

MEETING:	Central Area Council
DATE:	Wednesday 9 November 2022
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Williams (Chair), Bowser, Clarke, K. Dyson, P. Fielding, W. Fielding, Gillis, Lodge, Moyes and Ramchandani

18 Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Central Area Council held on 19 October 2022 (Cen.19.10.2022/2)

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on 19 October 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on 19 October 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

20 Performance Management Report Q2 (Cen.09.11.2022/3)

The report was received, and questions invited. A request was made for more ward level information to be included in the report. Many Ward Alliances had a standing agenda item where a report from the Area Council was considered and ward level information on Area Council services would be useful for this purpose.

An issue was also raised in relation to the joining up of services, commissioned and otherwise, in the area. It was noted that the Area Team made efforts to foster relationships and partnership working including a bi-monthly multi-agency meetings to share good practice. Members were encouraged to highlight any specific gaps, and the Area Team would ensure appropriate links would be made with the officers.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

21 Welfare Advice - Presentations for Citizen's Advice Bureau and DIAL Barnsley (Cen.09.11.2022/4)

David Andy from Citizen's Advice Bureau was welcomed to the meeting, and Members were reminded that the service provided had started on 1st December 2020. It had always been designed to be delivered face to face but due to the pandemic had been delivered via telephone and digital means. However, it was noted that face to face services would resume in the new year.

Since the start of the service, 1,666 client contacts had been made, with in excess of £375,000 benefit gain, an average of £5,435 per client. £213,000 of debt had also been managed, an average of £5,357 per client. Clients had been assisted with 3,510 issues in total.

Members considered current data associated with the project, noting the gender imbalance, with females more likely to access support. The reasons for this were unknown. It was noted that data was likely to be much improved when face to face services resumed, due to the hampered ability to ask for demographic information via email.

Members received a case study which highlighted the impact of the service and questions were then invited.

A question asked related to the waiting times and Members heard that responses via email were normally provided within 2-3 days. Members also questioned whether the statistics referred to all CAB support provided in the Central area, or just those funded by the Area Council, and it was noted that it was the latter.

Those present discussed whether other options for advice and support were considered, such as through trade unions for their members, and it was noted that all avenues of support were considered.

Sharon Brown from DIAL was welcomed to the meeting and provided an overview of the aims of the organisation. Members were made aware of the highlights of the service between July and October, 2022. 259 residents had attended face to face sessions with 233 follow up telephone calls. Around £335,000 of additional income had also been generated and 159 volunteer hours committed.

Noted were the high proportion of residents using the service that reported a reduction in anxiety, an improvement in wellbeing and being more confident with an improved outlook.

Members received demographic information on users, include by age, gender, ward and ethnicity, and were provided with a case study which served to highlight the personal impact that the service could have on the lives of residents. A further case study showed the impact on the lives of those volunteering at DIAL.

Questions were invited and Members discussed potential duplication with CAB and other similar services. It was noted that DIAL specialised in providing advice for welfare benefits, whereas CAB specialised in debt advice and the services were complementary.

With regards to the distribution of residents using the service, it was noted that Dodworth figures had been surprisingly low historically but had increased more recently and it was noted that promotional work had taken place. When asked why the number of users had been low it was thought that there was no conclusive reason.

RESOLVED that thanks be given to both providers for their presentations and the continued hard work in the area.

22 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.09.11.2022/5)

The meeting received the following notes of the meetings of the Ward Alliances within the area:-

Central – held on 28 September 2022

Dodworth – held on 20 September 2022

Kingstone – held on 24 August and 5 October 2022

Stairfoot – held on 12 September and 10 October 2022

Worsbrough – held on 7 September (Environmental Working Group) and 8 September 2022

RESOLVED that the notes of the Ward Alliances be received.

23 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Cen.09.11.2022/6)

The report on the use of Ward Alliance Funds was received.

RESOLVED that the report on the use of Ward Alliance Funds be noted.

24 Procurement and Finance Update (Cen.09.11.2022/7)

The Area Council Manager introduced the report noting that lot two of the clean and green procurement had been unsuccessful, and that the need for this service had largely been surpassed. It was there for suggested that the finance been returned to the main Area Council budget.

With regards to the services to reduce social isolation and loneliness, Members heard that all projects had exceeded their targets and demand was on an upward trajectory. Therefore, after considering other options it was recommended that the projects be extended for a further year.

With reference to Supporting Vulnerable People, Members were reminded that this issue had been discussed at a recent workshop where intelligence and data around this issue had been considered, alongside the locality-based review of welfare services. Also noted were the presentations on Welfare Advice Services earlier on the agenda. Given that this area remained a priority for the Area Council, it was suggested that a Supporting Vulnerable People Fund was commissioned, with a financial envelope of £65,000 per year for two years.

The meeting went on to consider detached youth work provision in the area, provided by YMCA and The Youth Association. It was noted that demand for both services remained high and it was therefore suggested that both be extended. The Area Council Manager noted a discrepancy within the report, as both projects ran until 30th June 2024, therefore any extension would be for 12 months following this date.

It was noted that the current service to support Children and Young People improve their emotional resilience would come to an end in March 2024. Given that the need remained for the service, it was suggested that £140,000 per annum be allocated for two years to enable the procurement of a similar service.

The Area Council Manager then drew the attention of Members to the current financial situation, and that predicted going forward if the recommendations presented were agreed.

Members discussed the proposals, and it was noted that since the establishment of Area Councils there had been no uplift in the budget. It was suggested that the Area Chair could take this as an action point to discuss with relevant officers.

Questions were also received in relation to the work of Ward Alliances in supporting communities in the current financial climate. It was remarked that the Area Council in previous years had devolved additional finance to the Ward Alliances, but that if recommendations were agreed this may not be possible.

The significant demands on Ward Alliance budgets for such as the erection of Christmas lights were also noted and the Chair agreed to discuss the costs with relevant officers at the meeting of Ward Alliance Chairs.

Members acknowledged the national situation, and the potential impact on Council budgets and the need to make difficult decisions going forward.

RESOLVED:-

- i) That the overview of Central Area Council's current priorities, and overview of all current contracts, contract extensions, Service Level Agreements and Well-being Fund projects with associated timescales be noted;
- ii) That the actual financial position to date for 2022/23 and the projected expenditure, including future proposals, to 2023/23 as outline in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report be noted;
- iii) That an environmental education service no longer be procured and that the £50,000 allocated be returned to the main commissioning budget;
- iv) That the Social Isolation and Loneliness Grants be extended for a further year, as follows:-
 - a. Age UK grant funding of My Community, My Life Project from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 at a cost of £42,000
 - b. Reds In the Community grant funding of Reds Connect project from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 at a cost of £15,500;
 - c. MIND grant funding of Thriving Communities Project from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 at a cost of £41,800;
- v) That the commissioning of service via a 'Supporting Vulnerable People Fund' with a financial envelope of £65,000 per year for two years, from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2025 (to include the procurement of Welfare Advice Services within its scope) be approved;
- vi) That the establishment of the 'Supporting Vulnerable People Fund' be progressed by the Area Manager, in conjunction with a panel made up of Elected Members from the Area Council, with delegated responsibility for the approval of all necessary paperwork required for the procurement of these grants delegated to the Executive Director Public Health and Communities;
- vii) That approval be given to extend the following youth work grants:-

- a. The Youth Association grant funding of Streetsmart project from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 at a cost of £52,000;
- b. YMCA grant funding of Detached Youth Work in Dodworth and Gilroyd from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 at a cost of £12,395;
- viii) That approval be given to establish a new Children and Young People's Emotional Resilience Service, with a financial envelope of £140,000 per annum for two years;
- ix) That the procurement of a Children and Young People's Emotional Resilience Service be progressed by the Area Manager in conjunction with a panel of Members of the Area Council, with delegated responsibility for the approval of any necessary paperwork delegated to the Executive Director Public Health and Communities;
- x) That the contingency budget of £33,446 as forecasted by the carry forward balance as at 31st March 2025 be noted. This remains available to cover any unexpected risks to services and to ensure the Area Council can respond to emerging need.

25 Date and Times of Future Meetings (Gen.09.11.2022/8)

Members were made aware that a request had been made to consider the date and times of future meetings, as there had some instances where it clashed with other commitments of Members.

It was noted that previously the meetings had been held on Monday, but this had been changed to necessitate the involvement of both Area Council Managers, who job shared, and both worked on Wednesday.

After some discussion, the consensus was that the meeting should remain on Wednesday at 2pm.

RESOLVED that future meetings of the Area Council be held on Wednesday at 2pm.

Chair