

MEETING:	South Area Council
DATE:	Friday, 25 June 2021
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Markham (Chair), Andrews BEM, Eastwood, Franklin, Frost, J. Higginbottom, Lamb, Osborne, Shepherd and Smith

1 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillors Franklin, Lamb and Shepherd each declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute number 6 due to their positions as directors of Forge Community Partnership.

Councillors Frost and Markham both declared an interest in minute number 6 due to their positions on the board of Age UK Barnsley.

2 Minutes of the Meetings of South Area Council held on 23rd April, and 4th May, 2021 (Sac.25.06.2021/2)

The meeting considered the minutes of South Area Council held on 23rd April and 4th May, 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the South Area Council held on 23rd April and 4th May, 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Sac.25.06.2021/3)

The meeting received the notes from the following Ward Alliances:- Hoyland Milton and Rockingham held on 19th May, 2021; Wombwell held on 17th May, 2021; and Darfield held on 27th May, 2021.

It was noted that efforts to provide hanging baskets in Darfield had come to fruition with the majority of feedback received being overwhelmingly positive. Members also heard of the issue of flies in the area, which had also been experienced in the Wombwell Ward in the past.

It was noted that membership of the Darfield Ward Alliance had fallen, and social media had been used to promote this to interested parties. It was noted that consideration was being given to holding meetings in evenings in order to engage people who also worked.

Feedback was also positive from the Hoyland Milton and Rockingham Ward Alliance with regards to hanging baskets, but concerns were expressed about the watering schedule, should weather be warm and dry.

Wombwell Ward Alliance had met with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance to discuss which areas to target within the Ward. The team would work with the Private Sector Housing Officer to target the Blythe Street area.

It was noted that the Ward Alliance had also discussed after school provision for children with special educational needs. It was noted that working group had been established to consider this in more detail and to engage residents. This would then inform any provision provided by the Ward Alliance.

RESOLVED that the notes and feedback from the Ward Alliances be received.

4 Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing - Lauren Nixon (Sac.25.06.2021/4)

Unfortunately, Lauren Nixon, Transformation Lead, was unable to attend the meeting. Therefore, it was suggested that this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Area Council.

RESOLVED that this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Area Council.

5 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Sac.25.06.2021/5)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, noting that all Ward Alliances had approved finance. The amounts remaining for distribution were acknowledged.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 Procurement and Financial Update (Sac.25.06.2021/6)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, reminding Members of the previous meeting where £1,414 had been approved in order to extend opening hours of the Wombwell Post Office. It was noted that subsequently the Post Office had relocated on to Wombwell High Street, so this finance would not be required.

Thanks were given for the support provided which provided a vital lifeline for many. Those present noted that a Post Office had been also now been reopened in Hoyland and in Darfield.

Discussion then turned to the Private Sector Housing Service Level Agreement. The service had been funded until September, 2021, with a recommendation to extend this for a further year. Members noted the benefits of the service, and how it contributed to the Area Priorities. The officer was based in the area and already had positive relationships with landlords and other services and agencies. The proactive nature of the post was also seen as extremely positive.

Members discussed the potential implications of the lifting of current restrictions and noted that evictions could start to rise. Questions were raised around the definition of 'Vulnerable Households' used by the officer, and it was agreed to circulate that used by all officers in the Safer Communities service.

Questions were raised around the low numbers of interventions in the Rockingham Ward. It was suggested that discussions could take place outside the meeting to

consider the reasons behind this, and what could be done to improve performance. It was noted that Members in other Wards undertook 'Walkabouts' with the officer and with officers from Berneslai Homes to highlight issues.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the update on the Wombwell Post Office monies of £1,414 previously allocated but no longer required, be noted, and that £1,414 be made available to reallocate to other priorities;
- (ii) That the Private Sector Housing SLA be extended for a further year until September 2022 at a cost of £33,528.
- (iii) That the definition of Vulnerable Households used by the Private Sector Housing Officer be circulated to Members;
- (iv) That Rockingham Members and relevant officers meet to discuss the low numbers of interventions from the Private Sector Housing Officer in the Ward, with a view to addressing this.

7 Covid-19 Update (Sac.25.06.2021/7)

Kay Tinkler, Neighbourhood Engagement Officer (NEO), was welcomed to the meeting and provided Members with an overview of the current situation.

It was noted that the latest 7-day rate was around 80 per 100,000 which was the highest in South Yorkshire, but lower than the national average. Members heard that there had been no reported deaths in Barnsley over the past 7 days.

Community observations were generally positive, with the main issue across the borough being the lack of face coverings being worn. The increase in footfall, particularly in town centre, was acknowledged but this had not resulted in any specific issues. Reported incidents with South Yorkshire Police had also been low. Members were encouraged to continue to submit intelligence through the established means.

Members noted that the Covid Marshals had been distributing beer mats trying to encourage uptake of vaccines in over 40 males.

NEOs had been supporting smaller shops with Covid compliance, and feedback from shops was that the main issue was lack of face coverings being worn. Feedback had been positive from those receiving visits.

A community group toolkit had been developed to support groups to reopen community venues, which had been well received. However, many organisations had decided to remain closed until restrictions had been lifted. Members noted that advice was available for those wishing to hold events, and were encouraged to refer any interested groups.

Work to support licensed premises continued, with 58 in the area visited by NEOs. Venues had been eager to open safely, taking account of guidance.

With regard to vaccination rates, it was noted that approximately 80% of residents had received their first vaccine and 60% their second. Pop up vaccination clinics had been well received.

Home testing continued to be promoted, with 702 home testing kits distributed in Wombwell, but also available across the borough through pharmacies or through the government website.

Members noted that approx. 6% of over 50s had not taken up the offer of a vaccine. The reasons for this, such as mistrust of the vaccine and lack of testing, were discussed, and communications had been developed to try to tackle misconceptions. It was noted that all those refusing a vaccine were contacted, but only around 12% of all called went forward to be vaccinated.

A question was raised as to when herd immunity would be raised and it was agreed that an answer to this would be circulated.

Members discussed recent issues in Barnsley Hospital and it was suggested that a position statement be circulated to Members.

A suggestion was made for Members to receive an update on the hidden harms related to the pandemic and what could be done in the South Area to address these.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the report be noted;
- (ii) That further details be circulated to Members with regards to when herd immunity will be reached;
- (iii) That a position statement in relation to Barnsley Hospital be circulated to Members;
- (iv) That a future meeting of the Area Council receives an update on the hidden harms associated with the pandemic, focused on the South Area.

Chair