

## NECHELLS WARD MEETING NOTES

<b>WARD:</b> Nechells	<b>DATE:</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>VENUE:</b> Free@Last, Nechells Park Road, B7 5PR	<b>START/FINISH TIMES:</b> 6.30pm – 7.35pm
<b>COUNCILLOR</b> Lee Marsham	<b>NOs OF ATTENDEES:</b> 12
<b>OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b> <b>Debbie Needle &amp; Simon Needle, City of Nature Project</b> <b>Pat Whyte, Community Support &amp; Development Officer</b> <b>Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager</b>	
<b>CURRENT WARD ACTION PLAN PRIORITIES:</b>	
1. A Cleaner Nechells 2. A Safer Nechells 3. A Greener Nechells 4. A Healthier & Better Connected Nechells	
<b>MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDING LOCAL CONCERNS:</b>	
<p><b>1. Welcome &amp; Notice of Recording</b>  Councillor Marsham welcomed all to the meeting and advised that members of the public/press could record and take photographs except where there were exempt or confidential items.</p> <p><b>2. Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>  Councillor Marsham reminded residents of the discussion at the previous meeting where ideas for Nechells parks and open spaces had been discussed as part of the consultation on the Future Parks project.</p> <p>Debbie Needle explained about the Future Parks project and that the pandemic had heightened recognition of how important parks and open spaces were to citizens. With this in mind, the condition of the city's parks and open spaces had been assessed to look at their condition and accessibility for</p>	

residents. Bloomsbury Park was the first park to be assessed and the Landscape Practice Group had come up with some ideas/designs that the local community might want implemented, changed or not considered. Those ideas had been shared at the previous meeting. It was stressed that funding was not available for all the suggestions. Images were shown to the meeting.

**Bloomsbury Park** – First step was looking at access. Entrance by the POD was well used but other entrance needed work to make it feel more welcoming/safer. Feedback around this taken on board from previous meeting. Also, better management of trees to ensure lighting was effective at POD entrance and by lifting the tree canopy wildflowers could be planted. Comments from the previous meeting focused on exercise and well being and a daily mile walk route was being started.

**Hope Park** – recognised this park was not used to its full potential as community did not feel safe using it as it felt dark and unwelcoming. Comments from last meeting referred to poor lighting but pruning the trees would allow existing street lighting to be more effective.

There was some discussion regarding the suggestions made for the wards parks and the meeting questioned the installation of notice boards as any previous boards had become neglected and then an eyesore. The priority for residents was safe children's play areas. Friends of groups were the answer to the upkeep and therefore promoting groups for each park/open space so that they could then make decisions on matters such as notice boards should also be a priority. Debbie promoted the importance of noticeboards as a way of communicating with the community, especially where there were no Friends of Group but added that if a Group decided the notice board was not needed it could be moved to a park without a support group. The proposal had been borne from criticism that activities etc in parks were not well communicated to local people. It was noted that there was an unused notice board by the Post Office that could be upgraded and reused in a park and Councillor Marsham suggested this be done for Hope Park and a new one secured for Bloomsbury Park.

Meeting was advised that there were 4 Green Champions in Nechells and a Green Champion Co-ordinator who helped with green spaces and volunteer co-ordinators who would manage the Notice Boards. Rangers undertook annual audits for health & safety purposes and would also check to ensure information was up to date and the Boards in good order. The importance of community involvement could not be emphasised enough.

In response to a query regarding reaching residents where English was not their first language the meeting was advised that pictorial information was used but residents were encouraged to take ownership of the boards and to display information in community languages as the boards were for everyone to use to benefit the community.

Residents commented on the amount of broken glass in parks and the safety risk, especially for children. Debbie advised that maintenance had come out

as a priority in the consultation and so that would be a starting point. Basic maintenance would be started in Bloomsbury Park and hopefully completed by 22 September (cleaning, tree maintenance etc) as Parks had been challenged to have the park ready for a daily mile walk that was organised for that date.

Residents expressed an interest in being involved and Debbie undertook to speak to individuals at the conclusion of the meeting. Councillor Marsham suggested the parent/carers group mentioned be put in touch with Free@Last to join the community walk in Bloomsbury Park.

### **3. Local Funding**

Councillor Marsham referred to the Beyond Birmingham 2022 grant fund allocation to the ward of £17,500. The applications as follows had been recommended for approval –

- The Salvation Army Community Sports Day - £2,800
- Nechells Athletic FC Sports Project - £5,400
- Aspiring Young Minds Sports Project for Mothers & Children - £4,300
- Shine@Nechells POD 4 Community Events - £5,000
- St Kitts & Nevis & Friends – not recommended for funding, outside the ward.

### **4. Councillor Updates**

Car Racing - Councillor Marsham said that he had met with senior police officers who were running Operation Hercules to tackle car racing and in response to resident's concerns had requested that representatives of the police team attend a future ward meeting to discuss.

ACTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	WHO	BY WHEN
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the councillor recommendations for the spend of the wards Beyond Birmingham 2022 grant allocation, as set out above, be noted.</li> <li>2. Car Racing – relevant police officers invite to future meeting.</li> </ol>	2. Cllr Marsham	2. Future ward meeting