

DARLASTON NORTH/BENTLEY/DARLASTON SOUTH AREA PANEL

Tuesday, 25th June, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.

at Darlaston Town Hall, Victoria Road, Darlaston

Present

Councillor Burley (Chairman)
Councillor Chambers (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor James
Councillor Underhill

In Attendance

Lyndon Parkes - Area Manager
Megan Stynes - Area Partnerships
John Leach - Head of Communities and Partnerships

1/13

Welcome

Councillor Burley welcomed Members and officers to the first meeting of the Darlaston Area Panel and advised the meeting that the Area Panels were Committees of the Council.

2/13

Apologies

No apologies were submitted.

3/13

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4/13

Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)

There were no items to be considered in private session.

5/13

Funding Procedures

The report of the Partnership Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report and reminded Members that the Panel would make decisions on funding applications rather than Area Managers from now on.

Councillor Chambers referred to the urgent projects proposals and asked whether the £500 maximum could be varied. The Head of Communities and Partnerships (John Leach) replied that for consistency, the £500 maximum would apply to all the Area Panels.

Councillor Underhill asked how groups and organisations would be made aware of the availability of funding. Lyndon Parkes replied that it was currently done by word of mouth and key stakeholders passing on information. However, it was planned to use social media shortly.

Councillor Chambers felt that efforts should be made to target new groups and embryonic organisations to spread the funding as widely as possible within Darlaston.

John Leach reported that Jo Lowndes would be re-visiting the website. Social media and newsletters would be used to encourage take up of grants. Jo would liaise with Councillors over the promotion of Area Panels and funding of projects.

Lyndon Parkes reminded the meeting that a robust process of funding had been put in place which would support the needs of the Area Plan.

After further discussion it was,

Resolved

That the Area Panel:-

- (1) notes that it has authority to make decisions on Area Partnership funding where allocated to an Area Partnership by the Council;
- (2) approves delegated authority to the relevant Area Manager for any urgent projects, up to the value of £500, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and relevant Ward Members.

6/13

Funding Report

The joint report of the Partnership Manager and Area Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report and drew attention to Paragraph 3.1, which was the only scheme carried forward from 2012/13.

Paragraph 4.1 of the report contained those schemes which had already been approved by the Area Manager and were in progress following consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and relevant Ward Councillors. These schemes had been approved prior to Council on 22nd May, 2013. There was currently £23,061.17 available to disburse. He drew attention to Appendix 1 to the report which contained four funding projects for approval.

After discussion it was,

Resolved

That the Area Panel approves the project applications contained in Appendix 1 to the report now submitted.

7/13

Ongoing updates on the actions for Darlaston and Bentley Area Partnership

The report of the Area Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Area Panel. He indicated that local delivery plans would underpin the work of the Panel.

Councillor Underhill referred to Paragraph 6.1 of the report regarding the “No cold calling” zone in Bentley. She stated that she had contacted the police after a “cold caller” came to her home but there was no response. Lyndon Parkes indicated that he would raise the matter with Inspector Lisa Robson of West Midlands Police.

The Head of Communities and Partnerships (John Leach) reported that the Partnership Inspector (Mandy McPhee) should also be advised.

After further discussion it was,

Resolved

That the report be noted.

8/13

Area Plan Summary Document Approval

The report of the Partnership Manager, together with a mock up of the Area Community Plan summary document was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report and asked if Members were happy with the draft Area Community Plan summary document.

The Head of Communities and Partnerships (John Leach) reminded Members that Council had agreed the Walsall Plan in April, 2013. The summary document had local reference but also linked into the Walsall Plan itself.

Councillor Chambers referred to the contact phone number on the front page of the summary document and asked if it could be made more noticeable. He also asked if other contact numbers would be added. Lyndon Parkes replied that he had spoken to the Communications Unit and it had been decided to include one number at present as other measures such as local newspapers and social media would be explored in the future.

Councillor Burley referred to the fact that the website would include more phone numbers for residents to use.

Councillor Chambers asked where the phone number reached. Lyndon Parkes replied that it went direct to the Area Partnerships Team.

Resolved

That the Area Plan summary document be approved.

9/13

Devolution through Area Partnerships - Update

The report of the Partnership Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Head of Communities and Partnerships (John Leach) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel and drew attention to the salient points.

Councillor Burley stated that the matter had been discussed at Council when reservations over the proposals had been aired. She referred to Section 7 of the report regarding Local Area Co-ordinators (LACs) and asked whether funding had been secured for those posts. John Leach confirmed that funding had been agreed by Cabinet in April, 2013.

Councillor Underhill referred to Section 6 of the report regarding Community Hubs and felt that they should not be restricted to a particular location. She added that importance should be given to what was being done rather than where. John Leach agreed that focussing on a particular location could be constraining.

Councillor Burley referred to the pilot areas which she felt would have a major impact. Certain areas needed more attention than others so it was important that resources were targeted accordingly.

Councillor Burley asked how the strategy would be updated. John Leach replied through the work of the Scrutiny Panels.

Councillor Chambers suggested that the document should be forwarded to every Councillor as many were not involved in the Scrutiny process.

Councillor Burley requested that updates be referred to the Area Panels for consideration.

Resolved

That the Area Panel notes the progress achieved against each of the seven proposals for devolution through Area Partnerships.

Councillor Chambers in the Chair

10/13

Election to the Local Police and Crime Board

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Chambers **moved**:-

That Councillor Burley should be the Area Panel's representative on the Local Police and Crime Board.

and it was,

Resolved

That Councillor Burley be nominated to represent Bentley and Darlaston North and Darlaston South on the Local Police and Crime Board for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

Councillor Burley in the Chair

**Dates and venues for Darlaston North/Bentley/Darlaston South
Area Panel meetings**

It was **agreed** that the meetings of the Darlaston North/Bentley/Darlaston South Area Panel meetings be held on the following dates:-

2013

16 September
12 November

2014

22 January
26 March

All meetings to be held at Darlaston Town Hall commencing at 6.00 p.m.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 6.50 p.m.

Chairman

Date