

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SHARD END WARD MEETING

MONDAY 29 JANUARY 2018

7PM

GLEBE FARM LIBRARY

GLEBE FARM ROAD

B33 9NA

MEETING NOTES

Present: Councillors Marje Bridle, John Cotton and Ian Ward

Officers: Beverly Edmead – Community Governance Team
Liz Parkes – Library Services, BCC
Sgt Dan Turnbull – West Midlands Police
Pat Whyte – Community Development & Support Unit

There were approx. 30 residents present.

Cllr M Bridle in the Chair

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Following introductions, Cllr Bridle, Ward Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chair advised that members of the press/public may record and/or take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

3. APOLOGIES

An apology for lateness was submitted on behalf of Cllr Ward.

4. LOCAL INNOVATION FUND – PROJECT UPDATES

The Chairman welcomed representatives from Welcome Change CiC and Positive Impact Mentoring & Community Helping Hands. Both organisations had received money from the Ward Local Innovation Fund.

Community Caretaking & DIY Project

Dave Watton, Welcome Change CiC gave the following update:-

- The aim and purpose of the project was to upskill local active residents in the ward to perform small DIY and gardening jobs. The trained/skilled residents would then be able to put to these skills to use by providing an affordable and quality service to those residents most in need. The training provided was fully accredited (OCN Level).
- To date, approx. 5,000 leaflets/flyers promoting the service had been printed and distributed; a paid worker (15hrs per week) had been appointed along with

10 volunteers. Several residents had also indicated their willingness to get involved with the project.

- Work carried out to date included small DIY jobs within the home and litter picking/tidy up in hot spot areas and parks. A number of referrals to the service had been received from Age Concern and other local agencies/organisations.

Residents sought further information regarding the full costs incurred to date and how much of the Local Innovation Fund has been paid to the project to date to enable them to get started. Mr Watton agreed to provide a full breakdown of costs incurred to date to Pat Whyte, Neighbourhood Development & Support Officer and the Ward Cllrs, and that this would be done on a quarterly basis.

Action: Welcome Change CiC to provide full breakdown costs incurred to date as requested.

Glebe Farm Library – More Than Just A Library

Dave Watton advised of the following:-

- The use and development of the library facilities as a Community Hub was being managed by Welcome Change CiC
- The project was a joint venture with Stechford & Yardley North Ward and Shard End Ward and received LIF funding from both wards.
- Currently, the library building was open for 3 days a week. However, it was felt that the building could be better utilised to serve the needs of the local community.
- A steering group had been set up to meet on a fortnightly basis to look at and explore any ideas and suggestions put forward by residents and library service users.
- Approx. 2000 leaflets had also been produced and distributed locally. Several priorities had been identified from the suggestions made – these were
 - A Homework Club
 - A Jobs Club/CV writing/interview skills & techniques/getting resident(s) 'job ready'
 - A local History Club/Outdoor Activities
 - Coffee/Bingo Club
- A number of voluntary and community groups and organisations had also expressed an interest in using the library facilities for drop in/mentoring sessions; these included Birmingham Mind, Birmingham Settlement, Knit & Natter Group; Walking Groups and Translation Services.

Residents felt that the lack of public toilet facilities at the library was disappointing and could affect the smaller voluntary groups who wanted to use the library. The Library Manager explained that staff could allow the use of staff toilets in an emergency however a long-term solution would need to be considered.

Several residents called for more youth/young people involvement with the discussions and consultation regarding the use of the library as it was important their

voices were heard. There was also a need to engage older residents for the same reasons, and several suggestions had been made to include activities specifically for them. Walking benches and tea dances were amongst the suggestions made for keeping older residents active.

Intergenerational activities between young and old had also been suggested as good and positive way of building a better understanding and relationship as well as fostering community spirit.

Other suggestions included better use of the nearby recreation ground, including improvements and a general tidy up. Residents felt that a number of outdoor activities at the recreation ground for young and old would also be a positive step forward and suggested that a 'Friends Of' group should also be considered.

Cllr Cotton gave details of the 'Greening Up the River Cole' initiative currently being developed by the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund was being sought to carry out the initiative along with volunteers from the local community.

Members and residents suggested that consideration should be given to developing an Action Plan for the use of the Library and recreation ground.

Action: Welcome Change CiC to provide full breakdown costs incurred to date.

Community Buddying & Respite /Sitting Service

Lorraine Owen, Positive Impact Mentoring (PIM) briefly advised of the following:-

- The aim of the project was to provide much needed buddying and carers support /respite service
- Since the project started in October, 7 local volunteers had been recruited and following the necessary checks had been fully trained to help deliver the service.
- To date, 10 people/families had been supported by the service.
- A Carers Group had also been set up. The group meets every Thursday, 10am – 4pm at Aylesford Hall.
- Gentle exercise classes had also been set up for carers and their families – this included armchair aerobics and walking football.
- Young carers remained a cause for concern and a number of initiatives and activities were being considered at their request – these included book clubs, gardening, and basic cooking skills. Several elderly residents had offered to share their gardening knowledge and experience with the young carers.
- Good links had also been established with local businesses, several of whom had helped with small jobs/free materials etc.

Responding to residents' questions, Lorraine confirmed that full background and DBS checks had been DBS carried out for each volunteer before being accepted for training. Lorraine further advised that an affordable charge for the sitting service would eventually be introduced as the project developed.

Action: Positive Impact Mentoring to provide a full breakdown of expenditure to date.

The Chair thanked the project representatives for their presentation/information update and advised that the LIF funded projects would continue to operate across the current Shard End ward boundary until completed.

5. LOCAL NEWS/INFORMATION UPDATES

(i) West Midlands Police

Sgt Dan Turnbull advised of the following:-

- Burglaries had been the main focus for the local policing team during the last month or so. A proactive approach had been taken by officers to target/disrupt the activities of known offenders living locally.
- Several arrests had been made earlier in the day, and where vehicles had been stolen, these were recovered.
- Consideration was being given to working on a long-term solution to tackle/manage these problems. Offender management remained one of the main priorities for the neighbourhood policing team; work was ongoing with partner agencies including probation services to monitor/reduce the acts of criminality. Sanctions included curfews/exclusion zones would have to be agreed by the court.
- A number of warrants to recover stolen goods had been successfully executed in Tile Cross.
- Following on from the last ward meeting where the behaviour and actions of a known group of young people had been a major cause for concern, a meeting had been arranged with Council Officers, WMP and Housing Providers. A public meeting had also been arranged for Thursday 8 February, 6.30pm at Aylesford Hall for residents concerned/affected by the behaviour.
- WM Now Website– residents were actively encouraged to sign up to the site. Service users were able to report non urgent crime/concerns; track a reported incident as well as receive alerts about criminal activities and concerns locally.

Several residents felt there should be zero tolerance approach to offenders and that robust action must continue to be taken against prolific offenders. They added that many residents who had been burgled or a victim of crime had become disheartened and no longer felt there were able to report the crime. Residents further advised they were not kept informed or up to date on any progress made on reported incidents.

Responding to residents comments, Sgt Turnbull actively encouraged residents to continue to report incidents as it helped to learn more about the ‘modus operandi’ of the perpetrator so that resources could be targeted more effectively.

Sgt Turnbull acknowledged that keeping residents informed could be improved. A monthly police community newsletter was suggested as a good way of keeping residents informed.

Action: Sgt Turnbull to produce monthly police community newsletter for wider circulation amongst residents.

Lorraine Owen (PIM) advised of the ongoing mentoring work with a number of the disaffected young people who had been causing problems locally and agreed to discuss the matter further with Sgt Turnbull after the meeting.

The Chair thanked Sgt Turnbull for his update.

Action: All to Note

(ii) Councillors Updates

- Keep Britain Tidy Clean Up Weekend

This was due to take place on 2-4 March. Several residents/groups had already volunteered and hot spot areas identified. Residents interested in taking part were advised to contact Cllr Bridle for more information.

- Bus Services in the Ward (Nos 14 & 59)

Cllr Cotton had not yet received details from National Express regarding a public meeting to discuss the changes to the bus services. A petition with over 600 signatures had been submitted and a Campaign Group was being coordinated by staff at Birmingham Settlement.

Cllr Cotton would continue to keep residents informed of any further developments.

Action: All to Note

6. RESIDENTS NEWS UPDATES/CONCERNS AND ISSUES

Residents advised of the following matters of concern:-

- Cole Hall Lane – the road layout continued to be a cause for concern and felt the installation of speed humps/cushions was the only solution.

Cllr Ward advised that the road was on the 'Blue Route' used by WMFS and West Midlands Ambulance Service which meant speed humps/cushions, was totally unsuitable. The current road layout had been designed to reduce speed and traffic congestion, unfortunately the poor driving practices had continued to cause problems.

The District Engineer had explored a number of options and whilst an appropriate workable solution had not been found, the removal of the measures currently in place would lead to even more speeding, inconsiderate and dangerous driving.

- Increase in fly-tipping/rubbish dumping across the ward. Kirkham Grove and Stud Lane was particularly bad.

Action: Cllr Cotton agreed to investigate

- Increase in littering across the ward, particularly around fast food outlets and

takeaways. Residents called for more robust and proactive enforcement action against offenders, and that premises owners should be made more accountable for keeping area around the outlet clean, tidy and litter free.

Cllr Ward advised of the work carried out by Waste Enforcement Officers across the city, including the issue of on the spot fines for littering. However the dropping of litter must be witnessed by appropriate officers before a fine could be issued.

Business owners were responsible for keeping the area around their premises tidy and litter free as part of their planning consent.

Residents were reminded to report problematic areas to the Ward Cllrs for further investigation.

Action: All to Note

- Iron Lane Development - residents sought an update on when the scheme was likely to commence and what the plans were for the B& Q site. Cllr Cotton advised discussions were ongoing with officers and the site owners to find a workable solution. It was hoped this would be concluded before the summer. Residents would continue to be kept informed.

Action: Cllr Cotton to follow up on the site development

- Kitts Green Nursery Closure – a local resident/parent expressed concerns at the closure of the local nursery which was very well used and a much needed asset to parents living nearby. Many parents would have to travel further afield to find suitable and affordable childcare, which was disappointing and very stressful.

Cllr Ward advised of the ongoing consultation regarding Council Services following the savings required to be made as part of the budget savings, and the need to prioritise key services.

Cllr Ward offered to discuss the matter further with the resident/parent concerned following the meeting.

- Stud Lane – traffic congestion/obstructive parking on Saturdays and Sundays when the non-league football games were taking place.

Action: Sgt Turnbull to pass the details on to the Sgt covering Stechford Ward.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 26th March 2018, 7pm, Mackadown Sports & Social Club, Mackadown Lane

7. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRPERSON AND OFFICERS

Noted and agreed that:-

“In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer had authority to act on behalf of the Committee”.

The Chair thanked residents for their attendance and active participation in the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:50pm