

South Local Area Committee

Meeting held 4 July 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillors Simon Clement-Jones (Chair), Richard Shaw (Deputy Chair), Ian Auckland, Steve Ayriss, Nighat Basharat, Alexi Dimond, Marieanne Elliot, Mohammed Mahroof, Maroof Raouf, Sophie Thornton, Paul Turpin and Ibbi Ullah

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**2. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the South Local Area Committee held on 21 March, 2023, and 17 May, 2023, were approved as correct records.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1 The Committee received the following questions from members of the public who had submitted the questions prior to the meeting, and who attended the meeting to raise them:

(a) Simon Duffy

I made a simple proposal that Councillors from each party, officers and interested citizens begin the process of ending loneliness in Sheffield. There are some well-established methods that are very low cost. We could bring in expertise. This is a simple suggestion for action.

Councillor Nighat Basharat thanked Mr Duffy for raising the question, and stated that it was good to have discussions on this issue. She noted that loneliness was a big problem across Sheffield and that it needed more investigation. She added that she would be willing to look into any suggestions that Mr Duffy had. Following the discussion, a member of the South LAC team would contact Mr Duffy to discuss any next steps.

Councillor Simon Clement-Jones, Chair of the Local Area Committee, advised

that an informal meeting of the Committee would soon be taking place, where this issue would be raised, and options considered on how to take it forward.

Councillor Marieanne Elliot also thanked Mr Duffy for raising this issue. She believed that a good place to start was by involving Ward Members and mapping activity already available at ward level.

Councillor Steve Ayris agreed that there was good practice to learn from across all of the South Local Area Committee wards, and that this could be discussed at their next informal meeting. He stated that this issue linked in with the Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, created in 2018 but due to expire in 2024, and would be a good opportunity to refresh the city-wide strategy.

Councillor Ibby Ullah noted that the Age UK website had a postcode search engine that showed differing levels for risk of loneliness. Sharrow was particularly high, and he intended to work with colleagues to help with the challenges.

(b) Isabel O'Leary

Can anyone on this Committee give an update on the Rose Garden Café?

Are Committee members aware that the 10,500 people who signed the petition to save the café along with many other park users past, present and future will not accept demolition as an option?

Have discussions between the relevant people taken place yet for the restoration plan and it's funding? Please bear in mind that the Friends of Graves Park have put in an application for substantial government funding for the purpose of restoring the building and have been given reason to be optimistic they will be successful. Can you reassure me that Sheffield City Council is not being deliberately obstructive but instead is paralysed by bureaucracy?

Councillor Ian Auckland was welcoming of the applications made by the Friends of Grave Park for funding. He noted that the front wall was bowing and had been identified as 'dangerous' and that there were challenges around the solution and cost of this. He added that although several inspections had been undertaken, there were now calls for a full structural engineering survey of the building.

Councillor Mohammed Mahroof explained that there had been conflicting reports around the cost of refurbishment versus the cost of demolition. He believed that costings needed to be fully confirmed before any decision was made. He believed that although there was a difference of opinion, the Council still had responsibility for the building and its grounds.

(c) Isabel O'Leary

At the Charity Trustee Sub-Committee on 25 October, 2022, the Chair of the Friends of Graves Park said the Friends have been waiting for 7 years for permission to extend the arboretum they have created to bring back

more of the Norton Nurseries site to parkland for public use.

This would be at no cost to the Council as the Friends would fund it and do the work. At that meeting in October, the answer given by the Charity Trustee Sub-Committee was that this extension cannot be allowed as "Sheffield City Council needs this area to run operations for Graves Park and the local area".

Councillors on this Committee may not be familiar with the area of Norton Nurseries. I walk regularly into the current arboretum and can look through the fence into the area proposed for the arboretum extension, and often take photographs. I can assure you that apart from the occasional truck bringing waste to put into a skip and a heavy vehicle or two in one corner of the area, it is not used by Sheffield City Council operations. Leaving aside the misuse of Norton Nurseries as a waste transfer site, which may or may not be licenced, does this Committee not agree that someone with a bit of logistical intelligence could certainly work out how to use the space more efficiently, allowing the arboretum to be extended as planned 7 years ago?

Councillor Auckland explained that a licence was not needed for the temporary storage of waste. He added that 'depot modernisation' was being considered with a view to moving out of certain sites and instead, consolidating waste storage at key sites, for example Staniforth Road and Manor Lane. He agreed with the questioner that progress should be made in terms of extending the arboretum.

5.2 The Committee received the following questions from members of the public who attended the meeting to raise them:

(a) Anita Dell, from the office of Louise Hague, MP

What can the Local Area Committee do to make sure that the Low Edges Festival goes ahead this year? What resources and funding are being put into this and what can be done to ensure that it goes ahead every year so that the community doesn't lose this fabulous festival?

Councillor Richard Shaw thanked Anita for the question and stated that, once the news had emerged that the current organisers could not continue with the festival, local Councillors and officers had been in conversation with them in an attempt to provide a 'scaled-down' festival. It was clear that a major event attracting more than 12,000 visitors would not be able to be organised within the remaining timescale. As such, the focus had been on supporting the organisers to provide a smaller event. He noted that this would need to be self-sustaining, and would require new volunteers to replace those who had retired.

Councillor Nighat Basharat noted the benefit to the community of local festivals, and their impact on resident's wellbeing. She hoped that the Local Area Committee could find a way of supporting volunteers.

The Chair noted his thanks to Steven Rich and the festival organising committee, and wished Mr Rich a happy retirement.

(b) Viv Lockwood, Secretary of Banner Cross Neighbourhood Group

Before the election we attended a meeting of London Road traders which had been attended by Tom Finnegan-Smith and Councillor Terry Fox. We were promised that all data collected about emissions would be made available to us, including where the monitoring sites were, what data was collected and on which dates, but we have not received this. Also, Officers advised that the report would be made available for public inspection before the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee meeting. We want to make sure that all data can be interrogated by us and the public in general.

In response, Councillor Shaw noted that he, along with Councillor Auckland, were members of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee, and advised that the agenda and relevant reports were required to be published on the Council's website five clear working days before the meeting took place. Councillor Basharat stated that she had contacted officers to request a public meeting so that residents could ask questions before the Nether Edge Active Neighbourhood report and recommendations were heard at Committee, but had yet to receive a response.

Councillor Paul Turpin noted his concerns about the road safety impact, and the recording of serious injuries/deaths.

Councillor Maroof Raouf understood this to have been an 18-month trial which was shortly due to be reported to the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee, who would vote based on the information provided. He understood that emissions and vehicle data were available via Sheffield City Council officers, and he offered to give Mr Lockwood an overview of the data at the close of the meeting.

Councillor Ullah thanked Mr Lockwood for the work carried out by the Banner Cross Neighbourhood Group, and noted that he had requested an extension of the deadline of the survey, due to some residents having difficulty accessing it due to language and IT barriers. He added that he fully supported a public meeting to ensure that residents were able to scrutinise the report.

Councillor Basharat noted that the meeting referred to by Mr Lockwood had aimed to help residents understand what was happening in their area and provide them with a voice, and agreed that a public meeting would help to give residents more understanding.

Councillor Mahroof was concerned that traffic from one area was being moved to another area and believed that everyone should have the same right to clean air.

Councillor Alexi Dimond noted that it was important to base decisions on evidence, and believed that Active Neighbourhood schemes were an effective way of reducing the risk of accidents on roads.

Councillor Sophie Thornton was of the opinion that it was important to listen to residents lived experiences and understand their concerns. Councillor Shaw agreed, and added that a key objective for the Local Area Committee was to tackle road safety and parking issues.

The Chair, said that an officer response to the questions raised by Viv Lockwood would be requested and shared.

(c) Charlie Khan

I have been having problems for a long time regarding the road I live on in Sharrow, including problems with, children playing football and damaging cars, and narrow footpaths with no room to park. Councillors haven't always turned up and should visit to support us.

The Chair noted that the Local Area Committee team had been working on this issue. He advised Mr Khan to speak to his Ward Councillors.

(d) Mohammad Mahroof, local resident

I live on Sheldon road. In 2017/18 a petition was put to a local councillor about the state of pavements, which was dismissed. Amey came to try and solve this, but were stopped by tree protestors. In 2021 we put a petition together, which was presented in 2022 and was passed to the relevant policy committee. The design won't be finished until March next year, so another winter will pass with no improvement. There will need to be consultation before any improvements are made to pavements. I would like to ask local councillors why this is taking so long.

Councillor Dimond advised that Councillor Raouf had visited the area as a local ward member. He noted that some roads, including Sheldon Road, had not been resurfaced during the key Amey contract period, due to tree protests and the narrow pavements. He agreed that this was taking a long time to resolve, and advised the questioner to contact the Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee with any concerns.

(e) Joy Arnott, Terminus Initiative, Lowedges

We have received concerns from Council house tenants about housing repairs and not being able to report issues. Why have Lowedges and Jordanthorpe housing offices not reopened since the pandemic? At the moment local people have to travel to Newfield Green (Gleadless Valley) or the city centre. Could councillors look into this?

Councillor Basharat said that she understood the difficulties that local residents were facing, and offered to look into Ms Arnott's concerns.

Councillor Shaw noted that he was a Ward Councillor for this area, and that much of his casework related to poor housing. He advised that he had lobbied for the housing offices to remain open, and stated that he would continue to pursue this

issue.

Council Thornton stated that she had posed some questions on this issue for the Full Council meeting due to take place on Wednesday 5 July, 2023. She was concerned that many houses had remained empty and in disrepair since the pandemic, and advised that she would seek an update on housing office closures. The Chair advised that the South LAC Team would contact Housing to request a response to the questions raised.

(f) Samir Khan, local resident

I was part of the Active Neighbourhood discussions, and am concerned that some councillors are more concerned about emissions than accidents. Lots of children crossing Carter Knowle Road are being put at more risk.

The Chair noted the concerns raised.

(g) Mohammad Maroof, local resident

Flytipping on Leyburn Road and parking on Sheldon Road were causing problems. Late at night the pavement is completely blocked. When residents contact Parking Services they say it is a police matter, and the police say it is Parking Services matter. Could you consider a 'yellow box' on this road and can the Local Area Committee do something to speed up this process?

Councillor Basharat advised that she had met with residents to discuss the ongoing issues and was keeping them updated. She stated that she had shared photographs with officers of illegal parking and illegal petrol/oil exchange, which was now being monitored. The advice given was to phone '101' to report the incident when it was happening. There had been a suggestion of adding a 'keep clear' marking to the road. She also noted residents had requested a crossing on Sheldon Road, and that this request had been put forward and was pending a response.

Councillor Dimond added that this was a wider issue affecting much of Sheffield. He believed Sheffield streets were not built to accommodate the increase in number and size of cars in the last few decades. He added that the blocking of a highway was a police matter. He noted the 'Operation Park Safe Sheffield North West trial' which gave guidance on reporting of parking matters, and he hoped that this could be extended across the city. He believed that the problem of pavement parking required action from Central Government.

5.3 At this point in the meeting, Councillor Fran Belbin, Deputy Leader of the Council was invited to introduce herself. She explained that as Chair of the Governance Committee, she was committed to looking at how democratic engagement could be improved across the Council, and noted that Local Area Committees were one avenue for this. She added that she would like the public to have more say in decision-making and helping to create solutions and good neighbourhoods. She advised that she would be visiting other Local Area Committee meetings to

discover the needs of different communities, and she welcomed comments and ideas for involving residents in decision-making.

5.4 The Chair thanked those present for their attendance at the meeting.

## **6. SHEFFIELD RACE EQUALITY COMMISSION - FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS**

6.1 The Committee received a presentation from Homaira Ibrahim, Equalities and Engagement Officer.

6.2 Ms Ibrahim gave a brief overview of the Race Equality Commission recommendations and an update on the whole-city commitment. She explained that it was now time to reflect on the findings and that practice would be progressive so as to embed an anti-racist ethos in all areas of work. She advised that the Race Equality Commission had been commissioned in 2021, and that it was a city-wide commission affecting all organisations across Sheffield. It had an independent Chair and 24 Commissioners, and had heard written and oral evidence of lived experiences of racial disparities across Sheffield. Following this, the Commission had made recommendations and prioritised six areas of focus. She advised that the full report was available on the Sheffield City Council website, and listed all of the recommendations and individual targets. The evidence had found Sheffield to be a racist city; change was needed, and partners across the city would be held accountable through the Legacy Group, which had the responsibility of embedding practice systemically to enable Sheffield to become an anti-racist city within three years. The Sheffield City Partnership Board, community, and anchor institutions were working together in order to have a working model in place by October 2023. She explained that the south of the city had a diverse population in terms of age and ethnicity, with many languages, cultures, religions and beliefs, and that it was important to work in collaboration and to share good practice and learning from communities. She noted that information was available from the Equalities team to support individuals and organisations to share the message and to ensure anti-racist practice and service delivery.

6.3 Councillor Maroof Raouf expressed concern over how seriously the Leadership of Sheffield City Council had viewed this issue, and was disappointed that the Legacy Group had not yet been set up.

6.4 Councillor Ibbly Ullah stated that he had received feedback that suggested that individuals and organisations had not noticed any change following the Race Equality Commission report, and he undertook to help with this change.

6.5 In response to a question from a member of the public, Ms Ibrahim explained that the Race Equality Commission report had identified major inequalities within education, and that it was important for issues to be owned, whether by individual academies and their governors, or via Sheffield City Council. The education department had been tasked to identify their individual targets. She noted that research had shown that children's perceptions of race started as early as age two, and a collective approach was needed to realise the benefits of getting into

that space.

- 6.6 A public questioner asked how community organisations could be strengthened and given more powers and resources to address race inequalities within Sheffield, and queried whether Community Infrastructure Levy monies could be used to address the issues that have been raised.
- 6.7 Councillor Alexi Dimond also expressed disappointment that the Legacy Group had not yet been set up, and noted the hard work of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities with limited resources. He believed that there was structural racism across the city, including within education and policing. He believed that improvements could be made in accessibility of Council services for those who did not speak English as a first language. He hoped that Local Area Committees could use resources and make sure that racism was taken seriously.
- 6.8 Councillor Mohammed Mahroof stated that he had recently been to a meeting involving around 20 young people from different minority communities who felt that no progress was being made and that they were still facing barriers that he had faced as a child. He noted challenges that teachers faced in 'calling out' issues, and believed that Sheffield City Council had a responsibility for this and should be held accountable.
- 6.9 Councillor Paul Turpin expressed his disappointment that recommendations from the Race Equality Commission report had not yet been implemented, and believed that it was important for Sheffield City Council and its partners to be actively anti-racist in order to make positive changes. He noted that the diversity of the city was not represented at senior level within Sheffield City Council.
- 6.10 Councillor Raouf added that he had first-hand experience of working within schools in Sheffield, and felt that school staffing and governance was not representative and that this had led to a lack of understanding of children's heritage and their lives outside of school. He stated that BAME histories should be embedded into school curriculums.
- 6.11 In response to three verbal questions around feedback and support within communities, Ms Ibrahim welcomed feedback regarding lived experiences and advised that the Equalities team could be contacted to assist with support and education.
- 6.12 The Committee thanked Ms Ibrahim for attending the meeting.

## **7. SOUTH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2023-24**

- 7.1 The Local Area Committee received an update from Diane Owens, South Local Area Committee Manager. She referred to the 'South Local Area Committee Budget 2023-24' report which included an overview of how the budget for the financial year 2022 to 2023 had been allocated. During the municipal year 2022-2023, updates on spending had been given at the Local Area Committee meetings. She advised that £31,930 had been carried forward to the 2023-2024 financial year and outlined the projects this has been allocated to. Ms Owens



explained that an additional £100,000 had been allocated to the Local Area Committee for 2023-24 and confirmed that the Committee intended to reflect on the Community Plan and allocate spending in line with this. Members had been speaking to residents and communities and the intention was to reflect and identify any gaps before the next meeting.

7.2 RESOLVED: That the South Local Area Committee:

- (a) notes the expenditure against the £100,000 budget to address local priorities in the South LAC in 2022/23, and the carry forward of £31,930 into 2023/24, which is allocated to specific projects; and
- (b) notes the 2023/24 South LAC budget and next steps in terms of reflecting on the South LAC Community Plan and identifying priorities.

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