

MEETING:	Penistone Area Council
DATE:	Thursday, 3 December 2020
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Held Virtually

MINUTES

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

1 **Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**

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

2 **Minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on 1st October, 2020 (Pac.03.12.2020/2)**

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st October, 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Penistone Area Council meeting held on the 1st October, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 **Notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 8th October, 2020 (Pac.03.12.2020/3)**

The meeting received the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 8th October, 2020.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Penistone Ward Alliance held on 8th October, 2020 be received.

4 **Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Pac.03.12.2020/4)**

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, referring to the report circulated. Members noted the total figure available for distribution in 2020/21, which included monies carried forward from the previous financial year, allocation for the current financial year and income from finance to support recovery from Covid-19. A total figure of £38,247.45 was available.

At the time of the report being published £24,808.25 remained for allocation, however Members noted that the Ward Alliance had recently met and recommended four applications for approval, which would further reduce this figure.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

5 Presentation on Performance (Pac.03.12.2020/5)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item referring to the great work undertaken by Age UK Barnsley supporting vulnerable and isolated older people in the Penistone area, prioritising those with few contacts.

83 Service user contacts had been made in quarter 2, with this slightly reduced from quarter 1 as restrictions eased.

25 volunteers had committed 278 hours, with some of this providing socially distanced face-to-face support where possible. As well as walking for health programmes being arranged when appropriate, home based activity programmes had been extremely positively received with 31 taking part.

17 service users had received information and advice with an estimated benefit gain of £12,753. Though the Community Car Scheme had recommenced for essential journeys, take up remained low.

Members noted some groups had recommenced in line with guidance, but had since been postponed. However, U3A had started some activities via Zoom. It was also noted that the SOPPA network had met virtually and discussed how to collectively provide support over winter.

The services provided by Age UK provided a valuable support for older and vulnerable, and also acted as a sign posting service. Members noted the activities planned, including the continuation of activities at home and the distribution of winter warmth packs.

During the restrictions Twiggs Grounds Maintenance worked in innovative ways to support 15 community groups, with assistance from 2 businesses. 36 individual projects had taken place. Some were only small but made significant impacts. This included clearing walkways to schools and restoring seating.

Members noted that the equipment bank had been established using Ward Alliance Fund finance to provide resources for residents and community groups to use in their clean and green work.

The information and advice service provided by DIAL had moved to being provided online and via telephone. With some additional funding from the National Lottery, this had also enabled the service to be provided over 4 of 5 days. There had been a significant rise in users, with 162 benefitting from support within the quarter. Within the quarter an estimated £27,939.60 in additional benefit had been gained. This had a significant impact on the wellbeing of clients, including improvements in the levels of anxiety in users, their health and wellbeing and reductions in their feelings of isolation.

Members heard of the performance of the CAB service in the area, which assisted 42 clients within the quarter against a target of 15. Noted was the return on investment of £17 per £1 invested. There had been a growth in the demand for legal advice in relation to families and neighbours. 6 volunteers had also supported delivery of the service. Since April 2019 the service had assisted the management of £70,015 debt and helped residents to claim £145,623 of additional benefits.

Members were made aware of the work of the Area Team within the quarter. Links with community groups had continued to be maintained and advice provided in relation to accessing Covid support funds and Ward Alliance Funds. In addition, advice had been provided in relation to the safe operation of groups that had recommenced.

The 'Healthy Holiday' provision had been piloted with Springvale Primary, School, working with Café Generation. There are plans to develop this further with other schools and with the Children and Family Service.

The team continued to work with the Targeted Youth Support Service to develop proposals to utilise finance from the ringfenced Working Together Fund budget.

Though it was not possible to arrange an event to celebrate volunteering, it was noted that space in Penistone Living had been utilised in order to praise volunteers and to promote services provided by the Area Council.

Members noted that the team had worked to re-establish community responder volunteers, with a number of requests for assistance being received. Support will continue to be provided where required and referrals made to other relevant services in more complex cases.

Work continued with Age UK and Public Health to coordinate the distribution of Winter Warmth Packs, which included information on falls prevention and warm homes, as well as activity packs and warm clothing.

Support continued to be provided to the Principal Towns programme, with two artists being recently appointed to lead on art installation and way marking. Members noted that the artists would be engaging the community in the new year.

Members heard of the recent appointment of a neighbourhood engagement officer, who would provide support in relation to Covid-19. This included providing guidance to licensed premises, gyms etc and supporting test and trace arrangements.

Those present wished to place on record their thanks to SPAR in Penistone and other local businesses for their support provided to services provided by the Area Council. Also thanked were all the volunteers involved in the area. In addition Members praised the continued hard work of the Area Team.

Questions were raised in relation to the use of the £10,000 hardship fund and it was suggested that this would support continuation of advice services in the area provided by DIAL and CAB.

Members discussed engaging residents who were not digitally enabled, and it was noted that this was being considered by the Area Team and was a reason space was taken in Penistone Living Magazine. In addition, Age UK helped to make residents aware of support who were not on the internet, and noticeboards around the area were also used for promotion of services

RESOLVED that the feedback on performance be noted.

6 Procurement and Financial Update (Pac.03.12.2020/6)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report previously circulated. Members were reminded of the previous approval of the development of a further grant process to support vulnerable and isolated older people. In light of the recent lockdown and current restrictions, and that the demand was likely to rise during the winter period, it was suggested that the current services should be extended for a further six months. This would allow continuity for service users and in delaying the grant process would mean that proposals could more adequately reflect the impact of Covid-19.

It had been suggested that the Working Together Fund would be advertised widely, with a deadline for applications of 27th November, 2020. However, due to many organisations taking time to consider how to operate in light of the pandemic it was suggested that any deadline be removed and that the fund continue to be promoted.

A financial summary was provided, with an in-year budget of £50,225 remaining. However, with the approval to continue support services provided by Age UK for a further six months, this was reduced by £15,225.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the update on procurement be received;
- (ii) That the establishment of a grant scheme to support isolated older people be delayed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- (iii) That the current contracts funded through the Supporting Isolated and Older People's Grant Fund be continued for a further period of six months at a cost of £35,000 to address the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on vulnerable older people in the Penistone area;
- (iv) That the update and the current financial position of the Penistone Working Together Fund be noted;
- (v) That the update on funds ringfenced within the Working Together Fund for activities to support young people be noted;
- (vi) That the updates on the Clean and Tidy contract be noted;
- (vii) That the financial position be noted.

Chair