

Quinton Ward Forum Meeting Notes
Wednesday 29th March 2023
7.00pm – 9.00pm
Room 5, Quinborne Centre
Ridgacre Road
B32 2TW

COUNCILLOR(S):
Sam Forsyth

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Stuart Cross – Kier Highways Steward
Beverly Edmead, Community Governance Team, Neighbourhood Development & Support Unit (NDSU)
Stacey Kettner – Neighbourhood Action Co-ordinator, Quinton and Harborne Wards

Apologies:

Cllr Lauren Rainbow – illness
Barry Husband – Community Rep, Highfield Farm Recreation Ground

No of Attendees – approx. 35

Cllr Sam Forsyth in the Chair

1. Notice of Recording

Residents were advised that members of the press/public were able to record and /or take photographs of the meeting.

Cllr Forsyth welcomed everyone to the meeting and proposed a change to the Agenda running order- the Highways Update from Kier would be given first.

2. Highways Update

Stuart Cross, Kier Highway Steward briefly advised of the following:-

- Worlds End Lane to be resurfaced in June 2023; Dwellings Lane had recently been completed
- The resurfacing programme for next year should be available in September. In the meantime, monthly inspections would continue to be carried out on the main roads and repairs scheduled as appropriate.
- Winter maintenance programme should be completed by the end of April; general maintenance work would continue to be carried out.
- Tree planting programme was due to be completed by the end of April; weed spraying/treating between April and October

Residents advised of the following concerns:-

- Ridgacre Lane – very large/deep pothole outside Tesco superstore –urgent inspection and full repair needed.
- Grass verges being destroyed by cars being parked on the pavement; Lower White Road was particularly bad – several residents had tripped over the churned grass/mud
- Highfield Lane, Blandford Road and Four Acres – several deep potholes in need of urgent attention
- Quinton Road West/St Boniface Church – cracked /raised flagstones and damage to grass verges
- Croftdown Road/Balden Avenue – cracked/damaged flagstones; renovation/building works being carried out by homeowners damaging pavement surface and building rubble/rubbish spilling over onto the highway.
- Lordswood/Hagley Road – building rubble from property currently being renovated spilling over onto the highway
- Court Oak Road – dead tree and roots outside Court Oak Pub /St Laurence & St. Faith’s Church still not removed
- Lordswood Road/Court Oak Road -road and pavement surface damaged by utility services currently carrying out work

Responding to residents’ concerns, Stuart explained that utility services were required to make good/restore the road/pavement surface to an acceptable standard and that Kier would carry out inspections to ensure this had happened and discuss any concerns/repairs with the relevant service.

Where private building works had spilled onto the public highway, the builder/owner also had a responsibility to clear the mess and to

repair any damage to the pavement. A visit would be made to the properties concerned and the builder/owner advised of their responsibilities – a notice to clear could also be issued and further enforcement action taken if needed/not complied with. Grass verge parking/driving over grass verges was an ongoing problem; Kier would continue to repair the verges, but preventative measures would need to be considered by the District Engineers.

Action: Stuart agreed to investigate the concerns raised and action accordingly and would also arrange a site walkabout with Cllr Forsyth and Marie Brown, District Engineer to look at the issues in Lower White Road.

Residents should also continue to report any highway related repairs via the City Council website or contact centre so that details were logged.

Cllr Forsyth and residents thanked Stuart Cross for his attendance and update.

3. Quinton Ward Action Plan 2022 – 2026

Cllr Forsyth reminded residents of the three key priorities discussed and agreed at the last meeting – these being:-

**Young People/Effective Provision for Young People
Crime, Disorder and Community Safety
Cleaner, Greener Quinton**

Updates were given on the following:-

Priority 1 – Young People/Effective Provision for Young People

- Stacey Kettner, Neighbourhood Action Coordinator (Quinton and Harborne Wards) briefly advised of discussions with a boxing coach who was keen to set up boxing taster sessions for young people in the ward. Music/creativity taster sessions were also being explored. The sessions would only go ahead if there was enough interest from young people.
- B32 CommUNITY Hub- Kerry gave details of the afterschool and weekend provision currently being provided, including a Saturday club which runs 11am – 4pm, and a drop-in warm space provided on Friday/Sat evenings specifically for young people. Quinton Allotments had also offered to provide help and support with growing/gardening skills. Kerry thanked all at St. Boniface Church for allowing the Hub to use the kitchen space at the weekends to offer food provisions for residents in need.

- Cllr Forsyth advised of ongoing discussions with Jan Collymore, Area Youth Officer to identify funding. Quinton Library was also used as a Warm Space provision on Fridays and supported by Stacey.
- Discussions ongoing with Four Dwellings Academy regarding possible use of the Youth Forum building; much needed to be done to get the Academy 'onside' and to be a good community neighbour, however progress was slow. Kerry briefly advised of ongoing discussions with the Children's Trust to hold an Easter Holiday Camp at the Academy.

Priority 2 – Crime, Disorder and Community Safety

- The last PACT meeting was well attended; concerns raised regarding the increase in anti-social behaviour on Simmonds Drive, particularly outside the Premier Convenience store. Funding for one CCTV camera had been secured and would be installed in/around the site following the end of the consultation currently taking place. The store manager was very keen for this to happen.
- PACT meetings dates– publicity remains an issue; residents not given enough notice of the dates, time and venue. Officers need to find a better way of advertising the meetings so that residents were able to attend.
- Quad bikes/scooters/mopeds/motorbikes use in Woodgate Valley was an ongoing problem. The police had secured funding to provide off-road bikes for officers and the use of the police helicopter as necessary. Residents must continue to report incidents if more funding was to be provided to tackle this nuisance and the damage caused to the green spaces. Several residents advised details of known offenders/perpetrators had been given to the police several times, but nothing had happened; the nuisance was still ongoing and would get worse as the weather gets warmer.
- New Chief Constable appointed and changes to the working arrangements for police teams from 1st April 2023, with the focus being more on neighbourhood policing.
- Court Oak Road – parent parking continues to be a problem outside Harborne Primary School annex/Queen Alexandra College despite the traffic enforcement arrangements that were included as part of the Planning Permission/Safer Travel to school arrangements. Cllr Forsyth had raised the issue with the Traffic Enforcement Team and patrols had been increased.
- Burglary rates in the ward had increased by 8% - again residents must continue to report incidents.
A resident gave details of a recent incident in Ridgacre Lane where a group of young men tried to force entry into several homes before speeding away in a black BMW.
Residents reminded to remain vigilant and to be extra careful when answering the door, particularly during the evenings.

Priority 3 – Cleaner, Greener Quinton

- Some visible improvement to fly-tipping hotspots, but still an ongoing problem. More enforcement work had started in hot-spot areas.
- The Mobile Household Recycling Centre would be back in the ward on Monday 17th April, in Glynn Road, 7am – 12pm. Discussions

ongoing to see if an evening or weekend visit could be considered for the future.

- A Love Your Streets initiative was recently carried out on Simmonds Drive/Highfield Lane
- Litter-picking equipment would be provided for residents/groups interested in carrying out litter-picking activities, and arrangements for bags/rubbish to be collected by the Street Cleaning/Love Your Streets crews. Residents to let Cllrs know beforehand.
- Street cleaning rota would be useful so that residents could monitor the service, and more encouragement for residents to clean/pick up litter outside the front of their property
- Evidence of prosecutions/name and shame offenders could be a useful deterrent.
- A more flexible approach to using the static HRCs including having appointment free slots
- Some waste collection crews still not returning the wheelie bins to the collection points
- Litterpicking/volunteering grid system would be useful in helping to identify and coordinate activities across the ward, particularly hot spot areas. Some volunteers become disheartened and lost interest as rubbish/littering was non-stop in some areas – Ridgacre Road was particularly bad. Peter Beck, QMCC felt that constituted Friends Of Groups would be the best way forward in helping to support volunteers and coordinate the many clean-up activities as well as improving general health and wellbeing.

Action: Cllr Forsyth and Stacey to do a site visit

- No Mow May – central reservations and roundabouts would continue to be maintained so that driver visibility/road safety was not affected. Peter Beck, QMCC suggested that consideration should be given to creating meadows which would be more effective and longer lasting than No Mow May.
- Trees planted by Severn Trent at the rear of Near Lands Close/Woodgate Valley not being watered or cared for – most had died which was very disappointing. Several trees recently planted across the ward were also neglected/not properly cared for by the relevant council services.

4. Councillors Updates

Residents were advised of the following:-

- **Update on The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS) Local Innovation Fund Investigation**

Cllr Rainbow was leading on the issue which was still with Legal Services for investigation. No further update was available at this stage.

Elliot Hirst welcomed that the matter was finally being taken seriously. TAWS had received the full £48,000 Local Innovation Fund for the Quinton Ward to deliver a major change programme based on their skills and capabilities – to date, there was nothing of value to show from their efforts. Residents need to know:-

- When would the investigation be completed, and a report issued

- Who was leading the investigation
- Can we be sure that the investigation would cover all the of the points made in the two reviews – in particular, would the report identify the third parties paid for specialist support and training? It would be good to know why TAWS needed to employ third parties for these tasks rather than using their own skilled resources
- Would interviews include all the parties involved, including those who attended training, events and consultations?
- Would the scope of investigation include the process from review by the NDSU (Neighbourhood Development & Support Unit) and payment approval
- How would the report be delivered to the Ward Forum and Quinton Community

Kerry (B32 CommUNITY) advised that TAWS were still active with the Big Local in neighbouring Welsh House Farm estate.

- King Charles III Coronation and Street Closure requests – deadline date for submitting requests was 21st April; main roads could not be included.
- Food Banks – use had significantly increased; donations and contributions were very much needed and appreciated by volunteers. Advice and support were also available from Citizens Advice Bureau and Oxgem staff on Wednesday mornings when the foodbank was open.

5. Other Local News and Updates

i) Neighbourhood Action Coordinator

Stacey Kettner briefly advised of other taster sessions for young people currently being explored – this included basketball and football following discussions with local contacts in both sports; multi-media type activities could also be considered if there was enough interest from young people and acknowledged that not every young person was interested in sport. Stacey added that consultation with young people was essential before any activities was funded to ensure it was what they wanted.

A small budget of approx. £10,000 was also available to help support local groups with community projects/activities in line with the priorities agreed in the Ward Action Plan, with a maximum of £2,000 per application. To date, applications had been submitted by B32 CommUNITY and a multi-cultural community group based at the Allotments developing an outreach programme to help tackle social isolation. Discussions were ongoing with Friends of Pitts Wood to explore a Fix a Bridge in the Woods project. Other suggestions included a Community Fun Day (previously hosted by Barnardo's) and Finger Signage project by the Friends of Woodgate Valley Country Park.

Groups encouraged to contact Stacey with ideas and suggestions – individual volunteers could not apply for funding; however, support would be given to find a constituted group or sponsor to help develop/deliver their project proposal.

ii) The Future of Highfield Recreation Ground

Copies of the report were circulated at the meeting. Elliot Hirst briefly advised of the journey to develop Highfield Farm Recreation Ground into the welcoming, much improved, and useable green open space for all residents, and thanked everyone involved for their active support during this time.

Elliot added that setting up a constituted Friends of Highfield Group should be the next step in taking things forward and building on the progress made thus far; help and support was provided by Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF). The Group would also be able to apply for much needed funding to help with their activities.

Cllr Forsyth and residents welcomed the update and commended the work and commitment of everyone involved with Highfield, particularly Elliot, Barry Husband and Jim Nicholl, and stressed that residents help and support was needed to continue taking things forward. Residents were encouraged to contact Cllr Forsyth at the end of the meeting. QMCC also offered their help and support with setting up a Friends Of Highfield Group.

iii) Quinton Meadows Consultative Committee

Copies of the report were circulated at the meeting – residents were briefly advised of the following:-

- Volunteer sessions would be starting again following a combination of ill health and adverse weather.
- A new Natural Rivers and Green Corridors project by the Wildlife Trust would include Quinton Meadows
- A new dog waste bin to be installed on the Local Nature Reserve
- The revised Constitution was still to be ratified by the City Council
- A possible Eco Fun Event in the spring – between 28th April and 1st May under the auspices of the City Nature Challenge

iv) Friends of Pitts Wood (FoPW)

Clare Sandercock, Chair briefly advised that the paperwork with the necessary signatures from the Trust CEO and City Council had been received; however, confirmation from the Education Dept was still outstanding.

A special general meeting was to be arranged – more volunteers/ residents were also needed for the Friends Of Group.

v) Friends of Woodgate Valley Country Park

Vina Campbell briefly advised that the dates and times for the Dawn Chorus and Brumbats events were still to be confirmed and residents notified accordingly.

vi) Nature Recovery and Preventing Climate Change

Copies of the Information Briefing paper by Peter Beck were circulated at the meeting for noting.

6. Dates of Next Meeting

Weds 21st June, 7pm - suggested venue St. Boniface Church

Councillor Forsyth thanked residents for their attendance and participation

Meeting closed at 8.55pm