

NORTH EAST (INNER) AREA COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 31ST JANUARY, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor M Rafique in the Chair

Councillors J Dowson, G Hussain,
V Kendall, M Lobley, M Rafique and
E Taylor

Apologies Councillors S Hamilton and B Lancaster

54 Inquorate Meeting

The Chair stated that in the absence of any Moortown Ward Councillors, the meeting was inquorate. This meant that any 'decisions' taken by the Committee would have to be ratified at the next meeting on 14th March. The only alternative, in relation to any urgent decisions e.g. possibly Wellbeing Fund applications, was for the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, via the Area Manager, to exercise his concurrent powers and to take a delegated decision, in consultation with absent Members and the Chair.

RESOLVED – that the situation be noted, and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods be authorised to take any necessary delegated decisions, as outlined above.

55 Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of personal interests were made:-
Agenda Item 16 (Min. No. 66 refers) – Future Options for Long Term Residential Care and Day Care for Older People – Councillors M. Lobley and V. Kendall in their capacities as members of Community Action for Roundhay Elderly;

Agenda Item 17 (Min. No. 67 refers) – Consultation on Expansion of Primary School Provision for September 2012 – Councillors V. Kendall, M. Rafique and E. Taylor in their capacities as local School Governors;

Agenda Item 12 (Min. No. 63) refers) – Priority Neighbourhoods – Progress Report and Action Plans for 2010/11 – Councillor G. Hussain, in respect of a property mentioned under the 'Environmental Improvements' section of the report, which was owned by a relative of his;

Agenda Item 19 (Min. No. 69 refers) – Bus Quality Contract Scheme for West Yorkshire – Councillor E. Taylor, in her capacity as a member of the West Yorkshire Integrated Passenger Transport Authority;

The following declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest was also made:-

Agenda Item 10 (Min. No. 61 refers) – Wellbeing Fund applications – Bracken Edge Primary School Stay and Play Group – in her capacity as a Governor of Bracken Edge Primary School.

56 Apologies

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S. Hamilton and B. Lancaster.

57 Open Forum

Reference was made to the provisions contained in the Area Committee Procedure Rules for an Open Forum session to take place at each ordinary meeting of an Area Committee, for members of the public to ask questions or to make representations on any matter within the remit of the Area Committee. On this occasion, no such matters were raised.

58 Attendance of Chief Executive, Leeds City Council

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the Council's Chief Executive, Tom Riordan, who was attending all 10 Area Committees as part of his familiarisation induction.

The Chief Executive responded to Members' queries. In brief summary these were:-

- The Council's use of consultants vs in-house services – Tom Riordan accepted the point that there was a balance to be struck between the use of external consultants, with the fees involved, and the need to maintain sufficient in-house expertise. Ideally, consultants should only be engaged in specific circumstances – say, where an independent view was required, or where specialist expertise was a pre-requisite;
- The 'One Council' concept, and individual ownership of problems / solutions – Tom Riordan broadly agreed with the point being made that officers needed to be given the responsibility for a task and then be accountable if the service failed to deliver. The appointment to the new Area Leader posts – of which Rory Barke was one – was a good

example of the Council trying its best to co-ordinate services in an area, across a spectrum of professional disciplines and public sector organisations, and bringing a degree of responsibility and accountability to service delivery at local level. The delegation of functions to Area Committees, such as the proposals relating to Environment Services, was another example of delegating control and choice over priorities to Members at local level. He added the caveat that Chief Officers could not personally be held responsible for every nuance of the service which fell within their remit – that would be unfair and unrealistic.

59 Minutes - 6th December 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

60 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Probation Service Community Payback Scheme (Min. No. 49 refers)
It was reported that an update report would be submitted to the next Area Committee meeting on 14th March 2011.

61 Wellbeing Fund 2010/11 - Update Report

The East North East Area Manager submitted a report updating the Committee on the current revenue and capital wellbeing budget balances. The report also contained details of applications for funding, proposals for variations to previously approved applications and 'in principle' decisions in respect of some proposed spending commitments for 2011/12, subject to final confirmation of the Committee's wellbeing budget for 2011/12.

In respect of the proposed Community Skips budget 2011/12 - £3,000 – it was suggested that perhaps the proposed amount should simply be split equally between the three Wards. This was a departure from current practice, which was to have one 'pot' to fund all applications from across the Committee's area. Following discussion, it was agreed to continue with the current arrangement, with the proviso that Area Management staff would monitor the use of the fund to ensure, in broad terms, its equitable use. It was also agreed that, unless there were exceptional circumstances, each community organisation should normally be restricted to two skips per annum.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted, including the revenue and capital wellbeing budget balances 2010/11;

(b) That the following decisions be taken in respect of those applications before the Committee today for determination :-

- (i) Three Churches Youth and Intergenerational Projects - £2,000 – Approved;
- (ii) Independent Somali Women and Children Project - £250 – Approved;
- (iii) Bracken Edge Primary School – Stay and Play Group – Refused;
- (iv) Irish History Month 2011 – Refused.

(c) That £9,700 be set aside from the 2010/11 revenue wellbeing budget balance to offset the over-commitment on the capital wellbeing budget;

(d) That the proposed variations to the previously approved applications in respect of the Youth Service and Roundhay allotments, as outlined in the report, be approved;

(e) That the 2010/11 revenue and capital wellbeing budgets be ‘frozen’, and any remaining balances be transferred to 2011/12;

(f) That approval in principle be given to the following projects for priority funding in 2011/12, subject to the outcome of the Committee’s final revenue and capital wellbeing budgets for 2011/12 :-

Continuation of Neighbourhood Manager post - £35,000

Community Payback scheme - £15,000

Festive lights - £14,106

Volunteer thank you event - £2,000

Consultation and community engagement - £2,000

Community skips - £3,000

(NB Please see Minute No. 54 ref. inquorate meeting)

62 Area Delivery Plan and Community Charter - Update Report

The East North East Area Manager submitted a report updating the Committee on the work being carried out to refresh the Area Delivery Plan (ADP) 2008 – 2011 and to prepare a new Community Charter for 2011/12.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- Members regarded the £1,000 cost of producing the proposed Community Charter 2011/12 to represent good value;
- Members requested the Area Management Team to give due consideration to the proposed distribution of the new Charter, to ensure the widest possible coverage in the Committee’s area, and to inform Members of the proposals prior to distribution;
- There was a consensus that the ADP and the Charter would benefit from being slimmed down somewhat – currently it contained a lot of issues which were not the direct

responsibility of the Area Committee, but of the Council's public sector partners.

The Area Manager undertook to review the content.

However, the documents were not just about the Area Committee's promises – a key role and responsibility of the Committee, via the Area Manager / Leader, was to engage its public sector partners in dialogue and to hold them to account for their promises, so this needed to be included in some form in the documentation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and Members be requested to forward any detailed views or ideas in respect of the draft 2011/12 Community Charter to the Area Management Officer as soon as possible, pending a report back to the 14th March Committee meeting, when the proposed final Charter will be submitted.

63 Priority Neighbourhoods - Progress Report and Action Plans for 2010/11

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods updating it on activities and actions in the agreed Inner NE Priority Neighbourhoods and attaching the updated action plans for the Chapeltown / Scott Hall and Meanwood Priority Neighbourhood areas.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- The efforts being made to engage with and encourage the local communities to accept some responsibility for environmental issues, for example by organising community clean-ups;
- The reference to 'Harmonious Communities' in the Moor Allerton Neighbourhood Improvement Plan (P. 82 refers). It was explained that this priority had been identified by residents themselves. However, it was not indicative of specific problems in this particular area, but was more of a cross-cutting issue which should perhaps be reflected in other plans too – this would be reviewed;
- Councillor Dowson placed on record her gratitude to Steve Lake, the Neighbourhood Manager, for his role in acting as a catalyst in respect of the re-opening of the FSU building as a facility for the Council and partner agencies, including the Police, to utilise.

RESOLVED – That the progress made in each of the three Priority Neighbourhoods during the quarter October – December 2010 be noted.

64 Area Committee Forward Plan 2010/11

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

65 Delegation of Environmental Services

Further to Minute No. 42, 18th October 2010, and Minute No 48, 6th December 2010, Helen Freeman, Chief Officer, Health and Environmental Action Services, presented a report updating the Committee on progress towards the proposed delegation of elements of Streetscene Services to Area Committees in the new municipal year.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- The proposals represented a real opportunity for Area Committees to directly influence service provision and priorities across their areas;
- The plan was to develop a holistic approach to the service. It was proposed that front line staff would have the same job description, whether they were mechanical sweeper operators or manual operatives, and in theory would be interchangeable;
- An explanation was given regarding what was meant by the term 'domestic and commercial waste storage and transportation control';
- The fact that to a large extent, the three Wards had differing problems and priorities, and the potential problems of trying to reconcile this, allocate limited resources across the area on an equitable basis and embed all this in a Service Level Agreement (SLA);
- The need to co-ordinate gully cleansing services into the agreed new arrangements;
- Phase 2 of the implementation process was imminent, which would involve further discussions with Area Committee Chairs regarding an SLA model, followed by further Member workshops in March, agreement on the SLAs and formal delegation of the functions by June 2011.

RESOLVED – that the progress report be received and noted.

66 Future Options for Long Term Residential Care and Day Care for Older People

The Committee received and considered a report submitted by the Deputy Director of Adult Social Care (Strategic Commissioning) relating to future options for the provision of long term residential care and day care for older people in Leeds, and the current extensive consultation exercise taking place on the issue.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- The difficulties of trying to ensure that the consultation was as comprehensive as possible. Whilst consultation with key stakeholders such as staff, unions, service users, carers, Members and public sector partners was relatively easy to identify, more difficult to reach were potential service users not yet known to the service. The report contained a list of all the local organisations being consulted, and several Local Members undertook to contact the officers separately with contact details for other local groups and Neighbourhood Networks which needed to be consulted.
- The apparently prohibitive costs associated with possibly refurbishing existing Council-owned premises, compared to the already substantially cheaper service on offer in the private sector;
- Members were keen to be kept informed of progress on the consultation and the development of the final proposals. It was reported that an update report would be submitted to the next round of Area Committee meetings.

RESOLVED – that subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

67 Consultation on Expansion of Primary School Provision for September 2012

Further to Minute No. 34, 18th October 2010, the Committee received and considered a report submitted by the Chief Executive, Education Leeds, regarding the proposed expansion of primary school provision across the City, with particular reference to schools in the Committee's area (Paragraph 2 of the report refers).

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- A marked difference of opinion between Members regarding which proposals they supported, with some favouring the development of the Braimwood site, whilst others supported the potential proposals contained in the report;
- The dichotomy between the need for good local schools for local pupils vs the right of parents to express a preference in terms of their children's education;
- A discussion regarding the current review of admission criteria, and the current effect of the criteria in the Committee's area, in terms of the practical limitations it placed on parents to express a realistic preference for schools in that area;
- The concerns expressed at public meetings regarding the draft proposals, in particular the possible long term effect on Moor Allerton Primary School of the proposal to change Allerton Grange School to a 4-18 range school;

- Possible resistance to the proposals by some schools, or the dangers of non-collaboration between schools. This point was acknowledged, and would be addressed as part of the process.
- The current lack of a high school in Chapel Allerton Ward, and also the potential need for a possible future high school on the borders of Harehills and Roundhay Wards.
- Members requested to be provided with copies of relevant dot maps, which plotted the intake areas for schools in the NE Inner Area.

RESOLVED – that subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted, and Members be kept informed of progress as the proposals evolve.

68 Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) Achievements in the NE Area

Simon Brereton, LEGI Programme Manager, presented a report updating the Committee on the success of the LEGI Scheme in NE Leeds. LEGI funding was now due to expire in March 2011.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- The relative success of the scheme in assisting to create new businesses and jobs was acknowledged;
- The LEGI funding scheme had included both revenue and capital funding, and had allowed certain buildings to be purchased for LEGI purposes – the report listed the various projects. A view was expressed that now was the time, with LEGI funding ceasing, to develop more outreach work, as opposed to buildings-based services, to assist entrepreneurs to develop businesses which needed very little infrastructure e.g. home-based businesses;
- Some concern was expressed regarding the costs of using facilities at Shine, which some regarded as prohibitive, and whether in fact this initiative had actually helped local people, as opposed to those from the wider local catchment area;
- Members requested a separate briefing regarding the exit strategy, now that the LEGI funding was ceasing.

RESOLVED – that subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

69 Bus Quality Contract Scheme for West Yorkshire

The Committee received and considered a report regarding the proposed introduction of a bus quality contract scheme in West Yorkshire. Under the proposals, Metro would specify and regulate the West Yorkshire bus network, including fares, ticketing arrangements and operating conditions.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- All services would be franchised by Metro under the proposals, giving Metro control over routes, fares and ticketing arrangements, rather than these issues being left to the vagaries of private bus companies, whose primary concern was profit. This would allow for greater integration of the public transport system, the introduction of simplified fares and the use of smartcard-based tickets (like the Oyster card in London). It would also allow any profits to be used to subsidise necessary, but not necessarily profitable, routes, such as cross-City or rural routes.
- The response from the public so far was overwhelming support for the proposals.

The Committee welcomed the proposals, which it regarded as a positive step in the right direction.

RESOLVED – that subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

70 West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Collaborative Working within the Area Committee

Richard Gomersall, Station Commander, Moortown and Wetherby, presented a report regarding the Community Risk Management Strategy initiative included in the WYFRS Service Plan 2011-15. The service already worked collaboratively with its public sector partners across the City – for instance, he attended the Neighbourhood Tasking meetings and the Service participated in the Operation Champion multi-agency action days. However, it was felt that even closer working arrangements would be mutually beneficial, for instance in helping to identify and then assist vulnerable members of society, identifying anti-social behaviour hot-spots etc.

Members welcomed the initiative and acknowledged that it would contribute towards the joined-up services ethos which aimed to provide better services for people at local level. Individual Members undertook to supply Mr Gomersall with further information or contacts to assist WYFRS operations in the local area.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and welcomed.

71 Towards Integrated Locality Working

The Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) submitted a report outlining the concept of locality working across the City, and how this was proposed to be introduced.

In brief summary, the main issues discussed were:-

- The importance of community engagement to the success of the initiative
- The draft design principles were aimed at commencing a dialogue regarding establishing an appropriate framework to take the proposals forward in a sustainable way;
- The appointment of Rory Barke to the post of East North East Area Leader was very much welcomed by the Committee.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and noted.

72 Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

Monday 14th March 2011, 4.00pm, Technorth.

The meeting concluded at 7.10pm.