

MEETING:	Central Area Council
DATE:	Wednesday 31 January 2024
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Reception Room - Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors K. Dyson (Chair), Bowser, Clarke, Fielding, Lodge, O'Donoghue, Mitchell, Moyes, Murray, C. Wray and P. Wright

29 Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillor O'Donoghue declared a non-pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda, insofar as it related to his employment by Age UK.

30 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Central Area Council held on 6 December 2023 (Cen.31.01.2024/2)

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on 6 December 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on 6 December 2023 be approved as a true and correct record.

31 Creative Recovery (Cen.31.01.2024/3)

Charlie Barnes, Artist Developer, and Lorna Szkliniarz, People Grower, were invited to the meeting to provide an update on the work of Creative Recovery in the Central Area. Members heard how the work was part funded by the Area Council, with the funding matched by the Arts Council.

Those present were made aware that the Headquarters of the project was based at Summer Lane and work on the group had started there trying to engage with residents in this area.

The focus had been to try to reestablish neighbourly feel in the area, and a dog walking group had been established, which provided a way for residents to meet. Since then, the group had further developed and a logo designed, with a virtual campfire event held as a way to encourage people to join in. People felt it positive that new faces joined in, and more people got involved. Members were also made aware of a Christmas event, held in conjunction with the Ward Alliance, which involved lantern making and carol singing.

Work in Worsbrough had started by identifying in which area to focus efforts. The New England area had been agreed, and following discussions around what activities residents may have an interest in; it was decided to consider bingo, with arts activities. Attendance at events had been variable, but it was noted those attending did enjoy the sessions.

In addition, focused activity was undertaken in workshops with five groups across the area, where a range of ornaments had been produced which were then placed on a community Christmas tree. An even was then held at Barrow Club, in partnership with the Ward Alliance. The event, originally designed to be held outdoors, was brought in and a sociable evening was had, with reasonable attendance. Comments received highlighted that the area had not previously seen many events and that it was nice that families could take part at no cost.

Within the Gilroyd and Dodworth area, Gilroyd had been focused on as there was evidence that Dodworth generally had more active social groups. Lorna had been focusing on bringing together local and social history with a view to creating a book or exhibition. There was only a small number of individuals involved, but work was ongoing to increase engagement.

Members noted that the project provided overall progress reports on a quarterly basis, and to date all targets had been met. Noted was the ongoing challenge to engage those hardest to reach who may benefit, especially given the time allocated of 1.5 days a week.

Notwithstanding time pressures, Members were made aware of plans for the future, which included extension of the local history project from Gilroyd into Dodworth, a Community Tapestry and possible Community Drama in Worsbrough, and another campfire event and a large-scale public art project at Summer Lane.

Questions were raised around the timescales of the project. It was acknowledged that funding was in place to July 2024, but that opportunities for funding elsewhere were being explored. Members questioned whether there was also the opportunity to expand the project, where funding allowed, so in the future all Wards could be supported.

Members also provided a number of suggestions for groups or facilities that the project could usefully link with, such as the Top of Dodworth Bottom Club, the Edmunds Centre in Worsbrough, the Worsbrough Mystery Plays, and the family hubs in the area.

It was acknowledged that groups had been supported so that hopefully many relationships would continue, and volunteers would try to keep the momentum going should finance not be forthcoming. A suggestion was made to link to the Council's Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) scheme, and details of this be circulated to Members and to staff at Creative Recovery.

Members questioned whether support had been readily available from other stakeholders, and it was noted that support had been provided within respective parameters and was always gratefully received.

When discussing the impact on recovery from such as substance misuse, it was noted that this was not the main focus of the project, but anecdotally there had been positive impacts on those with improved mental health and wellbeing, but care was taken to avoid monitoring this too keenly which could act as a deterrent.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation and the work of Creative Recovery in the Central Area.

32 Procurement and Financial Update (Cen.31.01.2024/4)

The Head of Stronger Communities spoke to the report previously circulated, noting the update on delivery against the priorities of the Area Council. Also noted was the current financial position and that proposed.

Members were reminded of the recent meeting of the Social Isolation and Loneliness Grant Fund moderation panel, who recommended that four applications be funded at a total cost of £102,736.20. This left £27,263.80 remaining from the funds allocated.

Members also noted that £35,403 also remained unallocated from tranche 2 of the funds allocated to the supporting vulnerable people priority. It was therefore proposed to combine these two unallocated amounts to run a Social Isolation and Vulnerable Persons Grant Fund for one year with a total budget of up to £62,666.80.

Also of note was the recent consideration of applications to the Youth Work Fund, which had received two high quality applications. To fully fund both would exceed the budget allocated by £515. Therefore, it was proposed that the additional £515 be allocated from the main Area Council budget.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the overview of Central Area Council's current priorities, and overview of all current contracts, contract extensions, Service Level Agreements and Grant Funded projects, with associated timescales be noted;
- (ii) That the actual financial position to date for 2023-24 and the projected expenditure, including future proposals, to 2023-2025, as outlined, be noted;
- (iii) That the Social Isolation and Loneliness moderation panel met and were able to recommend the progression of four applications at a total cost of £102,736.20 be noted;
- (iv) That approval be given to progress the commissioning of services via a 'Social Isolation and Vulnerable Persons Challenge Fund' with a financial envelope of £62,666.80 for grants to end prior to 31 March 2025 and that this is progressed by the Area Council Manager in conjunction with panel made up of Central Area Council Elected Members, with responsibility for the procurement of these grants delegated to the Executive Director Public Health and Communities; and
- (v) That an additional £515 be allocated to the Youth Work Fund to support both applications for YMCA and The Youth Association in their entirety.

33 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.31.01.2024/5)

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

Dodworth Ward Alliance, held on 6 November 2023;
Kingstone Ward Alliance, held on 13 November 2023;
Stairfoot Ward Alliance, held on 13 November and 11 December 2023;
Worsbrough Ward Alliance, held on 16 November 2023.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Ward Alliances be received.

34 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Cen.31.01.2024/6)

Those report on the use of Ward Alliance Funds was received by Members.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

35 Date and time of the next meeting (Cen.31.01.2024/7)

It was noted that the next meeting of the Area Council fell on 27th March 2024, which coincided with the Easter holidays. Members were asked whether the meeting would be quorate, and whether it was preferable to move the meeting to allow more Members to attend.

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Area Council be held on 10th April 2024.

Chair