

MEETING:	Penistone Area Council
DATE:	Thursday, 1 October 2020
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Penistone Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Barnard (Chair), Greenhough,
David Griffin, Kitching and Wilson

51 Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

No Members declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

52 Minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 23rd July, 2020 (Pac.01.10.2020/2)

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd July, 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on the 23rd July, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

53 Notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 6th August, 2020 (Pac.01.10.2020/3)

The meeting received the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 6th August, 2020.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 6th August, 2020 be received.

54 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Pac.01.10.2020/4)

Members noted that the Ward Alliance Fund had an opening balance of £36,970.05 at the beginning of the financial year. The Area Council Manager noted that the report indicated that £26,380.43 remained, however a number have projects had received funding from an allocation held centrally to respond to the Covid-19 situation and therefore the Ward Alliance Fund had been reimbursed. The amount left for allocation was therefore £27,657.

Members heard of plans to promote the Ward Alliance Fund in order to encourage applications, particularly from groups which may have been adversely affected by the pandemic. Members noted that many groups were apprehensive to continue their activities in the current situation, especially where those taking part were elderly or vulnerable. It was hoped that the fund could be used to ensure groups were able to be maintained, and the great work these were undertaken in the area was acknowledged.

Members heard that another virtual meeting of the Ward Alliance would be arranged to take place soon.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

55 Performance Report (Pac.01.10.2020/5)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item reminding members that the information related to quarter one, as information relating to quarter two was still being processed.

In relation to an overview of performance, Members were reminded that providers had to alter their delivery in light of the pandemic. However, the outcomes being delivered were commendable. A number of areas of success were highlighted including that four business had been engaged in improving their local environment, three full time jobs had been created, and 14 people had received training through virtual means.

Members were reminded that the report featured the first quarter of the new contract with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance. Though restrictions due to Covid-19 had impacted on the work, the team had engaged with groups, Parish Councils and Businesses. Support had also been provided to Neighbourhood Services cleaning up targeted areas and others identified as needing some attention.

Support had been provided in innovative ways, often through the use of technology, and consideration was being given to establishing an equipment bank in order for volunteers to have access to the relevant tools. Members noted how appreciative the community were for the continued hard work of the team.

The contract with Age UK Barnsley was in its second year and had refocused of late to support the most vulnerable. Staff had worked with the Area Team, Social Prescriber and Age UK Barnsley staff based more centrally to ensure those who required support received it.

39 volunteers had been engaged in delivering the contract with 417 interventions to support 94 older people. The service had supported residents throughout the area.

Feedback from service users was extremely positive, however it was noted that there had been a number with complex needs. In these cases referrals were made to other agencies where appropriate. Members noted that issues due to lack of mobility were increasing due to the current restrictions.

It was noted that 14 service users had received information and advice from Age UK Barnsley. This had resulted in £41,422 of additional benefits being gained. In addition, clients had been referred to other services such as Warm Homes where relevant.

Age UK Barnsley had also been innovative in engaging older and vulnerable people as conventional groups could not be convened. This had included a number of home activity clubs, including a pudding club which was very well received.

Contacts had been maintained in smaller communities contacts

and adaptations made so residents could carry on with activities in their own homes where possible.

Members noted that the PenPals project had been postponed as schools had not been in session. It was hoped that this could be resurrected now pupils had returned to school.

The Supporting Older People in the Penistone Area network had not been able to meet, but a virtual meeting was being planned. The group would be considering the winter period and coordination of winter warmth activities. Members noted the benefit of the presence of Age UK in the area, and the support given to those utilising the service.

The contract delivered by DIAL continued to be well subscribed with telephone and online appointments being offered. Approximately £155,000 of additional benefits had been claimed, with over £70 claimed for £1 of Area Council investment.

The service provided by CAB had seen a significant uptake, with 78 clients being assisted since October, 2019 and £70,000 of debt now managed. £128,000 in additional benefits had also been claimed. During the past quarter 51 clients had been supported.

Members noted that advice services continued to be promoted in the area and discussions were taking place as to how these could be better connected with services providing employment support.

Members considered the service provided by South Pennine Community Transport. It was noted that a final report had been requested but had yet to be received.

The Area Council Manager provided feedback on the work of the Area Team, which had provided support to the Community Responders and community volunteers. Though requests for support had reduced, contact had been maintained with service users with a view to them being able to access support if required as winter approaches. Contact had also been maintained with groups to continue to offer support if possible.

Members were made aware of an additional resource, for a Community Engagement Officer in the Area Team, which was funded by Public Health. This role would be hands on, gathering community intelligence and advising on the impact of Covid-19. They would also be able to assist in reaching out to more remote residents to advise them on services available.

Members praised the impact of all services commissioned by the Area Council, and thanks were given to all involved, including the Area Team.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

The Area Council Manager reminded Members of the history behind the services funded to help reduce loneliness and isolation for older people. A full review had been undertaken, this highlighted outcomes delivered and provided an indication of challenges expected over the forthcoming 12 months.

In order to respond to these challenges, it was recommended that £70,000 be allocated to the Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People's Grant Fund and that further applications be encouraged. It was proposed that this would be allocated through previously agreed mechanisms associated with the fund, with awards expected to be approved by mid December, 2020.

Members noted the history of the Working Together Fund, which was established in 2015 and had received several allocations from the Area Council budget. £61,030 had been carried forward in to the current financial year. One application had been received and if approved would leave £51,912 to allocate. Members were reminded of previous discussions, where there was a desire to fund activities to support young people. Unfortunately it had been unable to progress this due to the pandemic.

It was suggested that applications to the Working Together Fund be invited from groups to help with Covid-19 recovery, with a closing date of 27th November.

In addition, it was also suggested that a further £40,000 be allocated to the Working Together Fund specifically ringfenced to support young people in the Covid-19 recovery process. This would be advertised, again with a closing date of 27th November for applications.

Members noted the current situation in relation to the contract with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance, with performance being satisfactory.

Those present considered the financial position of the Ward Alliance Fund. It was noted that the figure remaining for allocation, had increased since papers were published due to the fund being reimbursed from a central budget to support Covid-19 recovery. £27,657 therefore remained for allocation.

Members were reminded of previous discussions that highlighted the need to review the Area Priorities in light of the pandemic. A review had been undertaken which recommended that the current priorities remained, but that flexibility ought to be applied where applicable.

The previous meeting had discussed the possibility of highlighting the work of the Area Council, the Ward Alliance, and the support available to residents via coverage in Penistone Living. This was supported and an allocation made available for coverage in future editions.

Members supported information being provided in printed media, as many residents were not online. It was suggested that the work of volunteers could be featured, recognising their hard work and dedication. Members discussed the awards event held in 2019 and it was suggested that consideration could be given to holding something virtually in 2020.

Members also discussed whether a loyalty voucher scheme could be explored in Penistone Living. It was noted that plans were in place to trial similar in Barnsley Town Centre with a view to replicating this in Penistone if successful.

Members were made aware of the current financial position of the Area Council. Subject to recommendations being agreed, £50,225 remained for allocation in the current financial year.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the update on all contracts funded by the existing Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People Grant Fund be noted;
- (ii) That £70,000 be allocated to the Supporting Vulnerable and Isolated Older People Grant Fund to be allocated using mechanisms previously agreed, and that the Executive Director Community be authorised to approve grants following recommendations from the grant fund panel to address the impacts of Covid-19 on vulnerable and isolated older people in the Penistone Area;
- (iii) That the financial position of the Working Together Fund be noted and that the fund be promoted widely to support with community recovery in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- (iv) That £40,000 be allocated to the Working Together Fund ringfenced to establish specific activities to support young people in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- (v) That the update on the new Clean and Tidy contract be noted;
- (vi) That the current position of the Ward Alliance Fund be noted;
- (vii) That the current priorities for the Area Council be maintained in light of the recent review;
- (viii) That £3,000 be allocated to support communication of Area Council updates through purchasing space in the Penistone Living Magazine;
- (ix) That the current financial position be noted.

57 Principal Towns (Pac.01.10.2020/7)

Fiona O'Brien, Project Management Officer was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update in relation to the Principal Towns programme.

In relation to the development of Penistone Town Hall, Members heard how the contract had been split into smaller lots in order to encourage more local business to tender.

A brief had been completed for wayfinding and this was to be tendered to engage an artist to work with the community an innovative approach. Work was also underway with the heritage group on a heritage trail.

In relation to the Market, discussion was taking place with the Markets Team around branding and new market stalls had been purchased. CCTV had been added to the market barn and extending Wi-Fi to cover the town centre was being considered.

A review of benches and cycle racks in the Town Centre had been undertaken and where necessary replacements or additional of each would be provided, concentrating on the high street and market area.

Members questioned whether extending Wi-Fi would provide value for money, given the improvement in mobile data provision. It was noted that cost would be taken into account, but that this was often popular and could offer useful information to inform marketing. It could also be used to promote public messages.

The Shop Front Improvement Scheme was discussed. It was noted that a further round of this had been proposed, but was likely to be oversubscribed.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That thanks be given for the update; and
- (ii) That further updates be provided to Members as appropriate.

Chair