

SOUTH WHITEHAVEN NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Cath Giel, Portfolio Holder
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy
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WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS

South Whitehaven residents have benefited from increased resources and improved services over the past four years. South Whitehaven Communities Together has developed to continue the community engagement and delivery of projects within the neighbourhoods of South Whitehaven championed by the Neighbourhood Management Board. Transferring the Working Neighbourhood Fund underspend by the Board to this new community company will continue to deliver local projects with residents.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE? (eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)

South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Initiative was a pathfinder supported over the past 30 months by the Council's Working Neighbourhood Fund area based grant.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive are requested to:

- 1) Note the closedown of the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme, and;
- 2) Agree to the transfer of underspend from the Programme estimated at a maximum of £34,619 to the legacy organisation South Whitehaven Communities Together by March 2011.
- 3) To delegate the agreement of the final figure for transfer to the interim Accountancy Services Manager and the Head of Development Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members agreed at the Executive on 18th January 2010 to extend the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme to the end of September 2010 and to approve the carry forward of underspend of

£71,722, from 2009/10 into 2010/11 to be spent by end of September 2010.

- 1.2 The South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme has now reached the end of the extension period and has closed down. Objectives of the Programme were to provide a neighbourhood focus for all service delivery in the South Whitehaven area incorporating the neighbourhoods of Greenbank, Woodhouse, Kells, Mirehouse and Hensingham. The aim has been to encourage service providers to respond effectively to local need and encourage a joined up approach to the provision of services both now and in the future. Key achievements of the Programme are listed in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme has been undertaking a forward planning exercise looking at a community led arrangement to continue to enable the community to work together on its locality plans and links and influence with local service providers. The new organisation being established will be a Community Development Trust (Company Limited by Guarantee) called South Whitehaven Communities Together. The organisation is currently going through the process of recruiting and selecting trustees and has recently held a conference to scope out the vision and priorities for the new Trust. See Appendix 2 for an overview of the Conference.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 The South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme has now closed down. The estimated underspend against the carried forward Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) grant is a maximum of £34,619. Any outstanding bills will have to be deducted from this figure before it was transferred. An aim of the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme Board is to complete their commitments on the Programme and provide a continued resource that will maintain coordinated service delivery and a continued renewal of the South Whitehaven area.
- 2.2 The successor organisation (South Whitehaven Communities Together) is keen to deliver key projects in the South Whitehaven area as part of the Whitehaven Locality Partnership arrangements and within the Whitehaven Locality Plan. The transfer of underspent WNF grant to South Whitehaven Communities Together will provide a flexible resource which can be built on by enabling the new organisation to lever in match funding to deliver local projects.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 The Executive have two clear options:

a) to transfer the WNF underspend from the former South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme to the successor body South Whitehaven Communities Together by March 2011 to enable the group to continue delivering to the forward plan of the neighbourhood management Board and work with residents to deliver continued renewal of South Whitehaven through locally determined projects; or

b) not support the request and reallocate the WNF underspend.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 This report is asking the Executive to consider option A as the preferred use of the underspend. The council has been committed as key partners on the Neighbourhood Management Initiative Board to developing and enabling a forward plan to sustain the impact and local delivery whilst endorsing locality working. The council through this option is providing a resource to maintain community engagement and resident involvement in delivering local projects and offering a one off grant to the successor body to continue to address the needs of local people.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

5.1 The Council has a responsibility for the financial control and propriety of the funding approved and disbursed by the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme in its role as accountable body for the Initiative. Advice and support has been given during the final wind up period of the initiative.

5.2 The administrative officer at the project completed her extended fixed term contract with the council on 30th September 2010.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Council Officers (Economic Development / Locality Workers / Community Development team) will continue to support the successor body (South Whitehaven Communities Together) as they provide continued renewal of the South Whitehaven area. This will reduce the risk of any financial wastage and aim to maximise the opportunity of match funding for forward plan projects.

- 6.2 If the underspend is to be transferred, the successor body will receive a grant offer letter outlining conditions of spend and monitoring requirements
- 6.3 As highlighted in Appendix B, the successor body are taking the relevant steps in order to establish themselves as an organisation equipped to deliver key projects in the South Whitehaven area.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Initiative has played a significant role in improving the quality of life for South Whitehaven residents over its period of operation. It has been particularly successful at reducing crime and disorder so that more people feel safe and delivering small community projects linked to public and third sector partners.
- 7.2 South Whitehaven Communities Together will work in partnership with public services and link closely to the Whitehaven Locality in continuing to improve the way services are provided to allow residents to live, learn and relax in a clean, safe and attractive environment

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Key Achievements of the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme
- Appendix 2 - Overview of South Whitehaven Communities Together Conference

List of Background Documents:

- SWNMI Board minutes and file papers

Appendix 1

The success story behind the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme is attributable to the ability of local service delivery partners working together to meet the common aim of making South Whitehaven a better place to live and work.

The best example of this is the reduction of crime in all of the areas covered in the management area. This was been achieved by the close relationship between the Police and the Community Wardens. The South Whitehaven Partnership enabled a joined up approach to problem solving, this worked particularly well between the Neighbourhood Wardens and the Neighbourhood Policing Team, influenced by Community members.

Funding provided improved lighting – (replacement of yellow to white bulbs), installation of fixed and re deployable CCTV equipment in all wards, provision of a speed indicator device, a speed gun, revenue funding for 5 PCSO's and 4 Neighbourhood Wardens. The CCTV partnership received an excellence award from the CDRP.

In a joint attempt to engage with young people, the Wardens provided cycling proficiency training. Alongside this, the PCSO's provided free bike security marking. Other interventions such as community 'clean up's' enabled effective community engagement and improved the quality of the environment.

Key Achievements of the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Programme

Key Achievements	Theme
Introduction and funding of 4 Neighbourhood Wardens, Activities carried out by wardens include Smartwater property marking, community clean ups and attendance at residents community meetings	-Improve Living Environment -Reduce Crime
Funding support for 5 Community Police Support Officers (CPSO's) – anti social behaviour incidents in the Neighbourhood Management area decreased	-Reduce Crime
Community Engagement activity – A Community Engagement Worker was employed to work with local residents in the Neighbourhood Management area providing opportunities for residents get involved and make a difference. Residents groups are now more confident and up-skilled.	-Improve health -Improve employment -Improve living environment -Reduce crime -Focus on most vulnerable
Improvement and extension to Evening Bus Service – Service to continue running post SWNM Programme	-Improve health -Improve employment -Improve living

	<p>environment</p> <p>-Focus on most vulnerable</p>
<p>Distribution of Leverage Funding grants to local community groups / projects. Grants included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension to evening bus service • Revenue support to Copeland Citizens Advice Bureau – debt awareness training and financial empowerment training to local residents • Revenue support to Family Advice Centre • PCSO revenue support for 5 Officers • 4 Neighbourhood Warden posts • Freedom Project • St Peters Mini Bus • Pathways to Art • Copeland Learning Together • Revenue support to Credit Union • Revenue for Community Engagement Worker • Contribution to Director of Public Services Post 	<p>-Improve health</p> <p>-Improve employment</p> <p>-Improve living environment</p> <p>-Reduce crime</p> <p>-Focus on most vulnerable</p>
<p>Distribution of Community Pot grants to local community groups / projects</p>	<p>-Improve health</p> <p>-Improve employment</p> <p>-Improve living environment</p> <p>-Reduce crime</p> <p>-Focus on most vulnerable</p>
<p>Introduction of educational activities to the Neighbourhood Management area, e.g. Numeracy/Literacy, Smart Darts 4 Kids</p>	<p>-Improve health</p> <p>-Improve employment</p>
<p>Introduction of health related initiatives to the Neighbourhood Management area, e.g. Smoking Cessation, installation of smoke alarms</p>	<p>Improve health</p>
<p>Health Impact Assessment carried out in South Whitehaven</p>	<p>Improve Health</p>
<p>Increased agency commitment from a wide range of agencies, e.g. Home Group, Local Faith agencies, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Services, Age Concern, CAB, Local schools (St Mary's)</p>	<p>-Improve health</p> <p>-Improve employment</p> <p>-Improve living environment</p> <p>-Reduce crime</p> <p>-Focus on most vulnerable</p>
<p>Support to Personal, Social and Health Education in Schools – Sex relationships and drugs, healthy eating, physical health, emotional health & wellbeing</p>	<p>Improve Health</p>

Appendix 2

South Whitehaven Communities Together Conference Report 1st September 2010

16 community and agency delegates attended the event, the purpose of which was to:

1. Establish vision and priorities for the new Trust
2. Explore any alternatives to the name "SW Communities Together"
3. Identify volunteers to form an Advisory Group to the new Trustee Board

What's great about South Whitehaven?

Delegates were initially asked what was great about South Whitehaven. The following views / themes were expressed:

- It's a live community
- Great people
- Pulling together
- There have been some great achievements e.g. bus, community garden
- There is a strong sense of community
- Things aren't perfect, but better since SWNM
- Friendly people
- Kids don't want to move
- Views, walks, parks
- Improved quality of life – don't want to go back to how it was
- Getting kids off the street
-

Summary – as an outsider the facilitator was impressed by the genuine passion for SW exhibited by the delegates.

What is your vision for the new trust?

Delegates were asked to work in groups to consider a vision for the new Trust. The following notes reflect the feedback given by each group.

Group 1 – "Promote inclusiveness across SW communities, supporting and empowering local people to lead the continuation of the improvement of the area"

Group 2:

- Improve where we live / sustain environment - sustain quality of life
- Better facilities for future generations
- Build foundations for better future
- Sustained services / long term as long as they are efficient / reliable
- Projects around skills / education for all

Group 3:

- Raise the profile of the area and publicise the good things about the area not just the bad ones
- Keep the new name
- Continued improvement
- Contact point for local people
- Somebody is listening to issues
- Re-launch of the project and highlight what has been achieved and welcome anybody that wants to be involved
- Make sure the trust is community led and supported by agencies
- Continue the successful schemes e.g. wardens, bus service, CCTV and continue working with the agencies to keep the schemes going
- Also working with the local schools and youth to develop pride in their community and break down barriers

Group 4 – “Community members through range of means participating in decisions and actions affecting the area and actively contributing to improvements in the quality of life in key aspects they have identified. Providing a mechanism to narrow the gaps we can identify between this community and others in health education and employment.”

Summary – The feedback covered general themes such as listening, supporting, empowering, raising the profile, inclusivity and improving. The first meeting of the Advisory Group will review this feedback and produce a draft vision for the Board to approve.

What sort of trust should be established?

Delegates discussed the kind of trust to be established. The consensus was that it should be first and foremost a lobbying organisation. Resident engagement will help to demonstrate what community wants and makes access to funding easier. The power to lobby comes from community involvement. Any advisory activities should be part of the lobbying and delivery themes. Delegates agreed that whilst the trust should be a service provider, subject to funding, it should be about doing not just demanding. Other suggestions included:

- Raising the SW identity

- Promotion of inclusiveness
- Ensure work compliments and works with other local groups not compete with them.

Summary – the new trust should focus initially on lobbying whilst sources of income are identified for other activities. Therefore the advisory group should consider selecting trustees with a mixture of lobbying and funding raising skills and experience as well as other relevant skills and experience.

What should the trust focus on?

Delegates were then asked to consider 6 priority themes taken from Copeland Borough Council's Corporate Improvement Plan. In groups, delegates discussed priority activities for the trust under each theme.

1. Crime
 - a. Retain PCSOs, Wardens, CCTV, Community police - local points of contact (confidentiality)
 - b. Continue to reduce key recorded crimes and fear of crime
2. Employment
 - a. Narrowing gaps in long terms unemployment rates and NEET rates between this area and others
 - b. Local employment opportunities
 - c. Lack of investment (finance, wages) and government interest north of Birmingham
3. Health
 - a. Health checks via local clinics, dentist, and pharmacy.
 - b. A priority should be to narrow gaps in life expectancy and prevalence of critical conditions compared with other areas - this is directly influenced by improvements under other priorities.
4. Education
 - a. Narrow gap in attainment rate and improving aspirations
 - b. Young people – alternatives / activities
 - c. Local classes for local people – accessibility, aspirations, identify opportunities
5. Environment
 - a. Clearer safer play areas – open space maintenance
 - b. Fly tipping – clean up campaigns successful but people take advantage
6. Barriers to service
 - a. Financial, accessibility, customer experience, trust
 - b. Inclusiveness – combat isolation

- c. Local services centre – doctors, dentist, etc
- d. Lack of funding – needed for long terms sustainability of services
- e. Developmental community engagement and participation across the age range in actions and decisions affecting the area.

Summary

- All 6 headings were seen as important and interlinked.
- Funding is a major consideration should the trust wish to expand beyond a lobbying body.
- Establishing a group which engages successfully with the community and is perceived to represents its views will increase the likelihood of attracting funding in the long term.
- User input / community representation on the advisory group is therefore important to ensure the perception of community engagement is achieved.

What should the new trust be called?

Delegates were asked to suggest alternative names for the new Trust.

Summary - the general consensus was that "South Whitehaven Communities Together" was an appropriate name for the new trust.

Do you want to become a member of the advisory board?

Delegates were asked to consider becoming involved with the advisory group.

Summary – many of the delegates put their names forward - list being co-ordinated by Julie Pearson. Several apologies were received for the conference – these people will also be kept informed of advisory group meetings.

Next steps?

The first Advisory Group meeting has been arranged for **10am on the 23rd September St Peters Hall, Lakeland Avenue, Woodhouse**. The meeting will finalise this conference report including the draft vision and review, amend and approve a draft election / selection procedure for the new Board.