

## GARRETTS GREEN WARD FORUM MEETING – ACTION NOTES

<b>WARD:</b> Garretts Green	<b>DATE:</b> Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>VIRTUAL:</b> Online via Microsoft Teams	<b>START/FINISH TIMES:</b> 5.30pm – 6.30pm
<b>COUNCILLOR:</b> Saddak Miah	<b>NOs OF ATTENDEES:</b> 3
<b>OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b> Beverly Edmead, Community Governance Manager, BCC	<b>VISITING SPEAKER(S):</b> None

### CURRENT WARD ACTION PLAN PRIORITIES:

1. Litter / clean streets / environment
2. Parking Issues/Problems/Concerns (including schools)
3. Parks & open spaces (management & maintenance)
4. Local shopping centres
5. Kier Roads / pavements / lights / trees
6. Neighbourhood policing / community safety
7. Housing & private renting
8. Community Groups - Work in partnership with local community and voluntary groups including Arts in the Yard, The Active Well-Being Society, Blakenhall Hub, Food Pantries, Sheldon Community Centre, residents and local businesses to encourage partnership working where possible.

### MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDING LOCAL CONCERNS:

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Following introductions, Cllr Miah welcomed residents to the online meeting.

## **2. Notice of Recording**

Residents were advised that the meeting would be recorded and that a copy of recording of the meeting would be made available on the City Council YouTube Channel for future record.

## **3. Cllr Miah's Local Updates**

Cllr Miah advised of the following:-

- Changes to the all the Parliamentary Constituency boundaries ahead of the next General Election, expected to take place sometime during 2024, which would see changes to some of the city wards being moved into other constituencies in Birmingham. Residents would continue to be kept informed.
- Councillor Advice Bureau would continue to be provided – constituents in need of help/support/advice/information should continue to contact Cllr Miah via the details provided.

## **4. BCC Financial Situation/Budget for 2024 – 2025**

Cllr Miah briefly advised of the City Council's current financial crisis faced by the City Council and the budget savings of £300M that was required to be made over the next two years. In addition, Commissioners had been sent in by Central Government to oversee the process and to ensure that unnecessary spending was reduced and that the required savings were made; these included:-

- An increase in Council Tax by 21% over the next two years
- Waste Collection service – a move to fortnightly collections from next year
- A reduction in library services/community centres
- Changes to the delivery of local highway services – including the trimming and dimming of street lighting across the city
- A reduction in the provision of youth services/facilities.
- Job losses/reductions in targeted service areas and the redesign and delivery of council services in all areas

Cllr Miah added that it had been fully acknowledged that the savings required to be made would have a devastating effect on council services, communities/neighbourhoods over the next few years. However, Officers and Councillors remained fully committed to ensuring that essential Statutory Services were protected and delivered, and that vulnerable residents/communities were supported through these difficult times.

Consultations regarding the reshaping of many of these proposals and services, and how they are going to be delivered were ongoing, and

residents would continue to be kept informed as matters progressed and actively encouraged to contribute to the consultation process.

Residents should also continue to contact Cllr Miah regarding any concerns they had or help/support they may need.

- **Local Police Team Update**

Apologies for non-attendance had been submitted on behalf of Sheldon Local Police Team, however a copy of the crime stats and activities for the ward was shared with residents at the meeting. Residents could also obtain a copy of the report from the meeting website or by contacting Cllr Miah.

## **5. Residents Updates/Issues/Concerns**

Residents advised of the following concerns:-

- **Poolway Shopping Centre**

The site has been left derelict now for a while as the second phase had not yet started following the demolition of the former shopping centre. The houses had been built, but a large section of site was still vacant, and now being subjected to regular bouts of fly-tipping.

Cllr Miah advised that the original decisions to specialist museum to house many of the artefacts from Birmingham Art Gallery and Museum would no longer be going ahead. More housing and a small parade/mix of shops would be built on the remainder of the site as part of the second phase of the development for the land. A date was still to be agreed as discussions were ongoing with a number of partner agencies involved in the scheme, however residents would continue to be kept informed.

- **The Increase in Council Tax by 21% for 24/25 and 25/26**

Residents expressed concerns regarding the increase in Council Tax by 21% for the next two years, and the financial struggle many will face locally to pay the increased charge, especially as many were already struggled to get by on daily basis.

Acknowledging the concerns raised, Cllr Miah explained that help, advice and support would continue to be available for residents struggling to meet the costs, and those with specific issues/concerns should contact him directly so that arrangements could be made with specific officers who would be able to provide appropriate advice and support.

- **Fly-tipping**

An increase in fly-tipping and littering across the ward – some streets/neighbourhoods being worse than others, with Sheldon Heath

Road becoming a hotspot for dumping and littering. A more proactive approach to tackling the issues and robust enforcement action was needed to tackle the issue – especially as more essential services came under strain and reduced as a result of the current financial situation.

Responding to residents' comments and concerns, Cllr Miah reminded everyone that fly-tipping/dumping was a criminal offence and offenders liable for prosecution. Residents should continue to report incidents to him or via the council website, giving as much details as possible, and photographic evidence as long as it was safe to do so.

Cllr Miah further advised that the City Council offered a bulky household furniture collection service – residents could pay for up to 6 items to be collected/taken away. Residents interested in finding out more should contact Cllr Miah for details.

There were no other issues raised.

Bringing the meeting to a close, Cllr Miah thanked residents for joining and participating in the online meeting.

Meeting ended at 6.15pm

