

INNER SOUTH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor M Iqbal in the Chair

Councillors S Ali, E Carlisle, R Chesterfield,
W Dixon, A Maloney, E Pogson-Golden,
A Scopes and P Wray

17 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

18 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

19 Late Items

There was a formal late item which was titled Climate, Energy & Green Spaces – Forestry, minute 25 below refers.

There were also two supplementary information packs for Item 9 – Inner South Community Committee Finance Report which were circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

20 Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of interest were made at the meeting:

In relation to agenda Item 9 (Finance Report) Councillor Iqbal drew the Committee's attention to one of his Other Registerable interests, with his role as Chair of the 'Hamara Healthy Living Centre', because the organisation had submitted a grant application.

In relation to agenda Item 9 (Finance Report) Councillors Carlisle and Wray noted that they were voluntarily involved with Project Space Leeds because the organisation had submitted a grant application.

21 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

22 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st of July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

23 Matter Arising

The following matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting were noted:

Minute 14 - Employment and Skills Champion Role

The appointment for this role was still vacant however, it was outlined to be under review as part of the wider Community Committee review, with the

changes to the role needing to be agreed. The role was anticipated to hold greater input into city wide strategies and Members requested sight of the new proposals as early as possible for a breakdown of what it was to entail before the role was appointed. A Council wide Community Committee review steering group meeting had been scheduled where further discussions were to take place.

Minute 14 – Health, Wellbeing & Adult Social Champion Role

As this role was vacant, further details regarding the requirements of the role were agreed to be provided back to Members.

24 Open Forum

In accordance with the Community Committee Procedure Rules, the Chair allowed a period of up to 10 minutes for members of the public to make representations or ask questions within the terms of reference of the Community Committee.

The following submissions were made as part of the Open Forum:

Barbeques in Cross Flatts Park

A local resident noted issues with the use of barbeques in public spaces, particularly in Cross Flatts Park, were becoming more prevalent, with associated anti-social behaviour, litter and health and safety implications.

In response Members noted that there were bylaws in place across many public green spaces which had become difficult to enforce with Park Rangers no longer in place across the district. The Climate Energy and Green Spaces (CEGS) Department were running social media campaigns to outline the dangers of barbeques and open fires in public spaces and parks and also a Firewatch initiative was being developed for Hunslet Moor. Firewatch was a pilot scheme and hoped to reduce pressure on the number of calls made to the service, with a local ranger potentially being employed as a dedicated point of contact. It was also noted that CEGS were able to permit some barbeques for events, but the main issue was disposable barbeques being dangerous and often improperly used and littered. Standardised signage to outline the dos and don'ts within Council owned green spaces were being trailed.

A pragmatic approach to this issue was discussed as many local residents had a small amount or no garden space whilst also recognising the extent of the issue and associated danger. Litter and poorly managed fires posed an overall risk to children, natures and pets.

Storm Damaged Trees

A local resident reported that there were damaged trees within the Hunslet and Riverside Ward which required attention. In response, the Late Item to be considered by the Committee was to discuss these matters. Minute 25 refers below.

Bonfire Night

It was queried whether the Community Committee could support a local managed bonfire on the 5th of November 2024, including potential funding options. In response it was noted that the Community Committee, West Yorkshire Police (WYP) and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team held discussions to work out safety measures for events occurring on bonfire night to encourage safety and any potential forthcoming funding applications were only able to be determined against what was provided to Members. The Committee did not hold powers to permit organised bonfires but some benefits for midscale events that were well managed, and community led were noted, and could reduce the number of illicit bonfires and fireworks.

25 Climate, Energy & Green Spaces - Forestry

The report of the Parks Operation Manager provided the Inner South Community Committee with a service update from the Forestry service.

The Parks Operation Manager introduced the report, and the following points were highlighted:

- The regular storm season was from August to September; however, the number and severity of storms had increased over recent years, creating a more dynamic situation.
- 73mph winds had been recorded during the recent Storm Lilian which had caused damage to a significant number of trees across Leeds. Over 1000 calls and 570 emails had been received by the Forestry Department in the week following Storm Lilian with over 400 jobs logged onto the work list.
- A wide survey across all parks was required, including surveying trees nearby other damaged trees and an additional 1 month's extra work had resulted from the storm.
- The amount of woodchippers across the Leeds district had increased, with an additional one in the Inner South recently in place. Chipping was done on site, where appropriate, and was used to efficiently clear fallen branches and trees which blocked roads and paths.
- The Forestry team had conducted site safety visits to manage the recent storm damage and implemented clearance and security measures. Some of the safety and clearance work was done by in house Council specialist but private contractors were also used to cover all work.
- The survey of storm damage mainly covered branch failures and fallen trees within Council owned land, with recent work conducted in Cross Flatts Park. The service used a categorised risk based approach, with imminent health and safety work prioritised. General maintenance work was to be followed up once work to secure the greatest risks were completed.
- The damaged trees posing the most serious risk to public safety were secured by internal staff and then contractors conducted lower risk work.
- The service was involved with the Highways and Housing departments as work often interlinked.

- Major delays in general clean up work were not expected once the higher risk jobs had been completed, but there was a potential delay in responses to new submissions of tree works that were reported.

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

- Given the additional work caused by the recent storm, the implications on workload in light of a further severe storm were queried. In response it was noted that the service had been as proactive as possible and a risk based approach would again be implemented to secure the highest risk damaged trees and also further contracted work could be sought.
- The perception of risk posed by a damaged tree was variable and the service's processes always favoured safety. Trees were subjective in regard to danger against amenity and reports of blocking light, signal or leaf fall were not usually considered for tree works.
- Large trees near Council houses were monitored, but height itself was not considered a relevant danger issue. Basic level 1 tree safety training was available to Officers within Housing and Highways allowing them to conduct basic tree surveys which could then be reported and escalated with Forestry. The process was based around seeking to identify risk and then management processes. Arborologists were needed to determine the level of risk.
- Any liability for a tree on Council land that caused injury or damaged private property was to be covered by the Council's insurance team. If a tree from a neighbouring property was causing damage to a privately owned property, the owner can cut branches back to the boundary line, but dialogue was usually needed between neighbours to limit dispute.
- If a tree was reported as nuisance on Council land and then surveyed to be healthy, no works would likely occur. In order to better identify vulnerable trees conversations with the Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Spaces were ongoing to determine whether training for Elected Members could be provided. It was noted this may assist with post storm processes across local areas.
- As the service had previously reported to be under resourced, it was confirmed that there was now only one vacancy within the team and that recruitment for Forestry was not frozen as it held statutory health and safety duties. Previous vacancies were noted due to some posts requiring specific skills and training; an apprenticeship programme was in place to provide specific in-house training and also contracted workers were utilised to fill gaps for essential works.
- Dangerous trees at Middleton Park GP Surgery had been reported to the service following the storm, which were agreed to be followed up. An inspection along the ring road had taken place in the previous week.
- The support for community, volunteer led clear up operations were queried. In response the willingness was appreciated but a sensible approach to assessing capabilities was needed to manage public safety, so specialist tree work was not encouraged. Council Parks gardening staff were taking chainsaw training to supplement specialised works for initial clean ups.

- Biodiversity benefits for leaving fallen branches and trees were noted, as well as some instances of sculptures and fences being built out of fallen tree limbs.
- During the clear up after the storm, the trunk of a fallen tree, that was damaging a fence on Harehills Road, had been left after the branches were removed. This was to be cleared once essential priority safety work was completed.
- Methods that supported tree management on private land were queried in order to encourage reasonable steps for clear up and maintenance work. In response, a link on the Forestry Department's website outlined common law rights and contained a directory for reputable contractors and the service were able to manage contracts. Members noted that this was useful but should be better communicated, which was agreed to be reviewed so this information was clearer.
- A summary of common law related to tree maintenance was provided, noting, if a tree was within the boundary of a private property works can be conducted without permission, subject to the tree not being covered by a tree preservation order (TPO) or relevant conservation area policy. A tree of a significant height sometimes required additional permits or potentially an ecological survey. An online mapping system tool, mainly focused on TPOs, conservation areas and bat alert areas, was available, with the link to be provided to Members.
- As overgrown trees were blocking CCTV cameras in Cross Flatt Parks and crimes were being committed unmonitored, a resolution was sought. Discussions with the Safer Stronger Communities team sought a clear approach to address this. The matter was also to be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour Board as funding was likely required and safety was again the priority. Members appreciated the work was ongoing but requested that the trees or overhanging branches were removed as the cost of the CCTV operations were significant and convictions required evidence.
- Members thanked the Parks Operation Manager and the wider Forestry team for their approach to ensuring public safety after the storm and also attending the Committee on short notice when the service was under pressure.

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

26 **INNER SOUTH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - UPDATE REPORT**

The report of the Head of Locality Partnerships brought Member's attention to an update of the work in which the Communities Team was engaged in based on priorities identified by the Community Committee. It also provided opportunities for further questioning or to request a more detailed report on a particular issue.

The Localities Officer introduced the report, and the following points were highlighted:

- A Children and Families sub-group meeting had been arranged for the 9th of September 2024 and an update was to be provided at the next Committee meeting.
- An Environment and Community Safety sub-group meeting was yet to be arranged but a full update was to be provided at the next Committee meeting.
- Page 30 of the report pack provided an update from employment and skills, containing updated figures and a more granular breakdown of universal credit take up, which had previously been requested by Members.
- A community engagement update was available from page 36 of the report pack, including details for Holbeck Moor Market.
- A neighbourhood centres co-ordinator update was available from page 39 of the report pack.
- Appendix 1 detailed the social media update, with boosted posts now being used on the Community Committee Facebook page, with an update on its success to be provided once more data had been gathered.

WYP Inspector Mark Lund, attending the Committee and provided an update on recent crime statistics:

- Crime figures for Hunslet and Riverside had decreased when compared with July 2024 statistics, with hate crime and incidents the only category that had risen, but this was considered a national issue with recent riots occurring.
- Crime figures for Beeston and Holbeck displayed an overall reduction in average crime but robbery had increased. The increase in robbery was associated with organised crime and particularly related to E-bikes and E-scooters. One individual had been arrested which related to four of the robberies.
- Crime figures for Middleton Park showed an increase in theft of motor vehicles with a recent theft incident leading to four vans being stolen. Three of the vans had since been recovered.
- Overall hate crimes and incidents had increased for all three wards, but this was related to national issues.
- There had been some difficulties for neighbourhood policing recently with other issues such as protests and riots requiring attention, however, Officers were back to usual operations in the area, all departments were fully recruited, with the exception of PSCOs being just below capacity.

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

- The legality of riding E-scooters in parks was dependant on the motor capacity, it was outlined that WYP would not seek to prosecute an individual reporting theft of their E-scooter when riding in a park but may advise against use in public spaces. WYP were more concerned with E-bikes which were generally capable of much higher speeds.
- As crime in Cross Flatts Park was noted to be prolific and local people reported feeling unsafe and wariness when in the park, actions to

address this were queried. In response the park was noted to be a community asset and a partnership approach, including community groups, was best practise to improve safety measures and consult with residents. This was an ongoing issue and greater Police presence was encouraged.

- A property that backed onto the park had been associated with organised crime, with the fencing repeatedly removed to access the park. The approach to reduce trap houses and properties associated with organised crime was through mapping and managing identified houses in liaison with other Police departments and working with other authorities. Attempts had been made for a Police bike team to patrol the area, as well as the use of drones. A partial closure order had been served on the particular address and a briefing note on operations related to identified houses was agreed to be shared with Members.
- With the CCTV cameras in Cross Flatts Park being blocked by foliage, work was ongoing to resolve this issue. CCTV footage was valuable evidence and alongside Leeds Watch, cameras were monitored until 4:00am.
- Members had recently attended a site visit to the local Leeds Watch monitoring station, and it had been noted that WYP had requested a low amount of footage from the station. Members queried the usefulness of funding these CCTV cameras if serious crime was going unmonitored. In response it was outlined that to request footage a crime needed to be reported and a limited number of Officers were permitted to engage with Leeds Watch; there were also issues with the length of time each camera was permitted to be monitored alongside staffing limitations.
- Drug statistics were not included within the Police update as the figures would be skewed by Elland Road Police Station being within the Middleton Park boundary lines and anyone brought to the station found to be in possession of drugs upon arrest would be included in these statistics.
- It was agreed that the number of nuisance or illegal quad bike reports for Middleton Park were to be double checked to ensure all reports were picked up and logged.
- The process for suggesting locations for speed cameras was explained as a shared partnership decision, involving WYP, highways and other local authorities and required evidence of severe danger for fixed cameras; portable measures such as speed guns were more easily accessible.
- As there were reports of anti-social behaviour outside a nail salon in Middleton Park, including reports of robbery, this issue was agreed to be followed up with superior WYP Officers to check ongoing work and outcomes.
- As part of the employment and skills update it was suggested that the service could connect with local employers and third sector organisations for work and voluntary options, which was agreed to be shared back with the service.

- Further detail regarding the locations for Jobshops and a further breakdown for community learning courses to a ward level, as well as a list of organisations engaged with were requested.
- The list of schools and colleges that the employment and skills service had engaged with, as well as an Inner South specific list for *Connecting Schools to Hospitality* was requested by Members.
- As the community engagement update had referenced Holbeck Moor Market, information on engagement and support for Middleton Market was requested. It was noted that both these markets had the same organiser who delegated operations to others.

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

27 **INNER SOUTH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - FINANCE REPORT**

The report of the Head of Locality Partnerships provided the Community Committee with an update on the budget position for the Wellbeing Fund, Youth Activity Fund (YAF), Capital Budget as well as the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget for 2024/25.

The Localities Officer presented the report, outlining the following information:

- The remaining Wellbeing balance available to the Committee was £106,439.71, with the Ward breakdown as, Beeston and Holbeck £30,733.14, Hunslet and Riverside £29,720.06 and Middleton Park £45,986.51.
- The funding applications approved by delegated decision since the last Committee meeting were detailed on page 52 of the report, with three delivered and one declined.
- Monitoring information was available on page 53 of the report with an update provided for a previously approved funding application project, Beeston Community Youth Theatre.
- The remaining YAF balance available to the Committee was £28,139.94, with the Ward breakdown as Beeston and Holbeck £4,509.48, Hunslet and Riverside £9,900.78 and Middleton Park £13,729.68.
- Tables 3, 4 and 5 detailed the Small Grants, Community Skips and Capital budget position.
- The remaining CIL balance available to the Committee was £313,621.41 with the Ward breakdown as Beeston and Holbeck £50,293.47, Hunslet and Riverside £186,735.76 and Middleton Park £76,592.18.
- Injections had been received to the CIL balance which were noted as Beeston and Holbeck £1270.27, Hunslet and Riverside £154,910.75 and Middleton Park £75,690.92.

During consideration of the Finance Report, the following was discussed:

- The funding for the Monday Club application was agreed for Hunslet and Riverside's contribution (£2,241) only. Middleton Park Elected

Members requested information relating to access and provision take up before making a contribution.

- Members discussed the plans and operations for the South Leeds FC funding application with the applicant, which outlined that the previously applied for funding had been used to set up a women's and girls' team and associated pitch provision costs, sponsorship's had been secured which assisted with some operation costs, Community Committee funding was to be used for venue access, many local clubs had merged into South Leeds FC, with Members raising some concerns regarding negative impacts on future grassroots and academy teams, although the applicant noted there was significant local support and the club was to feed into Leeds United's scouting programme.
- Community focused events held by South Leeds FC were confirmed to be open to the public and worked with local schools and youth clubs with education events aiming to increase opportunities for young people and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Future sustainability plans for South Leeds FC were discussed with the Committee outlining that there was no guarantee for future funding through the Committee.
- Following discussions the whole Committee voted on the matter, which resulted in a majority approval to provide the entirety of funding for the South Leeds FC application.
- Support for the Refurbishment of the Golden Lion – Nawroz School funding application was outlined, with the building being repurposed by a Kurdish community group.
- Some concern regarding the cost and operation for the Mini Bus Replacement Project funding application for the Hamara Centre, given the Council's financial constraints and the need to scrutinise applications thoroughly, were raised. It was confirmed that, due to insurance reasons, the mini bus was not able to be hired out to other community groups with some further concerns for exclusivity noted.
- The Hamara centre had previously received significant funding from the Committee so, in light of this, it was queried whether additional funding streams had been sought for the mini bus, prior to the submission of this application, and also how thorough had the application been scrutinised versus other funding bids that were brought before the Committee.
- Discussions with the Hamara centre had been held to agree a process for the mini bus to be available for wider community use which were ongoing.
- An update on previously approved funding applications for the safer streets programme and Kidz Club noted positive delivery and results for the local community with a recent event well attended and reviewed.

RESOLVED –

- a. That the details regarding the administration of small grants (paragraph 18), be noted.
- b. That the details of the Wellbeing Budget position (Table 1), be noted.

- c. That the Wellbeing/CIL ringfence proposals for consideration and approval (paragraph 22), be noted.
- d. That the Wellbeing/YAF/CIL proposals for consideration and approval (paragraph 23), be noted.
- e. That the details of the projects approved via Delegated Decision (paragraph 31), be noted.
- f. That the monitoring information of its funded projects (paragraph 33), be noted.
- g. That the details of the Youth Activities Fund position (Table 2), be noted.
- h. That the details of the Small Grants Budget (Table 3), be noted.
- i. That the details of the Community Skips Budget (Table 4), be noted.
- j. That the details of the Capital Budget (Table 5), be noted.
- k. That the details of the Community Infrastructure Levy Budget (Table 6), be noted.
- l. That funding proposals as detailed in the report for consideration, be determined as follows:

The following ringfences were agreed:

£10,000 (CIL/Wellbeing) for Beeston & Holbeck’s festive lights.

£9,000 (CIL) for the Hunslet Improvements CIL ring-fence budget towards the costs of additional play equipment on Hunslet Moor (Hunslet & Riverside)

£12,000 (CIL) towards the cost of fitness equipment in Cross Flatts Park (Hunslet & Riverside)

Project Title	Ward	Amount	Decision
Monday Club	Hunslet & Riverside and Middleton Park	£2,700 (Hunslet & Riverside: £2,241 and Middleton Park: £459)	Agreed for Hunslet and Riverside only (£2,241)
Rowland Road Play Patch	Beeston & Holbeck and Hunslet & Riverside	£2,100 (Beeston & Holbeck: £669.93 and Hunslet & Riverside: £1,400.07)	Agreed
Winter Training	Beeston & Holbeck, Hunslet & Riverside and	£12,606 (Beeston & Holbeck: £327.76, Hunslet	Agreed

	Middleton Park	& Riverside: £592.48 and Middleton Park: £11,685.76)	
South Leeds FC	Beeston & Holbeck, Hunslet & Riverside and Middleton Park	£10,000	Agreed
Refurbishment of the Golden Lion Beeston - Nawroz School	Hunslet & Riverside	£7,000 (Beeston & Holbeck: £2,000 and Hunslet & Riverside £5,000)	Agreed
Minibus Replacement Project	Hunslet & Riverside	£25,000	Agreed
Hunslet Tara Festive Lights	Hunslet & Riverside	£3,060	Withdrawn
Belle Isle Circus – Replacement lighting column	Middleton Park	£1,984.40	Agreed
Pride Place Equipment	Hunslet & Riverside	£5,000	Agreed

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DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the date and time of the next meeting as the 21st of November 2024 at 1:30pm, be noted.