

MEETING:	South Area Council
DATE:	Friday, 12 February 2021
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Held Virtually

MINUTES

Present Councillors Markham (Chair), Andrews BEM, Eastwood, Franklin, Frost, Lamb, Saunders, Shepherd, Smith, Stowe and Sumner

12 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillors Shepherd and Franklin each declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute number 20 in so far as discussion related to their positions as directors of Forge Community Partnership.

Councillors Frost and Markham both declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute number 20 in relation to their positions as trustees of Age UK Barnsley.

13 Minutes of the Meeting of South Area Council held on 18th December, 2020 (Sac.12.02.2021/2)

The meeting considered the minutes of South Area Council held on 18th December, 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the South Area Council held on 18th December, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

14 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Sac.12.02.2021/3)

Members received the notes from the following Ward Alliances:- Hoyland Milton and Rockingham held on 13th January, 2021; Wombwell held on 18th January, 2021; and Darfield Ward Alliance held on 21st January, 2021.

Councillor Shepherd provided a brief update in relation to the work of the Hoyland Milton and Rockingham Ward Alliance. Communications had been circulated regarding the ability for people to sponsor hanging baskets. Finance had been ringfenced in order to address the issue of nuisance off-road biking in Jump Valley and discussions had taken place regarding recommencing work.

Councillor Frost spoke about the Wombwell Ward Alliance, noting that discussion had taken place around the success of the healthy holidays programme. The Ward Alliance had previously financed hanging baskets, but had more recently sought sponsorship, with all now being funded by sponsors. The Ward Alliance had also discussed Post Office provision in the area. A temporary facility was in place at Wombwell library, but a site for a more permanent fixture was being sought.

Councillor Smith updated Members on the work of the Ward Alliance in Darfield. The Ward Alliance had also been considering the sponsorship of hanging baskets. It was noted that the CCTV requested had been granted funding by the Principal Towns

Programme. The Ward Alliance had discussed the issues of quad biking, and different measures to restrict access and resolve the issue. It was suggested that the partnership work being undertaken by Hoyland Milton and Rockingham could be shared.

The Alliance had also discussed the issues of potholes in the area, and thanks were given for the efforts of highways, noting that dangerous and severe potholes were normally filled within 24 hours.

RESOLVED that the notes and updates from the Ward Alliances be received.

15 CityFibre Deployment - Natalie Ward (Sac.12.02.2021/4)

Unfortunately Natalie Ward was unable to attend and therefore the item was deferred for consideration at a future meeting if appropriate.

16 SFSY & BMBC Digital Activity Update - Julie Tattershall (Sac.12.02.2021/5)

Julie Tattershall, Projects and Contracts Manager, was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update on Superfast South Yorkshire (SFSY) and Accelerating Digital Barnsley.

Members heard how SFSY was a partnership between the four South Yorkshire local authorities, Building Digital UK, Openreach and the Local Enterprise Partnership. So far SFSY had increased availability of superfast broadband from 80% to over 90% bringing nearly 120,000 new connections. In addition support had been provided to SMEs on how to gain the benefits of connectivity and advice relating to infrastructure had also been provided to developers and to planning departments.

Members noted the current activity being undertaken, including working with Openreach to provide fibre to the premises for 8,000 homes, inputting into digital strategies in Barnsley and the City Region and also being consulted on digital connectivity as part of the planning process.

Noted was the work undertaken in the South Area with a total of 2,948 properties now having improved connectivity.

Those present heard of the work of Accelerate Digital Barnsley which included efforts to increase gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure from commercial providers such as City Fibre, to stimulate demand through voucher schemes, and to ensure all new residential and commercial sites were future proofed with gigabit capable infrastructure.

Members also were made aware of Internet of Things (IoT) work to utilise technology in smart ways, collecting data to be used for strategic decision making. An example of temperature sensors being used to help decide when to deploy gritters was given.

It was noted that officers worked with network providers to plan the installation of 5G provision over the next two years. It was noted that liaison included supporting the planning process to ensure smooth roll out.

Members acknowledged the strategic linkages being made and social value opportunities created, and noted the example given of utilising technology to allow video calling in care homes. The work to address digital exclusion was also acknowledged.

Members discussed the impact of the pandemic and reliance on data for work and schooling, noting the effect on those digitally excluded. The expense of connections, and the complexity of contracts used were also discussed. Work to ensure children and young people had access to laptops and affordable connections was acknowledged.

Noted was the work in the area by Openreach and other providers such as Virgin Media, which would contribute to the Government target of all properties being able to gigabit enabled by 2033.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation, and that its content be noted.

17 Public Health Update - Diane Lee (Sac.12.02.2021/6)

Diane Lee, Head of Public Health, introduced the item by making Members aware of the Older People and Alcohol Toolkit developed by the Barnsley Alcohol Alliance.

It was noted that historically alcohol consumption declined with age, and the numbers of non-drinkers increased. However, the current older generation are more likely to drink, with those aged over 55 more likely to exceed guidelines for consumption. A number of factors were thought to contribute, including retirement, bereavement and loneliness. In addition, drinking had increased during lockdown.

Those present heard of the three types of older drinkers:- Early Onset (survivors), Late-onset (reactors); and Intermittent (binge drinkers). It was noted that hospital admissions due to alcohol consumption had increased due to such as cardiovascular diseases; cancer; liver disease; and slips, trips and falls.

The difficulty in discussing drinking was acknowledged and guidance on this was provided. Members were made aware of Drink Coach support, including the app, which helped track units and calories consumed, and online coaching sessions. It was noted that hard copies of the Older People and Alcohol Toolkit would be made available for distribution in the area, as would plastic glasses which served to highlight the size of measures and the alcohol content.

Members discussed the issue and the reasons behind increased consumption, which included more generous measures being poured when drinking at home and that alcohol is cheap, readily available and socially acceptable.

It was suggested that conversations could be started with residents through Sloppy Slippers events and through the Age UK provision in the area.

Questions were asked whether there would be a public health media campaign on this issue, and it was noted that one was being planned with the view to reducing the stigma associated with accessing support.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That thanks be given for the presentation;
- (ii) That Members agree to support conversations on the issue and promote the Older People and Alcohol Toolkit and Drink Coach resources.

18 Covid 19 Update - Cath Bedford and Kay Tinkler (Sac.12.02.2021/7)

Cath Bedford, Public Health Principal, and Kay Tinkler, Neighbourhood Engagement Officer, were welcomed to the meeting.

Members heard that there were signs of a decline in cases both in Barnsley, and nationally, but that there was still a need to remain vigilant and follow the guidance.

It was noted that case rates were most prevalent in working age adults, and that case rates were similar in all neighbourhoods, with all stable or declining.

Members noted the Covid Marshals and Neighbourhood Engagements Officers in place for advice and support. It was noted that issues of non-compliance had been identified in shops with both staff and customers not wearing face coverings, and support had been given to address this issue. Work to provide community insights had recently concluded and analysis was being undertaken to understand why some residents did not comply with regulations.

It was noted that work had been undertaken to support vulnerable communities and which included disseminating information. Members heard how there was a weekly meeting to discuss outbreaks across Barnsley including in schools, care homes and workplaces.

Noted was the work to support asymptomatic community testing at the Metrodome, and to encourage those with symptoms to get tested at the various testing sites throughout the borough.

The NHS was leading vaccination efforts, but feedback had been positive with most aged 70+ now vaccinated and those aged over 65 being called to make appointments. Members discussed issues with queueing at vaccination venues, and it was noted that efforts were being made to overcome these, including encouraging those attending not to come early.

Members heard about the work of Neighbourhood Engagement Officers (NEOs) working as part of a team to support individuals, community groups and businesses.

Community groups had been supported with advice regarding safe working. Businesses had also been supported with Covid safety information and signposted to financial support through Enterprising Barnsley. It was noted NEOs had also supported the Covid Responder service, Covid Support Service and worked alongside Covid Marshals.

NEOs had gathered intelligence on high streets and parks and monitored adherence to guidance. It was noted that residents largely adhered to guidelines but encouraged Members to feed in intelligence.

Members heard how the numbers requesting support from Community Responders had declined. Those requesting befriending support had been referred to Age UK

Barnsley, and those requiring support with shopping had been supported to order direct, which was suggested more sustainable in the longer term.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

19 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Sac.12.02.2021/8)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the item referring to the finance remaining in each Ward Alliance Fund, as contained within the report. An array of projects to support Covid recovery had been funded in each area, but finance still remained for allocation to worthy causes.

It was noted that an end of year report would be provided at the next meeting of the Area Council in April.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

20 Procurement and Financial Update (Sac.12.02.2021/9)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the item, referring to the service to reduce social isolation and loneliness. It was noted that the current service provided by Age UK had been funded for two years and would come to an end on 30th September, 2021.

Members noted that the service was initially commissioned with the first year designed to gain a greater insight into those socially isolated in the area. The second year was set to establish sustainable infrastructure to support the needs identified.

Members noted that the pandemic had impacted on the service, which had changed its delivery but had still worked to meet the needs of those isolated and lonely, with increasing numbers being referred to the service.

It was suggested that a workshop be arranged for Members to consider the service in detail, including its operation so far, with a view to making recommendations for any future service to the Area Council at the meeting in April, 2021.

RESOLVED that a workshop be held to consider the Social Isolation contract and discuss commissioning intentions going forward, with a report on the outcome to be presented to the next meeting of the Area Council.

Chair