

MEETING:	Penistone Area Council
DATE:	Thursday, 3 June 2021
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

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

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 8th April, 2021 (Pac.03.06.2021/2)**

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th April, 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 8th April, 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 **Notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 20th May, 2021 (Pac.03.06.2021/3)**

The meeting received the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance meeting held on 20th May, 2021.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 20th May, 2021 be received.

4 **Clean, Green and Tidy Service - Twiggs Grounds Maintenance (Pac.03.06.2021/4)**

Wendy Twigg and John Twigg from Twigg Grounds Maintenance were welcomed to the meeting to give an overview of performance for the new contract period started in April 2020 to date including delivery throughout the pandemic.

An overview of the service was given, which included the types of work undertaken and the groups and organisations engaged. 113 Twiggs led social action projects had been undertaken, work with 67 groups including Parish/Town Councils and independent groups, schools on 2 occasions which was a reflection of the schools being closed followed by restrictions due to the pandemic, and with businesses on 13 occasions.

121 litter picks with a total number of 482 sacks of waste cleared by both the Team and the independent volunteers, it was reported that volunteers had also been

disposing of the waste themselves. 22 volunteers and 13 young volunteers had been engaged.

Members heard about a variety of interventions and assistance delivered through the contract. These included supporting a number of business, schools and community groups on a variety of environmental projects and litter picking.

A number of other projects had been carried out including support provided to residents through a Tool Bank in order to assist with litter picking, handing out educational packs and Easter treats to thank volunteers, in particular the young independent ones who had engaged with the service during lockdown. Hbee+ project had gained momentum after initial support to get up and running, and had been linked in to support from the Men in Sheds Group. This has now been handed over to the Community to maintain as a sustainable area. Support has also been given to Springvale Gardens with trees planted and beds prepared for planting. The service has now benefitted from the introduction of a full range of re-chargeable electric tools.

Members praised the work showing that, with a little support from Twiggs, residents, businesses, schools and community groups could achieve positive results and that enhancement in skills was encouraging people to come forward and do more to improve their environment.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation and hard work undertaken by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance to improve the area.

5 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Pac.03.06.2021/5)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report, drawing attention to the £20,000 annual allocation and carry forward of £6,925 giving a total of £26,925. Members were informed that applications were being received by Groups and after a number of applications had been approved a total of £19,314.60 remained.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 Performance Report Q4 (Pac.03.06.2021/6)

The Area Council Manager provided members with an overview of performance for Quarter 4 which included months January to March, 2021 and all contracted services.

Members were reminded of the current Area Council priorities and which contracts funded by the Area Council supported them and their respective contract or grant timescales.

An overview of performance was provided with the knowledge that contracts had remained flexed due to the pandemic, it was noted that during the period, 4 businesses had been involved in clean and tidy activities, 2 young people had engaged in the design/contribution of their local environment and 19 people felt they had the opportunity to influence the design and maintenance of their local area. An apprentice that had been recruited through the Twiggs contract had unfortunately not

worked out but that was back out for recruitment, and 13 young people had volunteered with Twiggs supporting litter picking.

The number of Community groups supported in the quarter was 41 mostly due to the work of Twiggs and Age UK, with 1 new Community groups created which was not a concern due to the restrictions in place during the quarter.

Adults volunteering had seen an upsurge with 138 in total for the year and 33 for the quarter with 22 of those being new. The CAB and DIAL service had seen an increase in requests for advice and support with 191 in total for the quarter with 23 referred for health and advice.

In terms of the Local Economy 3 full time jobs had been created within the Twiggs contract since April 2020, local spend across all contracts was at 95% and the volunteer hours created in the quarter equated to £1918.42 with 37 people receiving training through the Twiggs contract. Members noted that it was positive what had been achieved during the pandemic with the flexed contracts.

Members heard how the Age UK contract had changed the way in which it contacted people due to the pandemic and had maintained 148 contacts in the quarter and working with 25 existing service users and 3 new regular ones whilst supporting 14 new group participants. Additional service users had been reached in the Thurgpland, Wortley and Howbrook areas as a result of a successful collaboration with Wortley Golf Club providing 244 meals. There were 21 active volunteers and 2 who were being processed in order to carry out support to the services for instance by telephone and to go on socially distanced walks with those able to participate. Advice and support had been given to 20 new service users with a total estimated gains of £28,565.77 which was an increase from £14,397.68 during the previous quarter.

Members were updated on a number of Groups that were planning to restart such as the Men in Sheds Group that had maintained contact throughout the pandemic and planned a relaunch as and when it was safe to do so. The Community Car Share Scheme had not been in use but the Dial a Ride service had resumed to take people to medical appointments and shopping but under restrictions. U3A Groups were gradually restarting and a SOPPA zoom meeting had been held in March over zoom to continue to provide a means of communication and referrals throughout the pandemic.

Activities at home would continue until a time when service users could start to attend meetings and events face to face with a view to maintaining some provisions for those who were housebound. Plans for when restrictions began to ease had begun such as walking activities and it remained an intention to reach out to smaller communities to include them in future activities.

An update was provided on the Twiggs contract and the rise in groups coming forward, a total of 41 had received support, 5 businesses had connected with the Team, 21 individual projects had been initiated such as clearing of footpaths from around the Penistone area, an upsurge in litter picks had been seen and work had commenced with schools with tree planting. Members were informed that with the success of the Tool Bank, they would look into developing an initiative across the 5 Area Councils that Twiggs had a contract with.

With regards to the DIAL information and advice services, members were informed that 120 residents had accessed it in the quarter resulting in £21,096 in unclaimed benefits being generated with a projected total outstanding amount of £24,960. This meant that for every £1 invested from the Penistone Working Together Fund the project had brought £40 into the area.

The CAB debt advice service had also seen an upsurge in people accessing the service with 51 clients seen in the quarter of which 80 issues had been dealt with across a wide variety of issues including benefits, universal credit, unemployment and housing issues. Clients had been able to claim £8,819 in benefits resulting in an investment return for every £1 spent on the project, £4 of benefits were gained. They had seen an increase in people with disability and long term health conditions and 10 volunteers had been supporting the project. During the quarter clients had been assisted with £6,900 of debts which was low due to Government advice of pursuing debts being put on hold, but this was predicted to increase once restrictions were lifted.

An update was provided on the work carried out by the Penistone Area Team including the Community Development Officers continued mapping exercise on Community Groups and venues across the Penistone Wards to help re-establish contact to support groups in the pandemic recovery steps.

The Neighbourhood Engagement Officer had been providing specific covid support to businesses and venues for re-opening during the roadmap out of the pandemic and carried out work to promote engagement around the vaccination programme.

The Area Team had been administering the Supporting Younger People's Grant Fund to provide advice and support for potential applicants, and continued their support to volunteer litter pickers and collaborating with both Twiggs and Neighbourhood Services to ensure a smooth process for any enquiries and work had been carried out to promote the Great British Spring Clean which was to be held 28th May to 13th June, 2021 and Volunteers Week to be held 1st to 7th June, 2021.

Members raised concerns as to whether post the pandemic people would re-engage with groups such as Men in Sheds, it was felt there would be a reasonable amount of anxiety of people attending groups again plus the loss of mobility and confidence for people to go out but that Age UK would provide support to people in order to get Groups up and running again.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7 Procurement and Financial Update (Pac.03.06.2021/7)

The item was introduced by the Area Council manager who drew the attention of the members to the contracts awarded under the Supporting Vulnerable and Older Peoples Service, members were informed that the original grant funded service was due to finish in 2020 but that due to the pandemic members had agreed to extend it by 6 months. It had been hoped that a procurement process for a new service would have been in place by June 2021, however, by the time the decision had been taken the post Christmas lockdown had begun. Members were informed that there was still a large amount of work to be carried out therefore it was proposed to extend the

contract for a further 6 months to give time for a transition period and to be able to invite Age UK to a Member Briefing in order to provide a detailed report to aid in working out what the future need would be. The cost of the 6 month extension would be a further £35,000 and would allow a revised timetable of procurement to include a Workshop in August and to agree the grant specification over Autumn in preparation for a new service in January, 2022.

Members received an update on the Penistone Area Council Working Together Fund, which had already funded 2 contracts with DIAL and CAB, it was reported that Penistone FM had submitted an application for grant funding to support the Young Minds Project which had been agreed at a cost of £8,583, leaving a balance of £33,699 which continued to be promoted by the Area Team to encourage further applications.

Members were informed that the Working Together Grant Fund – Supporting Young People Grant Panel had assessed applications in late April/early May 2021 and approved 5 projects at a total cost of £40,494. The overspend of £494, which was outside of the ringfenced £40,000 allocation for the Fund would be funded from the main Working Together Fund.

The Clean Green and Tidy contract which was agreed at a cost of £100,000 for the 2021/2022 year continued to thrive and members were informed that they would continue to look at the outcomes from that contract as the move out of lockdown continued.

The Ward Alliances opening budget for the financial year 2021/22 was £26,925. Members were informed that applications for funding were now increasing as groups had started to commence. Projects totalling £7,610.40 had been approved for funding at the meeting held on 20th May, 2021 resulting in £19,314 available to spend. Members were asked if they wished to allocate £10,000 to ringfence as a pot of money for smaller groups who wished to support young people for the summer period and summer holiday activities. Members noted that if the money was not used then it would be returned back to the main Ward Alliance budget for projects in the future.

Members expressed their support to the ringfenced money for smaller projects and were aware of a number of projects that would benefit from it.

Members noted that the spend to date from the 2021/22 financial year budget was £100,000 on the Twiggs Contract with a further £35,000 for the Age UK 6 month extension and £10,000 for the Ward Alliance, leaving a total of £70,225.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the update on procurement activity be received;
- (ii) That the update of contracts funded by the existing Supporting Isolated and Older People Grant Fund within the report be noted;
- (iii) That the revised grant procurement process and timetable to establish future provision to support vulnerable and isolated older people in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, be approved;
- (iv) That agreement be given for £35,000 to be utilised to provide a further 6-month extension to existing grant contracts Supporting Vulnerable and

Isolated Older People to ensure continuity of service whilst a procurement of new services takes place;

- (v) That update and current financial position of the Penistone Working Together Fund be received;
- (vi) That the update on ringfences funds within the existing Working Together Fund to establish specific activities that will support young people in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic be received;
- (vii) That the updates on the new Clean and Tidy contract started in April 2020 with the report be noted;
- (viii) That the update on the Ward Alliance Fund budget be noted and that £10,000 be approved for a ring-fenced funding pot within the Ward Alliance Funds to support young people's activities during the school summer holiday period 2021;
- (ix) That the current financial position for 2021/22 be noted.

Chair