

NEWTOWN WARD MEETING NOTES

WARD: Newtown	DATE: 18 th July 2023
VENUE As-Suffa Institute, High Street B6 4UX	START/FINISH TIMES: 6.30pm – 8.05pm
COUNCILLOR Ziaul Islam	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 15
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Pat Whyte, Community Development & Support Officer Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager Philip Morrissey, Red Watch, West Midlands Fire Service	
MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDING LOCAL CONCERNS:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome & Notice of Recording: Councillor Islam welcomed all to the meeting & advised that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items. 2. Police Update Apologies submitted on behalf of Inspector Everitt. 3. West Midlands Fire Service Update Fire Officer Morrissey reported on an increase in deliberate vehicle fires over the last quarter and urged residents to report abandoned vehicles to WMFS, similarly derelict buildings. Meeting advised of a consultation being run by WMFS seeking views to shape the fire service across the West Midlands over the next 3 years. Leaflets with details of how to respond were circulated, closing date 11th September. 4. Local Funding Available to the Ward Councillor Islam advised of local funding available to the ward & criteria for spend – Community Chest, Brum Breathes, local Highway budget & Beyond Birmingham 2022. Pat Whyte explained additional funding – Be Bold Crowd Funding and how this was available to local groups. 	

5. Ward Action Planning

Councillor Islam circulated a draft ward plan setting out priorities for the ward, based on conversations with residents and groups. It was noted that this was a draft document and residents were asked for further ideas and suggestions.

The meeting read through the Ward Plan and the following comments were made:

- Specific hot spots/roads/areas to be added in respect of actions.
- WMFS to be added to support clean-ups/rubbish clearing etc under Green priorities.
- **Green priority** – there were residents willing to assist with litter picks/clean-ups etc but there was difficulty accessing equipment, getting rubbish removed by the council etc.
- Alleyways needed clearing.
- Enforcement was key to keeping the ward clear of fly tipping and rubbish dumping. However, although evidence was provided to the council, action was not taken. CCTV cameras were requested for hot spot areas. Council tenancy conditions also needed to be enforced with regard to maintenance and cleanliness of homes and gardens and private landlords held to account.
- Mosborough Crescent – hot spot for rubbish/bins in front of the tower blocks overflowing.
- It was suggested that a waste management sub-station including equipment storage be situated at Wheeler Street shops to provide a point for communication around the street cleaning needs for the area and to house a mechanical street sweeper. Residents from the area would be willing to help achieve this as cleaner streets would help instil a sense of community pride. Newtown was also a gateway to the city centre so improving the environment would also be good for Birmingham.
- Suggested that St Georges area be used as a pilot to monitor clean-ups, bin collections, new bin delivery etc as this area was one of the most prevalent hot spots.
- **Safe Priority** – reference in Plan to speed watch & issues around parking. The local engineer was undertaking road safety work around Porchester Drive – this needed to be named in the Plan.
- **Healthy Priority** – include repairs to mould & damp in high rise blocks as a priority and housing & health providers as part

of the discussion.

- Head of Newtown Nursery School said that 60% of the children attending the nursery lived in high rise blocks and so she was developing, with the help of parents, the conversion of hard/tarmac spaces into nature spaces. She welcomed Councillor Islam and the Neighbourhood Forum to join the conversation to help change the way families saw green spaces and the opportunity to help with the Health priorities in the ward plan.

- It was agreed to include the above comments into the Ward Action Plan, with the use of local funding to action priorities.

6. Community Forums/Resident/Councillor Updates

a) Councillor Islam reported that he had –

- i) requested grass cutting around Geach Street, Ventnor Avenue and rear of Melbourne Avenue
- ii) reported issues to Housing Manager re Aldgate Grove
- iii) arranged a site visit around the ward with waste management officers
- iv) MHRC continued to be well used and alternative locations had been requested.
- v) Future of Newtown Community Centre – meeting arranged with Leader of the Council

b) Burberry Park Neighbourhood Forum –

- i) recent Fun Day had been a great success, 400+ people attended. Looking to hold further event in autumn, involving all Forums.
- ii) Parking – looking into funding for leaflets promoting the dangers of poor/inconsiderate parking that could be circulated around the area.
- iii) enforcement officers had visited re rubbish/keeping it on property prior to collection. Attempting to educate re cleanliness of the neighbourhood & advising that the situation was being monitored. Road sweeper had been out.

c) Central Newtown Neighbourhood Forum

- i) More volunteers needed and help around St Georges area.

- ii) Porchester Drive – rubbish dumping increased, inconsiderate parking – reported repeatedly but no action being taken
- iii) Yellow Park required maintenance to trees, bins emptying etc
- iv) meeting arranged at Newtown Shopping Centre 25 July re anti-social behaviour around the shops.
- v) monthly meetings to commence in September at Pannel Croft
- vi) Fun Day had been successful and residents were urged to join forums to help arrange the next.
- vii) Planting of hanging baskets had begun

d) As-Suffa Institute

Taz from the Institute gave a brief outline of services provided including soup kitchen, food bank, youth provision/club, counselling service as well education and community services. Details available on the website.

ACTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	WHO	BY WHEN
1. Add comments above to Ward Action Plan including new Green Priorities – a) Build waste management sub-station at Wheeler St Shops & St Georges area as a pilot area to monitor clean-ups, bins collections etc	1. Councillor Islam	asap
2. Include specific road names, hot spot areas etc, eg road safety measures in Porchester Drive	2. Councillor Islam	
3. Healthy priority – repairs to mould/damp in high rise blocks. Newtown Nursery School work on conversion of hard spaces to green spaces	3. Housing/health providers/Newtown Nursery to join discussion	