

# **Birmingham City Council**

**Oscott Ward Meeting**  
**Thursday 15 October 2015**  
**19:00hrs**  
**610 Community Centre**  
**Kingstanding Road**  
**Kingstanding**  
**Birmingham B44 9SH**

## **Meeting Notes**

**Present:** Councillors Tristan Chatfield, Barbara Dring and Keith Linnecor

**Officers:** Ken Brown – District Support and Community Development Officer  
Nick Barton – Tree Officer, Amey  
Beverly Edmead – Community Governance Team  
Eddie Fellows – Highways Network Manager, Amey  
Lucy O’Grady – Customer Services Manager, Amey  
Jayne Owen – Place Manager, Housing Department  
Will Tyos – Amey  
Dominic Waller – BCC Tree Officer

There were approx. 42 residents present.

**1. Election of Chairman**  
Cllr Barbara Dring.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised residents of the changes to future ward meeting arrangements. Meetings would be more informal and resident led – focussing on the issues and matters of importance and concern.

**2. Notice of Recording**  
Noted by all.

**3. Apologies**  
None submitted.

The Chairman proposed a change to the Agenda running order and that the Housing Issues was brought forward.

**4. Housing Issues**

Jayne Owen, Place Manager advised residents of the following:-

- The Place Managers had been in place since March 2015; the main aim and

purpose of the role was to provide a holistic approach to all housing related issues across the Neighbourhood with partner agencies.

- A Neighbourhood Plan was being developed with key partners and residents to identify and prioritise key concerns and issues within the ward.
- A full inspection of the whole ward would be undertaken every six months in April and October; residents and key partner agencies participation with the inspections were essential.
- Environmental issues were an area of concern across the ward, particularly overgrown gardens, fly-tipping and general rubbish dumping, and blocked alley/ access right of ways. Street Scene Co-ordinators working across Perry Barr and Ladywood districts were looking at ways to address these areas of concern.
- Resident representatives were being sought for the Oscott Housing Liaison Board.

#### Residents' Concerns:-

- The dumping of disused white goods, particularly fridges and freezers were a real cause for concern; hotspot areas included Anthony and Audley Roads.
- The Bandywood Estate was in need of a general clean up; overgrown gardens, dumped rubbish/black bags were a common feature on the estate. Improvements to the properties were also needed to bring them up to the City Council's Decent Homes standards.
- The former Oscott Clinic building had been left empty and boarded up for a lengthy period of time, with no clear indication of when it would be brought back into use.
- Lack of parking spaces was also a concern for residents living on Bandywood Estate. The existing garages were not fit for purpose and were far too small to accommodate the cars. Residents' cars were being damaged as a result.
- Obstructive parking was also an area of concern; emergency vehicles would be unable to access the properties in the groves.
- Residents had repeatedly asked for the kerbs to be dropped to enable a driveway to be created for each property and were willing to contribute towards the costs.

Cllr Linnecor advised that several options had been offered to residents by the Housing Department; however these had not been responded to.

#### Action:

**It was agreed that Jayne Owen, Place Manager and Cllr Linnecor would arrange to meet the residents from Bandywood Estate to discuss and explore possible options.**

#### **5. Petitions**

None submitted.

#### **6. Tree Issues**

The Chairman introduced several representatives from Amey, who had been invited to the meeting to address residents' concerns.

Cllr Linnecor advised of the following:-

- There was a lack of quality and care with tree pruning across the ward by Amey. He had been actively campaigning to improve the standard and had met with Senior officers from the City Council and Amey to discuss his concerns.
- The tree pruning and replacement programme across the ward had not been properly thought through; the arrangements appeared to be ad-hoc and not very well coordinated.
- Residents' concerns and issues were not been appropriately considered.
- A number of petitions had been submitted to the City Council regarding these issues and concerns.

Residents' Concerns:-

- Several trees on Anstey Road were very overgrown and dangerous; overhanging branches had significantly reduced visibility on the road which made driving dangerous, and the tree roots were raised and protruding from the ground.
- Lighting and visibility in the houses on Anstey Road were also affected by the overgrown trees, and the soil/paving around the tree roots were cracked and raised.
- The root growth on the trees had begun to cause damage to the foundations of the houses nearby, which had affected residents' household insurance policies and any subsequent claim. Private driveways had also been damaged as a result of the overgrown tree roots on the public highway.
- Several residents had tripped over/hurt themselves on the protruding tree roots.
- There appeared to be a lack of care and understanding from the Contact Centre staff regarding residents' issues and concerns.
- Following the removal of a tree from the front of 61 Lambeth Road to enable disabled access, a replacement tree was planted in the same place.
- The white 'H' marking outside 73 Harleston Road was unusable as the tree in front of the marking had not been removed.
- Tree roots had grown into the manhole cover in Old Oscott Lane; this had been reported on several occasions, however, no remedial action appears to have been taken.
- The residents living at 44 Hathersage Road were unable to access their driveway as there was an overgrown tree on the highway. This had been reported on several occasions to Amey; however no action had been taken.
- Residents were very unhappy and dissatisfied with the manner in which Amey had responded to their petitions and felt that their attitude had been rude and dismissive.

Nick Barton, Tree Officer, Amey advised of the following:-

- Inspections were being carried out following the receipt of the petitions submitted; several roads had been identified as a priority, including Anstey Road. Work would include thinning out/density removal and pruning as appropriate.
- Currently, tree inspections were carried out twice a year and tree pruning undertaken at the end of the autumn.
- A management plan was being finalised for the roads and trees programme for the next 5 years. This would include the regular inspection of trees and the tree pruning priorities reviewed as necessary; however, it had been acknowledged

there were long standing issues with severely overgrown/mature trees across the city which needed to be rectified.

- Tree removal was carried out based on the health and condition of the tree; the size of a tree was not part of the criteria for removal.

**Action:-**

**Nick Barton to look at the individual issues raised, and to advise the residents affected and Ward Councillors of the outcome.**

**7. Highways Issues in the Ward**

Residents' concerns:-

- A lamppost in Anstey Road had been demolished in a car accident, and whilst it had been made safe, repairs/replacement must be carried out as soon as possible and the lamp relit.
- The mixture being used to repair the road surface was substandard and of a very poor quality. The resurfacing/patching repairs carried out had deteriorated rapidly, leaving the road surface in a poorer state of disrepair.
- The road surfacing repairs recently carried out on Birkenshot, Brandwood and Kingstanding Roads were particularly poor and needed to be redone.
- The road surface in Dyas Road was dangerous and in need of urgent repairs.
- Obstructive parking in Greenholme Road was a real concern; double edged kerbs had been requested, and residents with driveways were verbally abused by drivers on a regular basis when asked not to block their driveway.

Eddie Fellows and Lucy O'Grady, Amey Representatives advised of the following:-

- The repairs to the lamppost in Anstey Road were in hand; arrangements were being made for the supply to be reconnected by Western Power as soon as the repairs were completed.
- The slurry seal mix previously used by Amey had not been used since 2013. However, all materials used were subjected to rigorous testing and had to meet strict quality control processes.
- Regular inspections of the work carried out were undertaken by Amey and City Council Highways Officers. Financial penalties were imposed for substandard work, and remedial works were carried out at Amey's expense.
- Each road is inspected and its condition assessed prior to its inclusion in the highways maintenance programme for the city. Each district/ward priorities would also be considered in the annual programme.
- The terms and contractual arrangements with the City Council were technically quite detailed and complex; any additional or non- standard work not included in the contract had to be appropriately priced and source of payment agreed by both parties.

**Action:-**

**Amey to follow up the issues raised and advise Ward Councillors accordingly.  
The District Engineer to be invited to attend the next Ward Meeting.**

**8. Boundary Commission Review**

Residents were advised that copies of documents were available online, and strongly advised that where possible, residents should submit their views, comments, concerns and suggestions.

Proposals included the reduction in the number of City Councillors from 120 to 100; the redrawing/redefining of current ward boundaries; the current and future role of the Ward Councillor and the move to 'all out Councillor elections' every four years, commencing in 2018.

Cllr Chatfield advised that Ward Councillors would provide support and assistance for residents wanting to know more about the proposals.

**Action: All to Note**

**9. Residents Issues/Matters of Local Concern**

There were no other issues raised.

The Chairman thanked residents for their attendance and active participation in the issues raised.

The Date of the next meeting was to be confirmed and residents advised accordingly.

**10. Authority to Chairman and Officers**

Agreed.

The meeting closed at 2030hrs