

**JOINT SPARKBROOK & BALSALL HEATH EAST & BALSALL HEATH WEST
WARD MEETING NOTES**

WARDS: Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East & Balsall Heath West	DATE: 22 January 2020
VENUE: Sparkbrook Health & Community Centre, Grantham Rd	START/FINISH TIMES: 7pm – 8.55pm
COUNCILLORS Shabrana Hussain & Zhor Malik	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 15
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Sergeant Chris Rigby & PCSO Lorriane Whelan, West Midlands Police Aviv Glaiser, Counter Terrorism Unit, West Midlands Police Sergeant Gallon, Impact Area Team, West Midlands Police Dean Morrall, Change, Grow Live Les Williams, Principal Operations Manager, Waste Management Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	Apology from Cllr Azim

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:
1. <u>Police update</u> Sergeant Rigby provided the following update; – In relation to the recent stabbing in Grantham Road an arrest had been made and stop and search powers granted to the police in the days following the incident. Arrests had also been made recently for drugs offences and there had been weapon sweeps of local parks etc and increased police visibility to offer reassurance. Street Watch & Neighbourhood Watch were good ways of helping the local community and reducing crime and there was an event being held at Christ Church Centre, 15 February at 11am to promote Street Watch & Neighbourhood Watch. Residents were encouraged to attend. – PCSO surgeries were being held on the last Friday of the month at Sparkbrook Health & Community Centre

- Youth interventions – junior PCSO's at Christ Church School & working with Bahu Trust on empowerment scheme for 14-17 year olds to build trust & confidence and in the police.
- Sergeant Gallon informed on the work of the Impact Team covering Sparkhill, Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath focusing on youth violence in the under 25's, drug crime etc through local intelligence. As well as dealing with crime officers were also supporting young people and helping them disengage from the wrong path. There were 16 officers on patrol over the area and contact details were left for residents to use to report any issues or if they were aware of any young person mixing with the 'wrong people' they would be happy to arrange a chat.

In response to residents questions the following responses were made;

- The recent stabbing had been a 'spur of the moment' attack
- There was no time limit for the Impact Team being in the area and it would be working in the area until the violence & drug issues were resolved. The Team was in addition to the Neighbourhood Team
- The knife bin had been reinstated outside Aldi but contact the police for collection of larger weapons.
- Officers would be patrolling the streets from the Impact Team but would mainly be in plain clothes & unmarked cars

Aviv Glaiser then outlined the work of the Counter Terrorism Unit and highlighted a specific issue with abusive stickers appearing around various areas promoting community tensions. She advised on action if such stickers were identified and recommended calling the Unit, which could be done anonymously, so that they could come and forensically examine the stickers if appropriate or residents could take photos & send and then remove the sticker. Information was on the police website or 'Hope not Hate'. Aviv said she would attend residents meetings etc if invited and she could be contacted via the local Neighbourhood Team.

PC Dave Manns spoke about the proactive work being undertaken with local schools and especially students with an Education, Care, Health Plan. Police worked with the school & parents/carers so that if the child became a victim, offender or witness officers would be aware that they needed support as an additional safeguarding measure. He welcomed contact from anyone with a child with a plan.

2. Change, Grow, Live

Dean Morrall gave a brief overview of the work of the Change, Grow, Live organisation that offered support to people suffering a substance misuse. The organisation worked with a range of partners including the local police team & KIKIT and also worked with the homeless and rough sleepers to get them into accommodation.

Residents referred to hostel accommodation in the area and the anti-social behaviour surrounding the properties, including attracting drug dealers. The meeting was advised that CGL was a charity and could only offer help to people who were referred to them or made contact for assistance. Family intervention was offered and there were outreach workers working with the homeless to move them off the streets. Sergeant Rigby referred to the areas of the ward where there were persistent beggars and welcomed some outreach work to work with those involved. Dean undertook to take that request back to the team to pursue.

In response to a question Dean advised that ex-armed forces personnel were identified at assessment and an alternative pathway was taken that recognised unique issues affecting that group.

3. Waste Management & Street Cleaning

Les Williams gave a brief update on changes to the service that would create improvements, including new vehicles, smaller vehicles to enable better access to narrow streets and new permanent staff. Services had improved and missed collections were reducing.

In response to questions the meeting was advised that the bulky waste collection service was increasing to £35 but residents were reminded that they could share a collection with neighbours and split the cost. Crews were now working a 5 day week and one member had been allocated a phone with an app so that they could deal with bulky collections, missed collections and other queries.

Residents thanked Les for attending and for the information provided but said that the streets were dirty and recycling had not been collected from Hickman Road for 6 weeks. It was acknowledged that the council was suffering from a lack of funding but increasing prices affected residents and for many in the area the charges were too high and this contributed to the amount of fly tipping. There were not enough prosecutions and therefore there was no deterrent. A further issue in the wards was traders displaying goods across the footpaths totally obstructing them for pedestrians but no action was taken against them. There were a vast number of fast food outlets which contributed to the litter and therefore increased frequency of street cleaning was required.

In response to the comments regarding street cleaning Les undertook to feed them back to the Street Cleaning Manager but advised that it was acknowledged that there were areas requiring increased cleaning so resources would be moved to those areas from 1 April and more beat sweepers introduced. There was a large scale exercise being undertaken regarding encroachment and waste enforcement officers were visiting traders to check duty of care, that the collection was adequate and other associated issues. Prosecutions were made but evidence was always required and residents could help with this but might be called to court to give evidence. Les undertook to attend the next meeting and to share prosecution information.

In response to queries regarding the collection of leaves the meeting was advised that the budget for that had been deleted and it now had to be done on the normal cleaning schedule. He took note of the roads mentioned –Birchwood Crescent & Taunton Road – and would report them to the appropriate manager. With reference to comments regarding groups undertaking litter picks the meeting was advised that bags for leaf collections could be supplied and arrangements made to collect. With regard to the request made for equipment the resident was asked to send details to Cllr Hussain & Les Williams so that the matter could be resolved.

Councillor Hussain said that Sampson Road, Dolman Road, Farm Road and Anderton Park Road were priorities for leaf collection. There was also an issue with fruit from a tree on the corner of Balfour Street/Mary Street which made the pavement very dangerous.

Complaint made regarding the collection of clinical waste. Les asked for details to be provided at the conclusion of the meeting.

Councillor Malik said that the garden waste had not been collected, rubbish left behind by crews on collection days was not being picked up & bins were not put back to point of collection. Les said he would look into it.

ACTION: Les Williams to attend next meeting with details of prosecutions and ward information. Councillors to meet with Les prior to the meeting to discuss issues.

Councillors (s) Signed:

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