
COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 25th November, 2020

Present: Councillor Glen Harrison (in the Chair),
Councillors Bernadette Parkinson (Vice Chair), Judith Addison,
June Harrison and Kate Walsh
Co-optee - Bernard Dawson

Apologies: Patrick McGinley

153 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

An apology for absence was received from Councillor McGinley. There were no substitutions.

154 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations declared at the meeting.

155 Minutes of Last Meeting held on 30th October 2019

The Minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30th October 2019 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Recommended - That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.

156 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020 - 2021

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer submitted a report relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. He informed the Committee that the report requested Cabinet to give consideration to and comment on the draft work programme for Overview and Scrutiny for 2020/21.

Resolved - That the work programme for the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2020/21 be approved.

157 Defibrillators in Hyndburn

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer submitted a report to provide the Committee with background information relating to problems associated with publically accessible AED (defibrillators) in Hyndburn. He also reported that a representative of NWAS had been unable to attend the meeting.

Helen McCue-Melling, Regeneration and Property Manager, gave details of the background to the report. In summary, she reported that:

- in 2016 the Huncoat and Central Springhill Area Councils had authorised expenditure on nine defibrillators which were installed at publicly accessible sites across these areas. As part of the installations an agreement had been produced laying out the responsibilities of each party (Council, NWAS and the building owner).
- this agreement had not foreseen potential ongoing costs or identified a suitable Council department to take on the responsibility for the AEDs. She also explained that any future Area Council applications for the installation of an AED must come from a third party, who would purchase, maintain and be responsible for the AED themselves.
- there are now 20 publically accessible AEDs in the Borough for which NWAS have informed the Council they should be responsible for. She pointed out that it would be the Council's responsibility to repair the defibrillators attached to Council buildings although there was currently no Council department assigned responsibility for this. She reported that faults on defibrillators were not being reported to the Ambulance Service making these sites vulnerable and there was no budget to repair.
- Defibrillators cost around £1,000 each and installation on a site about £2,000. Defibrillators are then registered with the Ambulance Service.
- She requested that the Committee gave consideration to the issues raised and proposed recommended action.

The Chair reported that the Committee had submitted questions in advance to Council Officers and the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and, although NWAS were unable to be in attendance, responses had been received on the following issues:

Questions to NWAS:

- How many times had public defibrillators been used in the last 12 months and the number of lives saved.
- How had other areas dealt with similar issues to this?
- How many other public defibrillators were there in Hyndburn, apart from the ones referred to in the report, and were they evenly spread across the borough?

Questions to Council Officers:

- How could offline defibrillators be brought back online and how much would it cost?
- How much vandalism had there been to public defibrillators?
- Could defibrillators be relocated from buildings where regular checks were not being carried out by building occupiers as agreed?
- What budget would be required for maintaining the defibrillators and carrying out regular checks and how many hours per year would be required for this work?

Responses were given as follows:

- NWAS would have to be contacted to get the equipment back online as well as ensuring that all of the equipment was still in good working order and that any damage was reported to NWAS. Details were given of the estimated costs of the equipment, ongoing maintenance costs and costs of changing pads. She pointed out that this responsibility was not currently under the remit of the Facilities Section.
- Only one defibrillator had been stolen by the end of July.
- There would be a cost to moving boxes to a more suitable place.

- The maintenance of defibrillators could be very time consuming and the project would only work if there was dedicated communication with the North West Ambulance Service.

D. Holden, Resuscitation Lead for Cumbria, attended the meeting to inform the Committee of the importance of the scheme to the community. She reported on the importance of defibrillators being available for emergency use and referred to some areas having AED Guardians and outlined their role.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred to the importance of ensuring that the scheme worked properly. He agreed to contact other local Councils to see how they ran their schemes and to report back.

Councillor Walsh asked if the defibrillators were not being maintained due to Covid restrictions and referred to the difficulties associated with the pandemic.

The Chair requested that the Committee considered the main issues of ownership and maintenance of the scheme and proposed a Task and Finish Group to look at recommendations. He suggested that the Task and Finish Group consisted of a minimum of 3 members. Councillors Glen Harrison, Kate Walsh and Bernadette Parkinson all volunteered to be part of the Group.

Resolved

- (1) That, a Task and Finish Group be established, as soon as possible, to consider issues related to a scheme for managing community defibrillators taking into consideration issues including ownership, maintenance, and budgetary; and**
- (2) That, the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group are submitted to Cabinet for consideration, in order to speed up the process of establishing a robust and effective scheme.**

158 Hyndburn Hub Step-Up Presentation

A presentation on the Hyndburn Hub Step-Up was given by Lyndsey Simms, Chief Executive of Hyndburn Leisure Trust. She reported that the Hub had been set up to respond to the national lockdown restrictions in March 2020 and had now gone through three phases (March to the end of July, August to October and now in new national restrictions). She pointed out that many Councillors were involved in community engagements and that there had been a good response from volunteers and the community. She explained that the Hub was a brand that was well trusted and had met the needs of the local community during the last 8 months and that the work they had done at the beginning now stood them in good stead. She outlined the type of support that the Hub offered and indicated that they had a list of around 700 people who they supported. She explained that personnel from the Leisure Trust and the Council had been redirected from their normal roles to help out with the Hub and that they had 40-50 voluntary groups also supporting the Hub. As a result of working together a Food Solution Network had been formed which had been given grant funding and would help to co-ordinate the network and increase food capacity. The Hub helped to direct people to appropriate welfare officers and linked up to charity shops. She informed the meeting that there were issues of loneliness for some people and that the Hub had been the only contact they had with others and therefore referred to its importance in this respect. She informed the Committee that it was their aim to find out why people were having to access food banks and to look at future needs.

