

MEETING:	Dearne Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 18 November 2019
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Meeting Room, Goldthorpe Library

MINUTES

Present Councillors Noble (Chair), Danforth, Gardiner, C. Johnson and Phillips.

18 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 30th September, 2019 (Dac.18.11.2019/2)

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Dearne Area Council meeting held on 30th September, 2019 be approved as a true and correct record.

20 Neighbourhood Services

This item was withdrawn, and an All Members Briefing would be held to discuss this subject.

21 Area Council Future Action Plan (Dac.18.11.2019/4)

The item was introduced by the Area Council Manager, who reminded Members of the work to review Area Councils undertaken earlier in the year.

Recommendations included improved induction for Members for them to be more fully aware of the role of the Area Council; development of the Link Officer role; and exploring links between the area governance structures, Integrated Wellbeing Teams and Primary Care Networks. Members heard of plans to share good practice across Area Councils, and to develop guidance around the escalation of common issues, and to consider the effectiveness of services within the area.

Also a priority was improving communications and the visibility of the Area Council. Members acknowledged the focus on Social Return On Investment in order to show the wider impact of the Area Councils. With regards to priority setting and commissioning, noted was the need to review and improve the availability of data and information, and to consider the possibility of standardising the priority setting frequency and process. The action plan put forward training for Members to engage in the commissioning and procurement process should there be demand for this.

Members acknowledged the need for their involvement in shaping improvements going forward.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

22 Performance Report (Dac.18.11.2019/5)

The Area Council Manager provided an update to the meeting on the performance of commissioned services and Dearne Development Funded projects during quarter 2.

With regards to the Employability Contract held by Dearne Electronic Community Village, performance was positive. Within the quarter an additional 20 learners had enrolled and 4 had entered employment. Members noted that increasingly those accessing the service required significantly more support to access the labour market, it was noted ultimately this may impact on the numbers the service was able to help.

With regards to the Environment, Education and Volunteering Service delivered by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance, performance against the contract was positive. Within the quarter 30 social action events had been led, and 20 community groups supported. 6 areas had been adopted by residents and 168 volunteers engaged. 10 additional local businesses had worked with Twiggs and 11 impact sessions had been delivered to groups and schools. Members noted that the weather had impacted on delivery, but were assured that if sessions with volunteers were cancelled due to poor weather, alternative work was undertaken.

Performance against the contract delivered by B:Friend to reduce social isolation delivered had improved, with an increased number of referrals. Volunteers had pledged 360 hours volunteering from 17 volunteers within the quarter. The service had received a further 22 enquiries from people who were interested in volunteering. 36 group sessions had been delivered, with 12 people signposted on to other groups. Members noted that those engaged were predominantly women and it was agreed to consider this in future contract negotiations.

Members noted that the Goldthorpe Social Club had been moved from the library due to changes in library opening hours, and it was being held at the Pentecostal Church.

The Area Council Manager went on to provide an update in relation to projects funded through the Dearne Development Fund (DDF).

Members noted that the advice service delivered by DIAL had been funded through the 2018/19 budget, but services continued in to 2019/20, with the final session being held in December, 2019. The service continued to be well used, with 24 sessions held and 84 residents assisted.

Goldthorpe Development Group had held three events within the quarter with 36 volunteers assisting and 206 in total attending the sessions. Members noted that attendance early in the quarter had been reduced, and this was down to changes in staff within some of the local care homes. This issue had been raised with the care homes and resulted in numbers attending improving.

Members noted that the Citizen's Advice Bureau had been previously funded by the DDF, and had subsequently been refunded. The performance considered covered the first tranche of funding. The project had seen 244 client contacts, with a benefit gain of £285,119. Members commented that the results from this and the project delivered by DIAL showed the demand in the area for such services.

Therapies for Anxiety Depression and Stress (TADS) had worked with young people with sessions at Dearne ALC, and Station House. Solution focused counselling had been offered as well as yoga club to improve mindfulness.

Low numbers had been seen the drop-in session which had been halted, but the intelligence from the Integrated Wellbeing Teams and Targeted Youth Support Service that there was still demand for such a service so reinstating this would be reconsidered, perhaps at a different venue.

Members noted the Playhouse now had LED lighting funded through the Dearne Development Fund which had a positive impact on performances, and would result in reduced bills.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23 Dearne Area Council Procurement and Financial Update (Dac.18.11.2019/6)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report referring to previous discussions around the Environmental Enforcement contract, which was held by Kingdom Security and which came to an end on 31st March, 2019. The Area Council Manager had challenged the patrolling hours, and as a result £929.94 had been returned.

With the returned finance, Members noted that opening balance for the 2019/20 period was £216,886.17. After taking into account the allocations made for the Environment and Volunteer Service, Housing and Migration Officer and Employability service, Community Newsletter and the Dearne Development Fund, £4,288.41 remained.

Those present heard how the Dearne Development Fund had started the financial year with carried forward balance of £9,572.10, however with the allocation of £60,000 and a further Wellbeing Grant from Healthier Communities of £19,018.78, £88,590.88 had been available for distribution in 2019/20. Members noted that £43,004.42 had been allocated, with £45,586.46 remaining. Members were made aware that a grant assessment panel would be meeting shortly to assess more applications.

It was noted that the Housing Officer post had been vacant since April, 2019, despite two unsuccessful attempts to recruit. Members were made aware that the most recent attempt had resulted in a preferred candidate being selected. Subject to appropriate checks being made it was hoped that the preferred candidate would start in post in the New Year.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

24 Notes from the Dearne Ward Alliance held on 31st October, 2019 and Performance Reports (Dac.18.11.2019/7)

The meeting received the notes from the Dearne Ward Alliance held on 31st October, 2019. It was noted that the Ward Alliance had recommended four additional Ward Alliance Fund applications for approval.

Members commented on the performance reports, which were well received. It was noted that in future there would be a more succinct combined report. It was suggested that, where possible, the stories be further condensed and be displayed publically using screens and noticeboards to further publicise the positive work of the Ward Alliance.

RESOLVED that notes from Ward Alliance be received.

25 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Dac.18.11.2019/8)

From an opening balance of £11,784.19 Dearne North Ward Alliance had allocated £10,341.17 to a total of 15 projects. This left £1,443.12 to allocate.

Dearne South had allocated £8,983.98 to 13 projects from an opening balance of £13,027.02. This left £4,043.04 to distribute.

Members noted that an additional £10,000 per Ward had been confirmed. Therefore it was suggested that the next Ward Alliance allocates appropriate time on the agenda to discuss the use of Ward Alliance Funds in more detail.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chair