

2nd February 2015

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

NORTH AREA COUNCIL

2nd February 2015

34. **Present:** Councillors Burgess (Chair), Cave, Cherryholme, Davies, Duerden, Grundy, Howard, Platts and Spence.

35. **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non pecuniary interests.

36. **Minutes from the North Area Council meeting held on 17th November, 2014**

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting, held on 17th November, 2014.

RESOLVED: - that the minutes of North Area Council, held on 17th November, 2014 be approved as a true and correct record, subject to an amendment to minute no. 25, which should read 'a defibrillator *will be* installed at Thompson's Garage, Darton rather than *has been* installed. In terms of minute no. 27 it was highlighted that the service monitoring and evaluation role of Area Councils remains under review.

37. **Minutes from the Special North Area Council meeting held on 22nd January 2015**

The meeting received the minutes from the Special meeting held on 22nd January, 2015.

RESOLVED: - that the minutes of North Area Council, held on 22nd January, 2015 be approved as a true and correct record.

38. **Environmental Enforcement Provider Update – Kingdom Security**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Kingdom Security was unable to attend the meeting to provide a verbal update.

39. **Future Council's Youth Service Provision**

It was highlighted that this topic is part of the family service offer and the Area Council will need to be involved in the Future Council budget consultation as representatives of the local area.

40. **Notes from the Ward Alliances, for information**

The meeting received the notes of Ward Alliance meetings held in November/December 2014 and January 2015.

Darton East: Councillor Spence reported that the Networking Meeting held in November was attended by around 60 individuals.

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Darton West: It was highlighted that a volunteer recognition celebration event is planned for March 20th and a committee is being organised to plan the event. The Neighbourhood Network is going from strength to strength and it is possible that a booklet will be produced explaining the structure and function of the Ward Alliance in order to get more groups interested and improve connectivity.

St. Helen's: A membership review will be carried out in February. It was highlighted that this is good practice and all wards were encouraged to do this.

Councillor Spence reported that John Peachey is leaving shortly and expressed thanks for all his hard work in the wards and best wishes for the future.

41. Report on the use of Devolved Ward Budgets and Ward Alliance Funds

The Area Council Manager updated the North Area Council on progress in each Ward in expending the Devolved Ward Budget, Ward Alliance Fund and Public Health financial contribution, highlighting that it is essential that the Area Team is made aware in the run-up to the financial year of any large 'annual' projects which will require on-going funding, such as provision of Christmas trees and hanging baskets.

It was reported that there is a proposal being taken to Cabinet in February to cut 50% of the devolved ward budget for 2015/16 but due to a degree of financial relaxation any unspent funds from 2014/15 will be carried forward to the new financial year. Ward Alliance funding will be maintained at current levels. Concern was expressed that some projects had taken time to establish and thus were showing an underspend.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that each Ward in the North Area Council area prioritises the efficient expenditure of the remaining Devolved Ward Budgets and Ward Alliance funds in line with the guidance on spend.

42. Area Commissioning Project Performance Report

The Area Council Manager presented this item which gave an overview and detailed summary of the performance of projects commissioned by the North Area Council in line with the Young People, Health and Wellbeing and Economic Regeneration priorities. In terms of the Environmental Enforcement project, concern was expressed at the lack of enforcement visibility, which gives extra reassurances to people living in the community. The Area Council Manager reported that the providers attend update meetings regularly and that lack of visibility does not necessarily indicate the work is not being done. In addition, performance reports indicate an equitable split across the area. Enforcement Officers had been seen in St. Helens Ward doing car parking work around local schools and issuing tickets.

The Health and Wellbeing project was discussed. Members felt that the action plan should be made available as soon as possible so that Members are aware of the groups taking place in their Wards and can tap into them, ensuring they are integrated with existing provision. There is a need to ensure that all Wards get an equal share of the contract and that Members are aware of what is happening in their Wards.

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RESOLVED:

- (i) It was suggested that attendance at Area Council meetings to update on progress should be written into contracts with providers for future projects.

43. North Area Council priorities and projects for commissioning

The North Area Council Manager provided a detailed report on the Area Council's project development, procurement process and associated spend. Members were also asked to consider two further projects for approval.

Anti-Poverty – Financial Inclusion Project – This project will ensure that residents of the North Area Council have access to information, support and guidance at an estimated cost of £145,000 over a two year period. It was highlighted that there is a need to find accessible appropriate workspaces in which to carry out sensitive work of this nature.

Environment, Clean and Green – Community Development Project

The 'Clean and Green' environmental project will deliver a service to complement existing BMBC provision to improve the overall environmental appearance of the wards that make up the North Area Council area. The estimated contract value is £150,000 over two years. The project is about enabling people to work for themselves and the community and as such is not about scheduled maintenance, but rather capacity building, working with volunteers and linked to the Ward Alliances. A discussion took place about the removal of waste such as grass cuttings etc., together with the issue of third party insurance for tools and equipment.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Members note the current financial position statement of the Area Council in relation to live projects and associated spend;
- (ii) that approval be given to the Financial Inclusion and Clean and Green project specifications to enable procurement of suitable providers to commence and
- (iii) that checks be made with Mike Egnor (Operations Manager, Neighbourhood Pride) regarding disposal of waste from the Clean and Green project.

44. Community Magazines

The above item was accepted by the Chairman as an urgent item for consideration by the meeting in view of the need to ensure timely consultation with the Area Councils to ensure contracts with preferred suppliers can be entered into by March, should the Area Council indicate support for the initiative.

A report was tabled which proposed options for a 'Community Magazine'. This is intended to be a twice-yearly Area Council publication following the cessation of Open Door magazine as part of the council's budget proposals. The magazine would be produced at nil cost through selling advertising space, compiled by the Area Team, with distribution costs estimated at £3,000. However members did not feel that they had been allowed sufficient time to information on which to base a decision.

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A discussion took place about the best way to effectively promote the work of the Area Council and also the Ward Alliances. There was a suggestion that any publication would be better served by a 'microbrand' as a single publication would not be relevant to all wards. Concerns were also raised about the impact on the Area Team's workload.

RESOLVED:

- (i)** that Members take another opportunity to consider the proposal to introduce a community magazine for the North Area, and
- (ii)** that a workshop session should be arranged to determine how best to promote the work of the North Area Council.

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Chair