

## **CENTRAL URBAN AREA COMMITTEE**

At a meeting held on Thursday, 25th July, 2013

Present:-

Councillor D L Billing (Chairman) in the Chair;  
Councillors S Bairstow, Mrs L Bastiman, E Broadbent, C R Challen, Mrs D V Cluer,  
Mrs J Jefferson, J Ritchie, Ms A Robinson, S Sharma and M Smith

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Chairman advised the meeting that in respect of Item 5, Area Committee Grants 2013/14, there was no need for members to declare an interest in this item of their involvement with particular groups as the decision was in respect of the method of allocating the funds and not allocating funds to specific individual groups or organisations.

### **2. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chairman reported that no public questions had been received.

### **4. PRESENTATION ON FIRST LIGHT TRUST**

The Committee received a presentation from Gillian Taylor, a Founding Trustee of First Light Trust and Occupational Therapist BSc(Hons). First Light Trust (the Trust) is a grass roots charity enabling ex-Service personnel and their families to re-establish their lives.

Gillian Taylor advised the meeting of her background which involved working for two years with Combat Stress who work with ex-service personnel. She is also an occupational therapist, fitness instructor and has worked in agriculture. Her remit at Combat Stress was to assist veterans to connect with the Community after discharge and discovered that, after veterans had gone through their treatment, there was nothing in the community to help them rebuild their lives.

Why establish a Trust in Scarborough? There is a significant need evidenced by local charities and organisations such as the CAB. A support group has been started which meets at the Rainbow Centre. This acts as a gateway for veterans to access housing and medical treatment. There is also a shop in the main street and an office at Yorkshire Coast Homes. Liaison also takes place with GPs, Cambridge Centre, Mind and support from many others in the community including Robert Goodwill MP and assistance from Captain Tony Viney. There are currently 50 veterans on their books and the aim is for Scarborough to be a beacon model for other towns to follow.

Gillian Taylor also explained some of the problems ex-forces personnel face when they leave the services, particularly if they are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This includes difficulties integrating into civilian life because they have had everything provided by the forces some veterans

don't know how to feed and look after themselves, or open a bank account. This can lead to family breakdown, homelessness, criminal activity, drug and alcohol dependency. Veterans can also suffer from physical problems due to their activities in the services. The physical body of a veteran is often 10 years older than their age. This can include spinal problems, arthritis and mental health problems leading to heart, breathing problems and diabetes. Problems with unemployment and family breakdown and isolation can also lead to suicide. Many veterans with these problems do not know where to go for help.

The aim of the Trust is to assist the veterans in getting the specialist help that they need and then to provide opportunities to assist in their recovery by providing activities at Stepney Hill Farm. These activities include developing rural skills and linking this with conservation, eg hedge and pond restoration, willow growing and creative arts. Developing horticulture skills and selling the produce through the tea rooms and farm shop. Selling items of furniture through a craft shop and involving the veterans in making the furniture. The wider community and local organisations are already involved through donating plants and Yorkshire Coast Homes was carrying out groundwork at 2 sites on the farm. These activities will assist veterans by giving them space and time to recover and provide them with employment and training opportunities. It could also assist the wider community in promoting tourism opportunities and economic development. It was also hoped to establish an arboretum for families who had lost loved ones. Work is also underway to widen the remit of Stepney Hill Farm to include other community groups and was already being used by the Cambridge Centre.

There are three Trustees of First Light Trust and their patron is Bernard Cornwell. Financially, money has been spent on setting up the charity properly and now the Trust is at a turning point to commence the activities with paid workers and the Trust to be financially self-sustaining. This would only be achievable through fundraising and support from the community. A member asked whether there were any veterans from Afghanistan in addition to Falklands and Northern Ireland veterans? Gillian Taylor replied that there were and also veterans from Bosnia, they tended to be a younger age range. They hoped to do some research on younger veterans, as they may have come from dysfunctional families, or joined the army to escape their home life or no other employment opportunities. By the nature of their young age they hadn't developed the coping strategies they needed in the civilian world and this could lead to problems. However the Trust met with a wide age range of veterans.

A member asked why the State did not pick up the cost and did the Trust work with the Royal British Legion? Gillian Taylor replied that the problem was there was no ground level community work being done to reach out to the veterans and signpost them to the appropriate support. The veterans do not know how to access the support they need. When the Trust has identified the veterans they then contact the appropriate support and gave an example of a recent case where they had worked with SAFFA to assist a veteran. The Trust also was working with local mental health services and now had a care pathway that local doctors could refer veterans to. Work had also been done with the Police so that the Police ask people whether they have served in the forces so they can direct them to the appropriate support. Gillian Taylor had

recently attended a conference which included the MoD and how they were looking at better resources to tackle this problem, particularly as 5,000 service personnel would be leaving the forces this summer. A visit had been made to Catterick to look at the programme for physical disablement but when the programme had been completed the veteran moved to a flat with no support. There was a need to get that infrastructure in place.

A member commented on the funding situation and the similar financial circumstances presented by the Disablement Action Group in their presentation at the previous meeting. Gillian Taylor responded they wanted to look at the farm as a business model and be self-funding. They also did not want to repeat what other charities were doing. However, they had got this far with very little funding but they did want to utilise support whilst the armed forces had a high profile due to the current conflicts.

Gillian Taylor also commented on the Raincliffe Wood project and that, from a personal point of view, it was important to them how this project progresses as the farm faced Row Brow.

The Chairman thanked Gillian Taylor for her informative presentation.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be received and the issues noted.

#### **5. AREA COMMITTEE GRANTS 2013/14**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Reference 3 13/280) regarding the Area Committee Grants 2013/14 in respect of how the funds were to be allocated. The Chairman presented the report and advised members that the report concerned the procedures for allocating the grant money and asked the members if they had any questions on the report. There were no questions from members and the Chairman read out the recommendations in the report.

A member proposed that the grants be allocated via the 'Voice Your Choice' programme. Although the member felt that there was a cost to this and was concerned in respect of officer time and that the grant process may be a cheaper option, the member felt that overall the 'Voice Your Choice' process was more democratic and had greater opportunities for community engagement.

The proposal was seconded and the Chairman asked members whether any member wanted to put forward any other proposals, but there were none. The Chairman then explained that four volunteers were required to form a sub-group. The sub-group was made up of four Area Committee members and four members from the Scarborough Urban Area Forum. Members of the sub-group would need to attend meetings to set the criteria, receive and determine the applications and attend the final event. Officer time was involved in this including servicing the meetings but it was hoped that most of this cost would be able to be absorbed within the budget. In respect of the budget there was £17,637.93 to be allocated which was made up of £11,550 from the 2013/14 allocation and an underspend of £6,087.93 from previous years. A member advised that this would include money from projects that were underspent or out of time, and a project for a garden that had eventually been disbanded. Members of this Committee nominated to sit on the sub-group were Councillor Steven Bairstow, Councillor Mrs Janet Jefferson, Councillor John Ritchie and Councillor David Billing as an ex-officio member.

In respect of timing the Chairman advised that the Voice Your Choice decision event would most likely be held in March to give the maximum time to advertise the event and for groups and organisations to submit their applications. A suggestion had been received from the Civic Society to roll the grant funding over to next year, but it was felt that funding needed to be allocated in this financial year. A member suggested that the Voice Your Choice decision event should be held at the Town Hall since the Council had retained the building in the town centre and would encourage the public to visit the building.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the report be received;
- (ii) the 2013/14 Area Committee funding allocation in the sum of £17,637.93 be distributed via the Voice Your Choice process in partnership with the Scarborough Urban Area Forum, as had previously been the case.
- (iii) a joint sub-group of a maximum of four members of this Committee together with four members of the Scarborough Urban Area Forum be set up with the following being nominated from this Committee: Councillor Steven Bairstow, Councillor Mrs Janet Jefferson and Councillor John Ritchie. Councillor David Billing to sit as an ex-officio member.
- (iv) the final Voice Your Choice event should, if possible, be held in the Town Hall to promote community engagement at a date to be agreed in early 2014.

**Members' reasons:** Members felt that the Voice Your Choice programme allowed an increased opportunity for community engagement and was a more democratic process. Holding the final event in the Town Hall would increase engagement with the public. Members wished to allow the maximum time for advertising the event and for groups and organisations to submit their applications.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-AGENCY PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT TEAM FOR CASTLE/NORTH BAY**

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Reference 13/277) outlining the proposals for the development of a multi-agency prevention and enforcement team, which would focus on a proactive, joint approach to tackling identified issues within Castle and North Bay Wards. This item had been requested by Councillor Challen.

The Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer presented the report. The proposal to establish a multi-agency team has been presented to the Safer Community Partnership to identify key areas. Scoping work to identify the problems has been carried out. The proposal also forms part of a wider plan for the Castle/North Bay area, currently being developed by the Council and its partners through the Public Service Executive. The title 'A Multi-Agency Prevention Team for Castle/North Bay' was considered to be long and residents would be consulted for suggestions for a more suitable name for the project.

The proposal has four key themes: physical regeneration, particularly regarding housing to encourage a higher quality rental market and address some of the issues around Registered Social Landlord stock; effective

prevention and enforcement; support for vulnerable people and environmental improvements, both public space and private gardens. The Place Survey in 2011/12 showed that only 57% of residents in the Castle Ward were satisfied with their area as a place to live. The Ward profiles were available on the website for anyone to look at and the Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer would e-mail them on request. Lots of good work has been carried out in the Castle Ward, for example Community Angels and the aim is to work alongside these projects. The proposal will also encompass the Night Time Economy Plan which is currently being consulted on. Officers involved in the Night Time Economy Plan will also work with the Enforcement Team.

The Enforcement Team will be based in offices in King Street. The project is being looked at by others around the country and will initially be a 12 month pilot using the decision making model. An example of this would be a housing problem was identified, the team would investigate what harm was being caused, risks or threat, what to do about it and who to contact to resolve the issue. Also to look at what difference the team are making to the area. There will be a focus on disruptive families and street drinkers. Team Members would be managed on a day-to-day basis by their main employing authority/agency and co-ordinated by the Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer. The team will not be solely based in the office but have a visible presence on the streets, including use of a car. A Police Sergeant dedicated to the team will provide a decision making element and be able to deploy staff. Other members of the team will be Yorkshire Coast Homes, a Housing Enforcement Officer, Community Safety Officer, Fire Officer, Sanctuary Housing Officer and a Stronger Families Officer. It was hoped that a drugs and alcohol worker would join them. As well as multi-agency action there will be stronger communication between organisations, a proactive problem solving approach and each event will be mapped. There will be a street by street approach to prioritise problem areas.

Approvals were in place to establish the Enforcement Team and staff recruitment was underway. A staff briefing will take place on the 7 August 2013 with the team commencing in August and fully underway by the end of September 2013. Funding was in place to commence some works and small scale environmental improvements, eg painting. It was anticipated that external funding could be secured to fund specific projects to improve an area.

The Chairman commented that there were problems outside the lower super output areas. eg the former St Mary's Hospital site and would like reassurance that action would be taken when reported to the team. The Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer replied that they would react to reported problems outside the identified areas, however they had to have a starting point.

A member commented that there was a voluntary scheme in the North Bay but this had drifted apart. There were huge problems in the North Bay area including people being threatened with dog attacks, lack of planning enforcement leading to degeneration of the area, and a particular social housing landlord. The Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer responded that talks were underway with the housing association and with the Police about which legislation to use and who can

enforce it. Planning Officers were not part of the Enforcement Team but would be consulted where relevant.

A member asked if the Enforcement Team would be working with the local CAP Group and should Councillors be involved as they were often the eyes and ears on local issues? It was also felt that with less Council staff it would be more difficult to get results. Another member commented that while it was good to see different agencies working together how were they going to ensure that the cultural change was embedded within the community, particularly in terms of the transient nature of the population? A whole housing estate could be improved physically with double glazing, etc but that did not tackle the problems within the community eg anti-social behaviour. Members commented on other issues such as rubbish in the streets and ways to encourage both residents and visitors to use the bins, including having 'Keep our Town Tidy' signs and more Council staff should report issues that they see to get them resolved. Members also referred to problems with planning issues over windows, the inability to get money from government to provide support for people, the system generally not supporting people's endeavours to resolve problems and a discussion took place on particular problems in Trafalgar Square.

A member proposed that one of the partner's on the Enforcement Team could be Royal Mail. This was a uniformed service who passes every door, every day and who would become aware of issues as part of their job. Royal Mail could be included as part of a scheme to support vulnerable adults, with the support of the Communication Workers Union. Another member suggested that milkmen could also take part in this scheme.

The Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer responded to members comments. In relation to the suggestion for Royal Mail and milkmen to be involved there was a similar scheme in Hambleton & Richmondshire through the bin men. Environmental issues were just as important as social issues, the Enforcement Team were not going to change things overnight but improve community engagement gradually over the next 12 months. It was anticipated that works would also take place with the schools in the area. In relation to the particular issues in Trafalgar Square the Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer would e-mail Councillors Sharma and Smith after this meeting to give them the latest information.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Partnership Manager and Safeguarding Officer for presenting the report which led to some useful information sharing and debate and suggested that she update the Committee at a future meeting including feedback on the Night Time Economy.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received and the issues be noted.

## **7. SCARBOROUGH URBAN AREA FORUM - REPORT OF THE FORUM CHAIR**

The Committee considered a report by Mrs Ros Fox, Chair of the Scarborough Urban Area Forum which updated the Committee on the latest activities of the Forum and future events. As Mrs Fox had sent her apologies, the Chairman presented the report and advised that if any members did have any questions Mrs Fox would be pleased to receive these via e-mail.

The Chairman referred to the 2013 Scarborough Four Corners Walk and encouraged members' participation in this event.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

**8. INFORMAL DISCUSSION TIME**

The Chairman advised the meeting that he welcomed suggestions for items for the agenda for the next meeting of this Committee. Members suggested the following items:-

1. An update on the Community Asset Transfer as this affected many Wards which were represented in this meeting.
2. A debate on the future role of Area Committees not just in respect of grants, but also its role in executive decision making.

If members had any further items the Chairman would be pleased to receive them.

**9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at 7.00 pm on Thursday 24 October 2013 at the Town Hall, Scarborough.

**Chairman**