

Report of: Head of Stronger Communities

Report to: Inner West Community Committee
[Armley, Bramley & Stanningley, Kirkstall]

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Date: 17th November 2020 **To note/discuss**

Inner West Community Committee - Update Report

Purpose of report

1. To bring to members' attention an update of the work which the Communities Team is engaged in, based on priorities identified by the Community Committee. It also provides opportunities for further questioning, or to request a more detailed report on a particular issue.
2. This report provides 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.

Main issues

Updates by theme:

Children and Young People: Champions Cllr H Bithell, Cllr L Cunningham & Cllr C Gruen

3. The Inner West Children and Young People Sub Group took place on 15th September 2020 via Zoom.
4. West Yorkshire Police and Safer Leeds, along with officers from Children and Families came together to discuss crime figures and domestic violence during the pandemic, an increase was reported and discussions around what work is been done to manage this took place.

5. The Principle of Dixons Academy along with the Head of Learning Improvement were also present at the meeting to discuss the challenges schools are facing to manage social distancing now that schools have reopened and the impact this is having on education, and what work is been done to support children and families.
6. Elected Members passed on their thanks to all the services for their hard work and creativity during the pandemic to keep children and young people safe and as active as possible.
7. The next meeting will be Tuesday 15th December @ 12pm, via Zoom.

Environment: Champions Cllr J Illingworth & Cllr A Smart – Update from Chris Chamberlain

Covid-19 Update

8. As you are aware, at the beginning of the initial lockdown period, staff from CNT were reallocated to other priority services such as refuse, waste management and adult social care. Remaining staff were put onto a rota where we offered a reduced service under the Emergency Provision Protocol which involved prioritising our work and resources. This involved all sweeping being stood down due to shortage of trained and qualified drivers. To ensure social distancing measures within the depot we are still staggering staff start and finish times for the moment. All of the above means we are not yet back to full capacity but are pulling together when required. All risk assessments have been updated and COVID 19 specific Safer Working Instructions are in place to keep staff as safe as possible whilst in work. Currently, our service is operating fully but some delays in getting work completed where there isn't a Health & Safety risk to the public may be experienced. Due to the new national lockdown and updated guidance for those clinically extremely vulnerable we have lost several members of staff who now must stay at home. We have also suffered with several COVID-19 positive tests within street cleansing and also enforcement which has resulted in staff being away from work in isolation conditions. Those EAOs able to work from home are doing so and will complete any visits as soon as practically possible.
9. We are monitoring staffing levels and will revise the service offer and priorities as needed to ensure key work can still be maintained. I will ensure to keep all Ward Members updated as necessary. We have provided some staff to CEL to combine resources to deal with the backlog of outstanding void properties. This is being reviewed weekly and the number of outstanding void properties is reducing enabling housing to get these properties re-let.

Bramley / Stanningley and Kirkstall – Zone 14.

10. Since the last report dated February 2020 Wayne Tonks, Team Leader has retired after 14 years' service within the Environmental Enforcement and Cleaner Neighbourhoods Team. As a result of the current recruitment freeze we have not been able to recruit to this position at the moment. The area has been covered by me but this has been difficult to maintain due to my duties across West. It is proposed that Baz Ali who is the current Pudsey, Calverley and Farsley Team Leader will take over the operational day to day management of the area from Monday 9th November. However, I will still be managing the area overall similar to when Wayne was in post. We still have limited Team Leader resource (currently down to 2 TLs and 2 STLs from 6 including Wayne's retirement and 1 other TL on long term sick).
11. Ongoing support is being offered to the Bramley Care Bears group who are doing some fantastic work supporting residents in cutting their gardens. A good relationship has been made since Wayne's retirement and I will continue to offer any support we can.
12. Likewise, the Bramley Wombles group is now up and running with some brilliant work being done as a group and as individuals. Bags and gloves are available to be given to those involved and we should be in a position soon to go back to lending out litter pickers, though I am aware the Ward Members and local businesses have donated a large number of sets.
13. A new batch of purple Litter Free Leeds has been ordered. Whilst we await delivery, we may have to resort to providing our usual white bags.

Armley – Zone 13. Senior Team Leader Chris Chamberlain

14. The Inner West area currently has 3 allocated Environmental Action Officers. A 4th Officer has been allocated to primarily deal with the enforcement of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Armley (which has been extended to include the area of the Hallidays and Park Mounts), Headingley / Hyde Park and Little London and Woodhouse. We have also recruited a Community Warden who will work alongside the Environmental Action Officers in an educational capacity only. Their main role is to educate about proper waste containment and work within communities to try and help them accept responsibility for waste issues. This is on hold at the moment due to the COVID-19 pandemic as the person who has successfully been appointed is a current street cleansing Assistant Chargehand.
15. We are fully staffed within the Inner West for street cleansing except for an Assistant Charge hand and street king sweeper driver within the Armley area. The post was advertised during the initial lockdown period and interviewed for at the end of August. Unfortunately applicant numbers were relatively low and no one was appointable to the Assistant Chargehand role. Despite there being a recruitment freeze we have made a business critical case to continue to appoint to these roles.

16. We are now working more closely with the New Wortley Urban Task Force who operate from the Community Centre. We have provided equipment to them and support them in removing waste. The longer term aim is to identify areas within New Wortley that can be improved and more appropriately used.
17. The Love Where You Live project has been completed on Back Nunnington Street with 2 other streets within the area being identified to next work on. The purpose of this project is to work with residents to improve their area through community interaction and includes planting, murals and general clean ups. A new community board will be installed over the coming weeks.
18. Some enforcement activity is still reduced such as the suspension of interviews under caution as ongoing arrangements are being sought for a suitable COVID-19 secure process and room. Inspections and visits are still being undertaken. Environmental Action Officers are still working remotely from home but are visiting the office regularly and are in contact with each other and the Team Leaders.

De-leafing

19. The programme has started as expected. Once again we have staff from Continental Landscapes to assist our sweepers. This has worked well previously and we will be following a similar program as previous years where Continental and the main road sweepers will be used in the heavy leaf fall and main arterial routes. Zonal teams along with street kings will be used in estates and other areas not covered by the main de-leafing team. The Armley de-leafing maps are similar to last year but Bramley maps have been added to as there were several areas missing. Team Leaders will be providing regular updates on de-leafing by email throughout this work.

Community Safety: Champion Cllr K Ritchie – update from Scott Lobsiger (LASBT)

20. Currently 77 cases active in Inner West

Armley – 29
Bramley & Stanningley – 22
Kirkstall – 26

21. Most predominant case is 'Drug/Substance misuse/dealing' 8 in Armley, 1 Bramley & Stanningley & 5 in Kirkstall. We are still working on tower block issues in Armley and in Kirkstall.
22. Noise we have 13 in total, 5 of these are in the Kirkstall boundary which again a number of these will be attributed to the student population. The highest number is currently in Armley ward with 6.
23. Threats/Actual violence is at 4 in Armley, 3 in Bramley & Stanningley and 4 in Kirkstall.

24. Hate crime is at 7 in total, all race. There are 2 in Armley, 2 in Bramley & Stanningley & 3 in Kirkstall.

Armley

25. The Closure order is still in place on Burnsall Gardens as well as the Closure order on the Wythers estate. LASBT currently working with a problematic family who are causing significant issues in the Armley area and surrounding. Also liaising with police around a number of drug related cases and also one involving firearms. A number of youth group related issues are ongoing in the Armley area, particularly around the heights.

Bramley & Stanningley

26. A number of youth related cases that are still ongoing with LASBT. There are also a number of linked cases currently within this ward. It is a very problematic neighbour dispute the issue that is still ongoing.

Kirkstall

27. Ongoing work by LASBT at Queenswood Heights block as well as recent injunctions have been sought after. A number of closures have also been obtained in the area.

Health and Wellbeing & Adult Social Care: Champion Cllr L Cunningham & Cllr F Venner, Update from Jon Hindley

28. During the pandemic as you would expect many of the Public Health commissioned have been re-purposed to run the ward hubs to support citizens during the crisis.

29. As you will be aware there have been some small clusters of cases of Covid across the city in Harehills and Kirkstall. Rapid street outreach teams have been deployed to door knock, speak to concerned local residents and leaflet effected areas. These operations have been very successful in terms of engagement and communication of key messages to our citizens. This Public Health work is ongoing.

Kirkstall Covid Case Cluster Outreach Response.

30. The response to this cluster of coronavirus cases from local Better Together providers Barca and our excellent volunteers was superb. They mobilised quickly and effectively to make local people aware of the rise in cases in their area and how they could prevent infection and to advertise the mobile testing unit at Kirkstall leisure centre. Many local streets were door knocked and leafleted with great impact. Public Health officers went out on street outreach with the volunteers.

Door Knocking in LS4

Leafleted Households: 578

Households spoken to: 281

Shops: 6

31. Please note: should you require further information there are two brief and informal field note reports available describing the outreach from the provider's and from a LCC Public Health perspective. Please contact Jonathan.Hindley@leeds.gov.uk should you require a copy.
32. Protecting and supporting vulnerable citizens experiencing suicidal thoughts and the rapid training of volunteers in suicide prevention training.
33. As you can appreciate the scope and quantity of Public Health work by the council across the city during the coronavirus pandemic has been immense. The council is very appreciative of the massive amount of work of the cities' superb volunteers, third sector organisations and partners. The city owes them a huge debt of gratitude.
34. One of the challenging and upsetting tasks when the support system was put in place until other resources (RUOK helpline) came on line was when volunteers received calls from residents who were harming themselves and experiencing suicidal thoughts. One of the many pieces of work Public Health put in place was the rapid on line training of volunteers and partners in suicide prevention.
35. Full Training:
https://www.relias.co.uk/hubfs/ZSACourse4/story_html5.html
36. Micro Course
https://www.relias.co.uk/hubfs/ZSAMicroCourse/story_html5.html
37. USE THESE RESOURCES:
<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/phrc/current-awareness/suicide-prevention>

Community Engagement: Social Media

38. **Appendix 1**, provides information on posts and details recent social media activity for the Inner West Community Committee Facebook page & Covid-19 ward pages.

Town Centres Update – Update from Pete Mudge

39. Armley: Town Street and Armley Town Centre have new shops opening and about to open including Leon's Café selling snacks and a chance to sit down for a well-earned

rest half way along the high street. The owner of the former clinic at the junction with Theaker Lane has contacted the Council about beginning the creation of new housing and discussions are also underway about a post-covid performance area. Street drinking has been taken back to its pre Covid levels when it was at the lowest for many years and a clampdown is underway on drug prevalence meaning it is reducing by the day. They vital thing from now on is for the public and community to use their local shopping area which will result in ever less anti-social behaviour.

40. The majority of shops and businesses in Leeds are outside the city centre. Currently footfall is being retained in district centres and a lot of neighbourhood centres co-ordination work and information sharing is underway to help the centres remain vibrant through ongoing shopping and awareness of opportunities. Weekly updates on government grants and advice are circulated to businesses and the Town Team chairs and appropriate help is provided to all business requests.

41. Currently as in Armley town centre is being combatted - though the drugs problem remains a major concern for residents and businesses. The sadness is that by the start of this year the business area was making some real progress and businesses were preparing for the best VE Celebrations in any district. But of course that and the planned monthly privately funded street entertainments and much more besides was scuppered by Covid-19. Armley is getting back on its feet, there are 13 empty units but landlords have indicated 6 will soon be taken by new tenants as there is still interest in new businesses opening in the town. The owner of the former Armley clinic has also told the Council he is seeking permission from the Council to enable him to get on with building flats on the site.

42. Discussions are underway to encourage colleagues in Public Health, Economic Development, Highways, City Centre Management, Regeneration, Carbon Reduction, Community Safety and Planning to have a Zoom meeting with Communities possibly monthly to try and get a joined up approach to future opportunities and welfare for district centres. For specific wards it would also be helpful to discuss ideas with Ward Members, Cleaner Neighbourhoods, WYCA and Town Team chairs. Currently this is only an idea in discussion but hopefully there will be more news in time for the next roundup.

Updates from Key Services

Community Hubs – Update from Tom Booth

Armley

43. Has now reopened 26th October 2020 with controlled entry and a Covid-secure system of browsing in place. With eight public computers for use by Jobshop customers, bookable through the Library Enquires telephone line (0113 378 5005) for 45 minute

slots. Similarly socially-distanced support to provide residents support applying for work, completing job applications, creating and updating CVs.

44. New Wortley weekly surgery has relaunched as a 'virtual surgery', every Friday morning delivered by a Senior Customer Service Officer through Zoom, dealing with Council enquiries and signposting where appropriate. Furthermore Summer Healthy Holiday provision has helped successfully provide a large cohort of Armley and LS12 children with a healthy, nutritious weekly food hamper and activities to do through the holidays.
45. October Healthy Holiday provision has seen a further 45 children provided with a food hamper and October half term activities, with a further 15 children in the Armley area referred in who are from households seeking asylum or who are refugees. BARCA Leeds has also provided through the Hub Healthy Holiday provision Covid-19 bags for all households referred in including sanitizer, hand wipes and reusable mask for families.
46. The Community Hub remains open, in a socially-distanced, controlled access way dealing with Council enquires and referring in for telephone appointments for longer, more in-depth enquiries. Leeds Credit Union also remains open, dealing with customer needs. The Community Hub has been working alongside an Employment & Skills to deliver a 'Developing You' course. While originally planned for a face-to-face delivery, this has been arranged to be delivered remotely.
47. The Community Hub has referred in large numbers of Jobshop customers and acts as collection point for iPads, loaned by Learning Partnerships, for customers who do not have access to the internet at home. The Community hub has also participated in the Armley Halloween Pumpkin Trail, this is to be delivered by a Customer Service Assistant and to be placed on Facebook.
48. A Project Development Worker has been appointed, supporting partnership building with local TSOs and other stakeholders. As a result of this an Armley Social Coffee Group has been established, running sessions Zoom and facilitated by the Project Development Worker. Likewise A number of other projects in progress which will appear in later updates.

Bramley

49. Has now reopened to the public with controlled entry and a Covid-secure system of browsing in place. While the number of customers able to access the building is lower, we are able to offer a library browsing, Order & Collect library material, Public PC use and printing and certain Customer Service Enquiries. Again, as part of the wider Healthy Holiday scheme, Bramley was a site located in an area of referral, with 30 referrals being from LS13 postcodes.

Kirkstall

50. Has now reopened to the public on 17th September 2020 with controlled entry and a Covid-secure system of browsing in place and limited number of residents using the building at a time. Offering two public-access computers which are bookable for 45 minute slots by calling the Library Enquires telephone line (0113 378 5005) Partnership working has introduced a new Officer at BARCA to HAVA who have recently set up a socially-distanced walking group on the Hawksworth Estate.

Housing Leeds – Update from Paul Hodges & Paul Densley

Walkabouts

51. There were no walkabouts completed during the last 6 months, due to Covid-19, now that we have task based Risk Assessment finalized and staff are able to undertake this function We have only recently remobilized our walkabouts and therefore will resume our full schedule with no more than one attendee in addition to the housing officer, from November, 2020.

52. We are resuming our stage 2 fire safety checks, and block inspections

Universal Credit

53. The Inner West area have seen a substantial increase in the number of people who are claiming Universal Credit. The figures below have been taken from September's dashboard.

Armley

54. 937 Cases (2nd most in the city)

Bramley

55. 945 Cases (most cases in the city)

Kirkstall

56. 628 Cases (10th most in the city)

57. Total Number of cases for the city = **14,061**.

Good News Stories

Armley

58. In Armley Grounds maintenance has continued during lockdown with few interruptions. We have had contact with 243 tenants who are aged over 70+ offered them support, advice and assistance, for example with food parcels when lockdown started on 23rd March. Since then we have offered similar support for tenants in the age groups 60 to 69 and we have spoken to 203 residents.

Bramley

59. Bramley have been able to refer to a locally based charity (Bramley Care Bears) to help with the gardens of vulnerable tenants whilst the city wide vulnerable gardening service wasn't able to operate. They continue to operate in partnership with the Cleaner Neighbourhood Team who support them by removing waste, and by the local Housing Office who confirm customer's circumstances and refer them to the charity. Grounds maintenance has continued during lockdown with few interruptions.

60. From 1st March to 1st November, 348 Customers who are new claimants to Universal Credit have been assisted with their claim and contacted so that we can offer advice and support. Bramley now has the largest number of live claims of any office in the city.

Kirkstall

61. In Kirkstall Grounds maintenance has continued during lockdown with few interruptions.

62. From 1st March to 1st of September we have called all new claimants to Universal Credit, we have assisted them with their claim and offered advice and support.

63. We have had contact with 352 tenants who are aged over 70+ offered them support, advice and assistance, for example with food parcels when lockdown started on 23rd March. Since then we have offered similar support for tenants in the age groups 60 to 69 and we have spoken to 163 residents.

64. The LEODIS team's involvement is now coming to an end at Queenswood Heights and the exit survey has provided some positive results. In total, 78% of tenants felt that the joint approach to the ASB has improved the block and the ASB has got better, and agreed that there is less anti-social behaviour.

Staffing Update

65. Overall we working to a series of risk assessment that authorise us undertaking specific activities, and also personal risk assessments that assess whether the individual is at risk. Most notably we don't yet have risk assessments for returning to the office, and the arrangement for printing letters are difficult. Some officers who are in High Risk categories won't be working in the community but we have arrangements in place so that officers are covering different aspects of each other's workloads. Housing Assistants are contributing to the Housing Officers work most notably by completing Annual Home Contacts.

Other Area Updates

66. Estate visits are taking place and are not limited to; Tenancy breaches, estate inspections, arrears visits and block inspections. We have just started undertaking Mutual Exchanges where the surveyor is able to attend over threshold and have also resumed the stage 2 fire safety checks and block inspections.

Update on Anti-Social Behaviour

67. Since lockdown we have seen an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour, especially noise nuisance due to the main reason of people of living next door to each other 24/7. Joint working between Housing Leeds, LASBT and the Police is still continuing to help resolve some of the Anti-social Behavior residents are experiencing.

Inner West HAP – November 2020

68. When lockdown was imposed we introduced a Low Value Application Form for bids under £500. This form is much simpler than the standard application and was developed to encourage smaller groups or individuals to deliver small scale projects that would go some way to addressing some of the issues people were facing such as accessing food, isolation and inactivity. Details of the new form were shared with members directly via email and with partners and stakeholders through meetings and phone conversations. The Low Value Application Form will continue to be part of our offer for the foreseeable future so please continue to promote this as a funding opportunity.

69. Since the last update a total of 26 projects have been submitted, with now a total of 16 approved. 9 of the approved bids (equating to £6,305.85) relate to projects for Covid-19 activities.

70.

Budget for 2020/21	£54,532.86	
Carry Forward from 2019/20	£11,494.85	
TOTAL 2020/21 BUDGET	£66.027.71	

Approved Budget Spend 2020/21	£21,757.24.	
Available Budget	£44,270.47.	

HAP	Number of projects submitted	Number of projects approved	Amount Committed by Panel	% committed
Inner West Total	26	16	£21,757.24	32.95%

71. Bids Approved since last update for 2020/21

Address/Who	Scheme	Amount Awarded by HAP
Kirkstall	Argie Avenue Waste	£7,740
Armley	Theaker Lane Bins	£1,000
Armley	Armley Raised Beds	£500
B&S	Bramley Raised Beds	£500
B&S	Bramley Care Bears Boots	£375
Armley	NWCA Urban Task Force	£4,000
B&S	Bramley Wombles	£293.40

Corporate Considerations

Consultation and Engagement

72. The Community Committee has, where applicable, been consulted on information detailed within the report.

Equality and Diversity/Cohesion and Integration

73. All work that the Communities Team are involved in is assessed in relation to Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration. In addition, the Communities Team ensures that the wellbeing process for funding of projects complies with all relevant policies and legislation.

Council Polices and City Priorities

74. Projects that the Communities Team are involved in are assessed to ensure that they are in line with Council and City priorities as set out in the following documents:

1. Vision for Leeds 2011 – 30
2. Best City Plan
3. Health and Wellbeing City Priorities Plan
4. Children and Young People's Plan
5. Safer and Stronger Communities Plan
6. Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy

Resources and Value for Money

75. Aligning the distribution of community wellbeing funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

76. There are no legal implications or access to information issues. This report is not subject to call in.

Risk Management

77. Risk implications and mitigation are considered on all projects and wellbeing applications. Projects are assessed to ensure that applicants are able to deliver the intended benefits.

Conclusions

78. The report provides up to date information on key areas of work for the Community Committee.

Recommendations

79. The Community Committee is asked to note the content of the report and comment as appropriate.

Background documents¹

80. None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly, this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.