

OUTER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor N Harrington in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, D Cohen, S Firth,
P Harrand, A Lamb, L Richards,
M Robinson and R. Stephenson

14 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

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

15 EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press or public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be considered.

16 LATE ITEMS

Members agreed to the submission of a late item of business in respect of correspondence received from a Harewood resident who was expressing concern about the Environmental Harm from Motorways (Minute No. 24 referred). Members were also informed that an additional Wellbeing Application had been received in respect of Agenda Item No. 12 (Outer North East Community Committee – Finance Report). Members agreed to the inclusion of this Supplementary Information (Minute No. 26 referred)

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

18 DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests.

19 OPEN FORUM

The Governance Services Officer reported that no submissions had been received with respect to “Open Forum”

20 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes approved at the meeting
held 5th July 2021

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th December 2020 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no issues raised under matters arising.

22 Funding for Pond Creation & Restoration for Great Crested Newt Conservation

The Conservation Officer, Communities & Environment submitted a report which sought to provide an update on new funding available for pond creation and restoration, for the purpose of the conservation of great crested newts through Natural England District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme.

Members were informed that great crested newts (GCN) had seen dramatic declines in their populations over the last 60 years despite being legally protected. The new 'District Level Licensing' scheme (DLL) better protects this species by using conservation payments from developers to create new ponds in locations that would benefit the species.

It was reported that the scheme would create a network of ponds providing habitat for GCN, helping to join up sometimes isolated populations and helping them to thrive.

Members noted that Natural England, in partnership with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, would invest developer payments not only into creating or restoring new ponds but also maintaining and monitoring the ponds, for the long term (25 years).

Members were informed that Natural England had randomly sampled ponds throughout the Leeds district in 2018, using a technique called eDNA analysis which could detect the presence of GCN through water samples. This data, combined with existing biological records had enabled them to map Strategic Opportunity Areas for GCN conservation. These were the areas targeted for this funding subject to meeting the necessary criteria to be eligible.

Members sought clarity on how to identify potential pond sites

The Conservation Officer said, if you considered a particular area of land may be suitable for pond creation or restoration within the specified mapped areas (Details circulated separately) Yorkshire Wildlife Trust should be contacted in the first instance, who would assess suitability of the site info@ywt.org.uk. Natural England would give preference to sites that could support at least 2 ponds or more.

The criteria to consider before applying was as follows:

- Any site must sit within one of the Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs).

- The minimum and optimum size of each pond is 100m². The minimum depth at the centre of the pond is 1m.
- It must be within 500m of another existing pond.
- Ground conditions need to be such that the pond will hold water a minimum of one summer in every three (please note that ponds requiring liners are **not** normally funded).
- The location should be within 50m of suitable terrestrial habitat (taller grasses, scrub, woodland or hedgerows).
- If in a grazed landscape or where disturbance could occur any ponds would need to be fenced (this can be included in the funding) by a minimum 3m buffer zone.
- The pond must be in an area not likely to be polluted by runoff.
- Chosen locality should not be liable to flood or be at risk of suffering ingress by fish or excessive use by wildfowl.
- Any area chosen must not be contaminated by invasive non-native species (e.g. Himalayan Balsam or *Crassula helmsii*).
- Restorations ONLY – all ponds put forward must be in late successional stages (choked with vegetation), devoid of water or covered in a thick layer of anaerobic sediment.
- If successful, ponds will be monitored and maintained by Natural England for 25 years.

In offering comment Members suggested the East Leeds Country Park may also be a suitable location for this type of pond creation. It was also pointed out that the Alwoodley area overlapped with a number of North Yorkshire Parish Councils and would it be possible to circulate details to Parish Councils and major land owners in the area.

Members were informed that Lotherton Hall was already been considered as a possible location.

The Chair suggested that if she could be provided with the requested information, that information would in turn be forwarded on.

Members sought the definition of a pond, “when was a pond a pond”

Members were informed that a pond could be defined as a body of water, which could vary in size between 1 square meter and 2 hectares (equivalent in size to about 2.5 football pitches) and which holds water for four months of the year or more. Ponds are not connected to each other or to other water bodies – they are only fed by rainwater or groundwater.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and contributions commenting the presentation had been informative and useful.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted

- (ii) That details of the funding opportunities for pond creation and restoration for Great Crested Newt Conservation be circulated Parish Councils and major land owners in the area

23 Outer North East Community Committee - Draft Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy - Consultation

The Director of City Development, submitted a report which brought to the attention of Members' details of the consultation on the draft Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy.

Addressing the report Finn Campbell, Team Leader (Forward Planning) and Paul Foster, Transport Planning Manager spoke in detail about the following:

- The Transport Strategy has the vision that Leeds is to be a city where you don't need a car;
- The objectives of the strategy are to: tackle climate change; deliver inclusive growth; and improve health;
- The 6 big moves identified to focus on the Transport Strategy are:
 - De-carbonising transport;
 - Creating healthier streets, spaces and communities;
 - Transform the City Centre
 - Enhance public transport
 - New mobility solutions
 - Deliver a mass transit network

Members noted the draft strategy sets out the proposed approach to transport policy for the whole city. Whilst the strategy was not spatially defined, policies and measures detailed in the document and subsequent action plans would cover the Outer North East Area.

Consultation on the Transport Strategy will be open until 11th April 2021. A copy of the Transport Strategy was appended to the submitted report and could also be found on the Leeds City Council web pages.

In the discussion that followed Members expressed the view that for residents living in urban areas (inside the ring road) the strategy may be acceptable, but for the outer areas, in particular the Outer North East Area, this strategy was not acceptable, this area had simply been ignored. The vision for the city was for a Mass Transit System, but the ONE area was being told to "make do with buses"

Members suggested that geographically, the outer north east area was one of the largest parts of the City. Bus travel was particularly difficult in the area, buses did not go to where they were required, travelling by bus from mid-day to 3.00pm was especially difficult, residents living in the area could not get to the major transports hubs and accessibility was a major issue. "We need to meet the needs of the people, not the geography"

In responding the Transport Planning Manager said the vision was a huge challenge, a viable transport system was required for the whole of Leeds, but it was accepted there would be differences in some of the outer areas. Members were informed that extending any mass transit system into the Outer North East area would be difficult, car usage in the area was high and providing a robust business case for funding such schemes was challenging, the most viable option for the ONE area was bus provision. The No.36 bus service (Leeds to Harrogate) was highlighted as a good example of buses operating in the outer areas.

In responding Members acknowledged the No.36 was a good service but this was only one route.

Members were informed that officers were working closely with bus providers to deliver mass transit, timescales and partners may be different but all were working to the same vision.

Commenting on the feedback received in respect of the ONE area, Members noted that only 68 people had responded to the draft consultation, 0.19% of the City Population, across the city only 3,500 responses had been received.

Members queried why the Leeds Transport Strategy was being brought forward at this time, suggesting that in a few weeks-time the election of a West Yorkshire Mayor was taking place and once elected the new Mayor could override Leeds Transport polices.

In responding the Transport Planning Manager said Leeds would still remain the Highway Authority. There was governance at West Yorkshire level, this strategy would set out the Leeds position.

In summing up the Chair said, the views of the Community Committee on the draft Leeds Transport Strategy were requested, those views had now been provided and officers had been left in no doubt that improved public transport connectivity/ infrastructure needs to be provided to the Outer North East area.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and contributions.

RESOLVED – To note the contents of the report.

24 Environmental Harm from Motorways

Members considered correspondence received from a Harewood resident who was expressing concern about the Environmental Harm from Motorways.

In the discussion that followed Members were of the view that further information was required and that an officer from the appropriate City Council directorate be requested to investigate the matter further and prepare a report for the next meeting of the Community Committee.

RESOLVED - That matter be referred to the Director of City Development with a request that a report be prepared and brought back to the next meeting of this Committee in June 2021.

25 Dates, Times and Venues of Community Committee Meetings 2021/2022

The City Solicitor submitted a report which sought the Community Committee's formal approval of a meeting schedule for the 2021/2022 Municipal year and to determine if there are any revisions to the current meeting and venue arrangements.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the proposed scheduled of meetings for 2021/22 be determined as follows:
 - Monday 7th June 2021 – 5.30pm
 - Monday 13th September 2021 – 5.30pm
 - Monday 6th December 2021 – 5.30pm
 - Monday 7th March 2022 – 5.30pm
- (iii) That the meeting scheduled for 7th June 2021 be held in the Civic Hall, Leeds, the remaining meetings to be held at various venues within the three wards

26 Outer North East Community Committee - Finance Report

The Head of Stronger Communities submitted a report which provided an update on the budget position for the Wellbeing Fund, Youth Activity Fund, Capital Budget, as well as the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget for 2020/21. The report also provided an update on organisations funded by the Community Committee and how their project delivery would be affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Members were provided with an update on projects that had been funded through the £10,000 set aside by this Committee from their available Wellbeing Budget 2020/21 (across all wards) to tackle the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Members were also informed of the work that had been taking place through their local Volunteer Hubs, together with an update on the work of the wider Communities Team and what they had been doing to support some of the newer communities and communities of interest in the area.

The Localities Officer, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report together with the appendices which included:

- Available funding for the current financial year.
- Clarification around some of the projects seeking financial assistance.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the details Wellbeing Budget Position (Table No.1 referred)
- (ii) That the following Wellbeing Projects be determined as follows:

Project	Organisation	Amount Granted (£)
Purchase and Installation of a Communal Shed	Clifford Allotment Holders Association	£500
Allerton Primary C of E School Expansion Works	Leeds City Council	£10,000 (Capital £6,600 & Wellbeing £3,400)
Nature Reserves Footpath Repairs for Improved Public Access	The East Keswick Wildlife Trust	£2,500 (Taken from Environmental Pot)
Bins for Slaid Hill	Communities Team LCC	£460
Installation of Greenhouse (Additional Funding)	Aberford C of E Primary School	£266

- (iii) To note that since the last Consultative Forum on 7th December 2020, the following project had been considered and approved by DDN:

a) Arts Camp February Holiday Scheme

- (iv) To note that no projects had been declined since the last meeting
- (v) To note details of COVID 19 position (Table 2)

- (vi) To note the details of the new Central Government Ward Based Covid Fund (Table 3)
- (vii) To note the details of the Youth Activities Fund (YAF) position (Table 4)
- (viii) That the following Youth Activity Projects be determined as follows:

Project	Organisation	Amount Granted (£)
Scarcroft Cricket Club Junior Coaching Programme	Scarcroft Cricket Club	£7,536

- (ix) To note the activity within the Community Skips Budget (Table No.5 referred)
- (x) To note the details of the Capital Budget (Table No.6 referred)
- (xi) To note the details of the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget (Paragraph 37 referred)

27 Outer North East Community Committee - Update Report

The Head of Stronger Communities submitted a report which provided an update of the work which the Communities Team was engaged in, based on priorities identified by this Committee. The report also provided an opportunity for further questioning, or to request a more detailed report on a particular issue.

The report is also able to provide regular updates on some of the key activities between Community Committee meetings and functions delegated to Community Committees, Community Champions roles, community engagement, partnership and locality working.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted

28 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting will take place on Monday, 7th June March 2021 commencing at 5.30pm

29 Any Other Business

Members referred to a 'far-right' information session delivered at the Outer North East Town & Parish Council Forum.

Members noted that a YouGov poll conducted between the dates of 17-18 February 2021, found 69 per cent of respondents considered left-wing extremism to be a threat to the UK. Whilst 74 per cent worried about right-wing extremism. The poll indicated that the public expect to see both right-wing and left-wing extremism investigated equally.

It was the wish of the Members that the Chair write on behalf of the Community Committee to the Executive Board Member responsible for Communities to request that equal weight be given to all forms of extremism and that an information session be made available in the same way as you encouraged communities to access the far-right session.

RESOLVED – That the Chair write on behalf of the Community Committee to the Executive Board Member responsible for Communities to request that equal weight be given to all forms of extremism and that an information session be made available in the same way as you encouraged communities to access the far-right session.