MEETING:	Dearne Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 20 January 2020
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Meeting Room, Goldthorpe Library

MINUTES

Present Councillors Noble (Chair), Danforth, Gardiner, Gollick, C. Johnson and Phillips

26 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 18th November, 2019 (Dac.20.01.2020/2)

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Dearne Area Council meeting held on 18th November, 2019 be approved as a true and correct record.

28 Performance Report Q3 (Dac.20.01.2020/3)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item referring to the report, which contained performance from services commissioned by the Area Council and those projects funded through the Dearne Development Fund.

Members noted that performance was for quarter 3 of 2019/20 and that there were no major issues with any of the commissions.

The Employability Service was performing well, with 78 learners to date engaged; 28 within the last quarter. 15 of those engaged had gone into employment, 56 gained a qualification, and 61 had gone on to further training.

It was noted that recently referrals from Job Centre Plus were requiring more intensive support to return to the job market, which was felt may impact on the achievement of targets. A push on social media, and within the community magazine, was thought would help to improve the numbers of self-referrals.

With regards to performance against the contract held by Twiggs Grounds Maintenance, 25 social action events had been held within the quarter, 10 groups supported, and 56 new volunteers recruited. Two areas had been adopted by residents and two impact sessions had been held with schools or community groups.

Noted was the number of used needles in the area, which was increasing. The Area Council Manager made Members aware that they were working with relevant drug services to help manage and reduce this issue.

The service to reduce Social Isolation being delivered by B:Friend had received three requests for pairing within the quarter, and had brokeews eight new pairings. In total

360 volunteer hours had been pledged. There had been four new volunteers recruited and 20 further enquiries about volunteering.

Members noted the case study, and the significant impact the service had on the lives of those involved. Also noted was the number of men engaging in the Thurnscoe Social Club. Although small, this was positive.

Members were reminded that nine applications had been funded through the Dearne Development Fund, with approximately £25,000 remaining in the fund at the time the report was written.

Goldthorpe Development Group continued to perform well, with the lowest number of attendees at any of their sessions being 54, but over the past quarter attendances totalled 241. 102 had attended their Christmas session, with plans being put in place for the event to be ticketed in future in order to avoid overcrowding.

The TADS service had supported five young people from the Astrea Academy Dearne, with many requiring intensive support for complex issues. In addition eight young people attending primary schools in the area had also been supported. 11 had attended the drop-in and yoga sessions, and feedback from schools in the area was very positive.

The Little Talkers project had engaged with six families so far, with the service receiving positive feedback. Families were engaging in new activities and parents were being upskilled as a result.

The advice service being delivered by CAB had delivered 20 sessions within the quarter, assisting 67 clients. Clients had been assisted to claim over £35,000 of additional benefit, and around £94,000 of debt had been managed.

Members noted that B:Friend had received additional finance from the Development Fund which had enablesd the service to deliver on an additional day. Due to this the service had reached out to 23 older neighbours who were now engaged in either 1:1 activity or through social groups.

Due to the contract with DIAL to provide advice around £233,000 of additional benefit had been gained to date. Within the last quarter 22 sessions had been held and 97 residents supported. Members noted the complexity of issues dealt with and that the service was often oversubscribed with people queuing for long periods of time.

RESOLVED:- That the report be noted.

29 Dearne Area Council Procurement and Financial Update (Dac.20.01.2020/4)

The Area Council Manager spoke to the report highlighting the financial situation of the Area Council. From an opening budget of £216,886.17 for the 2019/20 financial year, £4,288.41 remained for allocation.

Within the Dearne Development Fund the opening balance was £88,590.88, with £19,018.78 of this from healthier communities. Nine projects had been funded, with £24,946.13 remaining.

Members noted that the Housing and Migration post had now been filled, with the officer starting on the 6th January, 2020. Comments were made that the post had been vacant nearly a year, despite it being much needed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

30 The Dearne Area Council Social Connectivity (Dac.20.01.2020/5)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item, reminding Members of the current service in the area funded by the Area Council in order to reduced social isolation. Currently delivered by B:Friend and funded through Nesta and the Area Council, it was noted that this would come to an end at the beginning of October, 2020.

Members considered options going forward, with that preferred being to procure a similar service in order to increase social connectivity.

A draft specification had been circulated, which built on the strengths of current provision, and took into account national guidelines. The documentation included the wish to maintain current social groups and one-to-one provision. It also included an increased emphasis on engaging males, who were currently underrepresented.

RESOLVED:-

(i) That the procurement of a Dearne Area Council Social Connectivity project be approved at £27,000 per annum for a period of two years; and

(ii) That the specification for the Dearne Area Council Social Connectivity project be approved.

31 Notes from the Dearne Approach Steering Group held on 18th November, 2019 (Dac.20.01.2020/6)

Members considered the notes from the meeting held on 18th November, 2019.

It was noted that the Head of Economic Development had made contact with reference to the Towns Fund from central government. Goldthorpe had been selected, with the potential of up to £25m available. Rather than creating a group to oversee this, it was suggested that the Dearne Approach Steering Group expand its membership to be able to take on this task. The local MP and members of local businesses had been invited to take part. Finance was already available to employ staff in order to create appropriate strategies and plans for the development.

Members questioned whether this was just for Goldthorpe, or the wider area, and it was thought that this would just cover Goldthorpe, however it was noted that Members would be briefed further when more information was available.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Dearne Approach Steering Group be received.

32 Notes from the Dearne Ward Alliance held on 5th December, 2019 (Dac.20.01.2020/7)

The meeting received the notes from the Dearne Ward Alliance held on 5th December, 2019.

Members noted that the meeting had received an update about the work of the Area Council, had considered three applications to the Ward Alliance Fund, agreeing healthy holidays provision for February, 2020.

RESOLVED that notes from the Ward Alliance be received.

33 Report on the Use of Ward Alliance Funds (Dac.20.01.2020/8)

Members noted that Dearne North had approved 18 projects within the financial year, leaving a balance of £8,147.12 to allocated.

Dearne South had approved funding to support 15 projects, and had a balance of £12,044.04 remaining.

It was noted that the Community Development Officer would be organising a workshop for Members to discuss potential use of Ward Alliance Funds.

34 SY Violence Reduction Unit (Pac.20.01.2020/9)

The item was deferred for discussion at a future meeting of the Area Council.

Chair