

**ASTON WARD MEETING
NOTES**

WARD: Aston	DATE: 28 November 2019
VENUE: Broadway Academy, The Broadway B	START/FINISH TIMES: 6.30pm – 7.55pm
COUNCILLORS Nagina Kauser & Muhammad Afzal	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 20
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Yorke, Service Manager Gary Messenger, Head of Housing Options & Private Sector Hsing Sergeant Scott Edwards & PC Gandhu, West Midlands Police Pat Whyte, Community Development & Support Officer Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:

1. Update on Barry Jackson Tower

Sarah Yorke gave a brief update on the present situation. The block had been open since end of April and had 128 families on site. There had been some initial teething problems that were being worked through, including car park lighting. There were 2 car parks with 39 spaces and residents were being encouraged to use.

A local resident referred to parking issues around the block, including contractors and staff who were parking on local roads/pavements and not using the dedicated car parks creating obstruction for local residents. Ways in which residents had been encouraged to use the dedicated car parks was questioned and what action would be taken as the parking situation was creating a safety issue. It was also mentioned that the car park on Upper Sutton Street had

a barrier which was only lifted on Aston Villa match days. Concern was expressed that the opening of Barry Jackson Tower had a detrimental effect on the area as shops were closing and resident's safety was being compromised. Sarah advised that the car park barrier could be operated by using the intercom so was not closed and parking for football matches had been undertaken illegally but security had now been alerted so would not re-occur.

Residents queried whether the car park could be used by others than those residing in Barry Jackson Tower to ease the parking situation and asked that action be taken to instruct the car park to be used by putting up notices in the tower block.

Councillor Afzal requested officers to tell tenants to use the designated car park rather than park on local roads or to allow local residents use of the car park to ease congestion. Sarah undertook to look into this but said that there was a notice in the block and tenants were advised at registration.

Gary said that he had noted the concerns raised and would take these on board and monitor the situation.

2. Police Update

Sergeant Edwards provided the following update;

- Main focus was on burglary, county lines, robberies
- Burglary numbers had reduced over last 3 months, no specific pattern to crimes and many involved sheds
- Robberies had increased over the past 3 months (mainly in the Newtown area and around schools) but arrests had been made. Specific operation had brought outside resources into the area to issue warrants and deal with offender management.
- Knife arch had been in position at The Lighthouse & local schools, including primary and a faith group was being started to offer youth support
- Residents encouraged to sign up to WMNow and follow the Neighbourhood Team on Twitter

PC Rani explained the work she was undertaking as follows;

- WM Police was recruiting police officers through an extensive recruitment drive for police and civilian officers. The requirements for application was explained and that new recruits would start on an apprenticeship.
- There were also volunteering roles for Special Constables as ambassadors for the community
- Neighbourhood Watch & Street Watch were also encouraged for active citizens
- Cadet schemes were growing across the West Midlands for young people aged 13-18 and community members could become cadet leaders
- Contact and event details were made available
- In response to questions the meeting was advised that some officers lost through austerity measures were returning in non-uniform roles to release police officers to front line services.

A local resident referred to a recent accident on Masefield Road but no update had been received. It was reported that speeding and pavement parking was worsening in the road creating safety problems for pedestrians and action was required. Sergeant Edwards said parking was a local priority and was taken seriously and enforced where possible. Masefield Road was patrolled but he undertook to send additional patrols.

Residents said that pavement and obstructive parking was an issue across the ward and that in certain locations spaces were being reserved by residents causing additional problems. Sergeant Edwards asked that specific locations be provided to him.

In response to concerns raised regarding beggars around Tesco, the meeting was advised that the local team had a Hostel Watch, conducted regular patrols and assured the meeting that there was a lot of work being undertaken.

3. Neighbourhood Network Scheme

Item deferred to future meeting

4. Local Highway Update

Councillor Kauser asked residents to forward to the councillors any ideas for future local highway schemes. Clifton Road TRO had been suggested and a scheme for Witton Road/Trinity Road had been put forward.

5. Residents Updates/Issues

- a) Old Aston Library – the Chair of the Perry Aston Residents Association referred to the old Aston Library, Witton Road that was being used as a hostel however there had been no planning application for a change of use. He said that WMFS needed to inspect the building to assess its safety as it was a 3 storey building and he requested that the councillors investigate as a matter of urgency. Councillor Afzal advised he had contacted the Director of Planning, a visit had been arranged and a report would be made to the councillors tomorrow regarding the lack of planning permission, the status as a listed building and anything that might have been done to affect the fabric of the building.
- b) Refuse Collection – it was reported that the refuse collection on Victoria Road was still irregular and as some homes did not have wheelie bins so put out black bags it encouraged fly tipping and bags kept mounting up. Councillor Afzal said that the bags had been cleared twice in the past month but kept re-appearing. Any resident that had evidence of those responsible could provide it to the councillors. Councillor Kauser said she would pursue again.
- c) Albert Road/Bevington Road – the road surface was extremely uneven and it was queried whether road humps had been removed. Councillor Kauser to request Highway Steward to investigate.

