

MEETING:	Dearne Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 24 May 2021
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Reception Room and Room 2, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Noble (Chair), Cain, Coates, Danforth and Gollick

1 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 15th March, 2021 (Dac.24.05.2021/2)

The minutes from the previous meeting of Dearne Area Council were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Dearne Area Council meeting held on 15th March, 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 Performance Report Q4 (Dac.24.05.2021/3)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report which covered quarter four of 2020/21.

The service provided by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance had been operating successfully, with positive feedback received about the tool bank, and the support to volunteers litter picking.

Within the quarter 37 events had been held, with 36 community groups and businesses supported. The service had worked with 55 new volunteers, and 671 bags had been filled with litter the quarter. Members noted that the Area Team, Twiggs Grounds Maintenance and Neighbourhood Services had worked closely to develop an easy to understand flowchart in order to support individuals who wished to volunteer in the area.

B:Friend had suspended face to face sessions due to the pandemic, but social groups had continued online. Question and answer sessions had been held with the Museums Service and with South Yorkshire Police.

The service had supported 70 older neighbours and delivered 355 hours of one-to-one befriending through volunteers, with most of this undertaken over the phone. There had been 78 hours of staff visits and calls, and 7 new volunteers had been recruited within the quarter.

Members noted the recent promotion undertaken through social media and partner networks to make potential users aware of the service.

Members went on to consider the service provided by Dearne Electronic Community Village (DECV). 71 learners had been engaged within the quarter, with 10 new learners. 10 individuals had gained qualifications, with 3 learners securing employment and 7 going on to further training.

The reduction in numbers due to face to face tuition being stopped was discussed, as was the impact of the library being closed. However, it was noted that previous learners had been contacted to offer supported, and it was expected that numbers of learners would improve when restrictions eased.

Those present then discussed the performance of the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Officer, who had made 141 reports, and helped to improve 39 properties. 29 residents had been assisted into positive changes, and 39 houses supported to responsibly recycle or dispose of waste. Members noted that the officer had reported 38 fly tipping incidents and the problem in the area was acknowledged. Members commented on the quick rate of response from the officer, and the impact of their work.

Consideration was then given to the services funded through the Dearne Development Fund.

Citizen's Advice Bureau had supported 36 people within the quarter with 80 issues. £14,237 of additional benefits had been claimed and residents supported to manage £2,419 of debt. Noted were the range of issues where support had been given, including with benefits, employment issues, relationships and families, and with legal issues.

DIAL had received 248 enquiries in the quarter, and 75 users receiving support reported reduced anxiety. The service had also supported £37,392 of benefit claims. The service had assisted with a wide range of issues including benefits, public health advice, social isolation and finance.

Station House had been funded to provide an afterschool club for young people aged 4-10. 76 children had taken part, with 25 sessions addressing issues identified by young people, and 14 session considering issues identified by staff. 48 families had registered for regular phone calls over lockdown.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

4 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Dac.24.05.2021/4)

Members noted that the Dearne North Ward Alliance Fund had £182.90 carried forward which led to a balance of £10,182.90 available for the 2021/22 financial year.

Dearne South had carried forward £1,317.72. When added to the annual allocation, this provided £11,317.72 for the financial year.

It was acknowledged that both funds had very recently received applications, which had been recommended for approval.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5 Dearne Area Council Financial Update (Dac.24.05.2021/5)

The Area Council Manager reminded Members of the £200,000 allocation at the beginning of the financial year. This, together with £9,667.67 of underspend from 2020/21, led to an opening balance of £209,667.67 for the 2021/22 financial year.

Members noted that four commissions had already been agreed at a cost of £145,000. Therefore £64,663.67 remained for allocation.

An overview of the Dearne Development Fund was provided, which had an opening balance of £41,650.68 in 2020/21 and had approved five projects leaving £27.68. However, when additional underspend allocated to the fund and the approval of a further application was taken into account, the Fund had £5,378.41 remaining.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 Dearne Development Fund (Dac.24.05.2021/6)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report circulated. Members heard that the Dearne Development Fund had an opening balance of £41,650.68 and had approved five projects leaving £27.68. However, underspend was received of just under £15,000, and an additional application had been approved meaning the Fund had £5,378.41 remaining.

The report proposed an additional £30,000 to be allocated to the fund, to be distributed as per previously agreed mechanisms, providing grants of between £1,000 and £15,000. It was acknowledged that this could be used as match funding to increase the impact in the area.

RESOLVED:-

- (i)** That approval be given for the continuation of the Dearne Development Fund;
- (ii)** That £30,000 from the commissioning budget be allocated to continue the Dearne Development Fund in the 2021/22 financial year to provide grants from £1,000-£15,000, through previously approved mechanisms, to enhance and improve provision that already exists within the Dearne Area; and
- (iii)** That the Executive Director, Adults and Communities, be authorised to approve grants of between £1,000 and £15,000 following consultation with the Dearne Development Fund panel.

7 COVID 19 Update (Dac.24.05.2021/7)

The report was received for information. Members spoke about the low rates in the area and that Craig Aubrey, the Neighbourhood Engagement Officer, had recently secured a permanent position with the Central Area Team. Thanks were given for Craig's hard work and Members gave their best wishes for the future.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chair