

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**HALL GREEN DISTRICT  
COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY  
1 FEBRUARY 2017**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HALL GREEN  
DISTRICT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1  
FEBRUARY 2017 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE  
ROOMS 3 & 4, THE COUNCIL HOUSE,  
BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT** : - Councillor Claire Spencer in the Chair;

Councillors Mohammed Fazal, Shabrana Hussain, Tony Kennedy,  
Habib Rehman, Martin Straker-Welds, and Victoria Quinn.

**ALSO PRESENT** :-

Karen Cheney	- District Head (Hall Green)
Andy Middleton	- Cycling Programme Manager
Andrew Chidgey	- Principal Studies Officer
Wesley Williams	- Station Commander, Highgate
Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick	- West Midlands Police
Marie Reynolds	- Committee Manager

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

356 The Chair advised that the meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site ([www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com)) and that members of the press / public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.

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**APOLOGIES**

357 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mohammed Azim, Barry Bowles, Sam Burden, Kerry Jenkins and Lisa Trickett for their inability to attend the meeting.

Councillors Kennedy, Fazal and Rehman apologised for having to leave the meeting before its conclusion.

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**MINUTES**

358 The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2016, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:- page 3 incorrect spelling of name should read Tsang.

**MATTERS ARISING**

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Councillor Quinn referred to the discussion regarding Bed and Breakfast figures at the last meeting and thanked officers for their subsequent excellent response.

She made reference to the Homeless Draft Review and the Homelessness Strategy that would be available in February 2017 and suggested that by the next district meeting, it would be a relevant time to delve more directly into the figures for bed and breakfast and homelessness within Hall Green district. She added that it did not only apply to people sleeping on the streets but also those that fell outside the statutory duty.

The Chair stated that with the shifting strategic picture at city level and with the Homelessness Reduction Bill, agreed that it would be beneficial in getting an idea of what homelessness looked like in the district and believed that it should be taken forward at the March meeting if at all possible.

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**PETITIONS**

**ONE-WAY SYSTEM ON GROVE ROAD**

The following petition was submitted by Councillor Hussain on behalf of citizens living in the above-mentioned location:-

(See document No. 1)

The petition on behalf of residents of Grove Road requested for the introduction of a one-way system on Grove Road or consideration for any other solution that may resolve the issues, as the road was too narrow and that it did not allow for two vehicles to pass safely approaching from opposite directions. It was noted that this had caused vehicle damages, distress to residents and on many occasions, altercations. There had also been lost refuse collections as the refuse vehicles could not access the road safely.

It was therefore requested that a one-way system or another solution be introduced as soon as possible to rectify this issue.

Concern was raised by members relating to the inadequate responses from Highways and Transportation regarding petitions that were submitted from elected members on behalf of residents.

Councillor Kennedy, Assistant Leader reported that he had discussed with Councillor Stacey yesterday this particular issue as to what could be achieved locally. He confirmed that there was going to be a basket of such issues that would be at least in draft by March 2017, as there needed to be a way for local consideration of such matters.

The Chair agreed that it was an ongoing issue within this district and the fact that there was no way of capturing this as a city and enabling it to be fed into the strategic decision making was very important and needed to be taken forward.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the petition be forwarded to the District Engineer for consideration and response.

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**MEMBER CHAMPION – CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE**

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The Chair reported in the absence of Councillor Bowles, that there were 2 children's homes within Hall Green District and confirmed that she would be visiting them with Councillor Bowles when he returned. She suggested that any members that would like to join them would be most welcome and agreed to circulate dates in due course. She subsequently explained the role of a corporate parent and why it was so important for members to make these visits.

Councillor Straker-Welds confirmed that he would be visiting one of the homes once he had received the Ofsted report.

The Chair encouraged members if they had not already done so to complete the on-line course relating to Child Sexual Exploitation and was happy to help if they needed any assistance.

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**BIRMINGHAM CYCLE REVOLUTION – HALL GREEN DISTRICT**

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Andy Middleton, Cycling Programme Manager and Andrew Chidgey, Principal Studies Officer, circulated illustrations detailing the Birmingham Cycle Revolution Programme, the overview and local plan for Edgbaston District.

Andy Middleton provided a brief overview of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution (BCR) Programme highlighting that they had secured funding of £57m to deliver a package of cycling improvements across the city. He confirmed that there was another 3 or 4 years before the programme would be completed and that there were 4 main elements to the programme.

He confirmed that following a number of successful bids, funding had been received from both the Department for Transport and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver the BCR Programme.

The largest element of the programme was a highway scheme package which comprised of the Main Corridor and Parallel Routes and associated Local Links, as well as the introduction of 20 mph Pilot Areas.

The other key elements were Green Route for cyclists in parks and public open space areas, as well as refurbishment of canal towpaths and associated access improvements to Canal Routes. The final element of BCR comprised a package of supporting measures including the Big Birmingham Bikes Initiative which introduced 4,000 bikes in local communities whereby 3,400 were allocated to the most socially deprived areas which helped people to access employment and other facilities. This had also provided a series of grants to a number of schools and businesses across the city through the Top Cycle Location initiative.

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Andy Middleton confirmed that in 2016 the BCR Programme Team had undertaken a review of the programme that had been delivered to that date and had taken on board views from stakeholders as to what they thought of the measures that had been put in place. He stated that as part of the process they had looked at revising and realigning the cycling programme over the next 3 or 4 years, and were focusing on highway delivery on two Main Corridor schemes, one along A34 to Perry Barr from the city centre and the second scheme from city centre to Bristol Road with a proposal to link the two schemes within the city centre. The slides circulated to members illustrated the measures that had been implemented to date.

Andrew Chidgey confirmed that the majority of work undertaken in Hall Green district related to off road routes which included the towpath of the Grand Union canal and the Stratford canal that connects through to the Cole Valley route which crossed the Stratford Road. Some minor improvements had been made relating to the Rea Valley route. With regard to the parallel routes, improvements had been made to the existing Stratford Road route which connected across from Springfield towards Balsall Heath. He added that there would be more substantive schemes in smaller areas. He referred to the money that had been set aside for Hall Green district to look at cycling measures around the Green Travel districts whereupon there were 2 in Kings Heath which also covered Moseley. He concluded by referring to the Green Travel district route where there would be some small scale work improvements links for cyclists in Tyseley.

Following comments and questions from elected members the following points were made:-

Andrew Chidgey referred to the Top Cycle and stated that although he did not have the specific figures for the Hall Green district, confirmed that there had been a full take up and that all of the funding had been allocated between businesses, other organisations and schools. He added that there was a further tranche that had been approved which would stretch across the city. He reported on the difficulties in providing information regarding the take up as it was difficult with monitoring private businesses and other organisations.

He referred to the broader issue relating to emissions emphasising that it was a big agenda item for the policy team and the city council regarding the clean air zones. He confirmed that at present it had not been linked to the cycling programme, and that it would be something that he would take back to colleagues and discuss with them regarding the clean air service. He added that it was not just about encouraging people to cycle but to encourage more usage of public transport and low emission vehicles and that all needed to work together in order to gain the maximum benefit.

Andrew Chidgey confirmed he would speak to colleagues regarding the opening times of Calthorpe Park and respond accordingly. With regard to the Highbury Park confirmed that due to various issues, they were still considering what could be done and also looking at what could be done within the park and would be consulting with Highways in due course, adding that it was not just an isolated route that they were delivering.

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He highlighted that next week they would be looking with colleagues in the vicinity of Shutlock Lane and Moor Green Lane and taking into account the area as a whole, whereby they would be looking at traffic speeds when considering crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and consideration would also be given to driver awareness.

Andy Middleton confirmed that the BCR funding was very much capital focused when looking at the different elements of the programme. He referred to the investment in the canal routes network which was in partnership with the Canal and River Trust and stated that once the capital investment had been made, the ongoing contribution would be from the Canal and River Trust taking on the maintenance side for the infrastructure.

He referred to the Green Routes and confirmed that in a lot of instances, they were in a poor state of repair, and therefore any improvements to the existing paths with the capital investment, was the intention that it was cost neutral, or in some cases, cost saving to the actual ongoing cost of maintaining the facilities.

He made further reference to the highways and specifically referred to the Bristol Road Scheme, where they were proposing to put a cycle lane through the central reservation and with the new infrastructure this would be an improvement to the highway network. He added that wherever possible they were trying to make the maintenance liability as minimal as possible.

He highlighted that they had worked with the park managers with regard to the type of materials that were to be used for the routes and were considered by all to be seen as low maintenance. He added that the ongoing issues with the clearing of leaves and fallen branches would have been a requirement on the previous paths, and therefore was unsure as to why they were making it any worse. He highlighted that they were limited with what they could do due to the type of budget that they were working with.

Andrew Chidgey referred to the issue regarding enforcement, and confirmed that they tried to ensure that what was implemented was correct and was enforceable through the police and the civil enforcement team. He highlighted that they were working with stakeholders with regard to education as well as the courts and it had been quite successful in what had been achieved. He emphasised, that it was about education and that there was revenue that had come from other sources, which had been used for education and training, however it was limited and was not sure of how much of the funding was going to be available in future years.

The Chair made reference to West Midlands Police and referred to their success in the 'Close Pass' enforcement which had been recognised across the country as the absolute best practice, and hoped, that more of this work would continue, adding that it was the first force in the country to target close pass drivers.

Wesley Williams, Station Commander, Highgate stated that as part of the Birmingham Road Safety Partnership agreed with road safety education especially with the increasing facilities for cyclists.

He reported that the road safety partnership was probably ahead in most Burroughs in co-ordinating with local authorities and the Crime Motorway Police Group (CMPG) in trying to get local policing and the fire service to work more

closely, although, it was not a well-funded activity which had to be considered, when trying to change peoples' behaviour, especially when cyclists and pedestrians were joining the traffic and that there was a real need for investment in this area.

The Chair commented that it was well known that congestion costs the city an enormous amount of money especially with regard to the poor air quality and the impact that it had on people's health. She considered the business case in taking this forward was very important and subsequently referred to the small examples of best practice in tackling this issue, and the need for all to be committed in finding ways to resource this properly.

The Chair concluded by thanking Andy Middleton and Andrew Chidgey for attending the meeting and presenting.

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**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE & FIRE SERVICE - UPDATES**

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Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick, West Midlands Police reported on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and confirmed that it was one of the main priorities for the force especially at a local level.

He referred to the recent schools panel meeting where it had been discussed how the police could work better with the schools within the area. He confirmed that West Midlands Police Partnership Team was currently trying to promote the sharing of the video from Leicestershire Police following the tragic murder of a girl from Leicestershire. The film was shown at the meeting and the police were encouraged to show the film in schools with the support of police attendance to deal with any debrief.

He confirmed that they continued to manage children that were suspected to be at risk from CSE at local level in partnership with Public Protection. He added that they also managed perpetrators that may be involved or at risk of being involved in CSE. He highlighted that they were trying to extend the level of work in order to involve primary schools before the pupils moved to secondary education.

Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick referred to the general intervention and prevention work that the police had been focusing on and hoped to believe with the recent crime trends that there had been benefits to the new way of working. He confirmed that there had been a third reduction reported in domestic violence and that a lot of intervention work had been directed towards domestic violence offenders and victims. He reported that burglary crime had started to subside and that there had been a number of good arrests over the last few months with several key offenders now in custody.

He referred to the work that had been undertaken in Springfield Ward with regard to tackling parking issues and the issuing of parking tickets which had been very well received by the community, adding that there had been a great deal of press interest which hopefully would raise public awareness to parking. He referred to the areas of Moseley and Kings Heath and Sparkbrook and the taxi operations that were planned in relation to the illegal taxis.

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The Chair commented on the work relating to CSE and primary schools highlighting that it was an important area of work and requested that the Committee be kept updated with the progress.

Following comments from members relating to the successful outcomes from the work undertaken by the police especially within the wards addressing the issues of quad bikes, traders, parking and hostels, Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick thanked members and agreed to feedback the positive comments.

He highlighted how they had increased their working relationship with hostels dramatically over the last couple of months and also increased their focus on knife crime and agreed to provide further detail at the next meeting.

Following a discussion relating to the increased numbers of hostels across the city and associated issues, the Chair stated that as there would be an update at the next meeting on Homelessness, suggested that it may be useful to have an update on how the licensing of houses in multi-occupancy worked and have a better understanding of how the city council could exercise their powers.

Following a further discussion relating to a greater need for statutory partners in sharing their intelligence more widespread with the local authority and with more effective joined up working, Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick agreed that there was the increased potential for a greater working partnership especially relating to vulnerability and homeless people.

Wesley Williams, Station Commander, Highgate agreed that there were a great many times when the fire service intervened in hostels and (HMO's) and it tended to be more reactive causing issues in relation to community resources. He stated that in his experience as a fire safety officer, that they did prohibit quite a lot of premises which often became an issue with the local authority with regard to re-housing.

He referred to his duties as a station commander whereby there was the involvement in helping and supporting communities' especially vulnerable people with regard to the 'safe and well' checks, and the expectation from the organisation that 40% of referrals came through partners. He highlighted the various categories of the community that were referred to the fire service which included alcohol and mental health issues and stated that through the organisation they would be linked into other partners that provided appropriate support. He added that if it was more intelligence led, it would be a greater benefit for the organisation and fully welcomed this way of working with partner agencies.

Wesley Williams, Station Commander, Highgate provided a general update. He confirmed that they were working more collaboratively with partners that included the police and local authority. He referred to the Birmingham Road Strategy that had been launched at the Fire Service Headquarters and that they were linking in with the West Midlands Road Safety Group and were covering the West Midlands regarding the road safety strategy which was working well.

He referred to the partnership working with the police regarding the burglary pack which had been part of the campaign over Christmas and as there were some surplus packs, they were being issued with the 'safe and well' checks. He further referred to the Homelessness Campaign and the clothes appeal which linked into

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the local charity St Vincent De Paul. He highlighted that people could donate all sorts of clothes except underwear to any of the fire stations across the city.

He reported that in terms of business safety, there had been a number of prohibition notices served and they were looking for opportunities to be proactive in acquiring funding from the business community, and confirmed that there was a growing relationship with partners in order to provide a much more effective and smarter service.

The Chair reiterated on the usefulness of having the item of the licensing of houses in multi-occupancy on the agenda and to invite Pete Hobbs to report on the private rented sector.

The Chair concluded by thanking Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick and Station Commander Wesley Williams for attending the meeting and reporting.

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### **FEEDBACK FROM CABINET COMMITTEE – LOCAL LEADERSHIP**

364 Karen Cheney, District Head (Hall Green & Selly Oak), reported on the discussion that had taken place with regard to the Chamberlain 21 report and the work that would be taking place in the areas of Hall Green and Selly Oak with regard to viewing assets. She referred to the revitalisation and reintroduction of neighbourhood working and neighbourhood co-ordinators, and highlighted the work taking place with regard to local innovation fund, confirming that 3 bids had actually progressed through the process, and was aware that there were several good bids in progress within Hall Green district.

In response to questions from Councillor Quinn, the Chair whilst explaining the concept behind the Chamberlain 21 the pilot, highlighted that it was looking at public assets and whether there could be anything done to use those assets more smartly in order to achieve the aspirations of communities within local neighbourhoods. She added that they were not necessarily suggesting that buildings should be sold off, but investigate the possibilities of gaining more value from these properties and therefore it was important to have a robust process in place in addressing this area of work.

Karen Cheney whilst detailing the governance arrangements for Cabinet Committee Local Leadership, highlighted that it was chaired by the Leader and that it had decision making responsibilities. She referred to the neighbourhood co-ordinators and agreed to provide further details at the next meeting.

The Chair agreed to share the information relating to the Assistant Leaders' proposal relating to neighbourhood managers and decide how this was best taken forward.

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### **HALL GREEN DISTRICT WORK PROGRAMME**

365 Karen Cheney circulated the work programme to members and briefly explained the breakdown of information and the items that would be discussed at the next district meeting.

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Councillor Quinn referred to the housing item and suggested that there needed to be an appropriate officer from the centre to provide the relevant information requested by members relating to the district's figures. She further referred to other area that needed to be brought into the housing aspect which was the selective licensing pilot that was likely to extend out to Hall Green district which needed to be taken together, with all of the figures included. She added that there was another challenge to this, which was the closure of the Sparkbrook Family Community Health Centre and as there was no other option within the district, or neighbouring environment for people to gain necessary information and support, this also needed to be included for consideration.

Karen Cheney confirmed that Jim Crawshaw was dealing with the information relating to homelessness issues, and believed that Pete Hobbs would be dealing with the selected licensing. She agreed to forward any further necessary requests on specific information relating to the district to the department for consideration and response.

Karen Cheney confirmed that the ward tracker information for quarters 1 and 2 was now available for circulation to members and subsequently explained how it could be of use.

Karen Cheney reported on the jobs and skills panel and district housing panel and confirmed that they were awaiting clarification on how they would be moving forward due to them going through some re-organisation. She added that the steering group for the Hall Green and Selly Oak project had now been set up.

She highlighted the dates for the weekend 3 – 5 March 2017 designated for the wards spring clean and confirmed that further information would be circulated shortly.

Karen Cheney provided a brief update on the Neighbourhood Challenge for Hall Green district 2016/17 which was to be based around Jobs and Skills and Young People. She reported that there had been some co-operation between Selly Oak district and Hall Green district as each would be swapping the themes they had focused on last year and the good practices would be shared from both.

She highlighted that the 2 district chairs had met to discuss what could be done and the broad theme would be around young people accessing and experiencing the journey through Job Centre Plus. She referred to the way in which this could be addressed with the young people providing their first-hand accounts of Job Centre Plus and the work with colleagues in the Youth Service to facilitate the round table discussions.

She suggested that it was taken as a major agenda item at the next district meeting with all the stakeholders on the observations and recommendations that came out of the round table discussions. She added that in order for this to be a productive piece of work, the recommendations from the sessions would be fed back to the Job Centre Plus and other interested parties.

She confirmed that she had received a favourable response from the Concorde Centre confirming that they could accommodate the discussions. She suggested

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that Councillor Jenkins, district champion may want to be involved in that area of work.

The Chair referred to the youth employment initiative, which was mentioned previously, and was part of the Birmingham and Solihull Youth Promise which had approximately developed 10% of what was supposed to do over 2 years with the engagement of young people. She stated that one of the reasons why they wanted to focus in on the Job Centre Plus routes, was to ensure that these young people were gearing up for work and that there would be some prospect of development and being able to gain real employment enabling them a future in the city.

Councillor Quinn suggested that members could accompany a young person to a Job Centre Plus in order to gain first-hand experience, and each member could invite a young person between 18-25 years from the ward to the district meeting as a means of getting the appropriate level of representation.

The Chair wholeheartedly agreed with the above-mentioned suggestions.

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### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 366 The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 29 March 2017 at 1400 hours in Committee Rooms 3 & 4 Council House, Victoria Square Birmingham B1 1BB.
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### **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (REPORTS BY OFFICERS)**

#### **Neighbourhood Advice**

- 367 The Chairman reminded members to view the e-mail that had been circulated related to Neighbourhood Advice relating to the changes that had come through from open advice to closed desk session.
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### **AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

#### **RESOLVED:-**

In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 15:45 hours.

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CHAIRMAN