

MEETING:	Central Area Council
DATE:	Wednesday 22 May 2024
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Reception Room - Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors K. Dyson (Chair), Bowser, Bullcock, Christmas, Clarke, Fielding, Lodge, Moyes, O'Donoghue, Sumner, C. Wray and P. Wright

1 Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Central Area Council held on 10 April 2024 (Cen.22.05.2024/2)

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on 10 April 2024.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on 10 April 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 Social Isolation and Loneliness Grant Fund Providers (Cen.22.05.2024/3)

Sean Margison, Head of Health and Wellbeing Barnsley FC Community Trust was welcomed to the meeting. He mentioned the three strands of Reds Connect in the Central Area; Walking Football, Exercise Tuesday and the Walking Group. Members noted the aims and mission of the Community Trust and that this was wider than football; encompassing physical health, mental health and promoting social inclusion.

Members heard how the gender split of those taking part in the service was roughly equal and intergenerational interaction had been positive.

Walking Football had been held at Oakwell, but connections had also been made with other groups, guest speakers had also attended sessions.

Exercise Tuesday included activities for all abilities and included celebration events, and wellbeing activities.

The Walking Group had mostly been utilising the Trans-Pennine Trail, but Members noted plans to build on this.

A case study was provided, which provided an insight into the personal impact the service provided. Those present then noted how the project had recorded 700 hours of activities, 5,000 attendances and 6,000 hours of engagement to date. Statistics on the positive impacts on participants were also provided.

Noted was the difference in levels of engagement between Wards in the area. It was suggested that notice boards across the area could be utilised for promotion. Walks could also be led in different wards, subject to a social space being available after the walk, such as a café.

In the ensuing discussion queries were raised around offering satellite exercise classes, linking with Barnsley Premier Leisure and sports facilities within schools. It was suggested that links with Ward Alliances and Community Development Officers in each Ward were also made.

Jo Stanley-Cook was then welcomed to the meeting to make Members aware of the Time Together project being delivered by DIAL Barnsley. The project was still in its planning stage, with the concept being that if people donated an hour of their time, they could then claim back an hour of someone else's.

It aimed to build confidence, develop relationships, and assist in building new skills without a financial commitment. The project followed a period of research and built on the successful timebank operating in the Dearne Area.

Members heard that a launch event had been planned for 3rd June, which had been widely promoted, and a membership form developed. It was noted that funding had been provided for 12 months but it was hoped that it would be self-sustaining following this.

Offers from Members to promote the service were received and those present discussed safeguarding concerns, noting that volunteers would undertake a DBS check where this would be appropriate.

David Andy from Citizen's Advice Bureau updated Members about the service provided to those living or working in the Central Area. The service provided advice service to clients, which in turn would help reduce their social isolation and loneliness.

The service had commenced on 8 April 2024 and had made 176 client contacts, with 60 unique clients. £15,937 of additional benefit had been gained during this time with £7,950 of debt now managed. It was noted that though amounts of additional benefits or debt managed could be small, these could have a significant impact on the lives of those affected. Members noted that 23% of clients had identified themselves as vulnerable and 15% socially isolated.

Members discussed the support with debt, for examples through a Debt Relief Order, and it was noted that all the debt team were authorised to complete these.

Questions were asked around the accessibility of the service, and it was noted that in person sessions were held at Wellington House every Thursday 9.30am-12.30pm and that for those who may not have English as their first language, a language line was used for translation and interpretation. Members discussed the merits of more in person sessions out in communities, noting the financial impact of this.

Questions were raised around signposting to other services, and it was noted that clients were signposted to other specialist services, where appropriate. When asked about working closely with partners, such as Berneslai Homes, it Members heard that

the organisation had a contract to deliver advice to Berneslai Homes tenants, and also worked closely with the Council and their benefits and taxation department.

RESOLVED:- thanks be given to all providers for their attendance and for their delivery against Central Area Council priorities.

4 Performance Management Report (Cen.22.05.2024/4)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, noting that the report covered quarter four of 2023/24. Monitoring reports had been submitted from all organisations providing services utilising Area Council funds. These had been reviewed by the Area Council Managers and contract management meetings had been held.

Members heard that all providers were delivering as expected and there were no concerns about performance.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the service provided by Barnsley and Rotherham Mind had come to an end at the end of the financial year. An exit meeting had been held. New providers including Citizen's Advice Bureau, would feature in future performance reports.

Feedback from all providers had been sought, and the common issue raised was in relation to the rising cost of living. This had impacted on service users, and on the costs of providing the service. It was noted that some services had highlighted increased difficulties in recruiting volunteers, as people had other pressures including taking on more work to offset increasing costs.

Providers also remarked that many service users had increasingly complex problems, which necessitated an increased time commitment from services.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

5 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.22.05.2024/5)

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

Central Ward Alliance held on 24 March, 2024

Dodworth Ward Alliance held on 6 March, 2024

Kingstone Ward Alliance held on 17 April, 2024

Stairfoot Ward Alliance held on 8 April, 2024

Worsbough Ward Alliance held on 17 April (Environmental Working Group) and 18 April, 2024.

RESOLVED that the notes of the Ward Alliances be received.

6 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Cen.22.05.2024/6)

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

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

Chair