

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**HALL GREEN DISTRICT  
COMMITTEE MONDAY 18  
JANUARY 2016**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HALL GREEN  
DISTRICT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 18  
JANUARY 2016 AT 1000 HOURS IN COMMITTEE  
ROOMS 3 & 4, THE COUNCIL HOUSE,  
BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT** : - Councillor Tony Kennedy in the Chair;

Councillors Barry Bowles, Sam Burden, Claire Spencer, Martin Straker Welds, Lisa Trickett, Mohammed Azim and Habib Rehman.

**ALSO PRESENT** :-

Karen Cheney	- Interim District Head (Hall Green)
Andy Pepper	- Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services
Peter Wright	- Area Planning and Regeneration
Neil Vyse	- Principal Development Planning Officer
Chris Robinson	- Acting Senior Service Manager
Marie Reynolds	- Committee Manager

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

200 The Chairman 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.

---

**APOLOGIES**

201 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Jerry Evans, Kerry Jenkins, Mohammed Fazal and Victoria Quinn for their inability to attend the meeting.

---

**MINUTES**

202 The Minutes of the last meeting held on 17 November 2015, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

---

**MATTERS ARISING**

**District Corporate Parenting Champion**

- 203 It was noted that Councillor Straker-Wells was standing down as District Corporate Parenting Champion whereupon Councillor Bowles would be taking on the role.
- 

**RECEIPT OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)**

- 204 No petitions were submitted.
- 

**DISTRICT MEETINGS – CORPORATE PARENTING**

Mr A Pepper, Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services whilst highlighting his strategic responsibilities relating to Corporate Parenting and also Children in Care and subsequently provided a detailed presentation on the introduction to Corporate Parenting:-

(See Document No 1)

Councillor Bowles encouraged elected members to undertake the Section 44 visits and highlighted the importance of them getting involved with the children and young people. With regard to undertaking inspections at private homes, he confirmed that if the child was from Birmingham, members could carry out the inspection unannounced.

At this juncture the Chairman announced the training times that were available for members to attend.

Following comments from members, Mr A Pepper detailed the differences between regulation 44 visits and informal visits and subsequently suggested to the members that they kept them separately. He highlighted the importance of building good relationships with the staff at the homes as well as with the children and young people, and stated that by doing this, members would gain more information and get a more realistic feel of what was going on in the homes and the local community.

Mr Pepper referred to the commitment scheme which related to how the service was trying to get people on board and officers particularly regarding corporate parenting. He stated that most of the commitments people were making was around mentoring and at the moment, there were 30 mentors that were local authority employees working with young people. He confirmed that through the work there had already been several successes with young people being mentored into university. He stated that they were looking at the opportunities for mentoring around 'missing' and how people could get involved in some of those return visits where there was really low risk which would be suitable for members and officers with some training. He added that they were looking at as many opportunities as they could in order for people to get involved in mentoring with regard to a whole range of areas that could include apprenticeships.

Mr Pepper concluded by stating that Councillor Bowles was a massive advocate for children in care and it was excellent to have in on board.

The Chairman thanked Mr Pepper for attending the meeting and presenting.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

205

**RESOLVED:-**

That the presentation and comments be noted.

---

At this juncture due to lack of officer representation, the Chairman agreed to vary the order of the agenda.

**FORWARD TOGETHER – UNLOCKING ASSETS AND TALENTS**

Councillor Trickett stated that the ‘Forward Together’ was an overarching part of the vision and subsequently provided an overview of how the City Council needed to start doing things differently with the understanding of working with communities in shaping the city and the areas people lived in.

Mr P Wright, Area Planning and Regeneration, referred to the initiative which covered all of the City Council services and that the information sets out the recommendation that Hall Green District could be used as a pilot area. The project explores how through an asset based service planning model which actively encourages citizenship and participation, new ways could be looked at in service delivery and decision making which would help create new economic and social cultural activity. He referred to the associated issues faced by many local resident campaigning groups relating to BCC land and buildings that were not used to their full potential due to the many constraints, and therefore, there was keen interest to explore whether some of these difficulties could be unlocked through partnership working. He highlighted that this was a timely proposal and made reference to the localism debate regarding the issues with the budget review and with regard to some of the proposals relating to the Kerslake initiative about harnessing local engagement. He stated that the time was right in exploring the harnessing of community enthusiasm and subsequently referred to the 2 initiatives that had taken place in the spring and autumn of last year.

He referred to the establishment of the Balsall Heath Local Plan and the fact that it was believed that there was a real commitment that Hall Green District was most probably the best district within the city at the moment to take this forward. He highlighted that members would be aware that Balsall Heath had also brought forward the first Neighbourhood Plan in the city whereby the document had been community led and subsequently referred to the currently active campaigning groups that were looking at the various establishments, playing fields and green spaces across the district for greater use.

He added the city was not alone in exploring this concept as Plymouth had become ground breaking in terms of how to stimulate social enterprise with a number of groups working across a huge range of sectors looking at different ways of procuring their services. He referred to the research and promotion of Liverpool City’s initiative and that the city had links with Lancaster University who were actively looking at south Birmingham as one of their pilot areas. He further referred to a worldwide initiative from Cleveland, USA – Evergreen Co-operative

initiative which helped to create living wage jobs for local people who otherwise might not be in the economic active sector.

He highlighted that there was the requirement to harness the enthusiasm of the local community, and to look to best practice elsewhere in the city and worldwide and perhaps to put Hall Green District forward as a pilot project to explore how using the assets, and building with that enthusiasm could look to improve the key areas. He stated that the proposal was to produce a document for Cabinet that promotes Hall Green as a pilot district. He referred to the funding pot that had been put forward by the Department of Communities and Local Government in looking at how to speed up plan making in local areas, and how to devolve decision making in local neighbourhoods. He stated that they had recently put forward a bid for £60,000 with the expectation of receiving £30,000 and anticipated that they could well have a budget to sit alongside the initiative if it was taken forward.

Mr N Vyse, Principal Development Planning Officer, confirmed that the bid had been submitted, and was hopeful that £30,000 would be forthcoming which would allow work to take place with community partners, Balsall Heath forum and possibly educational establishments to try and take forward the initiative which would also tie in with the Chamberlain 21 agenda.

Councillor Trickett stressed that the reference was very much about the district and that it was a wider look at sustainability and how the city approached it in terms of this area. The emphasis was not to provide a rigid set of projects but to provide the narrative and frame that enables communities to come forward.

Ms K Cheney, Interim District Head (Hall Green), referred to the work that had already taken place and the idea of submitting the bid had come from the community themselves. She highlighted that it illustrated that all were trying to work bottom up and collaboratively and that was the power of these bids that they were jointly put together and supported.

Following discussion, Mr Wright made reference to the documentation and the recommendation relating to a steering group in guiding the pilot's role and putting in place the mechanism to enable processes to take place to transfer to the local community with the city council playing a supporting role. It was noted that apart from officer time, the project was cost neutral which could lead to long-term financial savings being made. Reference was made to the funding contributing towards visual focus which would be some form of framework, to be used both to record achievements, decisions taken and as a tool to steer further activity in actively participating in decision making, which could take the form of a continually updated folder, with a background on detailed information about the area's assets resulting in an overall vision and recommendations for the area.

Mr Vyse referred to the on line folder, which would be very practical if groups wished to engage with the council there would be a wealth of information available for them to provide the evidence space, which would be necessary in taking it forward in a formal land use planning document. The other element would be developing a mechanism and an understanding for hard to reach groups especially in multi-cultural areas that had an inkling that they would like to get involved in community planning, but did not have an understanding of the process. He added that the plethora of government information available was

mind boggling, and therefore, the first stage of involvement was whether there was an interest, the second was the fundamental bid and how to engage and take forward. With the other two aspects of the bid would be a review of the council neighbourhood planning protocol and the community asset protocol in how the process could be made easier to understand and appear more practical.

Councillor Trickett highlighted what the city council was trying to do, and as part of the process and in agreement with the Deputy Leader, explained that it was a 'whole place whole system' approach. She stated that they would be looking at stewarding the assets in a way that takes a much more strategic view in terms of the broader plans for the areas. She referred to cycling routes and the fact that they would not just be looking at that point in time, but consider the whole of the River Cole and how it connected to the station which provided a much more strategic dialogue in understanding how those assets could be applied. She highlighted that this was not a 'tick box' exercise.

Following comments from members it was highlighted by Councillor Spencer the good work relating to Moseley Road Swimming Baths with regard to capturing of what people would like from the asset. She referred to the good ideas and the strategic thinking and hoped that it would be a genuinely living and fluid process. She added that insofar as Kerslake and the future council this was clearly the sort of way the city was supposed to work, and she felt that it was important to get it right so that other people could learn from it and replicate.

Mr Wright referred to members comments, and highlighted that if the initiative was approved by Cabinet, the pilot would enable the city to look at a different way of working and that the instructions that were passed to senior officers about how they traditionally looked at assets would have to be reviewed, and the decisions would be taken in the spirit of the new pilot. He reiterated the need to look at the traditional ways of decision making and come up with new and better expedited ways if the initiative was adopted. He added that there was no reason that the smart targets could be included within the cabinet report.

The Chairman commented that it should be an ambition that the document was submitted to the improvement panel before final consideration, as believed it would be a valuable piece of work for them to consider.

Following further comments from members, Councillor Trickett referred to the Kerslake report and the need to think and behave differently about those assets in each ward and highlighted that it did not matter what the district controlled, it was how the district collaborated and worked with others to influence outcomes for the communities, and subsequently provided several examples in this respect, with the ultimate objection of improving the quality of life for residents of the city.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

206

**RESOLVED:-**

That approval was given by the District Committee for officers to work up a Cabinet report seeking authority to undertake a pilot project in South Birmingham exploring an asset based service planning model, encouraging active citizenship and participation and new ways of service delivery and decision making.

**BIRMINGHAM CYCLE REVOLUTION PHASES 2 AND 3 CONSULTATION**

207 The following presentation was submitted:-

(See document No. 2)

Following a discussion relating to the lack of officer attendance at the meeting, and due to the impact that it would have on the district and how the implications such as traffic management would be dealt with, it was agreed by district committee, that a specific report relating to the cycling revolution be provided at the next meeting.

---

**DISTRICT JOBS AND SKILLS PANEL, DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD CHALLENGE AND DISTRICT CONVENTION**

208 The Chairman informed members that the panel had met several times. He stated that they were meeting a major college this week and anticipated support from the Leader who had committed to stepping up for Hall Green District. He referred to the breakfast meeting in Yardley District whereby they had managed to secure 56 apprenticeship commitments from local businesses and that Hall Green District was looking to repeat the same model.

---

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND TIMELINE**

Ms K Cheney, Interim District Head (Hall Green), introduced the District Committee Work Programme and Timeline:-

(See document No. 3)

Ms K Cheney responded to members' suggestion by providing the above-mentioned documents and subsequently provided a breakdown of the detail. She highlighted that the documents were working documents and requested members provided the names of the chairs of the wards. She added that members would at least be able to get an idea of what was out there and what was within the domain of the district committee. She confirmed that all of the ward committees had now met and that the neighbourhood challenge had been agreed at the last meeting which was around co-producing road safety. She confirmed that Councillor Spencer had already sent out a survey and was aware that it had been an agenda item at the different wards and most certainly would be at the district convention.

Further reference was made to the development of the district plan and the stage where it was at together with the 'forward together' that had been presented today which would be subsequently tracked. She referred to the development training that needed to be picked up and the other areas where there were gaps that needed to be tracked. She stated that the document was in draft and that it would be updated appropriately after each meeting.

The Chairman referred to the forthcoming district convention and confirmed that he would be requesting for help from members to facilitate and that over the next

week or so, a number of discussions with officers to provide help would be taking place.

He further referred to the district community plan, and confirmed that he would be requesting for members' contribution before the next District Committee meeting scheduled for 15 March 2016. He highlighted that Councillor Bowles would be standing down as Community Safety Champion due to time conflicts and subsequently agreed to take on the role until the next meeting.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

209

**RESOLVED:-**

That the information be noted.

---

**DISTRICT CONVENTION**

210

The Chairman highlighted that the convention would be majoring on road safety. He highlighted that the district was the first district to have 'twenty is plenty' and the cycling revolution markings in place. He added that there was a lot of work to be undertaken around behaviour change aspects. He further added that part of the district convention would be the jobs and skills element where members would be updated.

---

**NEXT DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING – AGENDA ITEMS**

211

Ms K Cheney detailed the agenda items for the above-mentioned meeting which included:

Dementia – All districts – dementia friendly  
Feedback from Housing Panels  
Cycling Revolution – specific report to Hall Green District  
Jobs and Skills – Update  
Progress on Chamberlain 21 – Forward Together

---

**ACTING SENIOR SERVICE MANAGER – INTRODUCTION**

212

Mr Chris Robinson introduced himself to the district committee highlighting that he covered the east quadrant.

Following an enquiry from Councillor Bowles relating to implementing policies that were only aimed at city council tenants, Mr Robinson confirmed that the city council did have greater power through conditions of tenancy which was a legal contract that tenants signed up to, which he agreed caused huge frustration when action was taken against only city council tenants. He referred to the issues relating to parking on grass verges and confirmed that it was something that Highways had the power and authority to deal with. He added that it was something that the city council needed to look at collectively and agreed to take back and raise.

## **Hall Green District Committee – 18 January 2016**

With regard to the above, Councillor Bowles stated that every time he had contacted Highways was told they had no restriction and therefore requested that Mr Robinson investigate what the due restriction was and advise him accordingly.

In response to Councillor Burden's concern and comments relating to the Environmental Budget allocations, Mr Robinson expressed disappointment to learn about the confusion and subsequently explained, how the process should work with a consultation with residents and ward councillors prior to the projects being submitted to district committee for approval.

In response to Councillor Azim's enquiry relating to accommodating larger families, Mr Robinson confirmed that there was a very small supply of larger properties which had been addressed through the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust, which were subsequently building larger properties although not aware within Hall Green District however agreed to check. He stated that there were a number of large families that had been on the waiting list a long time, and whilst there was a wholesale review of the allocation procedure at the moment taking place, was unsure as to whether this would help to improve the shortage.

At this juncture, the Chairman requested that Mr Robinson forward the approved sites in the district and timetable.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mr Robinson for attending the meeting.

---

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 213      The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, 15 March 2016 at 10:00 hours in Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House.

---

### **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (REPORTS BY OFFICERS)**

- 214      No issues of other urgent business were submitted.

---

### **AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

- 215      **RESOLVED:-**

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

---

The meeting ended at 11:40 hours.

-----  
CHAIRMAN