

<b>MEETING:</b>	Central Area Council
<b>DATE:</b>	Monday, 3 August 2020
<b>TIME:</b>	2.00 pm
<b>VENUE:</b>	THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY

## MINUTES

**Present** Councillors W. Johnson (Chair), P. Birkinshaw, Bowler, Bruff, Carr, Clarke, Dyson, Gillis, Lodge, Mitchell and Murray

### 49. Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Lodge declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute 51, the presentation on 'Business, the Economy, and Employment and Skills' in view of the fact that his partner worked within one of the presenting officers service.

Councillor Bruff declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 5, the presentation on 'Business, the Economy, and Employment and Skills' as her son worked for the Sheffield City Region.

Councillor Carr declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 55 'Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds' insofar as the discussion related to DIAL in her capacity as a Trustee of that organisation.

### 50. Notes of the Meeting of Central Area Councillors held on 9th June, 2020 (Cen.03.08.2020/2)

The meeting received the notes of the inquorate meeting of Central Area Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2020.

**RESOLVED** that the notes of the inquorate meeting of the Central Area Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record and that the following recommendations from that inquorate meeting be formally approved:

- (a) Minutes of the Previous meeting of the Central Area Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2020

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

- (b) Discussion: Reflection on the presentation and how Area Councils can assist communities in the recovery.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That a Workshop be convened to consider the priorities of the Area Council and its contribution to the strategic priorities of the Council; and

- (ii) That a Workshop be convened to consider the research and other available intelligence in relation to social isolation in the Central Area.

## **51. Business, the Economy, and Employment and Skills (Cen.03.08.2020/3)**

The Area Council received a presentation from Mr T Smith (Head of Employment and Skills), Mr P Clifford (Head of Economic Development) and Ms A Fitzgerald (Group Leader Strategy and Policy, Education and Skills) giving an update of the current position with regard to the Barnsley Covid Economic Recovery.

Mr P Clifford commenced the presentation by briefly outlining the areas to be addressed:

- a) The Barnsley Covid Economic Impact Assessment
- b) The Central Area Economic Overview
- c) An Overview of current Economic Recovery Work
- d) The People impacts and the Recovery Actions

### **(a) Economic Impact Assessment**

- Information was provided on the following:
  - The Barnsley GDP impacts,
  - The Barnsley Business impacts
  - The Impact on Barnsley Jobs
  - The Claimant Count outlined by the Office for National Statistics
- It was very difficult to predict in these uncertain times, the likely impact on the economy, however, the Office for Budget Responsibility indicated that there was a potential contraction of around 15% on the local economy. In addition, the IMF had recognised a potential contraction of 7% previously. This meant that there would be a scaling back of the economy both in terms of GDP, jobs as well as businesses and a significant increase in claimant counts
- It was noted that these predicted models did not necessarily mean that there would be contractions of that level, but it was important to have a starting point upon which to shaping and benchmarking recovery actions
- Information was provided on the potential sectoral impacts based on the types of businesses within the Borough – this indicated that some sectors would be impacted more than others. These were ‘rag rated’ against the 15% and 7% predictions highlighted above

### **(b) Central Area Economic Overview**

- Indices of Multiple Deprivation – the Area Council was above the Barnsley average in relation to Education, Employment, Health and Income deprivation and the biggest challenges and priorities for the area were, therefore Health, Education and Employment. Information giving comparisons to other areas of the Borough would be circulated outside the meeting
- Worklessness position – had seen a 14.8% increase during May giving an additional 2,720 claimants in the Central Area. This was the highest amongst the other 6 areas of the Borough with the impacted groups being
  - 14-24 year olds

- 50+
- 63% males and 36% females
- Business Sector
  - indicated that within the area the number of businesses equated to 32.8% of the number of overall businesses in Barnsley. This had seen a 7.8% growth since 2015
  - information was provided for the growth in Worsbrough, Dodworth, Stairfoot and Kingstone and further information on this could be provided
  - information was provided on the business sector breakdown and the likely impact that Covid would have on those businesses. This indicated where support was likely to be required from and national, regional and local level
- Covid Business Support/Response
  - The Enterprising Barnsley Website had provided a focal point in ensuring that key messages were given out as to the support that was available. 162 Enquiries had been received from the Central Area and £500,000 had Covid Business Interruption Loans had been awarded
  - A Council Employment Support Desk had been put in place providing support to people and to businesses. 73 enquiries in total, 6 of which were from this area although these figures were changing rapidly. It was anticipated that the number of contacts would increase over time
- Key Economic Messages
  - The indices of multiple deprivation identified Health, Education and Employment as potential priorities
  - The highest level of increase in the number of unemployed claimants was in the 18-24 and 50+ age group
  - There was a strong and diverse business base within the area
  - Barnsley and the Central Area was likely to see an economic contraction over the coming months and years
  - Ongoing monitoring was critical in identifying trends and strategies and to target support. Arising out of this it was reported that universities, other local authorities' partners, stakeholders and 'returners' from university or those taking a gap year were being targeted to ensure that they were given appropriate support in what was a very difficult time. Work was ongoing to ensure that such work was embedded within the recovery and future planning

### (c) Economic Recovery Work

- A designated Recovery Group had been established which was looking at a High Level Barnsley Jobs first Recovery Plan involving both the Council and its Partners which involved a number of Key Stands details of which and the type of work involved were outlined
- Barnsley Covid Business Recovery Actions included:
  - From the Government, obtaining £43m in business Grants to 3,700 businesses and CBIL/bounce back loans of £17m to support local businesses
  - Via Enterprising Barnsley, a proposed revamp of the website and provision of 24/7 support; the establishment of the Covid Business Support Programme; supporting, initially, 75 businesses; a Covid health

- check to enable targeted support to be provided; the development of the Covid Recovery Plan; and the provision of specialist support
- The Sheffield City Region had developed an Economic Recovery Plan and had asked the government for funding totalling £1.6bn across three key strands of activity of People, Skills and Employment (£700m); Employers (£400m); and Place/infrastructure (£500m). This would be complementary to the Strategic Economic Plan and would be aligned to government economic recovery strategy/funding. It was particularly important that Barnsley was involved in this in order to influence and shape the recovery and maximise the funding that was delivered to the town. Everything was being done that was possible in order to position the Region to receive the funding. Barnsley was, in turn positioning itself so that funding requests/schemes matched the key theme areas in order to maximise the funding opportunities available. It was also pleasing to note that a partnership arrangement was in place between the City Region and the four district councils

Ms A Fitzgerald continued with the presentation outlining the following:

(d) People Impacts and Recovery Actions

- The impact by June 2020
  - There had been a significant increase in the claimant count being the highest in 23 years and the 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the Yorkshire and Humber region (although lower than Doncaster and Rotherham)
  - An analysis was being undertaken of who was affected and, working with partners, consideration was being given to what could be done. As previously stated, the most affected were males aged 25-49 but young people had the highest percentage of claimants and this was increasing. Information about the contributory factors for this claimant increase was provided
  - Whilst there had been a collapse in job vacancies, it was pleasing to note that this was now increasing
  - It was getting harder to find work and information was provided (as compiled by the Sheffield City Region, about the competition for jobs, which varied widely across the UK. Having the right skills, experience and qualifications was, therefore, becoming more critical
  - The Sheffield City Region was a low wage economy
  - In response to the above, the work undertaken by the Authority was outlined. The Authority worked very closely with its Job Centre+ and other partners and Colleges and a number of initiatives had been introduced. The daily vacancy bulletin outlined jobs in the Travel to Work area and further information could be provided
  - Work was continuing with partners to examine what needed to be done moving forward and examples of the proactive response were provided.
  - In response to specific questioning information was provided as to the types of jobs that it was hoped would, and were being made available and the support given to ensure that people taking up those positions found jobs which matched their desires and expectations. Support was also provided to ensure that those wishing to progress could do so

- The service was currently purchasing new software which, amongst other things could enable skills to be matched to employment opportunities and allow residents to identify skills they were interested in and where these could be obtained through study. This would also be made available for schools to use

Mr T Smith continued with the presentation by outlining the following:

- Work was continuing to ensure that the right support was in place. The impact of the Pandemic had not been equal and had impacted particularly on female and older workers. Indications from a national picture were that the 18-24 age group would be particularly disadvantaged
- The support in Barnsley centred on 5 Key areas, Young People, Supported Employment, Support for Career Change/Transition, Digital Skills and Good Work and information was provided on the work currently being undertaken in these areas
- The Authority was an active Partner supporting a South Yorkshire wide response and Barnsley was taking the lead in working group with South Yorkshire Local Authority Employment and Skills Leads
- The four South Yorkshire Authorities were working together on the Sheffield City Region First Economic Recovery Plan and detailed information was provided on the scope of each of the three key themes previously mentioned but particularly in relation to the People, Skills and Employment element
- Further information was awaited in relation to the significant investment by the government in relation to Young People and Adults around training, skills and progression into work. Particular mention was made to the Kickstart Scheme and the sector-based work academy placements. Barnsley was working with the City Region to ensure that all schemes were aligned
- A close working relationship had been forged with the Job Centre and the Department for Work and Pensions which had announced a programme of additional support including frontline Work Coaches, an Expanded Youth Offer as well as a number of other interventions
- Whilst not all programmes and schemes were currently in place, the Authority was ensuring that all the evidence about who needed support was available, that the correct employment support was in place, that work was undertaken with businesses to ensure that opportunities were maximised and appropriate help made available to get people ready for work and ensuring support was in place to help Barnsley businesses to grow

The Chair reminded Members that the Area Council Managers had arranged for a Workshop to be arranged with Mr T Smith and his Team should Members request it. In the light of the information presented today he was confident that several Members would be wanting to obtain further information relative to the Central Area. Most questions had been addressed during the presentation, but the following matters were then touched upon:

- Whilst the presentation presented a very pessimistic outlook in relation to employment, it was pleasing to note that there was room for optimism going forward if what the Government delivered what it promised and the Sheffield City Region was able to provide the type of support it had asked the government for
- It was agreed that, notwithstanding the action now being taken to boost employment opportunities, pupils within schools should be encouraged to strive to attain their aspirations. There was also a need to provide a mix of employment opportunities as this would ensure that Barnsley children remained in the area into their adulthood. Work was progressing to try to ensure this occurred
- There was a discussion of the Extended Youth offer and whether or not this would be linked to what was happening locally. It was noted that discussions were progressing with the DWP who were awaiting further guidance from the government, however, once the programmes were released every effort would be made to ensure that there was added value and that there was no duplication or displacement of what was currently on offer. This would also include a discussion on how there could be greater involvement with the voluntary and community sectors
- Appropriate publicity was ensuring that job seekers understood that apprenticeships were for adults as well as young people. Indeed the Council's own apprenticeship programmes were showing a balance of apprentices between the two sectors but more could be done both nationally and locally
- There was a discussion of the operation of the schemes/programmes now referred to and whether or not these would engender real change. Further information had been promised for August so further information could probably be made available at the Workshop that was proposed. The proposals were, however, broadly welcomed as it created more opportunities for young people. Members were reminded that Barnsley was performing well in terms of schools and colleges and there were a good many pupils who transitioned well from school to post 16 education. It was hoped, therefore, that the programmes proposed would help with that and would create additional opportunities. Many pupils would, of course, continue along the traditional education/employment pathway. More apprenticeships would be welcomed not just at entry level but also at degree apprenticeship level. It was the hope that programmes and schemes added value and enhanced the offer and opportunity available for all
- Information on the outcome of the Sheffield City Region funding request was likely to be available as part of the Chancellor's budget statement in the Autumn
- It was noted that there was a national framework for apprenticeship pay, however, many employers, including the Council, chose to pay above that level particularly in relation to adults taking up such opportunities

Mr P Clifford, Mr T Smith and Ms A Fitzgerald were thanked for their most informative and thought provoking presentation.

## **52. Central Area Council Priorities (Cen.03.08.2020/4)**

The Area Council Manager submitted a report providing a summary of the outcome of the Area Council 'Priority Setting' Workshop held to discuss how priorities might be changed to be more aligned with the Covid 5 Point Recovery Plan as presented at the last meeting.

The Workshop had been provided with information about how the Area Team had been supporting people within the area and information had also been provided about how Age UK had supported over 90 residents.

Members were also reminded that it had been agreed to establish a Social Isolation and Loneliness Workshop and this had been held in July and was starting to work towards a Social Isolation and Loneliness procurement exercise although it was likely to be the end of the year before this work was complete.

The Priority Setting Workshop had also considered:

- an options appraisal which included an offer of support from Age UK Barnsley specifically focussed on moving from the response to recovery phase of the Strategy
- how the Area Council could better support the 5 Point Plan through Ward Alliances and Commissioned Services. Consideration had also been given to how all commissioned providers had flexed their contracts to ensure that those in need were supported
- the existing Area Council Priorities in some detail

After detailed discussion, the Workshop had made 2 recommendations namely that:

- Age UK be granted £10,000 in order to support the Covid 19 emergency response and exit strategy; and
- That the current 'Supporting Vulnerable Families' priority be changed for 'Supporting Vulnerable People' as this better reflected the vulnerabilities that had presented themselves during the pandemic

Ms C Bedford (Public Health Principal) attended the meeting and stated that from a Public Health perspective she was more than happy to support the change in priority proposed.

It was noted that the original suggestion had been to provide a £20,000 grant to Age UK however, following the Workshop meeting it had been confirmed that the grant of £10,000 would enable Age UK to draw down additional national funding. If approved, this decision could be reviewed at the end of the year.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the report be received; and
- (ii) that the recommendations of the 'Priority Setting' Workshop be approved and adopted, namely:
  - that the Area Council change it's priority from 'Supporting Vulnerable Families' to 'Supporting Vulnerable People'; and

- that a grant of £10,000 be made from the Central Area Council to support the Covid 19 emergency response exit strategy for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020

### **53. Procurement and Financial Update (Cen.03.08.2020/5)**

The Area Council Manager introduced the item providing an update on the current situation in relation to each of the priority areas previously agreed together with an update of all current contracts, contract extensions, Service Level Agreements and Well-being Fund projects and the associated timescales.

The report provided an overview of the Service Level Agreements with the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and made recommendations in relation to Fly tipping and Private Sector Housing Support. It also gave an update of the previously agreed areas of work relating to services for Social Isolation and Loneliness.

The report also outlined the financial position to date for 2020/21 together with the projected position to 2023/24.

Members were informed of the current work of the two job share Area Council Managers who had recently taken up their posts, the areas upon which they would be 'expert' lead and the way in which they would be working together to ensure a seamless approach.

In relation to the social isolation work identified within the priorities for future focus it was suggested that this should be amended to include an examination of the impacts on both working age men and women. It was noted, however, that the Area Council Manager had been tasked with looking at this group particularly in relation to suicide rates and there was a need, therefore, for this to be clarified. Arising out of this discussion, it was noted that the next Workshop meeting was to be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 and the Area Council Manager briefly commented on the work that was currently ongoing and that would be discussed at that meeting. An invitation to that meeting was also extended to Ms C Bedford although it was stressed that she had been involved in all prior discussions with the Area Council Manager.

#### **RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That the overview of Central Area Council's current priorities and overview of all current contracts, contract extensions, Service Level Agreements, and Wellbeing Fund projects and associated timescales be noted;
- (ii) That feedback about the development of the agreed priority areas from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020, including the work undertaken by the Social Isolation Workshop as outlined in Section 5 of the report now submitted, be noted;
- (iii) That approval be given an extension of the Service Level agreement with Safer Neighbourhoods Services – Private Rented Household Fly Tipping to November 2021 at a cost of £33,000 (with £13,000 in year expenditure for the financial year 2020/21);
- (iv) That approval be given for and extension of the Service Level agreement with Safer Neighbourhoods Services – Private Rented New Tenant Support to November 2021 at a cost of £32,500 (with £18,960 in year expenditure for the financial year 2020/21); and

- (v) That the financial position to date for 2020/221 and projected expenditure, including future proposals to 2023/24 as outlined in appendices 1 and 2 of the report be noted.

#### **54. Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.03.08.2020/6)**

The meeting received the notes of the meetings of the Ward Alliances within the Central Area:-

- Dodworth Ward Alliance – 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020
- Stairfoot Ward Alliance – 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

It was noted that the Worsbrough Ward Alliance had funded hanging baskets along the A61 through Worsbrough and thanks were extended to the volunteers who had sourced the basket and got local businesses involved

Reference was made to the difficulties being encountered in relation to Principal Towns Project for Dodworth following suggested changes in design. It was suggested that there was a need for further consultation on this. This matter would be taken up by the Area Council Manager

Thanks were extended to the Central Area Team for the support for the Healthy Holidays programme which had been funded outside the Ward Alliances. The Area Council Manager also reported on the positive feedback received to date.

**RESOLVED** that the notes and feedback from the Ward Alliances be received.

#### **55. Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Cen.03.08.2020/7)**

The Area Council Manager introduced the item referring to finance remaining in each of the Ward Alliance Funds.

The Central Ward Alliance had £19,086.35 available funding but £2,430 had been allocated for the Healthy Holidays Provision (£2,000) and to the Dearne Valley Litter Pickers (£430). The Dodworth Ward Alliance had £19,701.04 available funding but £125 had been allocated for the Secretary payments.

The Kingstone Ward Alliance had allocated £4,384.00 of its available funding of £14,538.91 as follows, Hope in the Community – Covid 19 (£1,217.99), Exodus Project food delivery programme (£1,508), Bowling Club for residents (£959) and Bowling Greens at Locke Park ((£700). The Stairfoot Ward Alliance had £20,926.00 funding available with £2,000 allocated for the Healthy Holiday Provision. The Worsbrough Ward had £28,161.66 available and had allocated £15,267.14 on 9 projects for various amounts.

There was a discussion on the moratorium on expenditure and the devolvement of Ward Alliance Budgets which limited what Ward Alliances could utilise finance for, however, given the wide priorities of the Area Council it was felt that there was plenty of scope for expenditure, although this had ben be related to Covid 19 priorities.

Arising out of this, the Area Council was informed of the devolvement of finance from central government in relation to expenditure financial hardship issues. £42,000 had

been utilised locally across the Healthy Holidays Programmes and a request had been made for an additional £10,000 per area to assist with financial hardship issues and approval had been obtained to add £10,000 to the existing welfare services being delivered in the Central Area. This would add value and bolster the work in the area that DIAL were already operating.

If Members were looking at where to allocate Ward Alliance Funding, whilst DIAL offered support around Welfare Benefits, there would be the possibly to give support to the CAB in work with people made redundant, accessing employment, issues with mortgages/rent which would then mean that there was a whole systems approach within the Central Area around access to Welfare Services and access to Benefits/support alongside the work of the CAB. The additional funding referred to above would not, however, be allocated to the Ward Alliances but would add to the existing funding already allocated to the DIAL contract.

It was felt important not to blur the lines between core Council business and the work of Area Councils and this was a matter that was regularly addressed to ensure that any expenditure added value. There was perhaps a need to have further conversations on how additional finance was distributed.

The Area Council Manager confirmed that the Advice Network comprised Age UK, DIAL and the CAB, therefore, any contribution to the CAB from the Ward Alliances would ensure a wraparound service from all partners. Such a contribution would mean an allocation of £2,000 from each Ward and each Ward Alliance would have to determine whether or not to support such a proposal.

A decision on the allocation from the Central Area of an additional £10,000 to Ward Alliances would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Arising out of the above, there was a discussion about dates for meetings of the 'Business and Economy' Workshop. The Head of Service Stronger Communities stated that she would circulate proposed dates to all members.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

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Chair