

ASTON WARD MEETING NOTES

WARD: Aston	DATE: 11 th October 2023
VENUE: Broadway Academy School, The Broadway B20 3DP	START/FINISH TIMES: 6.30pm – 8.05pm
COUNCILLORS Ayoub Khan & Mumtaz Hussain	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 34
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Karl Randall, Local Engineering Manager Sergeant Akeel Akhtar, West Midlands Police Pat Whyte, Community Development & Support Officer Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDING LOCAL CONCERNS:

1. Welcome & Notice of Recording

Councillor Khan welcomed all to the meeting and advised that members of the public/press could record take photographs of the meeting except where there were exempt or confidential items.

2. Police Update

Sergeant Akhtar acknowledged residents' concerns regarding the turnover of sergeants for the area but said he had moved from the Bordesley Green area that had similar issues to Aston. Following the appointment of a new Chief Constable a new operating model was now in place, so response and community teams were working together which should lead to more officers on the streets.

Sergeant Akhtar made the following main points –

- Main priority was youth violence, there had been a reduction over the last 2 months.
- Robberies had increased, especially round parks although the figure was lower than last year. Certain individuals had been issued with notices preventing them entering Aston and the team was working with offender management in this regard.
- Increased work around ASB including drug dealing using specific patrols and targeting hot spots.
- The team was also working with Youth Endowment Fund (organisation committed to preventing children/young people becoming involved in violence) through a £1m project over 3 years, supported by AVFC Foundation to bring community groups together and assist youth provision by

helping with bid writing, legal advice, admin etc.

There was discussion around parking issues in the ward, specific reference was made to employees from the bus depot parking on neighbouring residential streets causing noise nuisance moving vehicles late at night and some households using objects eg bins outside their properties to prevent parking. Sergeant Akhtar undertook to request a PCSO to talk to West Midlands Travel and advised the police did ticket cars where necessary via an on-line system and therefore paper tickets were no longer issued. In response to a suggestion from Councillor Khan, Sergeant Akhtar undertook to look at putting 'Park it Don't Plonk It' stickers on ticketed cars to indicate action was being taken and to bring details on numbers of tickets issued to next meeting.

In response to concerns raised regarding beggars at Tesco, meeting advised that police were working to control and manage away from Tesco and were encouraging better reporting by Tesco. Help was provided in the form of sign posting and Councillor Khan acknowledged that some progress was being made. In response to comments made regarding HMO's/exempt accommodation, Councillor Khan advised residents report via PRS@birmingham.gov.uk or SupportedExemptAccommodation@birmingham.gov.uk and Sergeant Akhtar advised reporting confidentially via Crime Stoppers.

Residents expressed concern regarding increased amounts of fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and crime where no action was being taken. Sergeant Akhtar advised an arrest for fly tipping had been made recently and Councillor Khan said an environmental enforcement officer was working in Aston gathering evidence. Regarding HMO/exempt accommodation properties, Councillor Hussain said that reported issues were low in Aston and therefore residents were encouraged to report their complaints.

A member of a local street watch said that more volunteers were needed and encouraged residents to speak to him at the conclusion of the meeting so that action could be taken.

In response to comments regarding a recent pellet gun shooting in Witton Road, Councillor Khan asked for reassurance visits from the police to that area.

3. Parking/Highway Issues Aston Triangle

Karl Randall spoke about general parking issues and explained responsibilities around parking enforcement and said that provided there was space for a double buggy to pass along a pavement, pavement parking would not generally be enforced. With regard to disabled bay markings, it was noted there was a high number in Aston especially around the Aston Triangle roads, but they were expensive to remove so it was usually done when the road was resurfaced and were only reinstated where the person applying met the mobility criteria. It was noted that a disabled bay was an advisory marking and non-enforceable.

In respect of the removal of bays which did not meet criteria around the Aston Triangle, letters had been sent to properties but when the contactors went to remove those where the resident did not meet the criteria they were met with threats of violence and intimidation and could not therefore carry out the work. Councillor Khan referenced the parking problems encountered on the Aston Triangle roads and the numerous petitions submitted requesting removal of pavements so that additional parking was possible, as had been the case in Small Heath. Karl advised environmental improvements had been undertaken in the past to include off road parking, but the cost was now prohibitive because of the price of moving utilities from under the pavement. In response to suggestions of a one-way system or LTN's similar to Lozells, the meeting was advised that LTN's had generated numerous complaints and was therefore being monitored.

Other issues raised -

- corner of Trinity Road/Hampton Road constant pool of water
- business operating from a house on Hampton Road/Freer Road, parking vehicles on the corner and on the pavement forcing pedestrians to walk in the road. Karl undertook to raise with Kier & planning enforcement.
- Councillor Khan raised concern over match day parking and the issue of parking tickets not being issued but tickets being issued on Friday afternoon around the mosque. He said that there needed to be a consistency of approach and a relationship with the enforcement team.

Number of issues around waste management including using wheelie bins to save parking spaces, allocation of bins to properties in Victoria Road and missed collections/not all rubbish being removed. Councillor Khan suggested inviting waste management officers to a future meeting.

4. Aston Ward Plan

Deferred to next meeting.

5. **Councillor/Residents Updates**

a) Councillor Updates –

Beyond Birmingham 2022 Grant applications – following the Section 114 Notice, all spending had to be agreed by the S151 Spend Board and it had decided not to fund the grants.

S114 Notice – Councillor Khan gave a brief overview of the financial situation facing the council and that government appointed commissioners had been appointed to oversee the running of the council. An extra ordinary council meeting was scheduled for 12 October to discuss budget issues further. The meeting was open to the public.

Next Meeting – 6th December.

b) Residents Updates

Community Centre/Meeting Place for the Elderly – lack of places for the elderly to go/meet was highlighted and councillors were asked to take this up with a view to finding a community centre/meeting space. Councillor Khan said that during meetings with Aston Villa regarding the development of the ground, community facilities had been part of the discussion, including space for the elderly. He would continue discussions with AVFC and also approach New Hope Global to see if assistance could be provided.

TIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	WHO	BY WHEN
1. Flooding corner Trinity/Hampton Rds	1. Karl Randal to take up with Kier	1. asap
2. Business operating from residential property Hampton/Freer Rd, parking vehicles on corner/pavement	2. Karl Randal to take up with planning enforcement	2. asap
3. Community space for elderly	3. Cllr Khan to discuss further with AVFC & New Hope Global	