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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

DISTRICT COMMITTEE - BATLEY AND SPEN

Thursday 21st January 2016

Present: Councillor Gwen Lowe (Chair)
Councillors M Akhtar, H Mayet, S Pandor, V Kendrick,
J Lawson, S Alvy, D Hall, S Hall, L Holmes, A Pinnock,
K Pinnock, D Sheard, E Smaje and A Stubley

Apologies: M O'Neill, R Light and A Palfreeman

In attendance:

1 Welcomes and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and committee members introduced themselves.

The committee held a minute silence in tribute to former Councillor Peter O'Neill.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 2 December 2015 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

Councillor David Sheard declared an 'other' interest in the 'mobile shelving for Heckmondwike Library' project at item 11 in the Budget Report, as a member of Friends of Heckmondwike Library.

4 Admission of the public

RESOLVED – That all items were for consideration in public.

5 Deputations / Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

Responses were given to the following questions:-

- (a) Liversedge Football Club had been unable to play since October due to drainage issues. Other sports teams would be similarly affected. Was there anything that could be done?

It had been exceptionally wet and pitches right across Kirklees were affected unfortunately. Drainage schemes were expensive so were unlikely. Rob Dalby welcomed further discussion with affected groups.

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A suggestion put forward by a community group representative was willow tree planting.

- (b) Was there an intention to debate the draft Local Plan at a district committee Meeting?

The Local Plan was determined by the Council. Residents were encouraged to submit all responses directly through the consultation process by the deadline of 2 February 2016.

7 Neighbourhood Policing

Inspector Rauf outlined the staffing structure across the district, and the role of the Police Community Support Officers which included dealing with anti-social behaviour, and hate crime, linking with the Safer Communities Officer and problem solving.

Traffic Officers are deployed from Wakefield if needed.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team engaged with the public as much as possible within the resources available.

Inspector Rauf gave an update on current crime trends, highlighting that burglary had reduced.

Rates of theft from motor vehicles, shed break in's, and theft from commercial premises had not reduced. Patrols were being made in the areas affected and officers were working closely with Bradford Police.

Some arrests had been made with a spate of home invasion burglaries and further arrests were anticipated.

Officers were offering advice on crime prevention and safeguarding of commercial premises. Arrests had been made and investigations were ongoing.

A question and answer session followed relating to:-

- (a) Cross border crime and the police use of automatic number plate recognition and joint working arrangements with Bradford Police.
- (b) The issue of supermarket promotions being placed near store exits. The Neighbourhood Police Team were advising on crime prevention.
- (c) Home invasion crime and the Police strategy. The Police strategy included use of covert intelligence, closed circuit television, and automated number plate recognition.

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- (d) The Britain First Demonstration. Police liaise with demonstrating groups on their arrangements. Councillors were to be kept informed.
- (e) The Neighbourhood Policing Team ward arrangements were to commence on 15 February 2016. Although Liversedge and Gomersal ward and Cleckheaton ward arrangements were unlike the other wards in the district, cover was flexible and responsive to need.

Inspector Rauf was thanked for his presentation to the committee.

8 Call Handling and Crime Management

Sergeant Andrew Lockwood wished to raise public awareness of the standards that could be expected of Police response times.

The presentation outlined the standards that could be expected for the following categories of call – ‘emergency’, ‘priority’, ‘standard’ and ‘other’.

The criteria for categorising calls, was also explained.

Sergeant Lockwood emphasised that the Police aimed to respond within these time frames but issues such as volume of calls or location of resources could affect the response times.

Sergeant Lockwood defined potential critical incidents, explained issues that affected the deployment of officers and outlined some of the partnership arrangements in place.

The Police appointment system had been changed as missed appointments wasted Police resources. Police Officers may still arrange appointments if necessary.

Sergeant Lockwood invited the public to work with the Police to provide input relating to satisfaction levels or matters of concern.

A question and answer session followed relating to wasted appointments, Kirklees response times, 999 and 101 call logging arrangements, and perception of residents living on Kirklees border.

There was praise for the Neighbourhood Management Group arrangements.

Sergeant Lockwood was thanked for his informative presentation, and congratulated on his recent promotion.

Following the presentation, the committee and members of the public would assist in raising awareness of call handling and crime management.

The standards were made available on the Police website.

9 Grounds Maintenance Service Standards - Greenspaces

Rob Dalby explained the Gold, Silver, Bronze and Natural standards applied to parks and open spaces.

The standards were to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Natural areas still have management – officers were working with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to get the maximum benefits from the Natural areas.

Work was ongoing to increase the influence and activity of friends groups which may release some service capacity.

It was important that the service and groups worked closely together to determine the tasks that could be completed by the service and those best undertaken by friends groups.

Rob Dalby responded to questions and explained that there would be site based management plans in place which would identify works required and how these might be delivered. Groups could be supported in kind but financial support would be more difficult.

Rob Dalby clarified that the report referred to schemes only under his management and not those vested in Housing Services etcetera.

The wet conditions had prevented grass cutting so areas appeared scruffy at present. That would be addressed as soon as possible.

The need for close liaison between Friends of Park groups and the service to ensure planting doesn't create issue with mowing was reiterated.

It was also highlighted by a member of the public that group insurance schemes were available and may be less costly than separate group insurance schemes.

The schedule of schemes and associated standards was endorsed by the committee and Rob Dalby was thanked for his presentation.

10 Estates and Environmental Works Budget

Noreen Beck explained the background to the report coming to the committee and the outcome of voting on proposed schemes at the Batley and Spen Valley Forum held on 3 December 2015.

The schemes highlighted in green were those being presented for approval. Other schemes still required further exploration and funding.

Noreen Beck acknowledged that the timescales to get the green schemes ready for approval had been very tight in order to ensure some allocation of funding this financial year. Future rounds hopefully would not be as tight in timescales.

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Noreen clarified that the intention to cost up other schemes and bring viable schemes, voted on at the next area forum meeting, to the committee for approval.

Consultation was through the area forum. All Councillors were invited to comment and attend.

The committee approved funding from the Estate and Environmental works budget, of all schemes highlighted in green, as set out in the report.

Noreen Beck was thanked for presenting the report.

11 Committee Budget Report

Budget balances were highlighted.

RESOLVED:-

Capital Approved –

Mobile Shelving for Heckmondwike Library - £6,588

Councillor David Sheard declared an 'other' interest as a member of Friends of Heckmondwike Library and did not take part in the decision making.

Revenue Approved –

Kirklees Dementia Action Alliance – development work in Batley and Spen district - £2,500 (£416.66 per ward).

12 Dates of Future Meetings

The next Batley and Spen District Committee meeting takes place on Tuesday 15 March 2016 at 7pm at Batley Town Hall.