

MEETING:	Central Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 26 April 2021
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Held Virtually

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Williams (Chair), P. Birkinshaw, Bruff, Clarke, Fielding, Gillis, W. Johnson, Lodge, Mitchell and Wright.

22 Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Central Area Council held on 1st March, 2021 (Cen.26.04.2021/2)

The meeting received the minutes from the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on 1st March, 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on 1st March, 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

24 City Fibre/SY Superfast Broadband - Natalie Ward and Julie Tattershall (Cen.26.04.2021/3)

Natalie Ward, City Manager, and Julie Tattershall, Projects and Contracts Manager, were welcomed to the meeting.

Members heard how Superfast South Yorkshire (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 98% bringing nearly 120,000 new connections, with over 70,000 in regular use. 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 Central Area with a total of 1,623 properties now having improved connectivity. Questions were raised in relation to the distribution of new connections, and it was noted that low numbers could be due to existing infrastructure already in place.

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.

Those present then heard about City Fibre and their work nationally to improve connectivity to 8m premises, a task which would create a number of jobs in construction.

The programme of £32m of investment in Barnsley had commenced in January, 2021. The programme would provide a model of full fibre infrastructure to allow improved internet connections that would be suitable for decades to come, allowing speeds to increase over time. The build involved both under and over ground work which would take around three years to complete the first phase.

Members were made aware of the details of the build and how the infrastructure would look. It was acknowledged that City Fibre owned infrastructure, but that the service would be provided by Internet Service Providers.

Members heard that work had commenced in January, and that City Fibre was working closely with the Council, engaging all stakeholders where possible, and raising awareness of the work being undertaken.

It was noted that the reinstatement of pavements and roadways following work would be undertaken on a like for like basis. Should issues arise, Members were made aware of the complaints process and that a team was dedicated to Barnsley was on hand to consider defects.

Noted was the workflow and additional communications to ensure residents were aware of the work in the area. It was acknowledged that this had been impinged somewhat by the pandemic. However, it was hoped that face to face discussions could be had in the coming months as restrictions were reduced. A suggestion was made for Members to highlight any avenue of potential stakeholder engagement, through briefings, events or publications.

Members questioned the use of telegraph poles in the area, noting that there had been a number of complaints, including in siting, with their size, and with the smell from their treatment. It was noted that the use of poles was part of design constraints, which could include needing to utilise existing infrastructure available, however it was suggested that communications about this could be improved.

Members asked what efforts were being made to improve connectivity in rural areas, and it was acknowledged that this was being considered by Central Government, who were working with operators to develop proposals to best suit rural areas.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentations.

25 District Enforcement - Environmental Enforcement Service - Craig Embleton (Cen.26.04.2021/4)

Craig Embleton, North Environmental Operations Manager, District Enforcement was welcomed to the meeting. Members were made aware that four officers operated in Barnsley, with a remit to educate and to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in the event of non-compliance.

In relation to education, discussions had taken place with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance about how to work together to improve education and deal with littering. Members were made aware of plans to develop an animation for schools, highlighting the impact of littering on the environment. It was also noted that officers did hand out 'Stubbi' pouches and dog fouling bags to educate.

Questions were raised in relation to the resource available in the Central Area, and how to make contact with officers. Members heard that officers were deployed in the Central Area in pairs, according to a rota schedule which focused on hotspots, and that details about how to report issues would be circulated.

Members discussed the large number of volunteers collecting litter and the fact that issues with litter still remained. It was suggested that education, especially from a younger age, and enforcement were two ways that could assist, but that changing culture was not easy. It was noted that the service would collaborate with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance to work with schools on education, but there was some concern as to whether this would be locally focused or differ significantly from national resources, and the impact of this was questioned.

It was acknowledged that overfilled waste bins did not help the situation with regards to litter, and the frequency of emptying was being considered.

Members noted the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices, which were below previous levels due to the pandemic.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that thanks be given for the presentation, and the contents noted;
- (ii) that details of how to report issues to District Enforcement Officers, and details of their working patterns be circulated to Members;
- (iii) that District Enforcement Officers be invited to a future meeting to discuss the performance of their service in the area.

26 Covid-19 Update - Lucy Butcher and Laura Dixon (Cen.26.04.2021/5)

Lucy Butcher, Public Health Practitioner and Laura Dixon, Neighbourhood Engagement Officer, were welcomed to the meeting. A brief update was provided on the current situation. Covid Marshals had been deployed in areas of high footfall, specifically in the Town Centre, Cudworth and Wombwell. In general, there were far

fewer reports of households mixing, people not wearing masks, and issues in gyms. However, there were some concerns around football, with a lack of distancing at both professional and informal matches feared.

Members questioned whether Covid Marshals were available out of normal office hours, and it was suggested that officers worked until 10pm in the evenings. Members requested that contact details be circulated in order to report any issues.

Potential issues around the opening of fairs and drive in cinemas were discussed and it was noted that these would be monitored.

Questions were raised about whether members of the public were adhering to restrictions within licensed premises, and it was noted that support was provided to licensed premises and that Regulatory Services were also undertaking visits to monitor adherence.

In relation to the relaxing of restrictions, it was noted that some support would be required in relation to the management of large events and it was expected that Covid Marshals would be available to support this until next year.

With regards to the lack of social distancing around schools, Members were encouraged to report any issues, and Covid Marshals would be deployed appropriately.

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Engagement Officers had been working to promote the uptake of the vaccine. They had also been working to support recovery, meeting with CAB to discuss their offer, and with Youth Services to ensure safe practices in the community.

It was noted that the Community Responder Service had now been stood down but would be on standby in the case of any further waves.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

27 Procurement and Financial Update (Cen.26.04.2021/6)

The item was introduced by the Central Area Council Manager who drew attention to the overview of all services provided by the Area Council and associated timescales. Members heard that the final performance report of 2020/21 would be considered at the next Area Council meeting. The financial position was considered, and it was acknowledged that the year end had yet to be reconciled and there may be some internal transfers. Noted was the £5,685 reimbursed into the budget. This was due to the successful award of finance from Central Government to address social isolation.

Members were reminded of the previous approval to fund the YMCA Detached Youth Work in Dodworth, which had been based on figures for 10 months. An increase of £943 was requested, as was a change of timescales.

An overview of the Social Isolation and Challenge Fund was provided, noting the successful applications: - Age UK, Reds in the Community, and RMB Mind. Members

heard that discussions had been undertaken with all, outcomes agreed, and contracts had also been signed. In addition, a meeting had been held to boost collaboration between the providers.

It was suggested that all providers would be invited to a future meeting of the Area Council to provide an overview and progress made of their project.

The quality of submissions had been very high, and appellants would be supported to access external finance where possible.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the overview of Central Area Council's current priorities, current contracts, contract extensions, Service Level Agreements and Wellbeing Fund projects, and associated timescales, be noted;
- (ii) that the actual financial position to date for 2021/22 and the projected expenditure, including future proposals, to 2023/24 as outline in appendices 1 and 2 of the report be noted;
- (iii) that the additional £5,685 reimbursed in to the budget via accessing Central Government social isolation funding be noted;
- (iv) that approval be given for a £943 increase in grant funding for the YMCA Detached Youth Work Project in Dodworth increasing the amount previously agreed on 1st March, 2021 to a total of £13,303;
- (v) That approval be given for the change in delivery period of the YMCA Detached Youth Work Project in Dodworth so that the project is operational from 1st July, 2021 to 30th June, 2022;
- (vi) That the Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund update be noted;
- (vii) That the projects funded through the Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund be noted;
- (viii) That the performance and monitoring arrangements for the Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund, as detailed in section 7 of appendix 3 of the report, be approved.

28 Dates and Times of Future Meetings (Cen.26.04.2021/7)

Members were reminded of discussion at the previous meeting where it was agreed that a potential list of dates would be circulated, with a view to identify any issues in moving meetings from Monday afternoons to being held on Wednesday afternoons.

A list of dates had been circulated and no issues had been identified.

RESOLVED that Central Area Council moves to meeting on a Wednesday at 2.00pm.

29 Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.26.04.2021/8)

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

Central Ward Alliance – held on 24th February, and 31st March, 2021;
Dodworth Ward Alliance – held on 9th March, 2021;
Kingstone Ward Alliance – held on 24th February, 2021;

Stairfoot Ward Alliance – held on 8th February, and 8th March, 2021; and
Worsbrough Ward Alliance – held on 4th February, and 4th March, 2021.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Ward Alliances be received.

30 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Cen.26.04.2021/9)

The report was received for information. A query was raised as to whether projects were still required to support Covid recovery objectives, and it was suggested that this was the case, but clarity would be sought.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chair