

South Local Area Committee

Meeting held 28 November 2023

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Alexi Dimond, Maroof Raouf and Sophie Thornton.

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. GREENSPACE, BIODIVERSITY AND FOOD GROWING

4.1 The panel discussion was introduced by Councillor Marianne Elliot who advised that the topic under discussion would be food, and sustainable food systems. She introduced the panel who were Gareth Roberts and Fran Halsall of Regather, Jock Stevenson of Gleadless Valley Food Bank and James Musgrave of Sheffield City Council Allotments Service.

4.2 Jock Stevenson stated that demand at Gleadless Valley Food Bank had risen recently, and food donations could not keep up with demand so food had to be purchased.

The Food Bank which was in an area of high deprivation, had a variety of customers, some of whom experienced difficulties with their mental health. Mr Stevenson advised that contrary to popular myth the customers were not people who were earning good wages, they were those struggling to make ends meet and were often people awaiting benefits. He hoped that there would be a time eventually when the Food Bank was no longer needed.

There were 35 volunteers who helped to run the Food Bank, most of whom had previously been customers.

4.3 A presentation entitled "Building a Sustainable Food Future in South Sheffield, Gleadless Valley and Moss Valley", subsequently published on the Council's

website, was delivered by Gareth Roberts and Fran Halsall of Regather.

The presentation set out the cooperative and sustainable systems used by the company which produced, sold and delivered organic food in Sheffield.

- 4.4 A presentation, entitled “The Allotments Service” subsequently published on the Council’s website was delivered by James Musgrave of Sheffield City Council Allotments Service. This outlined the role of the Service and gave details of the supply and waiting list of allotments in Sheffield.
- 4.5 A question and answer session with panellists followed, where the following additional information was provided;

James Musgrave advised that:

- The Allotments Service was working with colleagues in the Parks and Countryside Team to find new sites and was undertaking community consultation for areas including Totley Brook and Graves Park.
- The Urban Nature Parks scheme could potentially be re-started to look for further sites within parks.
- There were allotment plots which were currently unlettable, but which could be bought back into use.
- Climate Change mitigation schemes for Planning developments could include allotments.

Gareth Roberts advised that:

- Regather were looking at the disused Newfield Playground for food production. The intention was for the school to grow fruit trees. This would help to address the national horticultural skills crisis. The glass houses, which had been state of the art at the time they were built, would be brought back into use.
- Making organic food produced in Sheffield affordable and accessible for all rather than a privileged few was a question which did not have a single answer but was what Regather was aiming to achieve. A significant barrier to this was the current system for changing uses of land. Local food production at scale was the aim. Questions needed to be asked about the role of supermarkets and how to compete with them. It was important to build local economic stability and it was household income that was the most important factor in this.
- It was also important to consider the market and how it currently operates e.g. how to address and coordinate supermarket food waste. A centralised food distribution system might not be what people really wanted.
- The purpose of growing organic rather than conventionally farmed food was to support nature.
- The Council’s waste collection contract with Veolia currently prevented food waste collection. This offered an opportunity to establish infrastructure in the city to process food waste locally and repurpose it for horticulture and agriculture thus creating local jobs, rather than contracting the process out to a multi-national.

Jock Stevenson advised that:

- Food Bank customers did not have the resources to participate in Regather services or Allotments. He believed that making land available in the local area and enabling people to informally tend it themselves was an alternative. This would teach people how to provide for themselves.
- In his view the City Council could do more to provide land for food production and there was currently too much red tape.

Points raised by members of the public in attendance included that:

- It was problems in the economic system that brought people to food banks, not problems in the food production system. Many people did not have access to cooking facilities- e.g. they might only have a kettle, so growing more food locally would not necessarily stop people going to food banks.
- Not everybody was able to cook with raw ingredients or able to cope with the work and planning involved. Additionally, they may not be able to afford the necessary gas/electric.
- Many refugees and immigrants were struggling in addition to local people.
- Allotment holders could produce food for people in need, but this would require coordination and then feedback as to of how the produce had been used. A representative from Food Works offered to assist with this.
- Could temporary use of land which was waiting to be developed, for food production, be addressed in the council's Local Plan?

Councillor Mohammed Mahroof stated that huge swathes of land were owned by the City Council and the priority order of how it was used needed to be addressed. He would talk to the Council's Property Department about potentially available sites. He added that under legislation, if a group of people declare that they want allotments the Local Authority has a duty to address this.

4.6 Councillor Marianne Elliot thanked the panellists.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 The minutes of the previous meeting of the 12th October 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

5.2 It was also noted that the version of the minutes that had been published had omitted the section confirming that the minutes of the meeting of the 4th July 2023 had been approved, so this had been amended.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

6.1 The Committee received the following questions from members of the public who had submitted questions prior to the meeting:

(a) David Bower

"I would like to ask a written question for the LAC South Councillors.

Will the council consider extending the period of the Green Bin collection since many trees have still not shed their leaves?

I understand Rotherham cover the full year however like with the Glyphosate trial perhaps you could trial this possibly with the option to pay more for the extended period if necessary."

The Chair, Simon Clement Jones, advised that this would be raised with the relevant Council committee and a written answer provided.

(b) Andrew Benson

1. *"Sheffield FC is moving to Meadowhead in 25-26. The roundabout there is not fit for purpose now. It desperately needs traffic lights and will certainly need them from when Sheffield FC arrives. Have you any plans?"*

Members advised that the plans only came out recently regarding Sheffield FC and this was one of the issues which would need to be considered alongside others such as traffic, parking and road safety. There were no current plans for a roundabout.

The A61 project was looking at bus times between Meadowhead and Heeley Bottom and there would be a public consultation soon. This and the plans for SFC would be discussed at the next meeting of the Local Area Committee. There would also be opportunities to comment when the planning application was submitted, which would be in January or February 2024. It was anticipated that the Football Club would hold public consultation meetings.

2. *"I live on Folds Lane and many cars use it as a rat run. Are there any plans for traffic calming or a 20 mph zone in that area."*

Members advised that there were no plans for traffic calming on Folds Lane at present. The Council had a list of planned 20 mph zones that it was working through this year, and a list for next year had not been published. It was confirmed that the Committee would contact the Council Highways department to see if there was a draft list for the next municipal year.

(c) Jonathan Leigh

“Can you tell me what the process is to request a pedestrian crossing on the A61 near the entrance to Graves Park please? This is a really difficult road for the elderly etc to cross.”

Members advised that a written answer would be provided, and that the public could also make comments on this via the A61 project consultation.

(d) Lindy from Greater Greenhill

Asked any representatives from local environmental groups present to speak to her after the meeting as they were keen to coordinate with other groups.

7. SOUTH AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE BUDGET 2023-24 REPORT.

- 7.1 The report which outlined agreed expenditure with regards to the £750 underspend carried forward from 2022-23, provided an update on further expenditure (under the LAC's delegated powers) and outlined additional proposals for the expenditure in line with priorities in the LAC Community Plan was presented by Diane Owens.
- 7.2 £10,000 was proposed to support the “Revitalising Jordanthorpe” project, which would be led by led by Meadowhead Christian Fellowship linked to a bid to the Economic Recovery Fund Round 2. In September 2023 the group were made aware that their bid for £190,000 of funding was not successful. The £10,000 would enable some elements of the project to still be delivered, this could include public realm improvements, such as benching, hanging baskets and street art. The full details of the project would be worked up in agreement with the group.
- 7.3 **RESOLVED:** That the South Local Area Committee:
- Notes the further expenditure under the £5,000 delegated authority limit;
 - Notes the allocation of the £750 remaining underspend from 2022-23 and
 - Agrees the further proposed project expenditure over £5,001 this being the £10,000 to support the “Revitalising Jordanthorpe” project.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

- 8.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be on the 7th March 2023 in the Beauchief and Greenhill Ward.

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