

PENISTONE AREA COUNCIL

18th June, 2015

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1. **Present:** Councillors Barnard (Chair), Griffin, Hand-Davis, Millner, Unsworth.

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

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

3. **Minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 16th April, 2015.**

The meeting received the minutes of the meeting of Penistone Area Council held on the 16th April, 2015.

With regards to a tenant for Penistone Town Hall offices, it was noted that there is an organisation interested and this is being progressed. If necessary there is still accommodation available in Penistone Library for the Area Team.

Members noted that a meeting had recently been held to discuss the Millhouse Green Traffic Survey, the action notes of which would be circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED that the minutes from the meeting of Penistone Area Council held on 16th April, 2015 be approved as a true and correct record.

4. **Minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 21st May, 2015.**

The meeting received the minutes of the meeting of Penistone Area Council held on 21st May, 2015.

Members heard how the Clean and Green commission was now with NPS and would be progressed as a matter of priority.

RESOLVED that the minutes from the meeting of Penistone Area Council held on 21st May, 2015 be approved as a true and correct record.

5. **Notes of the Penistone East and West Ward Alliance held on 21st May, 2015.**

The meeting received the notes of the Ward Alliance, held on 21st May, 2015.

Members commented on the note describing Dr. Billings as being dismissive, and it was clarified that this was generally not the case at the meeting, but was true of subsequent correspondence.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Ward Alliance be received.

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

The report was introduced by the Area Council Manager, who highlighted the total amount of finance available for allocation in 2015/16 from the Ward Alliance Fund

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and Devolved Ward Budget, noting that very little was carried forward from the 2014/15 financial year.

Members heard how the Ward Alliance had now already allocated over half of its annual budget, with £11,268.49 remaining for 2015/16.

RESOLVED that the report on the Devolved Ward Budget and Ward Alliance Fund be noted.

7. Penistone Area Council commissioning, procurement and funding update.

The report was presented by the Penistone Area Council Manager.

With regards to the Countryside Skills Training Commission it was noted that 8 trainees had passed their LANTRA level 1 qualification and many were now making enquiries in to becoming self employed.

Following the Area Council approval to extend the contract, the meeting noted that the necessary waiver documentation had been completed, with only the information relating to outputs and outcomes requiring agreement before contracts would be signed.

Members heard that the Clean and Tidy Commission was progressing well and noted that the Ward Alliance had selected two of its membership to take part in the Tender Evaluation Panel, R. Blythe and A. Pestell.

Members considered the financial position for the Penistone Area Council, noting that there was a proposal later on the agenda to establish a 'Working Together Fund'.

The meeting went to on to consider the option to allocate up to £20,000 per ward to the Ward Alliance Fund. It was noted that should members wish to allocate this finance, it would be on the basis of £10,000 requiring match funding as per the current Ward Alliance Fund and £10,000 not requiring any match funding similar to the current Devolved Ward Budget. It was acknowledged that all finance would need to address the priorities of the Area Council and/or Barnsley Council's Corporate Priorities.

Members supported the proposal, and noted the need to brief Ward Alliance Members appropriately on the finance.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the report be noted;

(ii) that approval be given for R. Blythe and A. Pestell to take part in the Tender Evaluation Panel for the Clean and Tidy Commission;

(iii) that £40,000 be allocated to the Ward Alliance Fund for allocation in 2015/16 in line with Penistone Area Council and/or Barnsley Council Corporate Priorities of which £20,000 will require match funding.

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8. Proposed Penistone Working Together Fund.

The Area Council Manager presented the report. It was proposed that a grant regime be established, with the ability to grant awards up to £20,000 to deliver against the priorities of the Area Council or of Barnsley Council. The fund would sit between the Ward Alliance Fund and the finance commissioned by the Area Council and performance against grants would be reported alongside that of Area Council commissioned services.

It was proposed that £120,000 be allocated to the scheme over an 18 month period through 2015/16 and 2016/17 with £53,334 in 2015/16 and £66,666 in 2016/17.

Members noted the draft Terms of Reference, General Guidance and Expression of Interest form circulated.

The meeting discussed the proposed Working Together Fund Grants Panel, which would assess the applications and make recommendations to go forward for officer approval.

Members were supportive of the proposal, acknowledging that this could provide a useful progression towards tendering for larger projects for groups in the area.

Similar funding regimes in other Area Councils were discussed, and it was agreed to share the details of the applications that had received approval.

RESOLVED that:-

(i) that £120,000 be allocated to the Working Together Fund for 2015/16 and 2016/17;

(ii) authorisation be given to the Service Director Stronger, Safer and Healthier Communities to approve Working Together Fund grants up to an individual value of £20,000 following consultation with the Working Together Fund grants panel;

(iii) that the Terms of Reference, General Guidance and Expression of Interest forms for the Working Together Fund be approved;

(iv) that Councillors Griffin and Hand-Davis be approved to act as members of Working Together Fund Grants Panel.

9. Review of Penistone area information.

The Research & Business Intelligence Manager was welcomed to the meeting to give a presentation relating to data and information pertaining to the Penistone area, with comparisons over time where possible.

A caution was given as to use of the data, due to the small cohorts and small time periods often involved.

Members received a wide range of information including the following:-

Demographics of the area - it was noted that the percentage of the population who were from ethnic minorities was lower than the Barnsley average and that 0% of residents in the area lived in the 20% most deprived areas in the UK.

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Crime and safety – though crimes had generally reduced in the Borough, rates for theft and handling of stolen goods had increase in Barnsley and in Penistone East, though it was thought that this was due to gangs targeting agricultural machinery in that area.

With regards to cleanliness it was noted that dog fouling incidents had increased slightly between 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Health and Wellbeing - it was noted that smoking prevalence was lower than the in the Borough as a whole and rates of breastfeeding were relatively high when compared to the Barnsley average.

With regards to isolation, it was noted that similar proportions of Penistone residents are aged 65 or over and live in one person households, when compared to the rest of Barnsley. It was agreed to circulate any further information on rural isolation when it becomes available.

Members noted the figures for excess weight in 4-5 year olds and 10-11 year olds, and acknowledged the significant fluctuations between years, however generally incidences in Penistone were below the Barnsley and national averages.

When considering childcare places, Members heard how the numbers of childcare places per 100 children for 0-5 and 5-11 year olds were above the Barnsley average.

The meeting noted the high proportion of owner occupiers in the area and corresponding small proportions of social housing, when compared to Barnsley as a whole.

Education, skills, training and employment - Attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 was discussed as were NEET figures, all of which were positive when compared to Barnsley and national averages.

The meeting discussed new business starts and acknowledged the rate has slowed somewhat apart from in Penistone West, and it was suggested that this reflected investment from section 106 finance.

Poverty – it was noted that children in Barnsley were less likely to be in families claiming Job Seekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit than in Barnsley as a whole, and the numbers of children living in lone parent families receiving those benefits fluctuated but broadly remained the same between 2010 and 2012.

It was also acknowledged that the proportion of individuals claiming working age benefits was reducing in the area and in Barnsley as a whole, yet this did not include figures for Universal Credit.

Members discussed the presentation and it was acknowledged that the situation for Penistone remained relatively unchanged, though it was suggested that figures at this scale may hide issues such as fuel poverty only faced in small isolated areas. However, rural isolation and business support were suggested as two areas which would warrant further investigation.

RESOLVED that

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- (i) thanks be given for the presentation;
- (ii) further information on business support and rural isolation be circulated to Members when available.

10. Affordable Housing.

The Housing Growth Development Manager was welcomed to the meeting to discuss affordable housing in the area.

Members were made aware of the definition used for affordable housing which included Social Rented, Affordable Rented, and Intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

It was noted that eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices, and that affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Members heard how the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) from November, 2014 suggested areas of sufficiency and shortfalls. It was noted that the net annual shortfall of affordable housing was 295, with a suggest split tenure of 78.8% social rented and 21.2% intermediate tenure.

The meeting was made aware that an Older Vulnerable People Needs Assessment was nearing completion that would provide further valuable evidence.

Member noted the procedure for consulting on and adopting the Local Plan, which included changes to the Affordable Housing Policy. The changes would seek to increase the proportion of affordable housing in the Penistone area from 25% to 30% for developments above 15 dwellings. However, it was noted that this is often challenged by developers due to concerns about viability.

Members heard of the ways in which affordable housing can be provided by developers, which included on-site provision; the transfer of land to equivalent value to enable the building of affordable units on-site; off site provision which can include the refurbishment of existing stock; and a commuted sum equivalent to the cost of provision on site. The desire to see provision on site or in very close proximity was acknowledged by Members.

Members discussed current sites within the area and the associated affordable housing provision. It was noted that planning permission for many of the current sites was granted before the affordable housing policy was endorsed in 2007 and therefore there was no compulsion to provide any affordable units as part of the development.

The meeting went on to discuss the various ways in which a commuted sum could be utilised, acknowledging that the Council itself currently owned very few suitable sites to build on.

The businesses cases put forward by developers to challenge the amount of affordable provision requested due to viability were discussed, and it was agreed to circulate an appropriate case to Members, when available.

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RESOLVED:-

- (i) that thanks be given for the presentation and the level of detail provided.
- (ii) that a business case challenging the amount of affordable provision requested due to viability be circulated to Members when available.

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Chair