

ASTON WARD MEETING NOTES

WARD: Aston	DATE: 12 March 2019
VENUE: Broadway Academy, The Broadway B20 3DP	START/FINISH TIMES: 6.30 – 8pm
COUNCILLOR: Nagina Kauser	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 7
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Pat Whyte, Community Development & Support Officer Sergeant Scott Edwards, West Midlands Police Kevin Smith, Amey Karl Smith, West Midlands Fire Service Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	APOLOGY – Councillor Mohammad Afzal Colin Sharrock, Perry Aston Residents Association

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:

1. Ward Planning

Councillor Kauser explained the ward planning process and that resident's views on priorities for the ward were important.

Residents attending the meeting objected strongly to the concept of a ward plan and to being asked for their ideas for ward priorities. The main reasons behind this refusal to take part in the process were;

- Similar exercises had taken place in the past on a number of occasions but there had been no beneficial outcomes for the community, nothing had changed and there had been no improvements
- Due to the above, residents did not believe they were listened to or their views taken into account and therefore there was little point in repeating the exercise
- There was no money available to enable any action from the priorities to be put into place and therefore no changes would come about.
- Aston had already had resources taken away from it and these would not be replaced, eg the community centre, swimming pool and therefore it was too late to ask the community for their opinions

- There was no action from the councillors
- To make a neighbourhood work together it needed to be stable but there were too many hostels in the ward and this created a transient population.
- The situation regarding Barry Jackson Tower had left the community feeling let down and ignored. The redevelopment of the tower block rather than demolition as promised was a constant reminder to residents that views did not matter and therefore there was little point in asking for views on priorities for the ward.

Pat Whyte explained the importance of having a ward plan and of involving the local community. She made reference to Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods consultation and that residents views had been incorporated in the green paper to change the final document and that the views above could be incorporated in the plan to determine the final document. Residents however did not wish to take part in a ward plan.

2. West Midlands Fire Service

Karl Smith gave an update on the progress of the new fire station which should be open by May and the library by October. A Fire Service Museum would also be incorporated in the building. Fire fighters need to communicate with the community regarding obstructive parking as the fire engines were being held up and crews were meeting with abuse when asking residents to move their vehicles. Ambulances were also experiencing difficulties. The new station would have a community room available for community use, meetings etc and it was hoped that it would be well used as crews wanted to get to know their local community. Reference was made to the amount of local groups/activities happening in the area, in particular by Aston Villa Foundation and Tesco & Karl undertook to send details to Kay to circulate to the group. He also undertook to attend the next meeting with more information.

Having listened to the previous discussion the meeting was advised that Aston Fire Station was the least supported station for charity and community days and it was hoped that residents would support the grand opening of the new station and other forthcoming community events. In response to questions the meeting was advised that leaflets were circulated in the area and officers went 'door-knocking' to try to drum up support for open days etc.

3. Police Update

Sergeant Edwards gave an update on the use of Operation Park Safe.

He continued to undertake safety checks at HMO's jointly with WMFS and look at any potential closures

He had met with Councillor Kauser regarding Street Watch and gave a brief outline of what was involved. There was a meeting on 26 March at 7pm at The Lighthouse for interested residents to attend.

4. Local Issues

a) A34 - Residents queried the proposals for the A34 in light of the Commonwealth Games and it was suggested that a joint meeting with Lozells & Handsworth wards be held so that residents could hear about the changes.

b) Ward Priorities – Councillor Kauser said that the main issues discussed at the ward meetings were – parking, HMO's & older people

5. Date of Next Meeting – 15 May at 6.30pm at Witton Methodist Church, Wyrley Road

Councillors (s) Signed:

Councillor(s) Name(s) (please print):