

MEETING:	Dearne Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 14 March 2022
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY

MINUTES

Present Councillors Noble (Chair), Cain, Danforth and Gardiner

43 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

44 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 17th January, 2022 (Dac.14.03.2022/2)

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

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the Dearne Area Council meeting held on 25th November, 2022 be received and noted.

45 Performance Report Q3 (Dac.14.03.2022/3)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report which covered Quarter 3 ranging from October to December, 2021.

The Service provided by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance had slowly been building back up following the pandemic with 164 volunteers working on events, 17 of which were new. Twiggs events had cumulated 349 volunteer hours with 353 bags of rubbish targeted. 33 areas had been scheduled for work alongside some additional proactive work being carried out and 7 fly tipping cases reported.

The b:friend service had supported 81 residents and 546 hours of one to one befriender interactions had taken place. There had been 42 volunteers with 16 of those new and 52 hours used for group social activities. The service was deemed a success and had commenced inter-generational work with young volunteers.

Dearne Electronic Community Village had 67 learners on roll with 20 of those new learners. 16 people had achieved qualifications, 3 had gained employment and 15 had moved into further training with other providers.

In relation to the Private Sector Housing Enforcement, 157 reports had been made, 32 properties had been improved and 35 people had been helped with positive changes. 38 fly tipping cases had been report and 38 houses had been supported to recycle and dispose of waste in a responsible way. It was reported that 30 houses had made improvements after just the first contact made.

The Dearne Development Fund which was supported by Barnsley Citizens Advice Service, had supported 49 people with a total of 72 issues raised claiming £300 of benefits and managed £7,825 worth of debt. The largest majority of issues raised were benefits, tax credits and employment issues.

DIAL numbers had increased once more with 145 enquiries made, 354 people had reported reduced anxiety since using the service and £163,212 of benefits had been claimed. A breakdown of issues dealt with was given, reporting that over half had been in relation to benefits and 14% were around social isolation, discussions had taken place with DIAL to signpost to relevant services.

Goldthorpe Development Group had seen 195 attendees at an Older Generation Get Together with 40 volunteers assisting the event.

Members were updated on staffing absences in the Housing Officer Post with an update that housing problems were being reported and dealt with through the main Core services. It was suggested that this be looked into at a future meeting as to whether the funding could be relocated elsewhere.

Members queried the b:friend contract and whether men were becoming more involved. It was reported that a discussion had been held and a new specification was being drawn up to target men but it would be a wait and see scenario as to whether it would be well attended. Further schemes were being investigated such as Men in Sheds.

RECOMMENDED that members receive and note the report.

46 Dearne Area Council Financial Update (Dac.14.03.2022/4)

The Area Council manager provided members with an update in relation to the financial position of the Area Council.

Members attention was drawn to the updated reported which showed a starting balance of £208,783.34, of which £175,000 had been committed to 4 commissions with £8,441 also being allocated into the Dearne Development Fund and extension of the housing officer post. An additional £31,638 had been received from the practical support grant leaving a total of £56,980.34 to carry over into the 2022/23 financial year.

Taking into account the already allocated funds of £197,277, a total of £59,703.34 would remain to spend on Dearne area priorities in the 2022/23 financial year.

Members were informed that the funds remaining included the reintroduction of the part time funding for the Neighbourhood Engagement Officer which had originally been allocated monies for a full time post.

In addition £14,003.41 remained in the Dearne Development Fund.

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

47 Notes from the Dearne Ward Alliances (Dac.14.03.2022/5)

The meeting received the notes from the Dearne North and Dearne South Ward Alliances held on 1st February, 2022.

The Dearne North Ward Alliance had reported surprising and welcoming uptake on hanging baskets by local businesses with nearly all brackets filled. A new action plan on priorities and potential projects was being produced and a covid update from the NEO had been received.

The Dearne South Ward Alliance received a finance update along with action planning on potential projects going forward and they had also received a covid update from the NEO.

RECOMMENDED that the notes from the respective Ward Alliances be received.

48 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Dac.14.03.2022/6)

The Area Council provided members with an update in respect of the Ward Alliance Funds.

The Dearne North Ward Alliance had a starting budget of £10,182.92 including an underspend of £182.92 from the 2020/21 budget. To date 7 projects had been funded leaving a balance of £2,797.92.

The Dearne South Ward Alliance had a starting balance of £11,317.72 including an underspend of £1317.72 from the 2020/21 budget. 4 projects had been funded to date at a cost of £5,500 leaving a balance of £5,817.72. It was noted that since this meeting further projects had been funded.

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

49 Future Meeting Arrangements (Dac.14.03.2022/7)

Members were asked whether now that restrictions had lifted, they would wish for future meetings of the Area Council to commence meeting back in the Dearne.

It was agreed that this would be the preferable option but with a view to finding a facility that could allow for hybrid interaction, and that if this was not feasible then meetings would continue in Barnsley Town Hall.

It was noted that this would be the last meeting of the Area Council that Councillor Noble would Chair and attend prior to stepping down as a Councillor. Members asked to place on record their thanks and appreciation for her services to the Council, to this Area Council and to the Ward and its residents that she represented. She would be sadly missed and was given best wishes for the future.

RECOMMENDED:-

(i) that the Clerk meet with the Area Council Manager at Dearne LIFT Centre to find a suitable room and test out the technology;

(ii) that the best wishes of the Area Council be extended to all Councillors retiring at the Election to be held on the 5th May, 2022.

Chair