

MEETING:	North Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 14 March 2022
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Meeting Room 11, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present Councillors Leech (Chair), T. Cave, Crisp, Howard, Hunt, Newing and Pickering

48 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Howard declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 3 – Anti-Poverty Outreach – Information Advice and Guidance Service as an employee of the Department for Work and Pensions.

49 Notes of the Informal Meeting of the North Area Councillors held on 17th January 2022

The Area Council received the notes of the informal meeting of the North Area Councillors meeting held on 17th January, 2022.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the notes of the informal meeting of the North Area Councillors held on 17th January, 2022 be received and that the minutes of the meeting held on 29th November be approved;
- (ii) that the Housing and Cohesion update be received and noted;
- (iii) that in relation to the Housing and Cohesion Update Bradley and Carolyn be thanked for their attendance and contribution at the meeting and for the hard work they and the workers are doing in the community;
- (iv) that in relation to the Housing and Cohesion Update, thanks be passed on to the wardens and all those involved for their hard work in the Community;
- (v) that the update on the Stronger Communities Grant 2022/23 be noted;
- (vi) that the update on the Commissioning, Project, Development and Finance report be noted and a workshop be set up to work through options discussed;
- (vii) that the update on the Ward Alliance Fund be noted; and
- (viii) that the notes from the respective Ward Alliances be noted.

50 Anti-Poverty Outreach - Information Advice and Guidance Service - David Andy

David Andy was welcomed to the meeting and updated members with regards to the joint work undertaken on the Anti Poverty Outreach Information Advice and Guidance Service jointly delivered by the DIAL and CAB Service since the project began in the North Area from 2015.

Prior to the pandemic services were delivered across the area in 4 outreach centres but since the start of the pandemic had been delivered remotely via telephone or video with a proposal to restart outreach centres from 28th March, 2022.

In total 10,481 clients had been assisted and of those helped £11.82 million had been claimed in additional benefits and £1.74 million worth of debt managed resulting in a return investment of £20 per £1.

An average of 32 clients per week had been assisted with a total of 23,900 issues equating to around 2.5 issues per client when broken down.

1800 clients had been assisted with benefits claims averaging at around £6,500 in benefit gain per client, but it was noted that some clients had gained more than this and some less. In regards to debt management, 300 had been assisted with an average of around £5,900 per client. In exceptional circumstances two clients were assisted with debts over £34,000.

Members questioned as to whether one person returning with a separate problem would be counted as one client or two, they were informed that they would be dealt with as two, when supported by Citizen's Advice Barnsley as they would be separate cases and issues.

Members raised concerns around the rising cost of fuel and energy and whether problems had arisen in relation to this. They were informed that it was predicted that these issues would possibly take a few months to show and that numbers would be high when they did.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that members note the update; and
- (ii) that David Andy be thanked for his attendance and all the hard work that himself and the Team carry out.

51 Stronger Communities Grant 2022/23

The Area Council Manager referenced the report and informed members that the Grant Panel had met following the receipt of 4 application forms totalling £23,716.34.

It was reported that the application forms received were of lower quality than had been received previously and the fund was undersubscribed for the first time, reasons behind this could have included two larger pots of grant money previously allocated by the Area Council. Two applications had been recommended to progress but that further information had been requested from both.

In particular a request for lower priced kit and medals had been requested from the Mother Runners – Stronger Mums project and the ask for the scheme to cover the St Helens ward also had been made.

With regards to the Mapplewell and Staincross Greenspace and Recreation Group – Mapplewell Park – Children’s Cycle Path, it was agreed that the application form was not at a point to indicate overall project delivery, assurance was required that if the money was awarded there would be measurable outcomes for the Community. Members were encouraging of the project and hopeful of a joint venture with the Bikeability project and getting schools interested to use the space as opposed to the roads.

It was reported that once all requested information had been received a meeting of the Grants Panel would be called.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the North Area Council Stronger Communities Grant update be noted;
- (ii) that the projects that have been recommended for funding, pending further information, be noted;
- (iii) that it be noted that the Panel will reconvene to confirm that the requests of the Panel have been met; and
- (iv) that the performance and monitoring arrangements outlined in Section 7 of the report be agreed

52 Discussion following workshop held on the 10th March 2022

The workshop had received a presentation providing local data for the North Area, however it was felt that in order to make decisions on local need, it would be appropriate to wait for the outcome of the Welfare Review. It was also noted that the first release of most up to date census information would be available later this year.

An overview was provided on a number of issues discussed at the workshop held on 10th March, 2022 including:

- Support for fuel, food and the cost of living crisis
- Anti-Social behaviour and the increase in nuisance caused
- Parking enforcement
- Careers advice/raising aspirations of 14 and 16 year olds including information on a variety of jobs and opportunities that would not come out of regular careers advice in school

Members received a brief update on the Welfare Review that was being carried out within the Council and what that could mean for the North Area Council going forward in terms of delivering the Information Advice and Guidance Service. It was envisaged that a core provision may be provided with the option of a satellite service for Area Councils to fund in order to maintain a bespoke service fit for requirements in the area. Members were informed that once the review had been completed and a

core model was known they would meet to make a decision on an additional provision.

Members raised concerns around the decision to have a core offer which would not meet the specific individual needs of the North Area and questioned the estimated implementation date as the contract for CAB and DIAL was due to end in September 2022. They were informed that the review was not expected to be reported into Cabinet until May 2022 with the possibility of the Core offer not commencing until January 2023. It was noted that there may be the need to agree a 3/3.5 month (15 week) extension to the contract in order to ensure continued support. Members were in favour of this suggestion and the Area Manager agreed to make arrangements for a waiver.

RESOLVED that the update on the Workshop held on 10th March, 2022 be noted.

53 Performance Report Q3 2021/22

The Area Council Manager introduced the item providing members with a comprehensive performance report for the period October to December, 2021 (Quarter 3).

Members noted that there was a good overview of what was happening with each of the contracted services and how they linked into 4 Projects and the 2030 priorities and narrative for each one.

Particular attention as drawn to the Youth Resilience Fund which had seen positive results and members looked forward to meeting with the YMCA and Ad Astra at a future meeting of the Area Council.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Performance Management Report be noted.

54 Commissioning, Project Development and Finance

The Area Council Manager introduced the item and updated Members with the financial position going forward and outlined the projects which had been commissioned.

Members attention was drawn to the Anti Poverty Community Outreach Project and the option to extend the contract for 3 months with a view to reviewing the future plans once the Welfare Review had taken place and a core model was known.

Twiggs were in their second year of delivery with plans to hold larger engagement groups and work in collaboration with the Ward Alliances to ensure a programme of works including plans for the Queens Jubilee, summer holidays and October half term.

The Housing and Cohesion Officer project was doing well and it was felt good value for money in terms of service delivery in the area.

The Connecting Communities Grant funded projects were deemed successful with Age UK active in the area, DIAL had a new member of staff commencing live

connection hubs and Reds in the Community planned also to be live from the end of April, 2022.

The Stronger Communities Grant continued to have a number of successful projects.

The Health and Wellbeing – focus on Young People project had grant agreements in place until October 2022

The Health and Wellbeing – focus on Young People project grants were originally funded until October, 2022. A recommendation was put forward to extend to October, 2024 which would include the third year originally agreed plus a further year's funding at a cost of £90,000 per annum. Members were minded to make the extension in order to maintain the support provided to students in their educational transitions who were adversely affected by Covid-19.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the existing budget position and existing funding commitments be noted;
- (ii) that the funding for and extension of the Anti-Poverty Outreach IAG provision in relation to the Welfare Advice Review, be agreed until the end of calendar year 2022 at a value of approximately £27,500;
- (iii) that the progress with the 2022/23 Stronger Communities Grant opportunities be noted;
- (iv) that the North Area Councillors commitment to extend the Youth Resilience Grant funding for the original 3 years be agreed;
- (v) that an additional 4th years funding be committed to the Youth Resilience Grant funding be agreed at a value of £90,000; and
- (vi) that the updated projected spend be noted.

55 Report of the Ward Alliance Fund

The Area Council Manager update the North Area Council on the financial position of the Ward Alliance budgets for each ward for the 2021/22 period. It was highlighted that match funding which had been suspended during the pandemic was to be reinstated in the new financial year.

Members raised a query as to whether the funds could be increased in the new financial year as there was an anticipated increase in projects surrounding anti-poverty. This was welcomed by other members with a view to waiting until the Welfare Review had been completed when this would be reviewed again.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that Ward Alliances pay particular attention to the Ward Alliance Covid-19 Recovery Plan document when developing projects during the remainder of 2021/22;

(ii) that, in line with the guidance on spend, each Ward in the North Area Council area prioritises the efficient expenditure of the Ward Alliance Funds 2021/22; and

(iii) that the possible increase in Ward Alliance funds be reviewed following the conclusion of the Welfare Review.

56 Notes from the Area's Ward Alliances

The meeting received the notes from the Darton East Ward Alliance held on 14th December, 2021, 11th January, 2022 and 8th February, 2022; Darton West Ward Alliance held on 18th January, 2022 and 15th February, 2022; Old Town Ward Alliance held on 14th December, 2021 and 11th January, 2022; and St Helen's Ward Alliance held on 13th January, 2022.

Councillor Hunt commented that the Winter Warmer Health Event had been a success and well attended in the Mapplewell and Staincross Village Hall with a view to holding similar events on a regular 6 monthly.

Councillor Howard reported that the Darton Stars Event had successfully taken place recognising community volunteers and unsung heroes. New connections had been made with a Kexborough Club in order to work with and plan future events.

Councillor T Cave provided members with an update on a number of improvements around Darton station that were due to be completed by the end of March 2022 with additional works to be carried out in the area to enable active travel and encourage people into the area.

Councillor Pickering reported that hanging basket take up had been phenomenal in the Old Town Ward and events were starting to be funded and taking place with the loan of gazebos from the Willow Bank Community Partnership.

Councillor Leech commented that the hanging basket take up had not been as successful as expected and that the Jubilee Event planning was taking shape. The Gala was being planned and spring bulbs had been planted around the area.

RESOLVED that the notes of the respective Ward Alliances be noted.

Chair