

MEETING:	Penistone Area Council
DATE:	Thursday, 7 December 2017
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Penistone Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Barnard (Chair), David Griffin, Hand-Davis, Millner and Unsworth.

23 Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

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

24 Minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 5th October, 2017 (PAC.07.12.2017/2)

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th October, 2017.

Members asked for an update with regards to the pigeon mitigation in an alley off the high street. It was noted that the area was to be cleared by Neighbourhood Services staff, and the Area Council Manager would follow this up to ensure it had been completed.

It was noted within the Safer Neighbourhood Service in the area Sergeant Ian Bailey had now been replaced.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 5th October, 2017 be approved as a true and correct record.

25 Notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 19th October, 2017 (PAC.07.12.2017/3)

The meeting received the notes from the Penistone East and West Ward Alliance held on 19th October, 2017.

Members noted that the Ward Alliance Fund guidance had been discussed at a recent event, and it had been agreed to be updated in light of comments received. Members were reminded to forward any further comments to the Area Council Manager.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Penistone East and West Ward Alliance held on 19th October, 2017 be received.

26 Report on the use of Ward Alliance Funds (PAC.07.12.2017/4)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item. Members were made aware that in the 2017/18 financial year the Ward Alliance Fund had £40,000 to allocate. This comprised of £20,000 of finance allocated from central funds together with a further £20,000 devolved from the Area Council.

From the £40,000, at the timing of writing the report, £11,544.81 remained. However it was noted that 3 applications had been approved since the report had been published, which reduced this figure.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

27 Performance report (PAC.07.12.2017/5)

The item was introduced by the Area Council Manager, who referred to the report circulated. The current DIAL project funded through the Working Together Fund was discussed, noting that the contract only ran until the end of December, 2017. Members were supportive of continuing this valuable service for another year through a further application to the Working Together Fund. A suggestion was made for the service to consider implementing a system whereby some appointments could be booked.

Members noted that a number of other projects funded through the Working Together Fund were also due to come to an end. These included the Trans Pennine Trail Volunteers, Penistone Round Table, and the South Pennine Community Transport Pilot. A briefing was to be arranged for Members to discuss the outcome of the latter, which would be considered in light of the SYPTE options assessment.

Those present heard how the latest version of Penistone Matters was now in print and that the Clean and Green service provided by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance was now operational.

Overall performance was very encouraging, and the Area Council Manager noted the significant increases in number of adults engaged, volunteer hours, and residents given advice and support. Members noted that the information for Penistone Youth Project was still outstanding, and it was agreed to circulate this information once it had been received.

Members discussed the overall impact of the investment, and it was suggested that the high number of 'green' ratings reflected the high quality of delivery in the area.

A discussion was had about the impact of the community magazine, and it was suggested that feedback received had generally been positive.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

28 Affordable housing (PAC.07.12.2017/6)

Sarah Cartwright, Group Leader Housing Growth was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update on affordable housing provision in the area.

Members were reminded of the definition used for affordable housing, which includes Social Rented housing; Affordable Rented housing let by councils or registered providers at 80% or less than the market rate; and Intermediate Housing which includes shared ownership or rent below market level but above social rent. It was noted that the definition did not include help to buy properties, or other low cost housing.

Those present heard how that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment had been updated in 2017, but had not changed substantially, and the shortfall of all property sizes was noted. Members noted the target for affordable housing provision in the borough of 295 units per year, with a preference of approximately 80% rented and 20% intermediate tenure.

The existing policy relating to affordable housing requested 25% of all developments of 15 units or more to be affordable in the Penistone area; however Members noted that within policy H8 of the draft local plan this rose to 30%. It was acknowledged that these levels could be impacted upon by the viability of the site and each proposal would be considered independently.

Members were reminded of the different ways of making provision for affordable housing, with the preference being provided on-site, however the significant number of other options were noted.

The attention of Members was drawn to figures relating to housing provision since 2000. It was noted that the majority of sites within the borough were below the 15 unit threshold and therefore there was no provision required. Members were also reminded that planning permission was approved for a number of sites in the area prior to the adoption of the affordable housing policy, and therefore contained no affordable provision.

Members acknowledged the evidence for the Local Plan, which highlighted that for areas where 25% of units developed were requested to be developed 19.5% had been delivered on site. Annual targets of providing 150 units were met in 2016/17 (160), and were on track in 2017/18 (98 by Q2). It was noted that these figures had been met through a variety of means which included new build, but also the refurbishment of void properties and purchasing long term empty homes.

The Area Council was made aware of the current situation with regards to Affordable Housing section 106 finance and the current priorities. Moving forward Members noted future priorities included the acquisition of land to develop Council houses with 106 funding, and the opportunities for affordable housing provision associated with strategic site within the Local Plan.

Members discussed the numbers of empty homes. It was noted that in the previous year 37 homes had been put back into use, but that this could be time consuming as owners may not be willing.

The issue of viability assessments were discussed and assurances were given to Members that developers were robustly challenged on quality of developments and the provision of affordable housing, with the district valuer engaged where necessary.

The quality of new build properties was considered, and it was noted that properties purchased by the authority using section 106 finance were inspected and any issues rectified before taking ownership. It was also acknowledged that a number of builders now engage third party building control services for inspection as opposed to the service provided by the local authority.

A suggestion was made that Members may wish to receive a further presentation on the use of Section 106 finance in due course.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Group Leader Housing Growth be thanked for their attendance;
- (ii) That a future meeting of the Area Council receives a presentation on the use of Section 106 Finance in the area;
- (iii) That the information provided be noted.

29 Clean, Green and Tidy - Twiggs Grounds Maintenance (PAC.07.12.2017/7)

John Twigg and Adam Price from Twiggs Grounds Maintenance were welcomed to the meeting discuss the new service which they would be delivering in the Penistone Area.

The team consisted of a Supervisor, an Operative, and would shortly include an Apprentice. They had just begun working in the area, and had been visiting established groups and Parish Councils in order to better know the area and work already taking place.

A presence on social media had been established and a number of events publicised. It was noted that this included tree planting of a community orchard in Millhouse Green, and working with volunteers at Saunderson Gardens. In addition, the team had made links and organised to work with Hoylandswaine School and would be making links with others.

Members thanked the team for their work to date, which had been thought positive. It was suggested that the team returns in approximately 6 months to discuss progress.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That thanks be given to John Twigg and Adam Price for their attendance;
- (ii) That Members forward any requests for work through the Area Team for appropriate scheduling;
- (iii) That Twiggs Grounds Maintenance are invited to a future meeting of the Area Council in approximately 6 months to discuss progress.

30 Principal Towns Investment Programme Update (PAC.07.12.2017/8)

Fiona O'Brien, Principal Towns Project Manager, was welcomed to the meeting and a video was presented which had been compiled by Sheffield University students. The presentation suggested a number of areas of improvement within the town centre. These included improving way-finding, traffic management, and increasing the offer at the Town Hall/Paramount and also within the Market Barn.

Members were supportive of plans, and in discussion wheelchair accessibility, access to parking, and increased signage were also mentioned. It was noted further development work would commence shortly; this would include feasibility work and further development of plans by architects.

It was noted that approval would shortly be sought for a scheme to improve shop fronts as part of the Principal Towns Programme and that the High Street may also be able to benefit from this.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the plans developed so far be supported;
- (ii) That the Principal Towns Project Manager be thanked for their presentation.

31 Procurement and financial update (PAC.07.12.2017/9)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, noting that the contract with Age UK for a further year of the service for isolated and vulnerable older people had now been issued. Targets were due to be agreed shortly.

Members noted that the Working Together Fund was allocated a total budget of £202,038 from the Area Council. A total amount of £147,249 had been approved, leaving £54,789. Acknowledged were a number of applications expected to be submitted, however it was suggested that the fund be promoted again to encourage further applications before the end of the financial year.

It was noted that the Clean, Green and Tidy contract with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance had started on 1st November, 2017 and the detail of this had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Those present heard that the community magazine had recently been printed and would be distributed before Christmas. Members discussed further print runs of the magazine, noting that production was at nil cost due to the advertisements and were supportive of further editions. It was suggested that further consideration ought to be given to measuring the impact of the magazine where possible.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the update report be received;
- (ii) That the position on the Clean and Tidy Contract be noted;
- (iii) That two further editions of the community magazine be produced, and with further detail regarding costs for distribution be considered at a future meeting;
- (iv) That the financial situation for the Area Council be noted.

Chair