



**South
Cumberland**
Community Panel

Date: Wednesday, 13 March 2024

Time: 6.00 pm

Location: Beckermets Reading Rooms, Beckermets, CA21
2XN

Present: Cllr L Jones-Bulman (Chair), Cllr D Moore (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Eldon,
Cllr S Pollen and Cllr A Pratt

Also Present: West Cumbria Lead (Growing Well)

In Attendance Local Area Network Manager, Area Planning Manager, Community
Development Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)

32 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Bob Kelly and Martin Birch (Director of Community and Family Wellbeing).

33 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Eldon declared an interest in agenda item 7, relating to Safer Streets due to a work link and in agenda item 8, the grant application for Shackles Off Youth Project (paragraph 2.7) due to a personal connection to the applicant.

34 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED – that there were no items on the agenda for the press and public to be excluded.

35 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

A Member requested further information on the Cumberland Strategic Framework, which had been noted in the minutes as a possible agenda item, which the Area Planning Manager noted an informal meeting would be arranged with the relevant officers for a date that all Panel members would be available for.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

36 Highways & Transport Strategic Board Meeting

The Local Area Network Manager as the Highways Representative, as requested by the Chair, provided the Panel with highlights from the minutes which related to the Panel area, with a specific focus on the Capital Programme update, the Highways Funding Allocation, the 20MPH Speed Limit Policy and the 2024/25 draft Work Programme, noting that Members are welcome to contact the Local Area Network Manager to discuss planned work within their individual areas.

A Member asked for an update regarding the current road works in Parkside, Frizington, which the Local Area Network Manager confirmed they would be able to provide after the meeting.

Members discussed the signs which had been put up in the area and the complaints raised from residents, specifically regarding the size. The Local Area Network Manager explained that the size of the signs was a stipulation within the grant funding. However, they did note that the communications with residents, specifically in Calderbridge, had been lacking which led to the sign being taken down to be re-sited and that they would be willing to review the Egremont sign placement over hazard concerns.

Members discussed the 20MPH Speed Limit Policy, noting that policy would be submitted to the next Board meeting for consideration, and queried the possibility of extending the amount of 20MPH zones within Cumberland with a focus on schools. Members highlighted the need for proactive improved safety for school zones. The Local Area Network Manager cautioned the Panel on the issues of having too many 20MPH zones, noting that Cumberland have no powers to enforce speed limits and the possibility of complacency from road users. The Local Area Network Manager also commented on ongoing conversations with the police to help create the appropriate and enforceable policy.

Members noted the difficulty of raising issues from the Panel to the Board, despite having two representatives from the Panel in attendance at the Board unless the item was on the agenda and queried the possibility of receiving the draft agenda to be able to feedback concerns more effectively. The Area Planning Manager agreed to discuss with the officers the possibility of the Panel receiving the draft agenda going forward.

RESOLVED – that the contents of the minutes be noted.

37 Growing Well

The Panel received a presentation from the West Cumbria Lead of Growing Well, who highlighted their purpose as a registered Mental Health Charity who were celebrating their 20th Anniversary this year and were in the process of establishing a site in Egremont at the old Egremont nursery. The West Cumbria Lead noted that the site aimed to distribute 100 vegetable boxes a week, with 50 boxes subsidised for low-income families, and hoped to open the site in April 2024. It was also highlighted that Growing Well would be putting on a minibus to bring people from all areas to the site for a full day with lunch provided during their beneficiary days.

A Member queried how to become included on the vegetable box distribution list which the West Cumbria Lead explained that it would be through contacting the team, the method of which would be advertised closer to the time when the vegetation would be ready near the end of May. They also noted the collaboration with Good Life to provide food for beneficiaries during their time at the site.

A Member queried whether it would just be seasonal vegetables that would be grown at the site and if there was enough interest due to the labour intensity of managing the site. The West Cumbria Lead explained that vegetables would be grown between March and November with the appropriate vegetables grown during the period. Regarding interest, the West Cumbria Lead explained that the site would have two employed growers with the appropriate experience, as well as volunteers and beneficiaries. Noting that with the experience from the Kendal site, Growing Well were confident that they had the appropriate amount of interest for the level of labour required.

A Member queried if there was any provision for schools and young people to be involved, if those with disabilities were able to participate and whether flowers would also be grown on the site. The West Cumbria Lead answered that the beneficiary focus was for adults, however, work is ongoing with staff visits to schools and inviting them to the site once it is opened on Fridays during their visitor day. It was also noted that once a referral had been made, an assessment would be carried out by staff regarding the suitability of to the site, so that accommodations could be made where possible. The West Cumbria Lead explained that the current focus of the site is vegetables but would not rule out flowers at a later date, especially with their benefits regarding pests.

A Member queried about whether Growing Well had a Facebook page and whether it was the aim of the project to become self-sufficient through their business model. The West Cumbria Lead noted that Growing Well did not currently have much advertisement in place as there are no places available but when the site opened, they would be more visible within the community and online. It was also explained that the current funding was for two and half years, with work being done regarding what happens for the future.

A Member asked how many beneficiaries the site could cope with, which the West Cumbria Lead noted that the average was 15 to 20 per day on Monday to Thursday with all volunteers welcome on Fridays and commented that all necessary vetting and assessments done by the site co-ordinator.

RESOLVED – that the presentation from Growing Well be noted.

38 Community Panel Update

The Area Planning Manager provided an overview of the detailed report which updated Members on activity in the Community Panel area and included information on network events and activities, the Local Focus Hub, a more localised libraries update and Active Cumbria, noting their Cumberland Walks and noting that a briefing note would be shared with Members after the meeting with further details regarding the Active Cumbria projects.

The Community Development Officer (CDO) highlighted the events that they had attended which included Egremont Farmers Market, Drigg Warm Hub, the Living Room Project with Helen's Herbs demonstration, two GDF Funding Events and supporting Millom Town Deals event to help promote the South Cumberland Community Panel and encourage engagement. The CDO also noted that some information had been missing from Appendix 1 regarding Active Travel, noting that three schools from the Panel area had not been available at the time the report was written. The CDO then highlighted that of the 36 schools across Cumbria that were involved in the Street Tag project, 10 of them were from the Panel area.

A Member requested an update regarding the Millom Town Deal, as Members were unable to attend the event due to it clashing with Full Council, which the Area Planning Manager agreed to follow up on with officers.

Members discussed improving attendance and promotion of events, both held by the Panel and those within the Panel area, which would be attended by both the CDO and Members to improve engagement with the Community. Both the CDO and Area Planning Manager agreed to follow up on to improve communication and a calendar of events within the Panel area, encouraging Members to also inform the CDO and team of events which are taking place.

A Member queried if there were any Cumberland Walks taking place south of Seascale, which the CDO explained as Appendix 2 only showing those walks open to the public co-ordinated by Active Cumbria. Training is offered to develop walk leaders, and other walks would be organised throughout the panel area by trained groups or individuals.

Members had a discussion regarding the Local Focus hub, querying what the Hub did and how it worked, requesting that an update be provided to the Panel at a future meeting with examples/case studies which the Area Planning Manager agreed to organise.

A Member praised the libraries in Gosforth and Seascale for their 'Library Links' service which the Area Planning Manager agreed to feedback to the team. It was also noted that, following feedback received from the community, fines for late books had been removed to help encourage people to return their books without fear of a fine. Members also agreed to having the Manager of Cumberland Libraries attend a future meeting to provide an in-depth update on the libraries within the South Cumberland area.

A Member queried whether any underspend would roll over to the next financial year, which the Area Planning Manager said was for the Chief Finance Officer to confirm.

A Member asked for further information on the Community Beat Officer for Drigg and Holmrook and the 'Deep Time' art project. The CDO commented that the question had been raised regarding the Community Support Officer but had yet to receive a response. It was noted that a piece of art was being added to the Seascale Water Tower for a 12-month period, but there were no other updates available on the 'Deep Time' art project.

RESOLVED – that the contents of the report be noted.

39 Investing in our Neighbourhood Report

Members received a report which set out the current position of the Neighbourhood Investment Fund allocation to this Community Panel as agreed by the Cumberland Council Executive. The CDO informed the Panel that there were 5 Community Investment Applications for either approval, disapproval, or deferment.

The Area Planning Manager noted the other recommendations within the report relating to the Panel priorities and Neighbourhood Investment Plan. Members queried the reason for the additions to future agenda which the Area Planning Manager explaining was to promote discussion, provide evidence and encourage partner working to help achieve aspirations where required. The Area Planning Manager also noted that the team had an overview of all funding opportunities within the area and were reviewing the current grant application and process, with CDO help and support available to all participants when asked.

The CDO noted an amendment to Appendix 1 due to an allocation of an investment to Orgill School for £992 but confirmed that the remaining balance for the Panel remained at £25,633.

A Member asked for clarification as to why some of the themes met being different from what was in the application to the application within the appendix. The CDO clarified that this was due to the application coming into the team before the Panel priorities were agreed and were therefore set against the Cumberland priorities.

A Member proposed an amendment to the allocated amount proposed to be given to Friends of Egremont Castle, with the CDO clarifying that the costs for the donation (£50) and contingency (£247) would need to be excluded, for the full amount available of £1,645. The amendment was seconded and agreed by the Panel with a vote of three for and two against. Due to this proposed amendment, the remaining balance for the Panel would now be £24,577.

A Member queried whether the Shackles Off pilot would take place during school times, which the CDO confirmed would be the case, to prevent anyone from being excluded from the pilot due to transport issues.

Members discussed whether the Shackles Off pilot met criteria D and F, which they agreed that there were some areas of concern but noted that other factors, such as extending the hours of existing staff, would allow for the pilot to meet the criteria.

A Member queried if the Ladies Lunch Club within the proposal for the Millom Network Centre would provide free meals. The CDO explained that as the Ladies Lunch Club was based on the Men's Lunch Club, free meals would be provided.

Members discussed the other funding applied for in relation to the Millom Network Centre project and what would happen should the match funding from Screw Fix not be attained. Members agreed to having a condition attached to the approval for the application, stating that match funding must be acquired before the approved funds are made available.

Members discussed the need to ensure the Panel service all of South Cumberland and funding spent as equally as possible.

RESOLVED – that,

- a) The contents of the report be noted.
- b) The Neighbourhood Investment Plan, as presented up to 31 March 2025, be agreed and reviewed at each Community Panel meeting.
- c) An amount of £2,000 be allocated from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to Gosforth Parish Council towards Stage 2 Detailed Design phase for improvements to Gosforth Public Hall.
- d) An amount of £1,645 be allocated from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to Friends of Egremont Castle towards a community event in Egremont Castle.
- e) An amount of £8,800 be allocated from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to Shackles Off Youth Projects towards a pilot NEET prevention programme.
- f) An amount of £5,000 be allocated from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to Millom Network Centre towards upgrading the kitchen facilities with the condition that match funding must be acquired before the amount is given.
- g) An amount of £6,000 be allocated from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to Millom Town Council towards installing solar lighting in Millom Park.

40 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – that the date and venue of the next scheduled meeting of the South Cumberland Community Panel be confirmed following the confirmation of the 2024/25 Calendar of Meetings at the Annual General Meeting in May.

The meeting finished at 8.38 pm