to discuss proposals to address issues with private sector rented accommodation in the Central Area.

The meeting noted the large proportion of private rented properties within the Central Area and acknowledged that a significant amount of these were substandard. The meeting heard how there was little proactive estate management and intervention was largely reactive.

Members heard of the 'Our Street' programme which piloted an approach, with private sector tenants and landlords, to understand needs and target intervention to help prevent decline in an area.

The proposal for the Central Area, was based on this approach, providing more proactive housing management and dedicated enforcement to support good landlords and tenants and deal with poor ones. This may also free other resources to deal with a wider range of problems.

Members discussed the proposal and acknowledged that there was some positive aspects of management within social housing, but also some examples of poor practice.

Discussed were a number of mechanisms to deal with the issues faced, and the merits of using such interventions considered. These included:- accreditation schemes; licensing; and use of powers such as under section 92 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Members were supportive of the proposal for the Central Area, and welcomed the proactive approach to dealing with the problems discussed.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the outcome of the procurement process to appoint a provider to deliver a service to reduce isolation and loneliness in older people be noted;
- (ii) that the progress made in taking forward various Central Area Council procurement processes be noted;

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(iii) that the proposed to address a range of issues associated with private sector housing stock in the area be supported;

(iv) that the Assistant Director Neighbourhoods, Access and Support be authorised to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Community Safety and Enforcement Service, to the value of £140,000, for one year, in order to provide a Private Sector Housing Management Officer, and Enforcement and Investigation Officer for the Central Area.

62. Monitoring progress and challenging performance.

The Central Area Council Manager introduced the item by referring to Appendix 1 of the report, where the terms of reference of the Area Council had been considered.

The meeting considered the role in relation to 'monitoring the performance of services commissioned from the Area Council budget in relation to the Area Council's priorities and desired objectives/outcomes'. Members noted the mechanisms for monitoring, included in the formal contract for each procurement. This included the quarterly reports providers would submit and meetings with the Area Council Manager. It was noted that information provided through these means would form the basis of a quarterly performance report to the Central Area Council for each contract.

Members discussed the involvement of service sector representatives and community representatives who had taken part in the evaluation process and it was suggested that this could be incorporated into the framework for ongoing monitoring undertaken by the Area Manager.

The meeting noted that once each contract had been signed off, a schedule of when contract monitoring reports were to be made available would be produced and circulated.

It was acknowledged that some of the benefits of commissioned interventions may be hard to evidence, and may take a number of years to materialise.

Members heard how discussions were taking place with the Council about the other roles of the Area Council and how these related to those within Corporate Performance and Scrutiny functions. It was agreed to submit a further report on this, for discussion at the Area Council, once more clarity was available.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the contract monitoring arrangements, as proposed, be approved;

(ii) that a future meeting of the Area Council receives a report detailing the framework for taking forward roles within the terms of reference not currently being exercised.

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Chair