

MEETING:	Central Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 7 September 2020
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY

MINUTES

Present

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

56. Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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

57. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Central Area Council held on 3rd August, 2020 (Cen.07.09.2020/2)

Members received the minutes from the previous meeting of Central Area Council held on 3rd August, 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Central Area Council held on 3rd August, 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

58. Safer Neighbourhood Service - Jill Griffiths (Cen.07.09.2020/3)

Jill Griffiths, Community Safety Team Leader; Adam Bailey, Housing and Cohesion Officer; and John Partridge, Community Safety Officer, were welcomed to the meeting.

The Community Safety Team Leader made Members aware that she had only started in the position on 1st April, 2020. Members heard of the increase of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and environmental crime during lockdown.

During the whole of the lockdown period officers had still been out in the area, undertaking not only their role, but they had also been called to assist other teams where necessary.

The team had been proactive, but had also responded reactively to intelligence, taking forward enforcement where necessary.

John and Adam had reported significant amounts of fly-tipping and waste in the Central area and they had working closely with other Council officers, this included taking forward legal action for breaches of CPNs.

With regards to numbers of fines, Members noted that the role of officers was largely advisory, with a move to issuing fines only where non-compliance was seen. This would be escalated to court should fines not be paid. The pressure on the court system, due to it being closed for a number of months, was noted.

It was noted that targets had not been set in the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) agreed as the services were new and had no benchmarks for comparison.

Members were reminded that the current SLAs ended in November, 2020, but that a previous meeting of Central Area Council had agreed to extend both SLAs. This offered an opportunity to reconsider the detail of each SLA in line with more up to date intelligence and data. It was suggested that a workshop be convened for Members to discuss this.

Praise was given for the work of John and Adam and the whole of the Safer Neighbourhood Service, who had assisted in addressing the issue of ASB in a number of areas, working well with partners such as Berneslai Homes.

It was noted that officers were available to attend 'walkabouts' with Members around Wards to identify issues and look at solutions.

Prevailing issues of fly-tipping, side waste and provision of bins were discussed. Members were reminded of previous discussions around piloting a project where replacement bins with address details embossed were provided free of charge. Here issues would be monitored, with a hope that stealing of bins would reduce and correct usage would increase. It was noted that for this to have an impact bin collection would also need to be reliable. It was suggested that this project could again be discussed with colleagues in Waste Management.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That thanks be given for the attendance of officers and their continued hard work in the area;
- (ii) That a workshop be arranged in order to consider data and intelligence to inform the detail of revised SLAs for services to reduce household fly tipping and to support new tenants in the private rented sector;
- (iii) That discussions be revisited with officers in Waste Management in relation to piloting a project to increase correct use of bins and reduce side waste and fly-tipping.

59. Performance Management Report (Cen.07.09.2020/4)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item and gave a brief overview of each of the commissions, service level agreements, and projects funded by the Area Council.

Members heard how the service provided by YMCA had adapted well to the pandemic, flexing their delivery. This enabled them to meet many of their existing targets. The service adapted by increasing its use of technology; keeping in touch with young people via text messaging, email and social media. Support was provided on social media and resources provided such as those to support emotional health and wellbeing. In addition, seed bombs and postcards were distributed, as were Easter eggs and self-care and activity packs. Some socially distanced face to face work had also taken place. Feedback from users of the service and their families had been extremely positive.

It was noted that positive discussions were taking place with a number of schools about how future provision could be organised, and planning was underway to arrange appropriate provision in October half term.

Members heard how the service provided by District Enforcement had been flexed during lockdown to provide much needed intelligence. This included reporting fly-tipping; ensuring that parks were secure, with appropriate signage; and dispersing groups of individuals.

It was noted that the service would be returning to its normal remit, with Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) being issued for littering and dog fouling. Members discussed the pending Cabinet discussion around the Public Space Protection Order for Dog Control and the potential for FPNs to be increased to £100 to act as a deterrent.

The contract with Twiggs Grounds Maintenance was discussed and it was noted that the service had been altered in light of the pandemic and support had been given to the Council's Neighbourhood Services department due to a number of their staff shielding. This had involved picking up fly-tipping, litter picking and cleaning of areas.

However, support of volunteers had also continued. Advice and equipment had been supplied to individuals and families, and arrangements had been made to dispose of collected litter. Members noted that the lockdown period had seen an increase in residents coming together and volunteering.

A number of Councillors expressed their thanks for the service that Twiggs provided, and to the volunteers that helped keep the area clean.

Members noted the discussion earlier in the meeting around both Service Level Agreements, and the suggestion that a workshop be held to consider any changes to the service and the communities they focused on.

The service to support new mothers provided by Family Lives had seen a reduced number of referrals. This had resulted in the service being rated as 'Amber'. The Area Council Manager made Members aware that work would be undertaken to consider the low rates of referrals from midwives. In light of restrictions, support had been provided via such as Zoom and telephones. Those that had received support had thought this extremely valuable. Suggestions were made to make necessary links with contacts in Early Help if this had not already been done.

With regards to Creative Recovery, there had been no recent activity. However, planning was in place for 'Blow out Blues' to take place in the spring. It was noted that finance had not yet been used, and that the project would be completed but was merely delayed.

The contract provided by DIAL through the Well-Being Fund had recently come to an end. During the final two months of the project 215 unique individuals had accessed the service. Due to the pandemic, access had been through means such telephone. Support had been provided for clients on Personal Independence Payments,

Education Health Care Plans, and Disability Living Allowance, amongst other things. For every £1 invested in the project had generated £31.28 for the local economy.

Members praised the value of unclaimed benefits the service had helped to secure, which was almost £1million. Also noted was the wraparound support provided.

The final monitoring information provided by Education, Learning and Support Hub (ELSH) was received. 683 hours of teaching had been provided through the project with 2,157 hours of volunteering. Support had been given on areas such as health and wellbeing, financial hardship, stress, information and educational needs. Members noted that the service had adapted to the current situation by using technology such as Zoom.

Exodus had met all their outcomes and targets, delivering 150 sessions, with 119 different young people attending 3 or more times. 27 volunteers had regularly supported the service.

The project had remained active during restrictions, delivering activity packs and had provided challenges and chat forums online. Easter eggs and food packs had also been delivered.

Hope House connects had commenced the second year of their project in June. All targets and objectives had been met, though the focus had been flexed more recently with delivery through social media and messenger. As restrictions lifted individuals were being supported to reengage and planning was being undertaken for a staged return in September, which would be socially distanced.

Members noted that no return had been received from TADS, and therefore performance against the contract had been rated as 'Amber'.

The Street Smart project provided by The Youth Association had ceased street work at the start of lockdown and made an effort to engage young people and maintain contact via online means. In addition, young people had been encouraged to write letters to elderly in care homes. It was noted that some face to face engagement had recently been undertaken, taking into account guidelines.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

60. Procurement and Financial Update (Cen.07.09.2020/5)

The Area Council Manager introduced the item referring to the progression of the priority to address social isolation and loneliness. Members were reminded of the workshop on 19th August, 2020 which was the second held on the subject. The outcome of the workshop was a recommendation to set up a challenge fund to address this issue across all ages. The fund would have a financial envelope of £200,000 to fund projects of up to 2 years. At the 12 month point, it was envisaged that an additional £100,000 would be made available to extend successful projects into a third year, or to invite projects to apply for funding to address further issues that had become apparent.

Establishing a fund was suggested as being the most flexible way of addressing this priority, with the possibility of having a greater impact should applicants be able to

provide match funding from external sources. It was suggested that applicants should have experience and a track record in this area in order to make an impact from very early on in their project.

It was noted that, subject to approval, a market engagement event and work with partners would continue to further refine the approach. The proposal was supported by Members, who acknowledged the issues faced across the life course. It was also supported by Public Health who offered their assistance if required.

Members then went on to consider a proposal to devolve finance from the Area Council budget to each of the Ward Alliances, as suggested at the previous meeting.

An overview of the current financial position of the Area Council, including projected future expenditure was provided. Detailed figures relating to the available finance in each of the Ward Alliance Funds was also considered. The Area Council Manager provided clarity on additional funds to support Healthy Holidays and Covid-19 resilience. Members were also reminded of finance for Legal and Welfare Advice, which would help to reduce the strain on Ward Alliance Funds.

The proposal was discussed in some depth, with different opinions being put forward. It was therefore suggested that a vote be conducted. The majority of Members did not support the recommendation, but it was suggested that the overall financial situation in relation to the Ward Alliance Funds be carefully monitored going forward.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the overview of priorities, contracts, service level agreements and funded projects be noted;
- (ii) that the recommendations made to progress the Social Isolation and Loneliness Priority be approved;
- (iii) that £300,000 (£200,000 for round one and £100,000 for round two) be approved to establish a Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund;
- (iv) that the draft framework, guidance notes and application form for the Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund be approved, with the Executive Director Communities authorised to make any necessary changes following consultation with Members of Central Area Council;
- (v) that the Executive Director Communities be authorised to approve Social Isolation and Loneliness Challenge Fund grants following consultation with a panel of Central Area Council Members;
- (vi) that the actual financial position and projected expenditure, as contained in appendices 1 and 2, be noted.

61. Notes of the Ward Alliances (Cen.07.09.2020/6)

The meeting received the notes of the following Ward Alliance Meetings:-
Central Ward Alliance, held on 22nd July, 2020;
Kingstone Ward Alliance, held on 2nd July and 12th August, 2020;
Stairfoot Ward Alliance, held on 12th July and 27th July, 2020.

Those present discussed the finance available to engage Citizen's Advice Bureau in each Ward, and the ability to add to the length of this provision should the Ward Alliance so wish. It was noted that further statistical information would be provided to

assist this discussion. Whilst the consensus was that services such as these were required, questions were raised about whether these should be provided more centrally.

RESOLVED that the notes from the Ward Alliances be received.

Chair