

Birmingham City Council
Notes of the meeting of the Weoley Ward Forum on 29 January 2018
at 6.30pm at Weoley Castle Community Church, Quarry Road

Present: Councillor Julie Johnson & Councillor Peter Douglas Osborn
Sergeant Richard Fryer, West Midlands Police
Damon Walsh, Street Work Manager
David Miller, Service Manager, Waste Management
Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager

There were 11 residents who attended the meeting

In the absence of Councillor Booton, Councillor Johnson took the Chair.

1. Notice of Recording – Noted

2. Apologies – Councillor Steve Booton, Richard Burden M.P.

3. Notes of Last Meeting – Noted

LIF - Councillor Johnson advised that she believed groups had received the funding and would be presenting updates on the progress of the projects to the next meeting. **Action: LIF updates to next meeting.**

Fortem – Councillor Douglas Osborne advised that boiler issues were being investigated and Fortem made aware of concerns regarding trainees being sent to repairs.

Buses – no outcome to the consultation had been received yet but successful petitioning by residents, the BID and councillors had secured the re-instatement of the bus stop at the Grosvenor Centre. Residents commented that National Express focused journey times on start to finish times and had removed stops to increase journey time, however now that new bus pass reader equipment had been installed there was no need to remove stops and create difficulties for users who now had to walk further.

Parking, Bristol Road – Councillor Johnson said that the District Committee was to arrange a working group but this had not yet happened. Issues around the Orthopaedic Hospital were still ongoing but double yellow lines were to be installed. She undertook to provide more information via social media as soon as possible.

4. Police Update

Sergeant Fryer gave the following update;

- The Alcohol Restricted Area covering Northfield High Street had been transferred to a PSPO and it was hoped this would help with the street drinkers on Prices Square.
- Anti-Social Behaviour – problems being caused by individual so working with BCC housing officer with a view to seeking an injunction
- Team Works Project – working with schools on intervention & prevention to divert younger children away from criminality. PC Barber was working with children in years 5&6 at risk of exclusion to take them out of school and put on courses with WMFS, RSPCA etc. This had proved successful in improving

behaviour in the majority of cases. Also looking to roll out to younger children.

- Car thefts and thefts from cars were high in Weoley. Action was being taken with intervention from other teams. Offenders were being managed via curfew and through the city council housing officers. Diversionary tactics were also being used.

Councillor Douglas Osborn commented on the issues that had existed with street drinkers on Weoley Square and while the problem had ceased due to actions taken it was hoped they would not return now there were no interventions in place. Sergeant Fryer said that evidence had to be provided to pursue a PSPO and currently there was none in the case of Weoley Square.

In response to questions from residents the meeting was advised that a crime in progress or suspicious behaviour should be reported via 999.

Re: The Square Club – the damage caused had not been reported as racially motivated. Sergeant Fryer had met with the pastor on site with WMFS and building control regarding the structure of the building and it had been made clear to him that he had a duty to the community to make the building secure. Advice had been provided and a further meeting would be arranged. Councillor Johnson referred to speculation regarding the future use of the building and that she had not heard from the pastor and therefore suggested that local councillors be invited to future meetings.

5. Gritting Update

Damon Walsh responded to concerns raised regarding issues with gritting over the recent bad weather;

- The south of the city had been difficult to manage and the weather had differed from the forecast. Routes had not changed so roads had been gritted but due to sudden drops in temperature the grit had not been as effective.
- Grit bin locations were determined by BCC. The bad weather had highlighted the need for some location changes and residents were asked to advise of wrong locations or where bins were needed via birmingham.gov.uk/highways or via the contact centre.
- Criteria for gritting routes was main route or bus route, with other criteria if a road was neither

Residents explained that although the Bristol Road had been gritted roads in Weoley that were bus routes had not leaving residents in Weoley stranded. The no.64 bus had been unable to access Weoley. Councillor Johnson added that the no.18 bus service had been suspended for 3 days as it was unable to navigate Hoggs Lane and while it was understandable that priority needed to be given to main routes a contingency plan needed to be in place if the period of bad weather was extended so that roads leading to main roads were passable otherwise residents were cut off for days at a time.

Concern was expressed regarding the condition of pavements and the number of accidents caused by slipping on icy surfaces that were referred to A&E departments.

6. Waste Management Update

In response to concerns raised Dave Miller referred to the strike action during June to September which caused a back log of work. This was followed by severe weather which caused the service to be shut down on Monday 11 December. Attempts were made to continue the service on Tuesday 12 but many roads were too dangerous for the wagons to access. The service was further hampered by more bad weather and crews had been attempting to catch up on missed collections since. It was acknowledged that the length of time taken to collect recycling on some routes was unacceptable and that the service had fallen short of what was expected but the fleet would be working differently from April/May onwards and was currently in negotiations with unions. Councillor Johnson added that she had reported numerous missed collections & assisted collections and asked that her thanks be passed on as all enquiries had been answered and dealt with. A contingency plan was however needed, especially when Christmas fell on a particular day and she undertook to pass that onto the Cabinet Member.

Residents referred to hot spot fly tipping areas – Merritts Brook Lane, Merritts Hill, Scotland Lane and Frankley Lane where regular inspections had been promised but residents still had to report tipping. The meeting was advised that Scotland Lane had been referred to the Waste Prevention Team. Councillor Johnson said that Merritts Brook Lane was a hot spot and asked this be reported back.

7. Residents Issues

- a) Ward Boundary Changes & Ward Meetings – Councillor Johnson advised that there was a proposal to abolish District Committees and strengthen ward meetings after the elections in May. This proposal would be discussed at City Council on 6 February. The ward boundary changes would create 69 new wards with either 1 or 2 member representation for each. Weoley Ward would be roughly split into 2 wards Allens Cross and Weoley & Selly Oak. Discussions were still ongoing regarding how ward meeting would go forward.
- b) Northfield Business Improvement District – it was agreed that Councillor Johnson be re-appointed as the ward's representative
- c) We Love Weoley - Councillor Johnson reported that there was a meeting on 22 March at 10am at Weoley Castle Community Church to discuss the Festival which was scheduled for 14 July and urged people to get involved. A date was yet to be confirmed for the We Love Weoley Castle Awards.
- d) Northfield Pool & Leisure Centre – Councillor Johnson reported that the new pool was due to open in May. Highways had been requested to look at the junction and implications for on street parking as no additional parking spaces had been created. Sergeant Fryer undertook to pursue the traffic light timing at the Black Horse junction as motorists were becoming blocked in the yellow box.

8. Authority to Act Between Meetings

Noted & Agreed

Meeting ended at 7.50pm