

Birmingham City Council

Oscott Ward Meeting **Wednesday 5 July 2017** **7pm at 610 Community Centre** **Kingstanding Road** **Kingstanding** **Birmingham B44 9SH**

Meeting Notes

Present: Councillors Barbara Dring, Tristan Chatfield and Keith Linnecor

Officers: Sergeant Hunt, West Midlands Police
Lucy O'Grady, Amey
Kay Thomas – Community Governance Manager

There were 16 residents also in attendance.

1. Election of a Chair for 2017/18

Councillor Barbara Dring was elected as Chair

2. Notice of Recording

Noted by all.

3. Apologies - Nigel Quinn, Oscott Residents Association & Head Teacher Hawthorne Primary School

4. Notes of Previous Meeting

Noted

Matters Arising – Burford Road Playing Fields – Councillor Chatfield asked that an update be provided to the next meeting.

5. Petitions

None submitted.

6. Police Issues

Sergeant Charlotte Hunt provided the following update;

- An awareness day to promote the Active Citizens Fund was being organised and community groups were asked to consider use of the fund that was now available.
- Key areas were being identified for attention known as 'hot grids' and in Oscott the focus would be around Asda (Queslett) and Kingstanding Circle.
- A youth club, run by the YMCA had opened at Emmanuel Community Church, Kettlehouse Lane and it was hoped this would help with anti-social behaviour issues in the area.
- Crime statistics, year to date – crime in general had increased by 15% (57 more cases), burglary had increased by 22.9% (8 offences), robbery had seen an increase of 1 crime and public place violence with injury had increased by

87.5% (14 offences). The meeting was advised that crime in Oscott was still low for the Perry Barr district and that changes to the way some crimes were recorded had increased the figures.

- The local team was aware of the issues around speeding and parking and would undertake community speed watches if groups wanted to get in touch.
- In response to concerns regarding groups of children on bikes, residents were asked to continue reporting.
- Reference made to the previous meeting and reports of a nuisance beggar. CCTV footage was available so efforts were being made to trace him to find out what support was necessary.

Councillor Linnecor thanked the team for their hard work. He referred to numerous complaints received regarding the length of time it was taking to answer a 101 call and that the service was clearly not working and asked Sergeant Hunt to take this message back.

Residents asked that action be taken with respect to quad bikes being driven at all hours of the day and night around Cooksey Lane, Kingstanding Hill and Anerley Grove. Sergeant Hunt undertook to raise with Sergeant Blackman. Complaints also of motorbikes racing along Anerley Grove and down Kingstanding Hill. The meeting was advised that Sergeant Blackman was aware of this issue but due to the reckless manner in which the motorbikes were driven they could not be pursued so work was being done to identify the riders.

7. Tree Issues

Councillor Linnecor referred to the consultation and review undertaken in the ward and said the results would be shared with residents in the autumn at the next meeting. Feedback was therefore requested that could be fed into the survey. A scrutiny review on tree pruning was also being undertaken as a result of the work of the Oscott councillors.

Lucy O'Grady advised that the tree officer would attend the next meeting with the results of the review that was still underway. She undertook to take back any issues raised.

Residents then made the following points;

- The meeting had been told by the tree officer in October 2016 that trees in Anstey Road would be dealt with in 2017. No action had been taken and now residents were advised that trees could not be pruned while in leaf.
- Thornbridge Avenue - some trees had not been pruned since 1990 and the sap caused damage to cars. Residents did not want to lose the trees but wanted them properly maintained.
- Trees on the central reservation in Thornbridge Avenue had been removed and replaced with saplings when there had been no problem with the existing trees.
- Tree outside 44 Hathersage Road was a London Plane growing 2/3ft from the property and residents in the house were suffering breathing problems which meant windows could not be opened, cars had been damaged from branches falling from the tree. Amey had indicated the tree was a priority but nothing had been done. Amey had a duty of care and urgent action was required.
- The leaves from trees in Warren Hill Road collected in the drains at the bottom of the hill on Wrekin Road causing flooding to local properties. Action was required to ensure the drains were kept clear. Residents were unable to clear the debris themselves as the amount of leaves etc falling from the trees was too great to be accommodated in their wheelie bins.

Lucy O'Grady undertook to refer the issues raised in respect of Ansty Road and Thornbridge Avenue to the tree officer and to take further details regarding the tree in Hathersage Road.

Councillor Linnecor requested that the above comments be fed into the review. It was hoped that the outcome of the survey would influence the way trees were pruned. With reference to clearing leaves Councillor Linnecor undertook to look into the possibility of groups working together and being given equipment to clear leaves.

Councillor Chatfield advised that large trees made air pollution worse by trapping pollution under the canopy and the Government needed to address this issue. The Chair said that the councillors had mounted a campaign to get the government, Amey and council to address the problems.

Residents said that urgent action was needed in the ward to properly prune the trees as they were damaging health, property and cars as well as causing other issues such as flooding however it was unfair to address all of these concerns to Lucy and those in charge of the service should be in attendance to listen to the concerns raised.

The Chair therefore requested that Senior Officers from Amey be asked to attend the next meeting.

8. Sustaining Oscott Libraries

Afzal Hussain gave an update on the progress of the proposal to create a community hub at the Oscott libraries since approval had been granted to the application for LIF. The hubs had opened in June and services had been delivered from the libraries, including IT, jobs and skills and advice. New signage had been ordered.

Lauren Fridlington said that Perry Common Library was staffed by Witton Lodge staff and volunteers. The library service was being operated through self-check facilities and at Kingstanding volunteers were supporting the library staff and well-being sessions and one to one sessions were on offer. During the summer assistance would be given to offer a summer reading scheme and children's activities. Despite not publicising that Perry Common library was open 150 people had been engaged and it was hoped to launch the services during the summer.

Afzal asked residents to come along and use the services, promote activities and volunteer. Remploy would be coming into Perry Common one day per week to offer services and any other group that wanted to work from the buildings would be welcome to discuss their service.

In response to questions Afzal said that services could be tailored to the individual when they came into the libraries seeking assistance. Witton Lodge had a long standing relationship with Wilson Stuart School and Lauren was speaking to the school about offering work experience and volunteering opportunities.

Further updates would be provided to future meetings.

9. Residents Issues/Matters of Local Concern

a) **Roads & Pavements** – Hathersage Road, pavements had been tarmacked but weeds were now breaking through cracking up the surface. Outside 24 Anerley Road, dropped crossing work started but deep hole left with bollards around it creating a hazard to pedestrians, especially blind people. Weed spraying undertaken by men on quad bikes and the effectiveness was questioned.

Action: Lucy to investigate issue in Anerley Road and report to councillors.

Details of pavement issues in Hathersage Road to be taken back.

If no improvement in the weeds in the above roads seen within 6 weeks,

Councillors to report details to Lucy.

- b) **Street Cleaning Programme** – Action: Councillor Chatfield to find the programme for the ward.
- c) **Litter** – in response to concerns Councillor Chatfield advised the industrial action by refuse collectors was having an impact but that collection of household waste was being prioritised.
- d) **Aldridge Road/Thornbridge Avenue/Greenholme Road junction** - concerns raised regarding the junction at Aldridge Road/Thornbridge Avenue/Greenholme Road which had been the site of numerous accidents and subsequent requests for action to be taken to make the junction safer. While it was acknowledged that some road safety measures had been installed at the junction accidents continued to occur and therefore it was requested in the strongest possible terms that further action be taken as a matter of urgency to make changes to this junction before a fatality occurred. Additional funding was needed however from the Transportation department as local funding was nowhere near enough to cover what was required.

It was noted that remedial works had been undertaken to a similar junction on Wylde Green Road.

Action: That the above concerns be referred to the Cabinet Member for Roads with a request that action be taken as a matter of urgency.

10. Authority to Chairman and Officers

Agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm