

OUTER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor N Harrington in the Chair

Councillors L Buckley, N Buckley,
D Cohen, S Firth, A Lamb, M Robinson and
P Stables

27 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

28 EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was no exempt information.

29 LATE ITEMS

There was a formal late item which was Policing Priorities in Outer North East, this was circulated to Members prior to the meeting and was on the agenda as item 12a.

For further details, please see minute 35 below.

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor R Stephenson.

31 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor M Robinson drew the Committee's attention to the fact that he was employed by TechUK, given the Committee's consideration of the item titled '100% Digital Leeds Update'.

32 OPEN FORUM

The Governance Services Officer reported that no submissions had been received with respect to the "Open Forum".

33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th of September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

34 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

35 POLICING PRIORITIES IN THE OUTER NORTH EAST

The Head of Localities submitted a report which formed a discussion around policing priorities in the Outer North East area, with input from Elected Members, partners and members of the public.

Inspector Richard Armstead and Sergeant Sam Standen attended the meeting and outlined the following information:

- Inspector Armstead had been in post for the Leeds North East Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) since June 2023, replacing Inspector Richard Horn upon his retirement. It was noted to have been a challenging 6 months.
- Policing priorities for the Outer North East were set by the Police, local community and relevant partners.
- Across the Outer North East, burglary of dwellings was a key priority as well as community concerns for anti-social vehicle use.
- It was noted that anti-social vehicle use at the Moor Allerton Centre had been less of an issue recently, however, work was ongoing to address issues at the park & ride at King Lane. Sergeant Pervin was thanked for his work on this.
- Partnership work with the Council to secure additional CCTV at King Lane had not been successful, however, it had prompted the conversation regarding best practise and a three stage model for engagement, education and enforcement.
- A process for addressing anti-social vehicle use was via tracking and indexing registration plates, with letters being sent to repeat bad drivers, noting they had attracted the attention of the Police. More than 12 letters had been sent and if the pattern of vehicle misuse continued, individuals will be dealt with via Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Public Space Protection Order powers.
- The increase in residential burglary was a priority for the Leeds North East NPT, with Alwoodley suffering the highest amount out of the three Wards.
- Initiatives to address residential burglary were, preventative strands through NPT and the 999 Team. The Darker Nights campaign included extending Police presence later into the evenings and nights, supported by an intelligence process and tackling cross force and district border burglaries as teams of burglars were noted to have been travelling from Bradford and North Yorkshire to target the area.
- Specific traffic operations had been commenced to target excess speeding, in collaboration with the Stainbeck Police Station team. Methods were, checking vehicles, ticketing people for driving offences, raising the Police profile and work alongside the Vision Zero scheme.
- An operation was scheduled over the Christmas period to target drink driving, along with other driving offences.
- Residential burglary in Harewood had increased with up to 4 reports over the past month, but overall, this Ward had the lowest figures for all reported crime.
- Recent burglaries in Harewood had been commercial and residential with quad bikes being targeted, all options to address these crimes were being considered, with a cross border instant messaging chat established to track stolen property and follow each case.
- Staffing was proportionate to crime demand, with the North East experiencing approximately 30% of all crime in the Leeds district. If Members wanted to request additional staff for the area WYP Officers noted, they would support this.

- Work to identify criminals committing commercial burglary in Wetherby was ongoing, with intelligence being gathered and Farmwatch being re-established.
- A Neighbourhood Support Staff Officer post had been vacant for a significant time. A job offer had been submitted for an individual who was to be released from another role within West Yorkshire Police and was expected to start in January 2024.
- Lines of communication were expected to improve once the post had been filled and Members were thanked for their patience over the past months.

The following points were discussed in response to questions from Members:

- It was confirmed that upon making a report to the Police, a visit will be conducted by Police to a dwelling that had been burglarised, followed up by a forensic investigation. It was noted the initial visit was to provide assurance and was aimed to be done within an hour after a reported burglary.
- It was believed that burglars had been travelling from Bradford and other areas into the Outer North East, largely for socio-economic reasons.
- It was noted that the tasking meetings that were previously held with Alwoodley Ward Members at Stainbeck Police Station could be re-established.
- PubWatch meetings were confirmed to take place on the first Tuesday of each month.
- A recently appointed PCSO was overseeing ShopWatch. It was noted shoplifting impacted Wetherby the most in the Outer North East. It was confirmed that ShopWatch covered Boston Spa.
- The process for Police dealing with theft from a shop was dependent on the context and circumstance, but the threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) model was followed. There were around 3 suspected teams of shoplifters operating in the Outer North East.
- As part of the FarmWatch initiative, suggestions for Community Committee funding to provide Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras were outlined. NPT Officers in attendance supported any offer of additional funding and provision of equipment but noted ANPR cameras may raise information governance concerns; clarity on this potential issue was to be sought from higher management.
- Stamping farming equipment and vehicles, to disable the ability for criminals to quickly sell stolen property on, was noted to be used in North Yorkshire, which could also be utilised by West Yorkshire Police.
- In order to further discussions relating to how the Community Committee can support and fund specific Policing technology a meeting was agreed to be scheduled for Members and NPT Officers.
- It was agreed that the Committee will write to Chief Superintendent Dodds, who controls the budget for the district, to request additional staff for the North East NPT Team.

- Reporting crime was encouraged in order to create an evidence based reflection and incident log which will impact on staffing and Police provision for the area. As well as via 999 or 101, reports can be made online.
- Further to the reference in the report that Wetherby and Harewood Wards account for 20% of all recorded crime in North East Leeds, a breakdown of the figures was agreed to be provided into specific crimes for each area.
- It was outlined that a beat code was appointed to the location of a reported crime, but work was ongoing to address cross ward and cross border crimes, however, the beat code was used to record a crimes location that would feed into the crime data for a Ward. Once the Support Officer post had been filled, capacity to work on crime analysis will increase.
- A message of thanks was extended to the NPT Officers for their attendance at the meeting and their work to make communities safer.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report, verbal update from West Yorkshire Police and Members comments, be noted.

(Councillor D Cohen joined the meeting during consideration of this item)

36 **100% DIGITAL LEEDS UPDATE**

The report of the Head of 100% Digital Leeds updated the Committee on the work of the 100% Digital Leeds digital inclusion team. Including information on some of the workstreams and activities that were increasing digital inclusion for geographical communities and communities of interest.

The Head of 100% Digital Leeds outlined the following information:

- Points 2 to 5 of the report set out how the 100% Digital Team operated as part of the Integrated Digital Service, working with partners and services engaged with communities.
- Point 4 set out the vision of the department, noting that *‘everyone in Leeds has equal opportunity to use digital tools, technology and services in the right way for them’*. The aim was to provide opportunities and capacity without being prescriptive.
- Community voice informed operations to address where need is most significant for digital support and education, enabling people to determine their own outcomes when using digital technology.
- From point 6 the ongoing projects 100% Digital were involved with were outlined, with a link to the Digital Leeds Website included where more detailed information on key initiatives can be found.
- A notable project related to digital inclusion for transport, in order to increase tools available and expand people’s options, such as using bus and taxi apps. The project had been ongoing for around 9 months and funding had been secured from central Government.
- Projects focused on a cross sectional and community voice models, consulting with relevant parties, such as the third sector, who deliver services for communities of interest.

- The service relied upon a range of expertise with varied understanding and scope from partners, some localised and some city wide.
- Point 12 onwards noted the breadth of work conducted by the service, working to improve the capacity for partner organisations and addressing barriers to inclusivity through funding, information and co-designed interventions.
- Point 14 detailed consultation results from a sample survey of 10% of the organisations the service worked with over the last year.
- Appendix 1 provided an illustrative overview for broadband speed and coverage for Leeds North East.
- Appendix 2 provided an A-Z list of partners the service had worked with over the past year.

The Committee discussed the following:

- As some areas of the Outer North East had limited access to Hubs and libraries, it was outlined that capacity for an increase in home visits was being worked on, with some funding potentially being secured, to engage with elderly people and people living with disabilities or mental health issues.
- The Digital Inclusion Board, which was co-chaired by 100% Digital Leeds and Leeds Older People Forum, and with Wetherby In Support of the Elderly (WiSE) included on the board's membership, was noted to be well attended and displayed good partnership working.
- Any suggestions from Members for appropriate community venues or organisations the service could engage with were welcomed.
- To address digital inequality, an equipment lending scheme was in place to allow people to begin their journey to accessing digital skills and technology.
- The reliability of the data contained in Appendix 1 was queried as it only detailed internet bandwidth availability and not the number of buildings or people that were connected. In response, it was noted internet providers often withhold this information due to its commercially sensitive nature.
- It was confirmed that landlines were proposed to be turned off by 2025, and all calls after then will be done via the internet. This raised challenges as Council telecare services, including fall alarms, operated through landlines and some people may not be ready to make the change, however, British Telecoms (BT) were providing vulnerable customers with support and information. Further updates on the issue were to be provided back to Members.
- The consultation sample size of 10% was noted to be low, the reasoning behind this was to not add additional pressure on organisations as they were unpaid partners. A list of organisations specific to the Outer North East was to be provided to Members.
- Town and Parish Councils were suggested as a suitable bodies for community engagement, with access to community venues that would be good for events or workshops.
- To achieve the ambition for 100% of people in Leeds to have the opportunity to choose to use technology in a way that suits their

lifestyle, socio-economic factors need to be addressed. Through partnership work, organisations can provide people with a safety net to have access to digital technology to manage their health, social connectivity and employment opportunities.

- Success was noted to be indicated by the services support of wider council strategies, such as Health and Wellbeing and Inclusive Growth.
- The funding for the Department for Transport's 'Tackling Loneliness with transport' was outlined to be approximately £200,000 which was shared between relevant partners and as the Council is a statutory body, funding was applied for by partner organisation.
- The need for digital skills development and inclusivity was noted to be great across Leeds and the main barriers to access were age, poverty and education level. There was also a personal choice element to provision and the model for engagement by the service was thought to be appropriate and not overbearing.
- It was outlined that the service only had a regional contact for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) which shared the Leeds digital inclusion model across West Yorkshire. Local data from DWP was to be gathered to outline people's needs, such as eligibility for social tariffs.
- A General Practitioners Surgery was due for closure in the Harewood Ward, it was agreed the 100% Digital Team will assess options, alongside input from Members, to support technological requirements, to reduce disruption for people accessing health care from this community. A meeting to discuss options was proposed.

RESOLVED – That to the contents of the report and Member comments be noted.

37 GYPSY TRAVELLER SERVICE

The report of the Gypsy Traveller Service provided the Outer North East Community Committee with an update regarding the ongoing work of the service.

The Gypsy Traveller Service Manager presented the report, noting the following information:

- The service was comprised of a small team and was responsible for statutory administration of social housing, unauthorised traveller encampments and management of settled traveller sites.
- There had been an increase in encampments, historically these were in East and South Leeds but had become more prevalent in North Leeds, particularly with the opening of the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR) and associated open areas.
- The policy approach was to negotiate terms for the encampment or a managed move, with consultation with Asset Management to determine better suited locations.
- Alternative locations were becoming more difficult to identify given the Council's financial position and land being sold off.

- The process for dealing with encampments was informed by Government guidance and law, requiring a welfare assessment to be conducted for determination of eviction or negotiation and the use of Policy Section 61 powers for removal of an encampment were in place.
- Facilities, such as portable toilets, were often provided to limit the environmental impact an encampment may have on an area and local communities.
- The following relevant statistics were provided;

Year	Total Encampments in Leeds	% Encampments Outer North East Area	Average Days + Cost
2021	109	2%	12 days - £6,807
2022	93	3%	15 days - £3,294
2023 to date	81	9%	3 days - £111 (short stays, S61 used once, no legal costs)

- The more frequent encampments that had occurred in the Outer North East were at Wetherby Leisure Centre, The Ings and the Wilderness Car Park.
- Partners the service worked with were West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Anti-social Behaviour Team (LASBAT) and Localities as well as charities and organisations that advocate for travellers.
- An update from a Highways perspective was provided by a Principal Engineer, noting the following;
 - Numerous measures had been installed to deter illegal camping and fly-tipping. In particular, these included installation of concrete and steel bollards along with large stone boulders. Demountable bollards had been installed where vehicular access needs to be maintained for mowing etc. Unfortunately, criminals (who are equipped with industrial equipment) had vandalized some of these items. The maintenance teams were working hard to replace these items as swiftly as possible.
 - Many incremental adjustments had been made to the road signs and roadmaking's etc. Further adjustments were due on site over the coming weeks. On request of the Police, a number of bays had been installed to facilitate the use of mobile speed cameras.
- The majority of travellers passing through Leeds were in the summer travelling to events such as Appleby fair, with the route down the A1 within the proximity of ELOR.
- The requirements for a suitable negotiated stopping site were outlined and suggestions from Members for any proposed sites were welcomed.

In response to questions from Members, the following points were discussed:

- Given the need to identify negotiated stopping sites and the reduced amount of Council owned land, renting land from private owners was queried as an option. It was noted that liaison with the Planning department was addressing this, with the potential for a private land strategy.
- Some concerns for the accuracy of the provided data were raised with many more encampments noted within the Outer North East. There were some discrepancies with cross Ward borders and where an encampment was recorded, but during the consultation for ELOR it had been raised multiple times that the open spaces will encourage encampments. It was agreed that the figures would be reviewed.
- As the ELOR encampments had starkly increased and had incurred multiple cases of criminal damage to gain access to sites, to then provide facilities could be perceived as essentially aiding criminals.
- It was confirmed the agreed settled sites were at capacity with 41 families residing at Cottingley Springs and 8 at Kidacre Park. Some land had been identified for new permanent sites as part of the Planning Site Allocations Plan.
- The Programmes Board was to be re-established to discuss best practise for negotiated stopping and permanent site procedures, but it was noted the service was unable to relocate unauthorised encampments to existing permanent sites.
- The Cottingley Springs site had existed since the 1970's, with 20-30 families on the waiting list for the site. The Kidacre Park site was established in 2018 and the strategy was currently under review to understand need and expansion up to 2040. There were around 1 or 2 vacancies per year which were filled on a priority need measurement.
- As encampments can incur high costs to the Council, analysis of mitigation measures and preventative methods were quired. In response it was noted that target hardening was difficult as heavy equipment can be used to destroy blockades such as bollards.
- The Environmental Crime Team were seeking additional funding to install more CCTV at repeatedly encamped sites and evidence was needed to prosecute crimes such as fly tipping.
- The measures to deter or negotiate were not serving the end purpose as disruption to the Outer North East had increased, with community events being cancelled due to encampments. Proactive alternatives needed to be sought.
- Work across district borders was queried as there was a settled site at Spring Lane in North Yorkshire that could potentially be utilised. This issue was to be discussed at the next meeting of services across regional Local Authorities, however, it was noted neighbouring authorities did not hold the same negotiated stopping policy.
- The number of permanent settled sites under the jurisdiction of nearby Local Authorities were requested. There was a 38 plot site in Wakefield and 2 sites within Bradford but further details were to be provided back to Members.
- No sites had been negotiated with private landlords yet as considering this as a potential option was at an early stage.

- The direction of the service as facilitation or enforcement was queried as some sites were left in a dire state despite Council money being used to provide facilities, potentially impacting the perception of the service for Council taxpayers. Public perception was a challenge given the length and cost of the eviction process outside of Section 61 orders.
- The service had an enforcement role, in liaison with relevant partners, alongside its statutory requirements for welfare. The public were encouraged to contact all relevant services to express concerns.
- As disregard for the wider community had occurred previously at some encampment sites, the success of the facilitation and negotiation approach was queried. It was noted that different groups of travellers responded differently, and issues caused by a group entail different actions and evidence was required to prosecute criminal acts.
- It was suggested that as Leeds was often being used as a stop off on the way to events, such as Appleby fair, cross border conversations and identification of routes travellers use may be best to facilitate negotiated stopping sites through various districts.
- Negotiated stopping sites were only available for up to 28 days, any permanent or semi-permanent site was required to go through the planning process.
- There was a database with over 20 years of input outlining locations, negotiation processes and outcomes.
- Although the behaviour of traveller encampments differed, the businesses around ELOR had been negatively impacted, the Police seemed unwilling to proactively use Section 61 powers and the cost to the Council was increasing annually, the negotiated stopping method was queried as best practise.
- It was noted there were cultural differences between residents and traveller groups. The need for education and understanding to find common ground and reduce the feeling of contempt, were stressed.
- A suggestion was made that Wetherby Racecourse may be appropriate as a negotiated site, as although far from an ideal location and the likely difficulty of public perception, solutions to improve the situation were needed to reduce disturbance and crime.

RESOLVED –

- 1.) That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.
- 2.) That the following suggested suitable locations that could potentially be used as stopping sites, be noted.

38 OUTER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE FINANCE REPORT

The Head of Locality Partnerships submitted a report to update the Community Committee on the budget position for the Wellbeing Fund, Youth Activity Fund (YAF), Capital Budget as well as the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget (CIL) for 2023/24.

The Localities Officer highlighted the following information:

- The remaining Wellbeing Budget balance for the Committee was outlined as £41,621.79, with the Ward split as Alwoodley £12,211.26, Harewood £12,230.65 and Wetherby £17,179.88.
- The remaining YAF balance was £14,611.40, with the Ward split as Alwoodley £7,887.80, Harewood £8,028.63 and Wetherby £427.97.
- The remaining Capital balance was £33,895.01 with the Ward split as Alwoodley £12,953.68, Harewood £11,487.66 and Wetherby £9,453.67.
- Since the last Community Committee meeting on the 18th of September 2023, there had been one project approved by DDN for additional litter bins in Wetherby for the cost of £2,750.

The Committee discussed the following:

- It was confirmed that “Members Improvements in the Community and the Environment” (MICE) were also making a contribution towards the total cost of the Land Purchase East Keswick Wellbeing funding application.

Projects set out in the report were discussed, and agreed as follows:

Project title	Amount proposed	Wards covered	Decision
Deepdale Centre Utility Costs	£7,000 (Wetherby & District Development Fund)	Wetherby	Agreed
Land Purchase East Keswick	£6,500 (Harewood Environmental Fund)	Harewood	Agreed
Wetherby Youth Project	£427.97	Wetherby	Agreed

RESOLVED –

- 1.) That the Wellbeing & Youth Activities Fund (YAF) applications be determined as set out above.
- 2.) To note;
 - a. Minimum condition arrangements for 2023/24
 - b. Changes to the Small Grant administration process (paragraph 18)
 - c. Details of the Wellbeing Budget position (Table 1)
 - d. Wellbeing proposals for consideration and approval (paragraph 21 & 22)
 - e. Details of the Youth Activities Fund (YAF) position (Table 2)
 - f. Youth Activity Funding proposals for consideration and approval (paragraph 28)
 - g. Details of the Capital Budget (Table 3)
 - h. Details of the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget (paragraph 29)

39 OUTER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the key activities being undertaken by the Localities Team based upon the priorities identified by the Community Committee. In presenting the report, it provided the Committee with an opportunity to discuss or seek further information on the range of actions currently being undertaken.

The Localities Officer in attendance introduced the report, outlining the following information:

- As part of the discussion regarding Outer North East Community Committee public engagement and venues where meetings were held, the following statistics outlining engagement with webcasts of recent meetings were provided:

Video title	Views
Outer North East Community Committee - 18th September 2023	68
Outer North East Community Committee - 24th July 2023	72
Outer North East Community Committee - 13 March 2023	142
Outer North East Community Committee - 12th December 2022	107
Outer North East Community Committee - 26th Oct 2022	8
Outer North East Community Committee - 27th June 2022	6
Outer North East Community Committee - 10 March 2022	3

- It was noted that the more recent figures displayed substantially more people watch the webcast that had historically attended meetings at community venues within the Outer North East.

The following points were discussed:

- During the meeting, a message of thanks had been submitted by a resident within Wetherby to Councillor A Lamb for his recent campaign against the introduction of parking charges at public green spaces. It was noted the resident was watching the webcast live.
- Previously the Outer North East Community Committee had been held at venues within the Outer North East Wards, as opposed to the Civic Hall. It was noted that these venues were unable to support the technology and security to webcast from and turnout from members of the public had been low. The webcast was an easy access point for the public.
- The Community Committee review was ongoing, with a workshop scheduled for the 17th of January 2024 which would cover community engagement best practice. The Chair encouraged Members to attend.
- The webcast allowed people to engage with the meeting after it had taken place, view only specific items of interest to the individual and was a helpful record for accountability for Members.
- The cause behind the increase in viewership for the webcast of more recent meetings was queried. The specific items for consideration at these meetings may have had an effect on the uptake.
- The effect of people logging in and out of the webcast as well as the number of Council officers viewing had on the figures was queried.
- It was thought the impact of officers viewing the webcast was likely fairly minimal as those involved in the proceedings will generally be attending to present an item. It was expected that the uptake in views

was due to social media promotion and evidence suggests the webcast was the best method for community engagement.

- The Outer North East area was substantial in terms of geographical size and given inadequate public transport provision it may be difficult for residents to travel between towns and villages to attend meetings that were held moving through the Wards.
- It was noted that other forums such as Parish and Town Council meetings and workshops serve the community well and were also a good space for residents to raise issues.
- Running Councillor Surgeries sessions via online methods had been successful and well engaged with.
- Some items, such as standard governance procedures, may not be relevant or interesting to residents, so the webcast allows them to tune into specific items of interest. Further consultation could be conducted with residents to discuss relevant topics they think should be considered by the Committee.
- A suggestion was proposed for a dial in method for the public to make submissions as part of the Open Forum. This was agreed to be looked into to work out the feasibility and logistics.
- The webcast was a good method for engagement, given the context of living in a digital age and when the technology for webcasting from community venues was available this would be the preferred method. Members noted the appropriate technology should be lobbied for.
- Recent discussion at the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board had covered potential options to provide facilities to webcast from community venues.
- Establishing the objectives of the Committee and developing agendas which cover issues that are important to the community was being discussed as part of the Community Committee review and workshops.
- It was noted that holding the Committee within the Outer North East Wards with the late evening start time will impact officers.
- A message of thanks was extended to Andrew Birkbeck, Localities Programme Manager, for all of his work over the years for the Localities service, benefiting the communities of Leeds.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.

40 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting will take place on Thursday, the 21st of March 2023 at 5:30pm.