

MEETING:	North Area Council
DATE:	Monday 13 November 2023
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Leech (Chair), A. Cave, T. Cave, Denton, Howard, Hunt, Lofts, Tattersall and N. Wright

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

Councillor Tattersall declared a non-pecuniary interest as she is a member of the Berneslai Homes Board.

81 **Minutes of the North Area Council meeting held on 11 September 2023 (Nac.11.13.2023/2)**

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the North Area Council meeting held on the 11 September 2023 be approved as a true and correct record.

82 **Connecting Communities Grant Provider DIAL - Sharon Brown (Nac.11.13.2023/3)**

Members received a presentation from S Brown from DIAL, which provided an update on the Connect Together initiative which was funded by the North Area Council, with a strategic aim to reduce social isolation of disabled people, their families and carers. The objectives of the service were to extend the provision of support to reduce social isolation, facilitate activities that bring people together to share and learn, and to explore and develop other models of bringing people together.

The following key points were noted:-

- A total of 117 sessions had been ran, including 32 themed events which were introduced in autumn/winter 2022.
- A total of 113 people had attended Connect Together events.
- Bingo and a social club ran weekly sessions which included special workshops in poetry writing and quilling.
- 240 hours of volunteering time had been provided by 8 volunteers.
- A total of 1070 hours of contact time had been made with members.
- The first annual jumble sale had raised a total of £400.
- In 2022, a total of 60 people had attended the events, 33 slow cookers had been given away at four Crisis Support Sessions, 20 Christmas goodie bags

had been given away at four Christmas Giveaway events and 27 people had attended the Grab a Gift gift swap events.

- In 2023, over 100 people had attended the events, 44 gardening kits had been given away as part of the Green Fingers events, 30 fitness DVDs had been given away at three Get Fit events, 32 people had attended the Great Spring Clean events where they had received free cleaning essentials, and 27 people had attended the Picnic Hamper events where they had received filled picnic hampers.
- The outcomes achieved from the initiative had shown that 100% of people who attended Connect Together meet ups felt less isolated, more connected to their community, had made new friendships from regular attendance, and felt more confident since joining.
- Members were referred to a case study within the presentation slides.

Councillor Tattersall queried whether any future delivery plans had been identified from the current attendees, and whether these would be put into action in the upcoming year.

In response, S Brown commented that delivery was based upon the needs and requirements of individuals. Delivery plans were in place until Christmas 2023. From January 2024, intelligence would be utilised to plan initiatives on a quarterly basis.

Councillor Hunt queried how Connect Together could increase the number of people it interacted with and to identify isolated individuals.

S Brown referred to the challenges to identify isolated individuals. Organised events were key to attracting new members together with word of mouth. Members noted that a good way to continuously increase the membership could be achieved by further developing Connect Together and by establishing the interests of individuals locally.

Councillor Howard referred to the Darby and Joan Club at Darton WMC, which was specifically established to reach socially isolated individuals. She suggested that it could be a venue for Connect Together to reach other socially isolated individuals.

Councillor Leech expressed his thanks for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED that Members noted the update.

83 Housing and Cohesion Officer - Mark Griffiths (Nac.11.13.2023/4)

Members received a presentation from M Griffiths, Housing and Cohesion Officer which provided an overview of his job role and highlighted some of the work undertaken to date.

The following key points were noted:-

- The core of the work undertaken by M Griffiths dealt with issues that were capable of having a detrimental effect on others i.e. environmental issues, property/housing conditions in private sector housing, fly-tipping, littering, garden waste, social issues, supporting vulnerable people and low level anti-social behaviour.

- The aims and objectives of which were to encourage communities to work towards setting their own standards and empower individuals to help themselves and improve their environment, to create and sustain safe and pleasant communities, to identify and react to problems and issues and to apply pro-active initiatives and interventions, and to improve housing conditions and standards for private rental tenants in the North area.
- Close collaborative working was undertaken with several departments and agencies which included South Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, voluntary agencies and Adult and Children's Social Services.
- On a quarterly basis, M Griffiths arranged and organised North Area Action Days in collaboration with a variety of agencies, which rotated around all four Ward Alliances. The following action days had recently been held:-
 - A waste clearance operation on Athersley pit fields, which focused on improving the appearance of the location for the benefit of local residents and dog walkers.
 - Operation Drift which focused on several issues in the North's geographical area of Honeywell. It was undertaken in a multi-faceted approach which had achieved good outcomes in terms of improving the environment, enforcement and support. A total of 24 private rental properties had been visited with a view to generating housing inspections.
- Members noted the community engagement events and were referred to a number of case studies within the presentation slides.

Councillor Tattersall expressed her thanks for an interesting report and for the work undertaken across all four Ward Alliances. She was pleased to observe the work that had been undertaken on garden fires which occurred across the borough and could easily become out of control and cause damage to other properties. She queried whether collaborative work was undertaken with South Yorkshire Fire Service to provide garden fire safety messages on social media.

Councillor Howard commented that individuals were permitted to have garden fires, although instances of frequent garden fires and at certain times during the day could be reported to the Council. She referred to the private rental property flats on Church Street, Darton which had encountered water leaks, and she had provided the Area Manager with the information to be forwarded onto M Griffiths for his assistance.

In response to a query raised by Councillor A. Cave regarding the frequency that cases were monitored and followed up, M Griffiths referred to a number of ongoing cases that would not close until at least a couple of follow up inspections had taken place. The number of follow up inspections undertaken would depend on the merits of a particular case.

Councillor Leech expressed his thanks to M Griffiths for quickly dealing with an instance where an individual had collected a large amount of rubbish for money, which he had burnt in his garden and it had got out of hand.

Councillor Hunt requested that garden fires be discussed with Members at the next Darton East Action Day.

Councillor Lofts expressed his appreciation to M Griffiths for dealing with the dog fouling issue in the Old Town area.

On behalf of the North Area Council, Councillor Leech gave thanks to M Griffiths for all the work undertaken.

RESOLVED that Members noted the update.

84 10 Year Celebration Reflections (Nac.11.13.2023/5)

Councillor Leech referred to the 10 year celebration event that had been held on Friday 29 September 2023 at Staincross Working Men's Club. He considered it to have been a fantastic event which had been enjoyed by everyone in attendance. He expressed his thanks to the Area Manager and her team for all the work involved.

The Area Manager gave thanks to Members for all their help and support in the preparatory work and for providing assistance at the event. She also wished to express special thanks to Christina who had made favours to be handed out to everyone at the end of the evening.

Councillor Howard considered that it had been a fantastic event, and she expressed her thanks to the Area Team for all the organisation involved. She requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Christina on behalf of the North Area Council.

Approximately 120 people had attended the event. During the evening presentations had been received from each of the Ward Alliances, all attendees had received a raffle ticket to be entered into a free prize draw, and performances had included the Angel Voices Community Choir.

Members noted that the North East and South Area Councils were still to hold their 10 year celebration events.

RESOLVED that Members noted the update.

85 Performance Report for Quarter 2 (Nac.11.13.2023/6)

A report was presented which provided an aggregate picture of how all the North Council contracted services contributed to the achievement of each of the North Area Council's agreed outcomes and social value objectives, which reflected upon the information gathered from each contract for the period July – September 2023. The report provided a summary of the performance management report for each of the contracted services for 2023/24 Quarter 2 (July – September 2023). The report provided a link between the commissioned services and the Public Health Outcomes.

M Griffiths referred to the outstanding work undertaken by the Environmental Caretaker Team during Operation Drift.

Councillor Denton referred to the Reds in the Community Men's Health Club that he had recently attended, which had a positive impact on his mental health in terms of education and fitness. He considered that this was a fantastic initiative, and he would be an advocate for future sessions.

Members were referred to the case studies for each contracted service.

RESOLVED that Members noted the contents of the Performance Management report.

86 Connecting Communities Grant Extension Report (Nac.11.13.2023/7)

A report was presented which provided Members with an update on the contract extension arrangements for the Stronger Communities Grant funded programme.

The Grant Review Workshop had been held on 31 August 2023 where the grant panel had reviewed the providers' delivery and performance, and had considered whether the North Area was receiving good value for money.

At the North Area Council Meeting held on 11 September 2023, Members had agreed a further 12 months of intervention by Age UK and DIAL Barnsley. As a result of the delayed start at the beginning of the programme, the Reds in the Community would continue to deliver until the end of June 2024.

RESOLVED that Members confirmed their decision to continue the funding for two providers of the Connecting Communities Grant programme at a total combined value of £75,000 for a period of 12 months. (Age UK - £40,875.00, DIAL Barnsley - £34,125.00).

87 Priorities, Commissioning and Overview Report (Nac.11.13.2023/8)

A report was presented which provided Members with a financial position and forecast for expenditure based on the projects that had been proposed. The report also highlighted the need to agree a clear plan for commissioning against the priorities.

In relation to the work undertaken on the resilience fund and to enable the review process to commence, the Area Manager discussed with Members, as the decision makers, how they could be better informed to ensure that the grant programme continued. Ad Astra would welcome one Member of the Working Group at a time to observe the school sessions, and the YMCA had recommended holding a surgery.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Members noted the progress on the Environmental Community Caretaker Service recruitment.

- (ii) Following the Connecting Communities Grant Review, the panel recommended and the Area Council agreed to a further investment of £75,000 to enable two grant providers to continue provision for a 12 month period, concluding March 2025. Full details at agenda item 7.
- (iii) To conduct a review of the Youth Resilience Fund required a review to enable a decision on potential project extension to be made at the January Area Council meeting.
- (iv) The North Area Council noted the existing budget position and the existing funding commitments. Section 4 of the report.

88 Report of the Ward Alliance Fund (Nac.11.13.2023/9)

A report was presented to provide an update on the financial position of the Ward Alliance budget for each ward for the 2023/24 period.

Councillor Leech referred to a recent Area Chair Liaison meeting, where an update had been provided on the hanging baskets and Christmas trees. A provider had now been sourced for the hanging baskets across the borough and work was underway to secure standard pricing for the Christmas trees.

RESOLVED that each Ward in the North Area Council area prioritises the efficient expenditure of the Ward Alliance Funds 2023/24, in line with the guidance on spend.

89 Ward Alliance Fund Grant Performance Monitoring Report from the last Financial Year (Nac.11.13.2023/10)

A report was presented which provided an update on the Ward Alliance Fund monitoring for the year 2022/23.

The Area Manager expressed her thanks to L Swift and R Battye for chasing the monitoring information, and to K Ashworth for the work undertaken in preparing the performance reports for each of the Ward Alliances. Members were requested to present the reports within their respective Ward Alliances.

Councillor T. Cave also expressed his thanks for the performance reports which were interesting to observe the differences between each Ward Alliance. He queried whether it would be possible for the monitoring information for the Ward Alliances to be included as part of the review.

It was noted that difficulties were encountered in receiving the monitoring information from the community groups. The Area Manager referred to instances where she would delay the timing of an application until their final monitoring report was received. Members supported the Area Manager in this action.

Councillor Tattersall gave thanks for the performance reports. She requested that Members be informed when future performance reports would be compiled and for Members to be provided with an email address to enable photographs to be submitted for inclusion into the reports.

Councillor Leech expressed his thanks for the excellent report presented.

RESOLVED that each Ward in the North Area Council referred to the monitoring information for the Ward Alliance Fund in their own area and took the time to reflect on which projects had worked well, enabling them to share best practice.

90 Notes from Ward Alliances (Nac.11.13.2023/11)

The meeting received the notes from the Darton East Ward Alliance held on 12 September 2023 and 10 October 2023; Darton West Ward Alliance held on 13 September 2023 and 16 October 2023; Old Town Ward Alliance held on 10 October 2023; and St Helen's Ward Alliance held on 7 September 2023 and 19 October 2023.

Councillor Denton referred to the work undertaken by the Darton East Ward Alliance. Funding had been approved for various projects which included a pantomime for disadvantaged children to be held at Staincross WMC and Christmas trees which would be installed at Mapplewell Village Hall, Windhill and Woolley. The next health and wellbeing event would be held on 14 November 2023 at Mapplewell Village Hall. The Christmas light switch on was scheduled for 24 November 2023, and the beer festival would also commence on the same date, which everyone was welcome to attend.

Councillor T. Cave referred to the work undertaken by the Darton West Ward Alliance. The Christmas programme of events had been the most recent topic of discussion. The number of Christmas trees would be limited to prevent a strain on the service providers. Focus had been made to the Kexborough Community Centre to provide additional help to families over the Christmas period. It was noted that the Gawber School History Board was almost complete. During early autumn, concern had been expressed around the hanging basket situation and how to avoid such issues in the future. The milestone on Huddersfield Road opposite Vets4Pets had recently been refurbished. Councillor T. Cave informed Members of the Milestone Society that could assist with the refurbishment of milestones within their respective Ward Alliances.

Councillor Lofts referred to the work undertaken by the Old Town Ward Alliance. Funding had been approved to help establish a Community Pantry in Honeywell, which had a long term aspiration to gather volunteers to keep it running. The main topics for discussion at the meeting had related to Christmas trees and spring bulbs. A funding bid for a local cat rescue had been received. It had been decided to defer the bid until further information was available to ascertain whether other Ward Alliances had been approached.

Councillor Wright referred to the work undertaken by St Helen's Ward Alliance. The Santa sleigh route had been finalised and advertised on the local Facebook forums, which would commence on Sunday 3 December 2023.

Councillor Leech referred to the 13 Junior Tykes football teams that played at the Memorial Field on Laithes Lane, Barnsley. It was envisaged that the storage container would be made available shortly.

A discussion had ensued in relation to a letter sent into the Barnsley Chronicle which had wrongly suggested that the North Area Council was not passing money onto the community groups. The letter had followed an earlier newspaper article where the Barnsley Chronicle had reviewed each Ward Alliance in the North Area. Councillor Hunt referred to the Darton East Ward Alliance which had recently approved a number of funding applications. Members noted that the Area Manager had prepared a statement in relation to the funding pot.

Councillor Howard referred to the Christmas event that would be held at Barnsley Town Hall on Sunday 10 December 2023 from 11.00am to 3.00pm where many of the activities would be free of charge. There would also be a craft stall and visits to see Father Christmas. Members were requested to encourage any families struggling with the cost of living to attend the event. Councillor Leech requested that details of the event be displayed within the North Area Council and advertised on the Council and Ward Alliance website pages.

RESOLVED that the notes of the respective Ward Alliances be noted.

Chair