

NORTH WEST (OUTER) AREA COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 4TH FEBRUARY, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P Wadsworth in the Chair

Councillors S Lay, B Anderson, J L Carter,
B Cleasby, R Downes, C Fox, G Latty,
P Latty and D Collins

61 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

62 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

63 Late Items

There were no late items added to the agenda.

64 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

Councillor Fox declared a significant other interest in Agenda Item9 – Well Being – Fund Budget Report as a Member of Bramhope & Carlton Parish Council.

65 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Townsley and Councillor C Campbell.

66 Open Forum

In accordance with Paragraphs 6.24 and 6.25 of the Area Committee Procedure Rules, the Chair allowed a period of up to 10 minutes for members of the public to make representations or ask questions on matters within the term of reference of the Area Committee.

On this occasion two members of WARD (Wharfedale and Airedale Review Development) were present to talk to Members concerning the proposed housing allocations in the Leeds Development Framework (LDF). It was put to Members that the number of new houses proposed for Leeds was significantly more than was indicated as needed by the population figures from the 2011 Census

RESOLVED – That Area Support prepares a report considering the full facts and figures for debate at the next Area Committee.

67 Minutes - 10th December 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2013 were approved as a correct record.

68 Annual Report - for the Parks and Countryside Service

The Chief Officer of Parks and Countryside submitted a report which provided an overview of the service and set out some of the challenges faced along with key performance management initiatives.

Guy Smithson Senior Area Manager (Parks and Countryside) was in attendance to answer Members' questions.

Members formally objected to the information in the report being out of date and thereby difficult to draw conclusions. It was commented on that this led to an underestimation of good work that has been done or that is on-going. Members requested that the next annual report should provide updated information.

Members discussed spending Section 106 money in parks and it was confirmed to them that this money does get invested into amenities for parks. Questions were also asked about what future planning there was in place for the development of parks and requested to be circulated with planning information held by the service.

Members considered the benefits of volunteers working in parks and how this supported the work of the Parks and Countryside Service.

The specific issue of Council owned bowling greens was raised and how they are used by many people and that they should if possible, not be closed.

Road works at the junction of Fink Hill and the bottom of Town Street in Horsforth were discussed in terms of the useage of the carpark on Fink Hill by Contractors A request was made to establish who is doing the works and what arrangements had been made for them to use the car park for their vehicles.

Discussion took place on the procurement of play equipment and what the procedure was for this, and if it represented value for money.

It was requested that consideration be given for a path to be laid to improve pedestrian access across Nunroyd Park.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That information be provided relating to the current road works at Fink Hill;
- (b) That planning information relating to parks and countryside development be provided to Members;
- (c) That the next annual report provide up to date information;
- (d) That a pedestrian access route across access Nunroyd Park be considered
- (e) That the contents of the report be noted.

69 Well-Being Fund Budget Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report outlining the current position statement of the Area Committee's Wellbeing budget, detailing for determination those expressions of interest received for Wellbeing funding and presented for information those small grant applications which had been received to date.

Members discussed the latest spending position in terms of Wellbeing money and while at present any money that remains unspent at the end of the financial year is carried over this may not be the case in the future.

Members were informed that the current system of reporting the Wellbeing position to Members was to be reviewed and an improved method would be implemented for future Area Committees

The Committee's future approach to spending well-being money was also considered.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the current position of the well-being budget as set out at sections 2 and 3 be noted;
- (b) That the following be agreed in respect of those expressions of interest received for well-being funding, as detailed within Section 4 of the submitted report;

Name of Project: New Grit Bins
Ward affected: Adel & Wharfedale
Name of delivery organisation: Highways
Decison: £3,195 revenue **APPROVED**

Name of Project: CCTV Otley
Ward affected: Otley & Yeadon
Name of delivery organisation: LCC Leeds Watch
Decision: £11,363 revenue **APPROVED**

Name of Project: CCTV Yeadon

Ward affected: Otley & Yeadon
Name of delivery organisation: LCC Leeds Watch
Decision: £6,442 revenue **APPROVED**

Name of Project: Puritan Chapel Refurbishment
Ward affected: Adel & Wharfedale
Name of delivery organisation: Bramhope & Carlton Parish Council
Decision: £7,500 revenue **APPROVED**

Name of Project: Pool Social Club Refurbishment
Ward affected: Adel & Wharfedale
Name of delivery organisation: Pool Social Club
Decision: £5,000 revenue **APPROVED**

Name of Project: Small Grants Budget
Ward affected: All Outer North West Wards
Name of delivery organisation: West North West Area Support Team
Decision: £10,000 revenue (£2,000 per ward for Horsforth, Adel & Wharfedale and Otley and Yeadon and £4,000 for Guiseley & Rawdon)
APPROVED

- (c) That the small grant and skip approvals as detailed at section 4 of the report be noted; and
- (d) That the monitoring information provided at Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

70 West North West homes Leeds involvement in Area Committees

West North West homes submitted a report which advised the Committee of activities and services undertaken by them over the last six months

Juliet Duke (Neighbourhood Performance Manager) was in attendance to answer Members questions.

Members sought confirmation that the Outer North West graffiti team would return to Horsforth following a temporary move to Kirkstall. This was confirmed but in the meantime Members were assured that there would be no loss of service across the wards whilst the team were based elsewhere.

It was requested that the ALMOs open up better lines of communication with Members. It was highlighted that Members found it difficult to establish a contact to action problems within their wards.

Errors were highlighted in the report relating to Estate Grading and Inspection in terms of place names and streets being placed in the wrong area. Members also requested to be notified of dates and routes for the planned walkabouts on estates.

Members were critical of the grading criteria as 24 of the 27 areas were graded as excellent with the remaining 3 graded good. The criteria for grading was subsequently discussed and the training of staff undertaking the inspections. It was requested that the grading criteria be circulated amongst Members.

Concerns were raised regarding tree management by West North West homes and how requests for trees and hedges to be cut back were being dealt with, particularly when over a certain height.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the criteria for which grades are based be circulated to Members of the Committee;
- (b) That Members be included in all correspondence relating to planned walkabouts on estates and the list of estates be updated with the correct addresses and circulated to Members.
- (c) That the report be noted.

71 Area Update Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report which brought together a range of information regarding Area Committee business.

Councillor Cleasby updated Members on Area Committees' Transport Sub Group and welcomed any suggestions or ideas for the group to consider. Discussion also took place on the state of the three bridges between the Rodley and Horsforth roundabouts and the effects of the NGT scheme on North West Outer Leeds.

In relation to the Environmental Sub Group a debate took place on the merits of 20mph zones, their benefits and the difficulties in enforcing them.

It was reported by Councillor Cleasby that the re-naming of the Brownlee Stone Centre was a success with thanks in particular made to Rachel Marshall (Area Officer) for her work on this.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

72 Welfare Reform Impact On Council Tenants

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 25th March, 2013

The Chief Revenues and Benefits Officer and The Chief Executive of West North West Homes Leeds submitted a joint report which updated the Committee on Welfare Reform changes, the first of which will come into force in April 2013. The report also summarised work that is being undertaken to prepare tenants for those changes .

Shaun Kelly (Finance Manager – Welfare Benefits) was in attendance to answer member questions.

Members discussed the report in detail initially considering the under occupancy of Council homes. It was commented that an improved mutual exchange system should be considered to help tenants move to smaller or larger accommodation as required.

Members were taken through Appendix 2 to the report and the implications for tenants living in adapted properties, foster carers and disputed family size or property size categories.

The Committee were informed of the likelihood of rent not being paid when tenants receive benefit direct, which led to calls for better education in relation to financial management at an early age. Furthermore that work needed to be done to identify people at risk financially and that help should be offered to people who find it difficult to budget.

In principal Members were supportive of the reforms taking place in April.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the work done to date by ALMOs and the Council to prepare for the introduction of Welfare Reform changes.

(Councillor Carter left during the discussion of this item at 4:05pm)

73 Area Chairs Forum Minutes

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report which formally notified Members that the minutes of Area Chairs Forum meetings will continue to be brought to Area Committee meetings as a regular agenda item, and to give a brief overview of the Area Chairs Forum meetings.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and the minutes from the Area Chairs Forum meetings be noted.

74 Date and Time of Next Meeting

2pm, Monday 25th March 2013.