

MEETING:	North Area Council
DATE:	Monday, 1 February 2021
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY

MINUTES

Present Councillors Leech (Chair), A. Cave, Charlesworth, Howard, Hunt, Lofts, Pickering, Platts, Spence and Tattersall

10 **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

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

11 **Minutes of the North Area Council meeting held on 23rd November 2021**

The Area Council received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd November 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the North Area Council meeting held on 23rd November 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

12 **Public Health Updates (including Covid-19) - Cath Bedford/Lucy Butcher/Leyla Brooke**

Lucy Butcher (Public Health) and Leyla Brooke (Neighbourhood Engagement Officer) were welcomed to the meeting to provide an update regarding the Council's Public Health response to the pandemic. Members were reminded that given the rapid pace of change during the pandemic, the information provided was as up to date as possible.

The information provided covered a wide range of work undertaken across the Council together with a summary of actions and progress in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members were informed that specific questions on areas of work will be taken back to the appropriate lead for further detail, if appropriate.

It was reported that currently working age adults aged 50 and above have the highest rate There is a higher prevalence of the new variant. Coronavirus appears to favour cold weather. There has been a rise of transmissions despite being in a lockdown. It is not possible to provide ward specific data but public health colleagues are happy to speak to individual ward members about ward issues. No specific trends are evident and Members were urged to continue to follow the Government guidance of 'hands, face, space', stay at home as much as possible and the importance of fresh air.

There are currently 16 Covid Marshalls who work closely with the Police, Regulatory Services and Safer Neighbourhood Service and carry out daily monitoring rounds across the borough in areas of concern, particularly of licensed premises where there

have been instances of breaching of guidelines. There have been concerns around increased footfall and traffic, with reports of people travelling to parks, open spaces and coffee shops to meet with people from other households. Specific hotspots have been targeted. Spot checks take place in all supermarkets across the Borough. Work is being undertaken to understand non-compliance and non-engagement, with a campaign planned from 26th February to raise awareness. Support to vulnerable people such as homeless, substance misuse and traveller communities etc is also taking place. The Test and Trace service and support provided appears to be working very well.

Up to date information regarding symptomatic and asymptomatic testing is available on the BMBC website under mobile testing. There is a lot of capacity to do the testing and 7 positive asymptomatic cases have been picked up to date. Schools and early years settings have access to testing.

The local NHS in Barnsley is leading on the vaccination rollout. It is anticipated that 25,000 vaccinations will have been delivered by mid-February in priority order. Vulnerable people who are unable to travel will be identified by their GP and will have local vaccinations. NHS and Social Care staff are being vaccinated due to their key worker status. People need to be encouraged to continue to follow the guidance once vaccinated. Members were advised to contact Emma White (Public Health Principal) regarding any concerns around vaccination.

Members were concerned that infection levels in some Barnsley wards are continuing to rise when compared to national rates and that there has been a 31% increase in cases in Barnsley Hospital admissions over the last 7 days. The possibility of asymptomatic mass community testing for hotspots was discussed and that this could potentially be publicised over social media etc. This issue will be raised at the regular Sitrep meetings and with Hannah Bailey who is leading on Covid communications campaigns.

Individuals who may not have the main symptoms of Covid but are feeling unwell in other ways should be encouraged to attend testing, dependent on the capacity of the centre. This can be booked online through the NHS or BMBC website.

Leyla Brooke introduced herself and updated Members with the work of the 6 Neighbourhood Engagement Officers (NEOs). The NEOs work closely with the 16 Covid Marshalls (who work in pairs) and feed in to response coordination alongside South Yorkshire Police. It was explained that the NEO role is about support and guidance, not enforcement. Duties include provision of guidance and support to licensed premises; Gym visits to check Covid compliance; business support; social intelligence gathering and follow up; support with food provision for those in isolation who have tested positive and supermarket visits.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The update be noted, and Lucy and Leyla be thanked for their attendance and contribution;
- (ii) That members continue to share the importance of continuing to follow guidance;
- (iii) Any non-compliance concerns should be sent to the Public Health inbox or Covid Marshalls alerted;

- (iv) Any specific questions on areas of work will be taken back to the appropriate lead for further detail; and
- (v) Members should contact Emma White (Public Health Principal) regarding any concerns around vaccination.

13 Commissioning, Project Development and Finance

The Area Council Manager introduced this report, providing the Area Council with a financial position and forecast for expenditure based on the projects that have been proposed.

RESOLVED that

- (i) The North Area Council noted the existing budget position and existing funding commitments;
- (ii) The Stronger Communities Grant opportunity should be advertised and
- (iii) Funds continue to be devolved to the Ward Alliances during 2021/22.

14 Area Commissioning Performance Report

The Area Council Manager introduced this report, providing the Area Council with detailed information with regard to Area Council commissioned projects including the Anti-Poverty Community outreach project; the Clean and Green service; the work of the Housing and Cohesion Officer and Age UK.

Various projects were commended for the valuable work they have been doing in challenging times, including Twiggs, the Winter Warmth project, the work of Bradley (Housing and Cohesion Officer) and the CAB/DIAL outreach project.

The Area Council Manager confirmed that outputs and performance indicators had changed due to the pandemic but that nonetheless a fantastic job had been done, adapting and flexing contracts under challenging circumstances. CAB/DIAL have secured over £200,000 in additional benefits over the last quarter for North Area residents and have managed £16,000 of debt. The service has been a real lifeline for people. It was highlighted that the service will probably come under additional pressure as the lockdown eases and there may be different people accessing the support provision in the future. At the moment the magnitude of demand is impossible to quantify.

Members were also aware of schools being approached by parents experiencing financial hardship and Ward Alliances had agreed funding to provide healthy food parcels for the Christmas school holidays. It is likely that the Area Team will become more involved in 'people helping people' activities and are currently collating food parcels to tide families in need over the February half term. Councillors are actively involved, with many listed as volunteer Community Responders. It was highlighted that the Christmas parcels had been very well received by local residents and that the help of volunteers in delivering them had been invaluable.

RESOLVED that the update be noted

15 Stronger Communities Grant

The Area Council Manager introduced this item and outlined the Stronger Communities Grant Panel's recommendation to make the grant funding available for 2021/22 with a view to agreeing dates for advertising the grant funding opportunity. Guidance and support will be available from the Area Team for providers thinking of bidding and how they can meet the criteria, including Covid recovery. There is a need to increase the time young people in particular spend outside and away from screens but it is unclear how this could be done under this project. The opportunity will be widely shared on social media and other channels.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Members approved the recommendation to run the grants programme in 2021/22 along with the terms of reference;
- (ii) Members agreed the value of the grant funding pot for 2021/22 of £40,000 and
- (iii) Members confirmed that a Councillor from each Ward will sit on the grants panel for 2021/22.

16 Report of the Ward Alliance Fund

The Area Council Manager introduced this item, updating the North Area Council on the financial position of the Ward Alliance budget for each ward for the 2020/21 period. It was felt that community groups should be commended for the work they had been able to do during the pandemic. The Area Council Manager will check if there is any remaining hardship funding available for businesses.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Ward Alliances pay particular attention to the Ward Alliance Covid-19 Recovery Plan document when developing projects during the remainder of 2020/21, and that
- (ii) Each Ward in the North Area Council area prioritises the efficient expenditure of the Ward Alliance Funds 2020/21, in line with the guidance on spend.

17 Notes from the Area's Ward Alliances

The North Area Council received an update on the progress of the Darton East, Darton West, Old Town and St Helens Ward Alliances. Members were reminded of the requirement for Ward Alliance minutes to be received by the Area Council.

DARTON EAST - The Ward Alliance supported the installation and removal of Mapplewell Christmas lights. 3 Christmas trees were funded across the Ward and were well received by residents. A new website will be funded and will be used to promote Mapplewell village, community activities, local businesses etc.

DARTON WEST - Parks have been reviewed to identify any essential works needed, litter picking has continued in line with social distancing guidelines. Costings have been obtained to install a water tap for outside the Church for members of the public to use. £2000 was put aside for Christmas activity packs, food parcels etc for 58 families but wasn't used due to charitable donations and will be used for similar activities during the half term holidays.

OLD TOWN - A number of funding applications have been agreed. The Ward Alliance has managed to save £3000 through Christmas tree sponsorship. Cllr Pickering reported that there have been a number of recent serious crime incidents which were not reported to either Wakefield and Barnsley Police. As a result of this, it has been agreed that major incidents across borders will now be reported by each Police force.

ST HELENS - Thanks were expressed to all ward members who had managed to attend meetings despite technical difficulties. Leyla Brook attended the November meeting and gave lots of information about what was happening in the Ward and was able to offer advice on how to go ahead with the Christmas events in line with Covid guidelines. Christmas packs were delivered across the Ward and Father Christmas was able to safely visit the Community Shop and local schools. Lots of activities are coming up over the next few months, mostly online and over the telephone but nonetheless the support has been fantastic.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted and Members, volunteers and group be thanked for their hard work and support over the past months. Members were reminded that the Area team is available for help and support alongside other officers.

Chair