

**KINGS NORTON NORTH & KINGS NORTON SOUTH WARD MEETING
NOTES**

WARDS: Kings Norton North & Kings Norton South	DATE: Friday 21 February 2020
VENUE: St Nicholas Place, The Green	START/FINISH TIMES: 7pm – 8.55pm
COUNCILLORS Alex Aitken & Peter Griffiths MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT Gary Sambrook	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 50+
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Representatives from Kings Norton Fire Station Stuart Cross, Amey Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:

1. West Midlands Fire Service Update

The following update was provided;

- WMFS had recently been awarded outstanding performance from the Government for its response time, which was currently 5 minutes.
- Small pick up type vehicles were now being used to attend smaller fires
- Focus was on flood work, Safe & Well Checks, Safe & Strong checks for businesses & work with schools
- Pathfinder Project working with single parents to divert children away from poor choices

In response to questions the meeting was advised that Kings Norton Fire Station was 3rd on the list for refurbishment after Aston Fire Station and Coventry both of which had been completed. There were no open days planned currently but any event would be publicised on Twitter but residents were welcome to 'knock the door' of the Fire Station and crew members would be happy to give a tour of the station.

2. Kings Norton in Bloom

Jenny Brewer, Britain in Bloom judge provided an overview of the In Bloom competition and in response to interest shown by Kings Norton Farmers Market in creating a project on The Green she explained that the Its Your Neighbourhood category would be ideal. Liz Charnley said the idea had been spearheaded by the Farmers Market and volunteers and they were currently engaging traders on The Green to seek support and would then look to community/resident's groups and WMFS. She undertook to arrange a meeting and post details on the Farmers Market Facebook & Twitter pages.

Councillor Aitken encouraged as many groups as possible to get involved and create a 'Blooming Green'.

3. St Nicholas Place

The Chair of the Friends of Historic Kings Norton advised the meeting that the church had announced that it could no longer afford to run St Nicholas Place and was therefore putting it up for sale. The Friends Group had been working hard to put a plan of action to save the building in place and had set up an Action Committee to pursue an Asset of Community Value application. The church had been requested to delay putting the building on the market but the group had been told to put a rescue package together before that could happen.

The ACV decision was due soon and if approved the building could not be put up for sale for 6 months. Help and advice had been sought from other local community centres and 2 well attended public meetings had been held for the community. Forms had been given to people to ascertain what they wanted to see, volunteering opportunities etc to create a database and keep people informed.

The church had reduced the number of staff employed at St Nicholas Place before Christmas which was making it difficult to manage the building and the groups using it and today had advised that there would be no paid staff employed from March.

The Project Lead for the Friends Group, in response to questions advised that the sale specification made clear the building was for community use and the new owner should continue that or pay back the Lottery funding received. However, this was not the case in the sales catalogue and the only other reference to community use was contained in a press release. The business plan being put forward by the Friends Group intended commercial (ie paying groups) & community use for the building and proactive marketing to include the heritage aspect and expand its use.

Gary Sambrook M.P. had been working with the group and advised that in line with planning conditions any change from community use would require planning approval and Heritage Fund was guaranteed to 2031. He undertook to take up with the Church of England if necessary.

In response to questions the meeting was informed that the church was unable to continue subsidising St Nicholas Place and the current and most pressing issue was how to find funds to retain staff to enable activity to continue in the building while a business case was put together. Details of the financial shortfall had been difficult to access but it was hoped to get the figures in the very near future. Councillor Aitken said he had been pursuing use of any S106 money available but the information had not been forthcoming and he would continue to pursue. He then outlined the next steps –

ACTION: - Several meetings had been organised to gather information/ move forward

- **Donations might have to be sought to keep St Nicholas Place open as the Friends of Group did not want to take it over before they were ready**
- **Residents asked to put names forward if able to help/volunteer or keep in touch**
- **The project plan would be shared so that help could be obtained from the community**
- **Main objective currently – keep building open with paid staff.**

4. Road Safety

Councillor Aiken referred to previous meetings where this had been a continuous issue raised by residents. He therefore sought suggestions that could be referred to the Local Engineer for investigation.

Residents made the following suggestions;

- Kings Norton Primary School – major issue with parking outside the school/ cars idling creating safety and health risks to children. The school had sought assistance from parking enforcement but as there were no ‘school’ or ‘zig zag’ markings outside had been advised it was not illegal to park outside the school.
- Camp Lane – parking on both sides of the road, used as an overflow for the train station creating difficulties for buses/lorries trying to get through. Driveways to the properties on the road were narrow so residents were unable to turn around on their drives and reversing onto the road was dangerous due to poor visibility & cars speeding around the blind bend.

- Knock on effect from Cotteridge islands & pedestrian crossings that changed continually creating a back log of traffic up to The Green. The stretch of road from Cotteridge to The Green needed to be re-examined.
- Rednal Road – layout change near to Lloyds Bank created traffic jams and noise & pollution for residents
- Longbridge Station park & ride – concern raised in connection with the charge for the Longbridge Station park and ride and the effect it could have on parking in local roads and the disincentive to use the trains. The suggestion was made for a multi-storey car park to be built on the site
- Pavement parking – serious problem in the area eg The Green, outside school, Grosvenor Court breaking paving slabs and obscuring vision for drivers and pedestrians. There was no enforcement to deter drivers from parking inconsiderately. Grosvenor Park Drive had been closed for 6 Months and motorists had started to drive the wrong way along the dual carriageway to avoid.
- Old Oak Road & High Meadow (off Masshouse Lane) – persistent speeding vehicles causing damage to parked cars, mounting the pavement etc
- Redhill Road (by golf course) – no street lighting making it very dangerous for pedestrians (BCFC training ground to Man in the Moon)
- Redditch Road – footpath was very narrow by doctors surgery & there had been a recent accident whereby a passing car had struck a pedestrian on the footpath causing an injury. This could have been more serious had a child been involved given that it was a route to schools. The road was busy as it was a link between the motorway and industrial estate. Thanks were extended to Cllr Griffiths for arranging to have the shrubbery cut back.

Residents queried the way in which accidents were measured and that the process needed reviewing as numerous accidents were not reported but were happening nevertheless. The M.P. was asked to take back to the appropriate Minister that the way accidents were recorded needed to be reviewed and changed.

Stuart Cross, Highway Steward outlined the details around the take over of the Amey contract by Keir at the end of March.

The following issues were raised and Stewart undertook to investigate and report back via the councillors;

- Street light P3 Birdcage Walk working intermittently
- Utilities digging up roads recently resurfaced and leaving in poor state of repair – Meadowsweet Ave, Calverey Road

- Co-op lorries travelling along back road to The Green causing damage to cars - weight limit required.
- Leaf & detritus build up making the pavements slippery along Redditch Road. Bank slipped onto pavement and required clearing. Also along Westhill Road towards The Green (Birdcage Walk) where leaves and encroaching brambles/vines was Making the pavement dangerous.

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In response to issued raised Councillor Aitken advised;

- Residents send photos of broken paving slabs to councillors for action
- Councillors had raised with the Leader issues around on street parking and difficulties for pedestrians and would continue to raise
- Councillors would look into the planning conditions attached to the Co-op planning permission re the size of delivery lorries.

Gary Sambrook M.P. advised he had been pursuing the issue around the park and ride charges at Longbridge Station and was in discussion with TfWM regarding funding to enable the charges to be removed. He was also looking into proposals for the Kings Norton Station and parking provision.

ACTIONS:

- 1. Issues raised above regarding road safety to be referred to the Local Engineer for investigation and report back to the next ward meeting**
- 2. Councillors to seek assistance from the Transport Behavioural Change Unit in respect of the parking problems around Kings Norton Primary School and request police to patrol and enforce**
- 3. Issue of road markings & broken speed activated sign on Westhill Road already raised with Local Engineer**

5. Other Issues/Councillors Updates

- a) Arc Academy Primary School – Stuart Cross, Amey reported that the pathway had now been repaired
- b) The Navigation – meeting advised that Weatherspoons had bought the pub and plans were out for comment. As there was no

demolition required or change of use submission to Planning Committee might not be required.

- c) West Heath Library – meeting advised that the library would now be re-located to Hampstead House
- d) Planters, Foyle Road – thanks extended to Kier for their assistance
- e) Graffiti, The Green – reported graffiti on Lloyds bank and other spots and future of the building was queried. Cllr Aitken undertook to request cleaning
- f) Redditch Road by car wash – hedge cut back but not the base therefore access by a mobility scooter was not possible.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – to be advised. **ITEMS FOR THE AGENDA** – Police update & Local Engineer Update

Councillors (s) Signed:

Councillor(s) Name(s) (please print):