

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**YARDLEY DISTRICT
COMMITTEE
26 JANUARY 2017**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE YARDLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2017 AT 1330 HOURS
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: - Councillors Sue Anderson, Nawaz Ali, Zaker Choudhry, Basharat Dad, Neil Eustace, Roger Harmer, Zafar Iqbal, Carol Jones, John O'Shea, Paul Tilsley and Mike Ward.

ALSO PRESENT: -

Richard Davies	- District Lead
Jason Jones	- Volunteering Matters
Paul Walls	- Leisure Projects Client Manager
Jamie Bryant	- Partnership Manager
Andy Middleton	- Birmingham Cycle Revolution
Andy Chidgey	- Birmingham Cycle Revolution
Inspector Dave Keen	- West Midlands Police
Adrian Whitehouse	- Station Commander, West Midlands Fire Service
Arthur Tsang	- Acting Senior Housing Manager
Marie Reynolds	- Area Democratic Services Officer

There was one member of public.

NOTICE OF RECORDING

- 415 The District Committee was advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site and members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

APOLOGY

- 416 An apology was submitted on behalf of Councillor Stacey for his inability to attend the meeting.

MINUTES

- 417 The Minutes of the meeting of the Yardley District Committee held on 24 November 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.
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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

418 No declarations were submitted

PETITIONS

419 There were no petitions submitted to the meeting.

At this juncture the Chairman agreed to vary the running order of the agenda.

VOLUNTEERING MATTERS

420 Jason Jones, Senior Operations Manager provided a brief overview on the above-mentioned UK National Charity.

He reported that the charity had been operating since 1962 and was previously known as Community Service Volunteers. He confirmed that the vision was to support people in their local community through voluntary social action and solve some of the issues that affected individuals and communities today.

Jason Jones referred to the leaflet that was circulated to the committee detailing the achievements and how 30,000 volunteers across the UK benefited 90,000 people which comprised of young people, disabled people, families and elderly people. He referred to the various areas that they were addressing at the moment which included; young people developing skills, combating isolation particularly amongst the aged population and disabled people. He referred to the charity Hub that was based in the city centre which was where they were delivering a full-time volunteering programme for the youth as well as an active programme which was inspiring lots of people to get out and about as well as various other programmes.

Jason Jones referred to the work that had been achieved through the programmes with disabled people in training them up with basic life skills and with young people that required additional support needs in enabling them to live independently within their own homes with the support of volunteers. He highlighted the work that was undertaken in supporting vulnerable children and young people at risk of neglect and also working with mentoring young people that were living in care.

He encouraged members to advise the charity if they could be of assistance in helping to inspire volunteers in their communities. He stated that in order to try and help address issues faced in communities they also worked with partners and organisations and would assist in helping to develop funding activities and any pilot projects.

The Chairman confirmed that the councillors did have some influence over smaller sums of money and that being made aware of the services offered may be something they wished to consider in their ward groups.

Councillor Dad thanked Jason for his presentation and referred to the number of services the charity offered which potentially could be used at both ward and district level and may help with local innovation fund projects.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Jason Jones for attending the meeting and presenting.

LIBRARY SERVICE FOR STECHFORD AND YARDLEY NORTH RESIDENTS

The Chairman reported on the current consultation that was taking place on the library service across the city. He explained why the above-mentioned item was included on the agenda due to the proposed changes that were relevant to Stechford and Yardley North Ward rather than the other 3 Wards.

Chris Jordan, Head of Service reported that the period of consultation regarding the proposed changes to the library service started on 25 October 2016 through to the 27 January 2017 and once the consultation had finished, consideration would be given to the responses.

He confirmed that the overall position for the community library service was that it had a budget reduction that required savings in excess of £1.9m across the service and therefore, they were having to look at a range of criteria to the library service across the city, in order to effectively rank library provision and round that to a tiered model which consisted of 3 main tiers, plus a grant funded pot which was tier 4. He stated that the tier 1 would provide a service of 35 hours, with tier 2 providing 21 hours and tier 3 was looking to work with a community partner in order to take on the running of the service and for the city council to provide 15 hours of staff time.

He reported that the libraries in Acocks Green and Yardley were categorised in tier 1, with Sheldon library in tier 2 and within the consultation document Glebe Farm and Kents Moat were in tier 3. He confirmed that there had been a significant response to the consultation and subsequently detailed the number of public meetings and meetings that had taken place with various partners exploring options. He further confirmed that the report would be submitted to Cabinet next month to obtain a decision in order to enact changes to the library service at the start of the next financial year.

Councillor Eustace expressed disappointment that the library at the Poolway was not being replaced and suggested that the 15 hours support earmarked should go to Glebe Farm Library, as it appeared that there was no suitable place for the library to be relocated.

He confirmed that they had had several meetings with residents at the Glebe and with councillors from Shard End and Stechford and Yardley North Wards. He stated that they were all keen to see the 15 hours be transferred to the Glebe Farm Library making it a tier 2 library highlighting that it was in a very deprived area. With regard to the consultation, he and members of the public believed that the deprivation issues had not been strong enough in the format for this decision.

Councillor Eustace emphasised that the Glebe needed a library to support residents across the whole of Stechford through to Lea Hall, and that it was imperative that this service remained. He subsequently referred to the petitions that had been signed by residents in support for this which had been presented at the last City Council meeting.

Councillor Jones highlighted there had been positive suggestions from the Glebe community on how the library could be utilised further. She subsequently highlighted a concern relating to the 'Coffee Morning' group that would lose out with the loss of the facilities used at the Poolway and wondered whether this facility could be accommodated at Sheldon Library.

Councillor Dad agreed with Councillor Eustace that local residents wanted their local services to remain, and subsequently thanked all residents that had participated in trying to ensure that there was some library service within Stechford and Yardley North. He agreed that the 15 hours would certainly be an advantage to Glebe Farm Library, having seen first-hand, how the facility was used and the services it delivered to the local community.

Councillor Tilsley agreed that it was essential that there should be library provision within the area however highlighted his concern, regarding the likelihood of there being a spill off from the users at the Poolway using the library facility at Sheldon, and whether the demand could be met especially with students, given the likelihood that Sheldon Library would be reducing their hours.

Councillor Anderson supported the motion expressed by Councillor Eustace and highlighted that it was a good solution as the Education and Jobs Skills Partnership were still holding very vibrant meetings, and had established a number of job clubs throughout the district. She suggested that with the additional 15 hours it would be ideal if a job club could be set up at Glebe Farm Library in order to help local people gain employment.

Chris Jordan referred to the issues that had been raised by members and confirmed that they would be fed into the consultation. He highlighted that the whole object was that through the process, they were trying to find the best solution, and that they were looking to maximise how the city council worked with partners between all tiers exploring opportunities in order to help to provide the additional services required, and accommodate people's needs that were losing out as a result of saving measures.

He confirmed that they would consider the proposition supported by members and also consider the deprivation aspect, adding that they would also look at more flexibility in hours of service within an allocation of set hours, as a means to reflect the community's needs.

The Chairman highlighted that if members wished to make individual responses to the consultation that they do so by Friday. He subsequently thanked Chris Jordan for attending the meeting and reporting.

Councillor Eustace moved the Motion:-

The Motion having been moved and seconded by Councillor Jones was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried and be agreed as follows:

421

RESOLVED:-

That as no location had been found for a library at the Poolway, Yardley District Committee believed that the 15 hour support earmarked for there should go to Glebe Farm Library, which should become a Tier 2 library and that the community in Stechford needs and deserves its own library, with its future secured.

That the motion be forwarded to the Head of Service for consideration.

**FOX HOLLIES LEISURE CENTRE AND STECHFORD CASCADES -
UPDATE**

422

Paul Walls, Leisure Projects Client Manager, and Jamie Bryant, Partnership Manager provided an update.

Jamie Bryant referred to the improvement works that had taken place at Fox Hollies Leisure Centre which now included a 120 station gym with card swipe entry which enabled a more efficient access to the facilities. He referred to the various types of gym equipment that had been installed and the completion of the new dedicated Spin Studio and the new large capacity Main Studio.

He reported on the ongoing work which included the refurbishment of the changing areas. Reference was made to the increased levels of attendance using the facilities which included the gym, exercise classes, swimming facilities as well as sports courses provided on a weekly basis. He highlighted that they had created 2 additional posts whereby employees had been recruited from the local area. He referred to the continued investment with the team whereupon 2 members of staff had been successful in completing a management qualification sponsored by Serco and concluded by referring to the work that continued with the back of house plant management and maintenance of the centre.

Jamie Bryant reported that Stechford had delivered some excellent community focus over recent months, which included a Super Stars holiday scheme whereby between 16 and 24 children attended every day during the school holidays and were looked after by the team and had taken part in a range of sporting adventure and cultural type activities. He reported that the trust had invested in a new large giant inflatable on the back of the closure of the Cascades element of the swimming pool. There had been a number of splash parties that had proven popular with adults and children and there had been the successful launch of the ladies only session at Stechford whereupon some sessions were supported by Sport England. He highlighted that the levels of dry attendance had increased with regard to usage of the gym, exercises classes and dry course activities for children. It was noted that a member of

the team had been successful in gaining a leadership management quality staff assessment.

Paul Walls confirmed that the new Stechford Leisure Centre built on the site next to the current site would provide comprehensive facilities which included; a new 25 metres swimming pool and also 12 x 7m learning pool, 4 courts sports hall, 120 station fitness suite centre, dance studio and community room.

He confirmed that the contractor that had been appointed was an associate member of the Considerate Scheme Committee, and was committed to providing a first class service and regularly communicated with local residents relating to the progress of the work and confirmed was in the process of setting up a web site. Reference was made to the projects that had taken place with some local schools which had resulted in a ground breaking ceremony taking place in October 2016 which had been well attended by elected members.

He reported that the work had commenced in September 2016 and subsequently detailed the construction progress that had taken place which would allow the construction of the main and learner pool to begin on time. He confirmed that the precast concrete lift shaft had been safely erected before Christmas, and the first phase of the structural steel work had arrived this week which would now give form and shape to the new building. He reported that the programme remained on track for expected completion by March 2018.

He confirmed that the play area as part of the redevelopment had been demolished and that the replacement play area would be located in the middle of the public open space to the rear of the facility. This was expected to be delivered by Easter 2017 at the latest.

Following favourable comments from members relating to the increased levels of attendance at the centres, Paul Walls agreed to provide feedback on the consultation exercise regarding the play area.

The Chairman and members highlighted concerns relating to the need to ensure that there were adequate parking facilities at Fox Hollies Leisure Centre in order that it did not impact on the local area and deter the public from using the leisure centre facilities.

Paul Walls confirmed that they would work with Birmingham Property colleagues in looking at what options could be used in going forward in terms of any potential reuse of the old gym car park and give consideration to the assessment use of the site car park.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Paul Walls and Jamie Bryant for attending the meeting and updating the Committee.

BIRMINGHAM CYCLE REVOLUTION - UPDATE

423

Andy Middleton, Cycling Programme Manager and Andrew Chidgey, Principal Studies Officer, circulated documents illustrating the Birmingham Cycle Revolution Programme, the overview and local plan for Yardley 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 of 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.

Andy Middleton confirmed that in 2016 the BCR Programme Team had undertaken a review of the programme that had been delivered to 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 referred to the schemes proposed with the majority of them in Yardley being off road routes. He referred to the significant improvements introduced on the Cole Valley and the towpath of the Grand Union Canal which had now been resurfaced from the city centre to the Solihull boundary. He confirmed that they were looking at the refurbishment of the canal accesses.

He highlighted the significant improvements in Sheldon Country Park pathway that stretched from Coventry Road to Marston Green and that they were looking this year at the pathway that followed the Hatchford Brook from the end of the airport runway to Coventry Road which connects an existing route through Elmdon Park and Solihull. He confirmed that they were in discussion with Solihull Local Authority regarding the link that comes off the canal near Yardley Cemetery and across through to Lyndon playing-fields which fell over the boundary in Solihull but was controlled by Birmingham City Council.

Andrew Chidgey reported on the road schemes with the main one being the route that ran parallel to Warwick Road and used parts of Olton Boulevard running through to Acocks Green local centre and once the details had been finalised and agreed, the scheme would be delivered this year. He concluded by referring to the Green Travel district route where there would be some small scale work improvements links for cyclists in Tyseley.

The Chairman welcomed the cycle way at the Hatchford Brook and highlighted that the existing new path through Sheldon Country Park was very well appreciated by Sheldon residents.

In response to concern raised by Councillor Harmer relating to Olton Boulevard and the particular issue that needed to be resolved regarding the service road, Andrew Chidgey agreed to pass on the concern to the Highways department in order to clarify the level of improvement that would be possible.

In response to concerns raised by Councillor Jones regarding whether the canal towpath by Yardley Cemetery could be made wider due to health and safety issues, Andrew Chidgey confirmed that it would be too expensive to undertake and referred to the promotional ways in ensuring that the public were aware that the towpath was a shared space. He further confirmed that they tried to make best use of the space available by cutting back shrubbery and that if in future money could be found they could look at addressing the tightest points.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Andy Middleton and Andrew Chidgey for attending the meeting and providing an update.

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE UPDATE

424

Inspector Dave Keen referred to the recent re-configuration of staff and highlighted that every neighbourhood officer and support staff had now been issued with mobility devices which allowed a more agile way of working with officers needing to spend less time at the station.

He referred to the rise in burglary offences across Yardley and believed that they had caught the offenders responsible. He highlighted the need to warn residents in ensuring their homes were secured adequately. He further referred to the intervention and prevention work they would be focusing on with regard to young people in order to help prevent them entering into crime.

He referred to the off road bike issue and the standalone team that were planning more operations in addressing this issue. He detailed the number of search warrants and arrests that had been made and the number of vehicles that had been seized since the last meeting, and referred to the 4 cannabis farms that had been located with the excellent results achieved with the Local Authority and registered social landlords. He further referred to the civil intervention work that had taken place mainly within the Gospel Estate and Sheldon area involving young people and families and as a result they were looking to secure a number of civil injunctions whereby some had already been secured.

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Following concerns raised by members which included anti-social behaviour issues and off road bikes, Inspector Dave Keen stated that there needed to be more civil injunctions carried out in order to ban people from certain areas and to look at other options around partnership working. With regard to the issues relating to crushing of the bikes, suggested that may be part of the punishment would be to invite the owners along to witness the bikes being crushed and that it was pushed out more by the media.

Arthur Tsang, Acting Senior Housing Manager confirmed that they were very keen in working in partnership with the police and when any tenants engaged in anti-social behaviour related to off road bikes, they were looking at taking as much enforcement action as possible. He referred to the difficulties that city council encountered at present and how it was being worked on in order to provide a more robust process in the future.

Arthur Tsang highlighted the 'Great British Clean up' weekend scheduled for the 2, 3 and 4 March 2017 which linked into the Cleaner Streets plans and requested that members contact their Place Managers with regard to any ideas they may wish to share.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Inspector Dave Keen for updating the committee and Arthur Tsang for his contribution.

Yardley District Health Partnership and Jobs and Skills Project Board - Update

425

Councillor Anderson referred to the above-mentioned partnerships and confirmed that they were both very active. She reported that the Health Partnership had agreed to look at childhood poverty in Yardley District and the associated issues which could include people accessing benefit support and advice. Reference was made to the resources that were available which included the faith groups that were very supportive in helping to overcome childhood poverty.

She highlighted that both partnerships were chaired by people from the voluntary sector and had strong links between Health and Jobs and Skills. Reference was made to the number of job clubs that had been set up to provide basic skills programmes in order to support people in obtaining employment, and that they worked closely with the DWP. She referred to the job fayres that were held at the job centre whereby employers were present and in some cases had offered employment to candidates. She highlighted that there was the need for more job clubs to provide more basis skills programmes in order to help more people enter into employment especially within the district.

She agreed to circulate to members the meeting dates for both partnerships.

Corporate Parent Role - Update

Councillor Anderson encouraged members to visit the children's homes within the district and agreed to circulate a list of contact numbers in order to ensure

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that before they made a visit, they contacted the home to ensure the child was at home.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Anderson for the update and her continued support in these areas of work.

DATE OF NEXT YARDLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING

- 426 The next Yardley District Committee Meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 23 March 2017 at 13:30 hours in Committee Room 6, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB.
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AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

- 427 **RESOLVED:-**

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

The meeting ended at 1515 hours.

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CHAIRMAN