

South East Local Area Committee

Meeting held 28 June 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Karen McGowan (Chair), Glynis Chapman, Kurtis Crossland, Tony Downing, Ian Horner, Alison Norris, Mick Rooney, Gail Smith and Ann Woolhouse

1. WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the running order for the agenda. The Chair advised that the formal business of apologies, declarations of interest and minutes of the last meeting would be dealt with first.
- 1.2 The agenda had changed slightly to include two extra updates. Following the formal business there would be an item on more information about members of the Local Area Committee, then public questions and answers and then the two extra updates regarding projects identified in the community plan 2022/23 and feedback and presentation on the recent volunteer day.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 An apology had been received by Councillor Denise Fox.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 There were no interests declared at the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 22nd March 2023 and 17th May 2023 were approved as a correct record.

6. MEET THE COUNCILLORS

- 6.1 Members of the Committee introduced themselves individually to the meeting and gave some background to who they were and what wards they covered.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

- 7.1 The committee received two questions in advance of the meeting and also two people were in attendance via online remote connection.

7.2 Question - Gill Green (online) firstly gave some context around her written question.

As some of you may recall, I attended the recent SE LAC meeting via Zoom but was only allowed enough time to raise part of my question which I sent to you prior to the meeting. As a result, the ensuing discussion in the room focussed on volunteer litter picking in the area rather than the problem areas that I highlighted in my email to you and in my question to the LAC i.e. hedgerows and verges at the side of the A57, Bochum Parkway, Donetsk Way see my email to you all (below). I did, however, appreciate Councillor Smith's comment to the meeting that my question was an attempt to target littering of our highways and that the Council should do something about the problem of littering from vehicles. Unfortunately, unfairly and much to my annoyance, as a resident who was attending the meeting virtually, I was not given the opportunity for a follow up comment or question. I was also disappointed with the rather fatalistic and patronising response to my question about littering from vehicles given by Amey's representative at the meeting. I felt that the attitude within Amey and amongst some councillors and officers is that litter collection is a waste of time because (to quote Amey's representative) "it's all about education" and "...we'll never stop people throwing litter, it's a waste of time picking it up because it's as bad again the next day." Amey's representative clearly did not appreciate that not all residents are able to take part in volunteer litter-picking or attend meetings in person to challenge their response. I found her comments were disrespectful, discriminatory and lacked an awareness of the Council's inclusivity policy and I would like this to be fed back to Amey.

I feel quite strongly that throwing litter is at its best, low-level anti-social behaviour, and that if it's left unchecked and unchallenged, contributes to the decline of the whole neighbourhood and city. It is also a criminal offence under the Cleaner Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Littering from vehicles is also an offence under Rule 147 of the Highway Code. Could I also refer you to the "Broken Windows Theory" which states:

The basic idea for the Broken Windows theory is that any kind of urban blight – a broken window, graffitied walls, rubbish on the streets, etc. – does no harm to a neighbourhood if it is immediately remedied. However, if left untended, it signifies a lack of care in the community, the kind of environment in which it is acceptable for residents to relinquish any notions of concern. And while the initial damage and disrepair is physical, the next stage is psychological. That is, if it becomes acceptable for people to litter and vandalise at will, why not walk around drunk, or beg for money, or mug others for it? Why follow any kind of rules at all? In sum, the Broken Windows theory postulates that the smallest symptoms can lead to the greatest crimes.

Because I feel strongly about how littering damages the environment (causes pollution, wildfires), wildlife and society, not to mention the cost to taxpayers of paying Amey to collect it, I have been in contact with Andrew Kemp, the CEO of Littercamai . He advises me that in 2022 the Chair of the Waste and Street Scene Policy Cttee stated that "there would not be enough offences to justify the expense of the system".

Please could the SELAC devote some of its resources towards asking the

Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee to re-consider trialling the use of Littercams on our most littered highways, and on what basis and in which area of Sheffield was it considered to not be cost-effective?

Regards

The Chair thanked Gill for her question and advised that she would get a full response to her in writing to her question and the additional points raised.

Councillor Rooney commented on the service provide by AMEY and that it should not be advocated for the public to have to litter pick on a busy main road. AMEY had a responsibility to do this. Councillor Rooney asked if the responsibilities of AMEY could be put on the LAC webpages and also who the public should contact in case of flooding.

Councillor Horner advised that the litter pickers in Beighton did an amazing job, but AMEY were responsible for keeping the City clean and fulfilling its contract.

Councillor Smith suggested that AMEY be invited along to answer questions at the LAC on issues of grass cutting. It was advised that a higher management person from AMEY should attend.

Question – Ken (Owlthorpe Litter Pickers) – Was the Community Payback Scheme still in place? The probation service picked this up. The Chair advised that they could be invited to litter pick in the SE area.

The Chair advised that Dave Cronshaw had submitted a series of questions on various issues from burglaries and thefts to blue bins, in advance of the meeting.

Mr Cronshaw was unfortunately not in attendance but would be provided with a written response. These would be published on the website.

Question (unknown) – Can the outcomes of the South East LAC priorities be demonstrated before moving on to new priorities? Assurance were given that these outcomes would be demonstrated and were looking at benchmarks. An update would be given later on the agenda.

Question (unknown) – In relation to burglaries and theft, what area was this in relation to as there was a lot of concerns over this around the area where they lived. Is there any opportunity for a local neighbourhood team to attend these meetings? It was advised that the Police were invited to the meeting but were not in attendance on this occasion.

Councillor Horner advised that the Police had limited resources and only had six officers in the Moss Way area.

Councillor Norris advised that the Police were working really hard to get more officers from September, but the more issues that were reported online, the better. It would help the argument for more resource.

Councillor Downing had a briefing with the Police Crime Commissioner, and they were recruiting more Police Officers, but it took three years to get them on the streets.

Councillor Smith mentioned that a lot was being said in community online groups, but had it been reported?

Councillor Rooney advised that recording of crimes was important for the allocation of officer resourcing, some areas had high crime rates and it needed debating whether SE area was getting the right allocation.

The Chair advised that a link would be sent to all community groups on how to report crime.

Jayne Mason (Hybrid) – As an admin of a neighbourhood watch group, she saw a general apathy for reporting crime. Everything should be reported, if it was important enough to put on social media, then it should be reported to the police.

Question (Unknown) – Living on the boarder of Sheffield in North East Derbyshire, she often saw litter and anti-social behaviour from Sheffield and reported this to Derbyshire. She was interested to know how information was shared between Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Police? The Chair advised that she did not know, but had the contacts to ask how the information was shared between forces.

8. UPDATE ON PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN THE COMMUNITY PLAN 2022/23

8.1 The Committee received an update on the Community Plan for South East Area. Jayne Foulds, LAC Manager gave a presentation that covered:

- Transport and Highways
- Environmental
- Crime and Community Safety
- Youth Provision
- Fly Tipping

It was advised that £100k had been allocated to all priorities. Additional funding had been received for fly tipping target hardening provision - £57k and Youth Provision - £10k.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee notes the information reported as part of the presentation.

9. FEEDBACK AND PRESENTATION ON VOLUNTEER DAY

9.1 The committee considered a presentation from Clare Knott, LAC Officer which updated members of the Volunteer Fayre Day that took place at Crystal Peaks Shopping Centre on Friday 16th June 2023.

- 9.2 Volunteers were in attendance to promote awareness of their groups to the public. It was identified at the last committee that there was a problem of gaining new volunteers and members since the pandemic and the period where so many groups and activities had to close.
- 9.3 Local Councillors were in attendance as well as representatives from Voluntary Action Sheffield and South Yorkshire Funding and Advice Bureau.
- 9.4 The event was well attended, and 100% of the volunteers gave feedback after the event and said it was useful in promoting their group.
- 9.5 **RESOLVED:** that the committee notes the update.
- 10. DISCUSSION SESSION AND REVIEW OF SOUTH EAST LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE PRIORITIES**
- 10.1 The meeting moved to a public participation session to discuss the review of the South East Local Area Committee priorities.
- 11. FEEDBACK FROM THE DISCUSSION SESSION**
- 11.1 Feedback was shared amongst the discussion groups.

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