BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

NORTH EAST AREA COUNCIL

6TH JUNE 2013

1. **Present:** Councillors Hayward (Chair), T. Cheetham, T.J. Cheetham, Ennis, S. Green, Higginbottom, Houghton, North, M. Sheard, C.C. Wraith

2. **Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest**

   There were no declarations of pecuniary or non pecuniary interest.

3. **Terms of reference, purpose of the Area Councils, and the role of elected members**

   The Chair welcomed all those present to the first meeting of the North East Area Council.

   Members noted the Area Council's terms of reference, and in particular the importance of identifying local priorities for action and agreeing an Area Plan. Attention was also drawn to the Area Council's role in scrutinising local services. It was noted for example that data would shortly be available on school performance within the North East area, which members strongly welcomed.

   Members felt that links with external organisations were also important, and were informed that Barnsley's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had already offered to provide a named link to each Area Council in order to build new relationships. The CCG had further indicated that it could provide some funding towards health related activities at an area level. Members felt that similar relationships with other key organisations, such as Voluntary Action Barnsley, should be explored in future as appropriate.

   The meeting noted the role of Council officers in supporting the Area Council. The Lead Locality Officer explained that he was responsible for ensuring a broadly consistent approach to Area Council development across the borough, and related policy support. He was also working with several Area Council Chairs to explore data requirements, Area Plan development, and communication.

   The Senior Manager Link Officer indicated that his primary role was to provide a link between the Area Council and BMBC's senior management, and to help members overcome any barriers they might face in working with Council departments.

Resolved:

(i)   that the terms of reference and related paperwork be noted.

4.   **Work programme for 2013/14, including key milestones**

The meeting noted that the Chair has previously met with members on a ward by ward basis to discuss their expectations for the North East Area Council, and in particular the priorities for action they wished to see incorporated within the Area Plan.

Members received a presentation from the North East Area Council Manager that summarised feedback received from members during these sessions and which identified key thematic concerns. These included communication, enforcement, volunteering, the environment, health and development, and finance.

Members discussed the extent to which enforcement would be a priority within the Area Plan, and the extent to which it could become self financing in future. Members were keen to hear more about the possibility of becoming a pilot area for testing the self financing approach.

Members also discussed the possibility of working with the Youth Service at an area level. It was noted that the service was currently undergoing a restructure and that members would shortly receive a presentation on the bespoke 'offer' for their area, which would help inform the priority setting process for the Area Plan. In addition, members acknowledged that the work programme would have to expand to include more detail on the Area Council's scrutiny function, and agreed this should be undertaken by August at the latest.

The meeting considered how the Area Council might maximise community involvement in the planning process, and agreed that a multi-channel communication strategy was critical. Each Area Council would have its own standalone website, which could link to the web pages of community groups and help engage as many people as possible. A strong social media presence was also important, and each Area Council would therefore have its own Facebook page.

Due to current work pressures within BMBC's web team, development of the websites was unlikely to begin before July. However, the meeting noted that this would allow time for members to provide feedback to the relevant officers on what they would like their site to include.

Resolved:

(i)   that the North East Area Council receive a further report on the implications of becoming a pilot area for self financing enforcement activities;

(ii)   that the work programme be expanded to include more detail on the Area Council's scrutiny function;

(iii)   that interested members of the North East Area Council be involved in the planning process for the Area Council's website;

(iv)   that the work programme be noted and form the basis of future meetings of the North East Area Council.

5.   **Standard agenda format for Area Councils**

The Chair drew members' attention to the draft standard agenda format circulated with the meeting's papers, which was intended to help the Area Council develop a consistent approach to business.

Resolved:

(i)   that the standard agenda format be used as a basis for future meetings of the Area Council.

6.   **Deadlines for Area Councils**

Resolved:

(i)   that the Area Council note the deadlines for report submission and publication, which reflected relevant statutory guidance.

7.   **Planning and format for the next Area Council meeting**

The Chair informed members that it was intended to organise the Area Council's next meeting as a workshop, so that members could analyse a range of relevant data that would help inform the Area Plan priority setting process.

Resolved:

(i)   that the Area Council Manager liaise with the Chair to plan the workshop session in more detail.

8.   **Venue for future meetings**

Members agreed that the Town Hall was the most suitable venue for future meetings of the Area Council, as it was readily accessible to local people in every ward via public transport.

Resolved:

(i)   that future meetings of the North East Area Council be held in Barnsley Town Hall.

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Chair