

MEETING:	Dearne Area Council
DATE:	Monday 8 January 2024
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Meeting Room, Goldthorpe Library

MINUTES

Present Councillors Coates (Chair), Bellamy, Cain, Moore and Morrell

33 **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

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

34 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 20th November, 2023 (Dac.08.01.2023/2)**

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting of Dearne Area Council.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Dearne Area Council meeting held on 20th November, 2023 be approved as a true and correct record.

35 **IDAS - Lucy Cafrello**

Lucy Cafrello attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the work of IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Services) with specific reference to that work undertaken within Barnsley.

By way of introductions, she outlined her role and explained that she was currently working within Community Engagement. She stated that IDAS was the leading specialist domestic abuse Charity within Yorkshire. It provided expert advice and support for people affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. The Charity provided a confidential helpline, safe accommodation, practical and emotional support and training for professionals.

During the last year, the Charity had won a national diversity award, had developed an ambitious 5-year strategy and held a helpline accreditation. They had received over 25,000 helpline calls, housed over 250 families, dealt with 15,000 referrals, supported over 10,000 within the community and trained 8,000 professionals. Within Barnsley, there had been 1,670 clients dealt with (both male and female), 10% of whom were within the Dearne Valley

Support was provided for domestic abuse and sexual violence as well as support for children and young people. Safe accommodation was provided as well as training, consultancy and policy work. The Charity also worked closely with the Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Services. Helplines and live chat were available via the IDAS website. Confidential emotional and practical support was available as was community-based support including 1:1 support and support groups. Emergency

accommodation was available, and support was also provided to enable people to stay safe in their own homes if that was what they wished.

The Area Council was then informed of the people who were supported and the way in which the IDAS referral process operated was explained. Information could about this could be sent to all Members.

Members were then informed of the role and work of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and the practical and emotional support they could provide.

In the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the following:

- The refuge for Barnsley was situated in Mapplewell although different types of accommodation were available in Sheffield
- It was noted that the community-based support was located within Goldthorpe so referred clients could easily access services/support. There was also a secure base within the Alhambra Centre in Barnsley. The Service could also see clients within GP surgeries.
- Reference was made to issues that could be exacerbated through the use of social media, IT as well as electronic devices which 'listened' to conversations.
- Reference was made to the way in which it was hoped that the service could be expanded possibly by the use of volunteers who opened their homes for victims of abuse. The Charity was also looking to establish specialist support groups and work alongside a wider range of other charities. It was noted that IDAS currently worked with the Salvation Army and Age UK amongst others.
- It was noted that some people did not recognise some kinds of behaviour, including emotional pressure, as abuse until this was pointed out to them and reference was made to the difficulties this presented in dealing with such issues.
- Further work was required with GP practices as well as other organisations to ensure that all vulnerable people were given access to the service.
- It was important that knowledge about the Charity and the services on offer was more widely known and, in this respect, the Area Council Manager stated that she would let IDAS know of any events they could attend to further publicise their work. Reference was also made to various Groups and the B:Friend groups which Ms Cafrello would attend if at all possible.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted and Ms Cafrello be thanked for attending the meeting and for answering Members questions.

36 Introduction to Neighbourhood Services for the Environment Priority - Mathew Holdroyd

Mr M Holdroyd, Assistant Service Manager, attended the meeting to explain the way in which Neighbourhood Services would provide the commissioned services to meet the priorities of the Area Council's Environmental priorities.

It was proposed that a dedicated Team would be allocated to the Dearne and would comprise 2 Members of staff, one working three days per week and one working 5. A vehicle would be provided as would any necessary equipment. The budget for the first year would be in the region of £84,000 and would include a contingency of

around 20%. Work would be undertaken with volunteers and would also include reactive work. The intention was that the service would be in addition to and enhance the 'core' service provision within the area and not be a replacement for it. This would mean that there was an improvement throughout the area which would meet the Area Council's environment priorities.

Neighbourhood Services and Street Cleansing were moving to an area-based approach and a co-ordinator would ensure that there was no duplication. The Team allocated to meet the Deane Environmental priority would, therefore, work collaboratively with those other Service Teams which would mean that there were economies of scale and more work could, therefore, be undertaken within the area. Members were already aware that Neighbourhood Services operated a similar model very successfully within other areas of the borough and whilst 'smaller' equipment would be purchased specifically for the Dearne, it was the intention that larger equipment could be pooled in one location and allocated for use on a rota basis as and when required.

In the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to the following:

- Prior to the commencement of the contract, the Area Council Manager would meet with all Members to discuss and draw up a list of agreed priorities for the Team to undertake
- All work would be apportioned fairly and requests from Councillors would be addressed unless there were specific reasons why this could not be undertaken. There was flexibility within the contracts to allow for occasional weekend/evening working if required and provided sufficient notice was provided – in this respect and by way of an example, reference was made to an event held in the St Helen's Ward on a Saturday for which support was provided for setting up and taking down gazebo's etc
- It was noted that maintenance of all equipment would be undertaken or arranged by Neighbourhood Services and such matters were included within the overall budget for the service
- Further information was needed in respect of any potential TUPE transfer of staff from Twiggs
- Mr Holdroyd stated that his service would be able to provide some limited support until the start of the formal contract. He stated that if any Member had any questions they should direct them to himself. He also encouraged Members to speak to Members in other Area Council Areas where similar arrangements were in place as there were many stories of success. He also encouraged them to speak to the Team Leader about what was required and what needed to be done on a day to day basis

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted and Mr Holdroyd be thanked for attending the meeting and for answering Members questions

37 Dearne Area Council Financial Update (Dac.08.01.2023/5)

The Area Council Manager submitted a report which provided an update regarding the Area Council's financial position.

The report outlined the carry forward from 2022/23, the committed spend for 2023/24 and 2024/25 together with information on the Dearne Development Fund. A detailed financial breakdown was included within an Appendix to the report.

It was noted that in total the Area Council had £57,429.91 to carry over into this financial year.

It was noted that, going forward, the majority of commissions had one year left with the exception of B:Friend which, if extended for a further six months, may make things easier from a financial management point of view as all would be due for renewal in March. Further discussions would be held with Members on options moving forward.

RESOLVED that the financial update and the impact on future budgets be noted.

38 Commissioning Update (Dac.08.01.2023/6)

The Area Council Manager submitted a report providing an update with regard to the Area Council's Commissioned Services and requesting a continuation of those services for a further term as per the original contracts which were subject to annual review.

Information was provided about the performance of the Social Connectivity Service, the Housing Cohesion Officer Post and the Assisting Employment and Skills project (Dearne Electronic Community Village) all of which were continuing to perform well and were well received and appreciated by the community.

It was also noted, as previously reported, that the Environmental Service project currently provided by Twiggs which was to have ended in March 2023 had been extended for a further year. This commission would not be renewed, and the service would be delivered by Neighbourhood Services from April 2024 on the basis that they could provide more hours within the Area Council financial envelope.

The Area Council Manager commented that as several commissions were coming to the end of their current contracts Members may wish to consider, in advance of that, if there were any new/alternative commissions they might wish to promote. Arising out of this discussion, reference was made to the need for additional Family Support Work and a comment was made about the possible use future of facilities that might be available at the Dearne Playhouse.

The Area Council Manager also commented that she was in the process of discussing with other departments, partners and stakeholders, what other options there might be for obtaining additional finance to support more projects within the area.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the continuation of the Social Connectivity Service from 1st July, 2024 to the end of June 2025 be approved at a cost of £28,000;

- (ii) That the continuation of the Housing and Cohesion Officer post from 1st April 2024 to the end of March 2025 be approved at a cost of £30,694;
- (iii) That the continuation of the Assisting Employment and Skills Commission provided by Dearne Electronic Community Village from 1st April 2024 to the end of March 2025 be approved at a cost of £34,000; and
- (iv) That the update on the current position with regard to the Environmental Service Commission be noted.

39 Notes from the Dearne Ward Alliances (Dac.08.01.2023/7)

The meeting received the notes from Dearne North Ward Alliance held on 14th November, 2023 and the Dearne South Ward Alliance held on 7th November 2023.

Members received a brief update from the Area Council Manager of the main items discussed and the activities promoted at the meetings:

(a) Dearne North

- One application had been resubmitted due to the lack of information from the previous submission. The Goldthorpe Library application had been agreed with a split funding from both Ward Alliances. This would help support the engagement work to improve the footfall into the library
- Group updates had been provided on the brilliant work that had been undertaken through the winter months and the Christmas activities that had taken place for all the community. No plans had been agreed for further events due to capacity of workloads from Ward Alliance Members and for personal health issues
- All had agreed for the renewal on memberships and a recruitment exercise was to commence in January 2024 with some marketing of the Alliance which would include details of the work that had previously been undertaken and funded. There would also be an update of the Action Plan in relation to the priorities from April 2024 to March 2025

(b) Dearne South

- Applications for funding had been submitted from Goldthorpe Library (as reported above), Santa's Grotto for the Christmas on the Square – both had been agreed and fully supported.
- The Treasurer gave an update on the working funds and balances and projects against committed spend
- Christmas on the Square project had been actioned and pencilled in for a future meeting to run through roles and responsibilities
- Group updates had been given by each of the Ward Alliance members representing their work in the Dearne South Ward
- A recruitment exercise had been approved and the Action Plan had been updated for 2024 to ensure the right priorities were made and potentially put a budget towards each category with a limit on the amount funded in order to ensure that all monies spent would be against the top projects and initiatives

RESOLVED that notes from the respective Ward Alliances be received.

40 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Dac.08.01.2023/8)

The Area Council Manager submitted a report on the spend to date from the Ward Alliance Funds within the Dearne North and South Area.

It was noted that within the Dearne North Ward Alliance there was a starting balance for 2023/24 of £12,270.17 which included the underspend of £2,270.17 from 2022/23. Twelve projects had been funded at a cost of £8,560.08, leaving a balance of £3,710.09. Within the Dearne South Ward Alliance there had been a starting balance for 2023/24 of £16,031.04 which included an underspend of £6,031.04 from 2022/23. A total of eleven projects had been funded at a cost of £11,990.12, leaving a balance of £4,040.92.

RESOLVED that the Dearne North and South Ward Alliance Fund Report be received and the spend to date be noted.

Chair