

NORTH AREA COUNCIL

22nd July, 2013

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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7. **Present:** Councillors Burgess (Chair), Cherryholme, Duerden, Howard, Leech, Miller, Platts and Tattersall.

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

After welcoming Members to the meeting the Chair asked those present to introduce themselves before asking for any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests. No declarations were received.

9. **Minutes from the North Area Council meeting held on 3rd June, 2013.**

With reference to both the area and ward budgets, it was confirmed that finance was in place for three years and any underspend could be carried forward. It was noted that the details of the finance available to develop Neighbourhood Networks had also been re-circulated.

As indicated in the minutes, the Chair asked members to forward any feedback about the area arrangements to feed into the ongoing review process.

The meeting noted that it was likely that the next meeting of the Area Council would consider procurement processes relevant to the area arrangements.

RESOLVED:- that the minutes of the North Area Council meeting, held on 3rd June, 2013, be agreed as a true and correct record.

10. **Notes from the Ward Alliances.**

Members noted that Ward Alliances were different stages of development, but that support for their development was available from the Senior Locality Support Officer.

The Chair emphasised the need for a Ward Plan to be in place to ensure a rationale for Ward Alliance Fund expenditure.

RESOLVED:- that the notes from the Ward Alliances be received.

11. **Community representatives on the Ward Alliances.**

The meeting received a report seeking approval for two individuals to act as community representatives on the Darton West Ward Alliance, as recommended by Elected Members from that ward.

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Members discussed the timings of Ward Alliances, stressing that these were flexible and may need to be rearranged to be held in evenings in order that community representatives could attend.

RESOLVED:- That the proposed individuals are appointed as community representatives on the Darton West Ward Alliance for the remainder of the municipal year.

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

The report was presented by the North Area Council Manager. It highlighted expenditure relating to the Devolved Ward Budget and Ward Alliance Fund from April-June 2013.

Members considered the expenditure, questioning discrepancies between different wards which had purchased hanging baskets.

RESOLVED:-

(i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That clarification be sought on price discrepancies between hanging baskets in St. Helen's and Darton East Wards.

13. **Emerging draft priorities for North Area Council.**

The Chair reminded Members of the timetable for the Area Council, agreed at the previous meeting, and the need to agree a list of possible priorities for further and more intensive investigation.

The meeting considered the priorities within the Corporate Plan and associated 18 outcome statements. The need to reconcile these with ward priorities was noted.

Members considered a wealth of data at Area and Ward levels, including comparisons with the borough average. Questions were raised about whether statistical information was available at postcode levels, in order to show small pockets of deprivation which may be masked in wards of relative affluence. This was considered important as many external funds are specifically linked to addressing deprivation.

It was agreed for more detailed statistical information and information relating to relevant funding streams to be made available to Elected Members.

Note - At this point in the proceedings, the meeting became inquorate but informal discussion continued.

Once a quorum was restored the formal meeting recommenced.

members considered priorities emerging from the wards within North Area Council. It suggested which thematic areas may be best dealt with at a ward level, using

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Ward Alliance or Devolved Ward Budgets, or at an Area Council level, either by commissioning activity or through an increased focus on performance monitoring.

The report suggested the following themes to be focused on by the Area Council:-

- Health and Wellbeing;
- Regeneration;
- Youth Provision and;
- Anti Poverty.

Housing was also put forward as an additional area of focus.

It was recognised that Community Engagement was also important but it was likely that this would be part of any activity to address any issues within the suggested themes

For each of the themes members recognised the need for further and more detailed exploration to understand the issue, consider current levels of intervention and identify where gaps in provision occurred. It was acknowledged that the latter would be informed by the Council's budgeting procedures.

It was suggested that it may be more appropriate to hold a number of workshops based around the themes suggested, to which all members of the North Area Council would be invited and where each Ward should have representation. The meeting acknowledged that these should be held at times conducive to ensuring the majority of Members could attend.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that more detailed statistical information at smaller geographical levels be made available to Elected Members;
- (ii) that details of relevant external funding streams be circulated to Members;
- (iii) that the themes suggested be taken forward as draft priorities for North Area Council;
- (iv) that the North Area Council Chair and Manager arrange a series of workshops to discuss the draft priorities in more detail.

14. **Local Democracy Week - 14th-20th October.**

The Lead Locality Officer for North, North East and South spoke to the item, making members aware of this Europe wide initiative. It was suggested that members may want to consider what activity they may wish to organise within their Ward or at an Area Council level.

A suggestion was made that this could be an ideal format for helping the public to further understand the role of the Elected Member. The meeting also noted that the timing may also coincide with the consultation on the Area Plan.

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15. **Future agenda items.**

Members discussed the next meeting of the Area Council, due to take place on 23rd September, 2013. It was suggested that the next meeting considers commissioning and procurement, and also considers again the draft priorities for the area after further discussion has taken place in workshops.

RESOLVED:- that commissioning and procurement, and the priorities for North Area Council, be considered at the September meeting

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Chair