

WALSALL SOUTH AREA PANEL

Tuesday, 8 July, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

Conference Room, Council House, Walsall

Present

Councillor K. Hussain (Chair)
Councillor E.B. Russell (Vice-Chair)
Councillor D.A. Anson
Councillor M. Arif
Councillor A. Ditta
Councillor B.V. McCracken
Councillor A.A. Nawaz
Councillor H.S. Sarohi
Councillor V. Whyte

Officers in attendance

Denise Perry - Area Manager
Andy Rust – Head of Joint Commissioning Unit
Megan Powles – Area Support Officer
Matt Underhill - Committee Business and Governance Manager

57/14

Apologies

No apologies were received for the duration of the meeting.

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Declarations of Interest

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type of interest</u>	<u>Item</u>
Councillor Arif	Non-pecuniary	Item 8 - Funding Report
Councillor Ditta	Non-pecuniary	Item 8 - Funding Report
Councillor Whyte	Non-pecuniary	Item 8 - Funding Report

59/14 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)**

It was noted that there were no items to be considered in private session during the meeting.

60/14 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting which took place on 1 April, 2014, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

61/14 **Urgent and Emergency Care Consultation**

The Panel considered a presentation from the Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit setting out the objectives of the consultation. The following is a summary of the presentation and the subsequent discussion:

The Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit explained that urgent care services offer advice and treatment for minor illnesses or injuries which are urgent but not life threatening. Services in Walsall include Walk-in centres located in the town centre and at Manor Hospital. It was explained that the focus of the consultation is two questions: 1. Resident views are being sought in relation to local plans for the future urgent and emergency care system in the next 3-5 years. This includes bringing some of the urgent care services together in one building; 2. Resident views are also being sought on the immediate changes needed for the Walsall Walk-in Centre because the building won't be available from April 2015. In this respect a number of options have been set out: 1. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre to a new town centre location – this would be open from 8:00 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days per week; 2. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre to a new out of town

location in the north of Walsall – this would be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days per week; 3. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre and merge it with the existing Emergency and Urgent Care Centre, which already provides an urgent care walk in service at Walsall Manor Hospital – this would continue to open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

It was explained that consultation activity carried out since 2013 at urgent care sites in Walsall has identified a number of common resident views. These include: that the care received from local GP practices is either good or very good, but it is not possible for individuals to get an appointment when they need it; that there is confusion about where to go, with many finding services difficult to use and many not knowing that there are two walk-in centres in Walsall. Other issues included services not sharing information and parking issues for Walsall Walk-in Centre.

It was explained that officers have identified a number of key questions and answers that have emerged during the consultation. For instance “Is this about closing the walk-in centre?” The consultation leaflet states “No. The service will have to be moved because the building won’t be available after next April”.

Officers are taking the opportunity to review the whole system with capturing local views part of that process. In this respect a number of public events were highlighted which are taking place at various venues across the borough. In addition, officers have been out and about gaining the views of those from within different communities by visiting faith centres, including temples and mosques, together with supermarkets and the town centre. In response to a Panel query it was explained that the level of participation in some parts of the consultation had not been as high as hoped, although officers are using as many different avenues as possible.

The Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit explained in terms of feedback to date a strong view had emerged that residents want to retain the town centre Walk-in Centre. Other views include a request for a dispersed set of Walk-in Centres across the borough. It was explained that this suggestion would require accessing accommodation in GP's practices. However, Walk-in Centres deliver a range of services and it is unlikely that many GP's practices would have suitable accommodation.

The Chair noted that this was an important issue. A further Panel Member highlighted the importance of retaining a Walk-in Centre in the town centre for reasons of accessibility, particularly for those residents that live in flats. Concerns were also expressed regarding the difficulty many residents in Walsall South would encounter in being able to access such services if they were only available at the Manor Hospital. A further Panel Member expressed concern regarding the difficulties experienced by residents in parking at the Manor, as well as travelling by bus to the hospital. The Member highlighted the significant cost of parking at the Manor. He suggested that an expanded Walk-in Centre in the town centre would reduce pressure on services at the hospital. The Member acknowledged that there would be an understandable desire for a Walk-in Centre in the North of the borough. However, given the financial challenges currently being faced this would not be possible. In response to a further Panel Member query it was explained that there had been around 100 paper-based responses, with 300 internet based responses also received to the consultation. The Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit again acknowledged that the level of coverage needs to be expanded. He explained that part of the difficulty may lie in the fact that many people do not visit their GP or non-urgent services regularly and so will not consider the consultation relevant. A further Panel Member also noted the difficulty of access to Walk-in services at the Manor Hospital and repeated the concern regarding the difficulty caused for those having to use public transport to access the hospital. Further Panel Members repeated concerns regarding limited car

parking spaces and the associated costs at the hospital, including the pressure put on local roads. In response to a further Panel query the Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit explained that there was footfall of around 90,000 per year across the two walk in centres. A Panel Member expressed concern regarding the use of Walsall football club as one of the venues for the public consultation. The Member felt that more appropriate venues for many of those in the local community would be places of worship. A further Panel Member expressed concern that many members of the local community would either not have access to, or being uncomfortable using, the internet as a method of responding to the consultation. The Head of the Joint Commissioning Unit explained that temples and mosques were amongst the venues in which local people were asked for their views. In response to a further Panel Member query it was explained that by being behind A&E the Walk-in Centre at the hospital was located in the wrong place. In practice this meant that A&E would have to manage the triage of many people to the Walk-in Centre. A Panel Member noted that a Walk-in Centre in the town centre would therefore reduce waiting times. A further Panel Member expressed the view that a Walk-in Centre located in the town centre was a need rather than a want, with the positive advantage that it would alleviate parking pressure at the hospital. In response to a Panel query it was explained that around 5 possible alternative sites have been identified for the Walk-in Centre within the town centre. It was further explained that officers intended to ensure that the new Walk-in Centre contract will demand a level of integration with other services which was not in place at present. It was also explained that the procurement process would commence in September to ensure that the new contractual arrangements were in place by April 2015. It was agreed that officers would provide Members with details of the timetable of consultation events and also report back on the conclusion of the consultation exercise.

There was a clear consensus amongst the Panel that there should continue to be a Walk-in Centre within the town centre.

Resolved

That Members will receive the timetable of consultation events and guidance following the conclusion of the exercise; &

the report be noted.

62/14 **Area Community Plan Refresh**

The Area Manager introduced the report. It was explained that it was envisaged that the refresh will ultimately be a two page document. It was explained that a key objective of the plan was to set out the positive activities that had been undertaken within the Walsall South wards. The other key objective is to set out the vision for the area up to 2016. The Panel agreed that the final version of the document be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

Resolved

That the final version of the refreshed Community Plan be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair; &

the report be noted.

63/14 **Area Manager's Report**

The Area Manager introduced the report.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

64/14

Funding Report

The Panel considered the latest funding applications for the Walsall South area.

Baby Space

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. Councillor Ditta having earlier declared a non-pecuniary interests in this particular matter left the room and did not take part in any discussion or voting on this funding application. Members considered the funding request and requested further guidance regarding the project's aims to be sent to them via email.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Whyte:-

That the Baby Space project be awarded £1,270.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

The Panel also requested that the funding be returned to the Area Panel budget should the project not go ahead. Councillor Ditta re-joined the meeting on completion of the item.

Healthier Walsall Young People

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. In response to a Panel query it was explained that this was an all year round programme. The

purchase of the smoothie bike would avoid the cost of ad hoc hire and also enable the bike to be used to support activities elsewhere in Walsall South. A Member noted that it would be useful to know the numbers of people who were anticipated to benefit from projects.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Healthier Walsall Young People project be awarded £945.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Hate Crime Creative Awareness Project

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. The Chair expressed concern that this was one of a number of applications made by IYPSS and suggested that a maximum of one funding application per meeting from the service be approved to avoid any suggestions of bias. A further Panel Member expressed the view that this was a very important project which would benefit a large number of people and the full amount requested should be awarded. In response to a Panel query the Area Manager explained that she could only reject a funding application from a council service that met work stream criterion if it was a request to fund something which the council had ceased to fund. It was also explained that this programme had a significant impact in reducing anti-social behaviour. The Area Manager also explained that when assessing a funding application volunteer time was given a monetary value. In response to an additional query the Area Manager explained that she would inquire as to whether the DVD would be used in local schools.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Hate Crime Creative Awareness Project be awarded £500. In addition, that the Panel will consider all funding applications that meet the Area Plan Priorities. However, it will only approve a maximum of one application from IYPSS per meeting.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Big Music Project

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. A number of Members objected to this application on the basis the view that funding for this type of project should have been identified from other sources.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Big Music Project should not receive any funding.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

South Area Steering group – Peer Mentoring Programme

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. It was explained that IYPSS were making the application on behalf of young people who were organising the project. A number of Panel Members spoke in favour of this project. They were especially impressed that individuals on the scheme can gain a qualification.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the South Area Steering group – Peer Mentoring Programme receive £1,571.80

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Mehndi Workshop

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. A number of Members expressed concern that a funding request for a small amount of money necessitated consideration at the Panel's meeting.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Mehndi Workshop receive £20.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Circus Skills Workshop

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. A number of Members

again expressed concern that a funding request for a small amount of money necessitated consideration at the Panel's meeting.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Circus Skills Workshop receive £100.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Walsall Homeless Outreach

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. It was explained that the project was operated by Suffa at the Glebe Centre. Some Members expressed discomfort with the idea of supporting charitable work as it might set a precedent. However, a further Panel Member expressed support for this type of work and called for the funding application to be approved. In addition, clarification was provided that the support provided by Suffa extended beyond a food bank.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Arif:-

That the Walsall Homeless Outreach project receive
£1,000.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Drug and Alcohol Awareness Project

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities.

It was **moved** by Councillor Arif and **seconded** by Councillor Russell:-

That the Drug and Alcohol Awareness Project receive
£800.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Mental Wellbeing and Healthy Living

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. In response to a Panel query it was explained that the project had received funding during the previous financial year. A number of Members spoke positively of the good work undertaken by the Aaina Community Hub with BAME women from the local community. A Panel Member noted the success of Aaina Community Hub in reaching out to many in the community. A further Panel Member queried why funding for this project had not been made available by Public Health. A further Panel Member noted that mental health services in Walsall were underfunded and that service users had suffered as a result of the closure of Broadway North.

It was **moved** by Councillor Arif and **seconded** by Councillor Russell:-

That the Mental Wellbeing and Healthy Living project
be awarded £2,451.30.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**.

Walsall Mela

The Area Manager introduced the funding application and explained its purpose and how it met the Area Plan priorities. Councillors Whyte and Arif having earlier declared a non-pecuniary interests in this particular matter left the room and did not take part in any discussion or voting on this funding application. A number of Members commented that while the Mela was a good event a significant amount of funding had been requested (£7,000). A discussion also took place as to whether the event could be held in other parts of Walsall South.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hussain and **seconded** by Councillor Nawaz:-

That the Walsall Mela receive £2,000, subject to the event taking place.

The Motion having been put to the vote was declared **carried**. Councillors Whyte and Arif re-joined the meeting on completion of the item.

Resolved

That:-

- (1) £1,270 be awarded to the Baby Space project;
- (2) £945 be awarded towards the Healthier Walsall Young People Project;
- (3) £500 be awarded to the Hate Crime Creative Awareness Project;

- (4) £1,571.80 be awarded to the South Area Steering group – Peer Monitoring Programme;
 - (5) £20 be awarded to the Mehndi Workshop;
 - (6) £100 be awarded to the Circus Skills Workshop;
 - (7) £1,467 be awarded to the Walsall Homeless Outreach project;
 - (8) £800 be awarded to the Drug and Alcohol Awareness project;
 - (9) £2,451.30 be awarded to the Mental Wellbeing and Healthy Living project;
- and
- (10) £2,000 be awarded to the Walsall Mela.

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Date of next meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be 2 October, 2014.

Termination of meeting

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman:

Date:

