

MEETING:	Penistone Area Council
DATE:	Thursday 8 June 2023
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Penistone Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Greenhough (Chair), Barnard, Kitching and Lowe-Flello

1 **Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**

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

2 **Minutes of the Penistone Area Council Meeting held on 6 April 2023 (Pac.08.06.2023/2)**

The Area Council received the minutes from the previous meeting held on 6th April, 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 6th April, 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 **Notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance Meetings held on 13 April and 11 May 2023 (Pac.08.06.2023/3)**

The meeting received the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance meetings held on 13th April and 11th May 2023.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance meetings held on 13th April and 11th May be received.

4 **Age UK Presentation**

Natalie Stokes, Social Inclusion Projects Manager and Helen Townsend, Social Inclusion Officer, were welcomed to the meeting and provided members with an overview of the work carried out by Age UK in the Penistone Area.

Members were provided with details of key milestones reached since the contract began in July 2022 which included:

- Recruiting and training a new staff member to join the Penistone Team
- Events taking place in harder to reach areas such as Crow Edge
- Supporting over 70 new clients on a 1 to 1 basis in their homes
- Over 500 community car share journeys carried out by 2 volunteers
- A new service leaflet had been produced to show people what services were on offer

- Active communications via social media and the Barnsley Chronicle to ensure up to date information is shared with residents

Members were informed of the various groups and organisations that Age UK had been collaboratively working with

Members heard how Age UK had been working collaboratively with a number of different Teams and organisations to raise awareness of the work being undertaken and to enable them to promote various groups to clients. It was emphasised the importance of volunteers and how without them, half of the support provided could not be carried out.

74 new clients had been referred to the service for 1 to 1 support and 5 new groups had been set up across the Penistone Area with varying success. It was acknowledged that more drivers would be needed to sustain the community car share scheme.

Members were informed that there were 31 regularly active volunteers, 19 of which made regular visits and phone calls to clients. 11 volunteers supported the Age UK Barnsley Community Groups including luncheon clubs, social groups and the memory café. 2 volunteers supported regular community walks enabling people to get out in the fresh air for some gentle exercise and socialise. 1 Volunteer supported the singing for fun group which offered a creative way for people to make friends.

A wide variety of events had been held over the year including: -

- Christmas get togethers across various venues
- Queens jubilee celebrations
- The Mayors' Penistone Paramount Christmas event
- A Love Later Life Party
- Crow Edge afternoon Tea
- The Kings Coronation afternoon tea

The Men in Sheds project remained popular as a group of volunteers that offered a safe place for older men to get together and make new friends. Members were informed of their transition to new premises and the new projects they were undertaking including a steam engine planter for Silkstone Train Station.

Key challenges which affected the delivery of services and projects were outlined, including the vastness of the Penistone area, the lack of reliable public transport to help people attend events and also the shortage of community space. There was also a constant need to recruit more volunteers to meet demand of the new groups and ongoing increased requests for the befriending service.

A number of projects had been established to help with the cost of living crisis including:-

- 5 well attended sloppy slipper events
- The Slow and Tasty project which had handed out 23 packs including a slow cooker
- 17 Clean and easy packs were distributed

- 91 people received Winter Warmth packs
- 19 Home energy checks were made
- 53 individuals had benefit checks completed to ensure they were claiming what they could

Future plans included setting up new groups in Cawthorne, Hood Green, Tankersley and Penistone Central, with a view to trying to engage with more men in the Penistone Central Group. Pop up events would be held in areas with no community space to ensure all residents have access to the support on offer. Volunteer and recruitment training would continue and the priority would be to engage more befrienders.

Members queried as whether it was known why men were less likely to engage with groups. In response it was felt that historically men would have gone to the local pub and chatted with friends there rather than join a group or club. Whilst this was not something new, they were trying new groups and projects to encourage more men to join. Men in Sheds had proven a success as there was no stigma attached and it was a friendly and welcoming environment, people could join with early onset dementia and they were treated no different to anyone else there. There would be a relaunch in July when the group had moved to their new premises to encourage more to join.

Members raised questions around whether other devices would be handed out in the cost of living crisis to save energy on cooking. They were informed that this had been looked into but that other devices were more expensive than a slow cooker which meant they could purchase more to be handed out with the budget they had.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation and hard work undertaken by Age UK.

5 Quarter 4 Performance Report (Pac.08.06.2023/5)

The Area Council Manager provided members with an overview of performance for Quarter 4 covering January to March 2023 and all contracted Services.

Members were provided with an overview of the contracts funded by the Penistone Area Council and their start dates and terms. A review of the statistics was provided, and it was highlighted that some volunteer numbers had slightly decreased. It was thought that this could be due to people returning to work and some volunteers feeling they weren't able to carry on due to ill health or age. The number of people achieving a qualification or accreditation had increased significantly, this was due to Penistone Grammar Schools mentoring programme and Angel Voices.

The Clean, Green and Tidy contract continued to meet their targets, 28 individual projects had been carried out during the period with a target of 10, this had included some winter repair work and volunteer activities. 10 Groups and parishes had been supported and 15 businesses had been worked with. Work within schools had picked up including the planting of a memorial tree at St Johns Primary School. Volunteer numbers had increased during the quarter at 123 including 18 new adult volunteers and 1 new young volunteer. A joint initiative had been brought together

with a local resident, Barnsley MBC and employee volunteers in support of a community orchard at Cubley Brook.

Members were informed that Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd were trialling 2 intensive days a week work pattern but there were concerns around the flexibility of meeting the needs of groups who met on specific days of the week.

Members received a brief overview of the Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People's Age UK contract following the comprehensive presentation provided at the beginning of the meeting.

Barnsley Citizens Advice Service had seen a significant increase in client contacts with a target of 25 and a total of 107 for the quarter. It was reported that 42% of client contacts had centred around health and disability issues. There had been an increase in benefit related issues for people returning to work but requiring a top up to their low incomes. Housing issues had also risen due to rent increases resulting in tenants struggling to pay the costs and having to move home. Whilst the contract remained non face to face, visits had been made to Penistone Library to look into suitable accommodation for the service to return to face to face in the near future.

DIAL had returned to face to face appointments which had resulted in lowered numbers of enquiries due to limitations of how many clients could be seen. It was noted that many cases were complex and took time to resolve and that a review of the target numbers would be taking place to reflect this going forward. Members heard that there was added value from the centrally funded contract with DIAL which had resulted in 130 phone contacts. In addition, 16 hygiene packs had been distributed in the Penistone area and they continued to provide warm connections energy support.

The Working Together Grant Fund had supported Angel voices who had commenced adult singing workshops which were being held in Cawthorne Village Hall. It was reported that there had been a slow uptake due to lack of confidence in adults but that it was building momentum and that a workshop session was planned for weekends to help those that work to be able to take part.

The Ad Astra project had seen a decline in referrals through Penistone Grammar and the teacher strike action had impacted on the number of sessions that the project had been able to deliver. This had since been addressed and progress was being made on referrals. Members were informed that some Year 8 pupils had attended some sessions and issues relating to lack of confidence, anger and families were raised. It was recommended to members that Ad Astra be invited to attend the Penistone Area Council in July to give members a more in depth insight into the work they undertake.

Angel Voices continued to go from strength to strength and had taken part in the Area Council 10 Year celebrations, linked in with Penistone Arts Week and held a concert at Penistone Paramount. Members heard how Angel Voices had started to earn their own money for future delivery of the service.

Members were provided with an overview of the work being undertaken by the Area Team including work to set up Cost of Living events in collaboration with 18 different service providers. A cost of living booklet had been produced and been well received

at the 3 events which had seen 100 residents in attendance. These were deemed a success for networking to different service providers.

The food options were still under discussion with a proposal to hold a consultation event and invite anybody who delivers food in some way to show possible models to and discuss which would work well.

An update was provided to members about the work the Barnsley Safer Neighbourhoods Service had been undertaking in the Penistone Area. Fly tipping investigations had been flagged as one of the biggest demands in the area for Neighbourhood Services, with Penistone West having higher incidents than Penistone East. However, compared to other areas of Barnsley, Penistone remained quite low.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Pac.08.06.2023/6)

Members received the report, noting its contents. The Area Council Manager drew members attention to the base allocation and carry forward figure totalling £25,529.18 for the 2023/24 financial year. The Schools Out Fund was included within the total figure which amounted to £3,875.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7 Procurement and Financial Update (Pac.08.06.2023/7)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the item providing members with a highlight of each commissioned contract.

Members attention was drawn to the Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People service contract provided by Age UK Barnsley. Following a comprehensive presentation within the meeting and receiving a detailed performance report, members agreed to progress the contract to the second year commencing 1st July 2023 at a cost of £70,000.

Members were informed that the Working Together Grant Fund had a remaining total of £77,052. They were provided with the option to ringfence £40,000 to the Supporting Young People funds within the Working Together Grant Fund. Members were in agreement to ringfence the funds in order to encourage projects to help support young people in the area.

The Clean, Green and Tidy contract waiver was due to finish at the end of September 2023 and a member workshop would be held to discuss preferred options for procurement of a future service.

Members were provided with an update to past publications to promote Penistone Area Council outcomes. In previous years the Area Council had commissioned the Penistone Living Magazine through the Barnsley Chronicle, but it was noted that this had ceased to exist and communications had been printed in a Borough wide

magazine. Members indicated that they would wish to proceed by investigating different avenues of promotion such as Penistone FM and other newsletter options.

Members were provided with an overview of the 2023/24 budget. It was noted that, with the allocated spend of £70,000 to Year 2 of the Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People grant contract, a budget of £38,059 remained.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the update of the contract funded by the new Supporting Isolated and Older People Grant Fund be noted and that the funding for the second year of the programme from 1st July 2023 at a cost of £70,000 be agreed;
- (ii) that the update on the current financial position of the Penistone Working Together Grant Fund be received and noted;
- (iii) that the update on the Supporting Young People ringfenced funds within the existing Working Together Grant Fund be received, and that the continuation of this fund with an allocation of a further £40,000 ringfenced from the Working Together Grant Fund Pot 2023/24 be agreed;
- (iv) that the updates on the current Clean, Green and Tidy contract started in April 2020 be noted and that members participation in further discussions to be held in a member workshop outside of the Penistone Area Council to discuss future options to meet the priority be agreed;
- (v) that future communications to promote the work of Penistone Area Council be pursued through Penistone FM and local newsletter options at no cost to the Area Council, be agreed; and
- (vi) that the record of allocated and proposed spend and current budget position for 2023/24 be noted.

Chair