

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

PENISTONE AREA COUNCIL

9th October, 2014

17. **Present:** Councillors Barnard (Chair), Hand-Davis, Rusby, and Unsworth.

18. **Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.**

No Members declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

19. **Minutes from the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 31st July, 2014.**

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 31st July, 2014.

RESOLVED:- that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting, held on the 31st July, 2014 be approved as a true and correct record.

20. **Notes from the Penistone East and West Ward Alliance, held on 11th September, 2014.**

The meeting received the notes from Penistone East and West Ward Alliance, held on 11th September, 2014.

Members considered the impact of the fund on levels of volunteering in the area. It was noted that the quality of applications for Ward Alliance Funds was extremely high, and the amount of volunteer time was captured in the monitoring of successful applications.

Also noted was the impact that projects being delivered under Love Where You Live had in increasing levels of volunteering.

RESOLVED:- that the notes from Penistone East and West Ward Alliance held on 11th September, 2014 be received.

21. **Report on the use of Devolved Ward Budget and Ward Alliance Fund.**

The Area Manager presented the report detailing expenditure from the beginning of the financial year to date. With regards to the Devolved Ward Budget, it was noted that between the two Penistone wards there was £23,622.87 remaining but a number of projects were in development. Discussion took place around the possibility of using funds to improve to the town centre.

With regards to the Ward Alliance Fund, it was noted that £9,264.33 was remaining, though but it was envisaged that this would be committed by the end of the financial year.

Members discussed the Public Health funds, noting that £2,562.72 remained. The potential of funding a luncheon club to improve health and reduce isolation was discussed. Members also sought clarification on whether there would be another allocation Public Health funds in 2015/16.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the report detailing the use of Devolved Ward Budget and Ward Alliance Fund be noted;
- (ii) that clarity be sought on allocations of Public Health finance for 2015/16.

22. **Community representatives on the Ward Alliance.**

Members considered a report which proposed a single individual to act as a community representative on the Ward Alliance. The report also noted the resignation of the representative from Penistone Grammar School. It was suggested that the Governing Body could be approached in order to identify a replacement representative.

RESOLVED:- that the individual proposed be approved to act as community representative on the Ward Alliance for the remainder of the municipal year.

23. **Penistone Area Council update on priorities and commissioning.**

The Penistone Area Council Manager introduced the item, referring to the recent exercise to invite tenders to deliver the Rural Bus Pilot. Members noted that the commission had now been advertised twice, and that no submissions had been received.

Members discussed future options for the provision of a subsidised bus scheme to help reduce isolation and provide a boost to the town centre economy. It was suggested that a dialogue be entered into with existing transport providers in the area about the potential of extending their service for a short period as a pilot to access the demand such a the service.

It was noted that £150,000 of the 2013/14 allocation of Area Council finance remained. It was agreed that details of commissions from other areas, which may be of interest to Members, be circulated to stimulate ideas for the use of unallocated finance.

The meeting welcomed Tom Handley, from Growforest, the organisation delivering the Countryside Skills Training Course to provide feedback on progress. It was noted that advertisements had been placed throughout August and September, 2014 but that there were only small numbers of respondents. 2 individuals now enrolled on the course. As part of the project 95m of wall had now been stripped, with 15% rebuilt, and over 40 individuals engaged in discussion about the project and its impact.

A number of avenues had been explored to encourage engagement from young people, including approaching Barnsley College and local schools, and a feature being aired on Penistone FM. The meeting heard how a website was also being created for the project. Members discussed possibilities for encouraging greater take up, including widening the geographical area, considering looked after children and allowing some flexibility with the age range of applicants.

Though there were potential issues with recruiting individuals to take part, Members noted that there was a definite need to restore walls and hedges, and for woodland management in the area. The meeting heard how plans were in place to help

ensure the sustainability of the project and its impacts following the completion of the contract.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Area Manager approach transport providers in order to discuss the potential of extending services in a pilot scheme to assess demand;
- (ii) that the Area Manager circulates details of commissions from other Area Councils;
- (iii) that the progress in delivering the Countryside Skills Training Course be noted.

24. **Future Council/Barnsley's Community Offer.**

Members noted that the Executive Director for Adults and Communities was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting. It was therefore agreed to defer the item on Future Council to a future meeting.

The Lead Locality Officer introduced discussion on Barnsley's Community Offer. It was noted that the work was being led by the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team, but had included a wide range of staff. The Community Offer was based on an approach to empower communities; recognising assets within the community and utilising these.

It was noted that the Council's area arrangements were a key part of the offer, and investment made through the Ward Alliance Fund were important to build capacity. However, it was noted that as part of the reshaping of the Council, the Community Offer should be embedded across the authority.

At the heart of the offer were principles relating to the focus on customers and residents and their needs, building capacities within communities. There was a recognition that staff need to work to provide a seamless 'One Council' offer, across the council and with partners, in order to add value and reduce duplication.

The meeting discussed the recent 'Talkabout' staff engagement events, where staff were asked to consider the point of view of residents, which many employees are. It was noted that a similar session has been planned for Members.

Members acknowledged the need to change, to become more empowering and customer focused.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the report be noted;
- (ii) that discussion with the Executive Director, Adults and Communities, on Future Council be deferred to a future meeting of the Area Council.

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Chair