

SMALL HEATH WARD PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLANNING MEETING

Thursday 12th January 2023

11.00am – 1.00pm

Khidmat Centre

2a Heather Road

Small Heath

B10 9TA

Councillors: Shabina Bano and Saqib Khan

Officers in Attendance

Beverly Edmead – Community Governance Manager

NOs OF ATTENDEES: 15

Ward Priorities and Action Planning Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Following introductions, Cllrs Shabina Bano and Saqib Khan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Cllr Saqib Khan in the Chair

2. Ward Action Planning – Priorities and Concerns identified by residents

Cllrs explained that all wards in the city were required to draft a Ward Action Plan for the period 2022- 2026. Locally, both Cllrs were committed to working with residents across the ward to identify their key priorities and concerns and how these could be addressed over time.

The Ward Action Plan was a working document which would continue to be reviewed, updated, amended as necessary.

Residents were asked for their thoughts and comments on the following key themes:-

Fly-tipping/Rubbish/Street Cleaning

Police and Crime

Community Safety/Road Safety Issues (including potholes, pavements, speeding, etc)

Healthy Lifestyle/Use of Green Spaces

Working with Local Businesses

Young People

Anything Else

Flytipping, Rubbish, Clean Streets

The following were identified:-

- CCTV Cameras were a Must Have
- Schedule of street cleaning rotas must be made available
- better enforcement/more patrols – visible and covert
- regular street sweeping – currently non existent
- bulk waste collections; flytipping reports to be taken seriously and regular spots to have mobile CCTV cameras; increase in the number of prosecutions; name and shame; witness statements should not be a requirement if video evidence available (neighbours may be reluctant to give evidence against a fellow neighbour)
- where cars/vehicles are known to block access for refuse trucks on collection days, council should remove vehicles to allow residents' refuse/recycling to be collected
- cleaning staff in the ward every day – like abroad; employ local people to help keep their streets clean
- regular street cleaning involving local schools/community groups; more community clean ups -high profile, well-advertised and everyone in ward – businesses and religious institutions actively encouraged to play their part
- leaf fall still not collected; drains and gullies blocked; all roads look dirty and strewn with bits of litter
- deep clean of all the streets in the ward to start with, which would show residents how clean their streets/surroundings can look, then manage the cleaning on a regular basis afterwards.
- More litter bins and making sure they are emptied on a regular basis
- Dedicated cleaning crew for the ward – reflective of the make-up of the local community

- fines issued and followed up for persistent offenders, education class or hearty fine for first time offenders(similar to speeding) education for communities, schools business.
- Facilities for recycling collection promotion for rubbish collection from homes(see Somerset council waste collection services)
- Ensuring everyone understands it's the everyone's responsibility to keep the area clean and tidy!
- more perpetrators who are flytipping prosecuted by the council as currently the council does not investigate, only collects rubbish when reported.
- Send a manual and mechanical sweeper to clean roads in and around Small Heath - let the residents know of the days their road will be clean so they can sweep rubbish on to kerb. Let's have a Clean Your Street Day
- More support for local voluntary groups in providing equipment and funding who do litter-pick to keep area clean.
- Pavements littered with used silver and blue gas canisters and discarded take-away food packaging
- Make local businesses/fast food outlets more responsible to keeping their frontages clean and tidying up discarded rubbish
- **Police and Crime**
- More police needed on the streets; increase in visible patrols at regular times throughout the day, evenings and night
- More proactive action in tackling street crime, aggressive /organised begging gangs
- Tackling and closing down 'BOB' shops/premises selling gas cannisters to young people
- Work harder at improving relationship with local community – currently residents have little or no confidence in the police
- Community reassurance that concerns are being taken seriously; increased presence to offer reassurance
- Afterschool chaperone service for young people/school aged children who may be afraid to walk home alone
- Regular patrols to check the large numbers of stolen/cloned cars/CHOP shops in Small Heath
- More proactive enforcement action to tackle speeding/driving under the influence of substances/alcohol/general dangerous driving behaviours
- Shops selling nitrous oxides to underaged children or where it will be knowingly abused should be prosecuted; shops should be made to keep records of which catering establishments have purchased their stock and how many bottles purchased by businesses versus how many bottles sold to caterers
- Improved telephone service provision – calls to 101 number is a huge problem, leaving many residents angry and frustrated and crime unreported
- Feedback to local community on crime-related issues/updates on incidents where permissible so residents feel more reassured/ that reported incidents being tackled

- The reduction of placing people with addictions in unsupported HMOs - as part of Friends of Small Heath Park we have seen increase in antisocial behaviour, discarded needles, open drug dealing and evidence prostitution in and around the Park. This requires joint management by police, Councillors ,landlords, tenants, Birmingham City Council, drug charities, mental health teams, and consistent law enforcement
- Councillors need to work with the police to get the criminals off our streets especially drug dealers and boy racers if CCTV is installed in the ward councillors should follow this up with the police to see any offenders reported by the public and provide the footage so the offenders can face full force of law
- Regular patrols and removal of untaxed vehicles.
- Fines for highway obstruction.
- Engagement with local community groups and be seen to promote good work done
- Regular patrols and enforcements by Police and traffic wardens. Dealing with stolen or cloned vehicles, highway obstruction/traffic management by junctions and double yellow lines
- **Community Safety/Road Safety Issues (including potholes, pavements, speeding, etc)**
- Speeding/excessive speeding/dangerous driving/obstructive/double parking/ parking on junctions and double yellow lines
- Illegal dropped kerbs/misuse of disabled parking spaces and badges
- Increase in organised street begging gangs
- Misuse of Voi/electric scooters by young people; greater security measures needed to ensure that young people (under 17) are not able to access/unlock scooters for riding/joyriding. Consider ban on scooter use until security measures can be guaranteed
- Wheelie Bins being left out on pavements, cluttering up pavements; also being used to secure parking; fines should be issued for causing an obstruction
- Potholes/damaged pavements should be repaired as quickly as possible
- Schools should do more to reduce/control parking around their premises; encourage parents to walk their child/ren to school; consider traffic marshalls/organised drop-off/collection points; walking bus
- Schools to reconsider their starting/finishing times to reduce traffic congestion
- Consider ban on Voi/electric scooters – danger to road users and pedestrians alike; illegal dropped kerbs to be raised and fines issued to homeowners; disabled markings to be removed where the registered user was no longer living in the household
- Fines issued and collected from persistent parking speeding offences (see Brake Charity) Traffic wardens going into schools, mosques, churches education sessions.

- Leaders in the community reiterating the safe drive, park message.
- Ensuring business understand keeping pavements clear for pedestrians, disabled access etc. Council asking shops to keep produce within certain limit outside shops to allow safe pavement access for mums with buggies, elderly etc. Reduce risk of injury, trips, slips etc.
- Ensuring business reduce reuse +recycle and separate waste and do their bit to be a 'good neighbour'
- There should be more police patrols randomly to detect criminal activity. I think the councillors should regularly walk around Small Heath and see the deteriorating pavements and roads any potholes should be reported for repair and maybe also ask the highways officers to resurface badly defect streets. Speed cameras should be monitored as they currently are not.
- Towing away cars parked on junctions especially on busy roads e.g. Coventry Road; instant fines/naming and shaming persistent offenders; more visible patrols by Traffic Wardens; zero tolerance approach to parking on double yellow lines, at junctions and general poor/bad driving behaviours
- Removal of redundant disabled bays and fines for obstructing the public highway with bins (to reserve parking spots).
- Double parking on roads an issue for emergency services who are unable to attend urgent and non- urgent call outs as well as restricting access for other services and road users.

Healthy Lifestyle/Use of Green Spaces

- Providing lighting facilities in the park as a minimum
- More activities and facilities in the park to improve fitness, mental health and reduce loneliness/isolation. Also reduces crime and anti-social behaviour in parks if they are well used by families.
- Install a Multi-use games area (MUGA) to encourage more activity
- Small Heath Park is a much loved and valuable community asset and should be treated as such; greater care and attention to the wildlife and flora should be a priority
- Investment in Small Heath Park, repairing and reusing the house for community groups. Put security fencing back around park to secure, invest in youth activities.
- Reintroduce coffee shop for park users.
- Investment into this precious green space. Oppose monument building in this precious green space.
- Introduce Park run event on Saturday mornings/and other organised activities to ensure park users felt safe
- Horticultural college/ short courses for the community
- Council/Park Staff should take greater control of the parks in Small Heath - keep parks clean regularly as well as keeping equipment usable

- Adequate facilities for children and sports players
- Lighting in the park and regular cleaning and maintenance schedules
- Promote free healthy exercise programmes for young and elderly to enjoy the green spaces and improve mental health

- **Working with Local Businesses**
- Flats above Shops to be better regulated/monitored/controlled and businesses to be made more accountable for their upkeep
- Business Improvement District (BID) for Coventry Road and/or Traders Association
- Develop a Neighbourhood Plan; restrict the numbers of the 'same type' of shops- e.g. fast food takeaways, nail bars etc.
- Encourage local businesses to offer apprenticeships to local young people/ to 'play their part' and be a good neighbour and asset to the community; to celebrate all that is good and kind, particularly at Ramadan
- Set up a business community group: working with schools, churches, mosques, voluntary groups to improve appearance standards of shops; sorting out rubbish, attract different businesses and positive growth to the ward.
- Sharing best practice to improve Small Heath
- Councillors should work with local businesses especially on Coventry Road to pressure them in to keeping the area around litter and rubbish free and not to take pavement space to display items as well as pavement parking as over the years this has resulted in badly damaged pavements outside business.
- Businesses should not be allowed to dump rubbish outside the premise on to the footway; they should have waste provision checked or face action, especially tenants living in business address where they should have a waste collection provision not be allowed to dump
- How to improve area, cleanliness of outside shops. Enforcement of encroachment by shops reducing pedestrian walkways
- Encourage local businesses to be a safe haven for young people
- Create more employment opportunities for local people
- Prosecute those businesses who contravene regulations as per licence agreement; reduce encroachment, remove frontages where there no planning permission exists or where building regulations are breached. Regular checks of trade waste removal licence and ensure frontages are kept clean.

- **Young People**
- More activities and greater encouragement for young people to get involved with community initiatives
- Support and guidance for young people with business/entrepreneurial skills and aspirations
- After-school activities/youth facilities/networks/hubs for young people to develop their skills and abilities/safe haven as an alternative

to youth delinquency/ ASB/ acts of criminality

- Ensuring all young people (not just those eligible for free school meals) are given the same opportunities to take part in activities and training
- Better safety awareness and the dangers of criminal activities; deter young people away from what they may see as 'harmless fun' e.g. illegal riding of electric scooters/off-road quad bikes/ gas canister use
- Police, social services, charities, FOSHP, local sports teams, schools working together to provide learning positive opportunities for young people which gives them an option from gangs dealing drugs
- Youth clubs for the young adults to go to and have positive role models to aspire to rather than having on the streets or driving around in cars intoxicated from drink, drugs and other illegal highs.
- The Council should scrap Voi scooters for underage children or any illegal use the perpetrator should face action. The Council should also work with young people in raising awareness of Nitrous oxide gas use and drugs.
- Facilities for youth to attend, help & support. This should extend to elderly also. Community facilities for Youth/Aged People for intergenerational activities/events/safe shared space
- Open days with schools so that young people are able to contribute to/be part of to the ongoing discussion and consultation process

- **Other/Anything Else**
- Look forward to real representation from local Councillors for the people of Small Heath who have deserved better for a very long time Small Heath community must realise that a great mind set change had to occur individually before things could improve. Fingers crossed for fair, honest representation for the Small Heath community
- Advocate on behalf of local residents to ensure the council comply with their own mechanical sweeper cleaning schedules.
- Advocate on behalf of local residents to ensure the council deploy wardens to enforce clear highways & ticket obstructions
- Illegal dropped kerbs on all roads making it harder for family to visit relatives as there is nowhere to park on the roads.
- Although both Councillors have done great work since elected more needs to be done for Small Heath due to the poor environment of the area. Street furniture in Small Heath e.g. Traffic Signs, name plates are mostly not clear defect bad condition in around Coventry Road these need to be renewed.
- Some streetlights are poor in some roads - it's just too dark. Trees need to be regularly pruned and maintained by the Council.
- Too much graffiti - needs to be a solution for this.
- Road markings need to be renewed as most are not visible around Small Heath. And whenever the Council completes road works, they should collect traffic signs, not leave them abandoned for many months.

- An extra public bin on Heather Road is much needed - this is because there are about 3 fast food outlets just in the junction with Coventry Road and heavily used daily - during busy school times all contents and packaging are littered on Heather Road by public as lack of bin so a bin would be helpful just outside next to lamppost 1 or opposite lamppost 7 by the bollards would be fine. Please keep applying to the council to investigate and maintain Small Heath ward assets I understand it's a very tough ward to get things done.
- A wider and more in-depth engagement by Cllrs to highlight events important to SH. This maybe via SM or mailing list. To understand the need for alternative meeting times.
- Work with neighbouring wards where there is a common issue/share resources and best practices
- Work with local major employers (Asda, Morrison, Tyseley Energy Park) in neighbouring wards to encourage employment/training opportunities
- Ensure anti-social behaviour is kept to a minimum, especially during occasions/celebrations like weddings etc where fireworks start after 11.30pm and continue into the early hours of the morning. Also ensuring hired out luxury cars do not cause a nuisance or obstruction – especially where both sides of the road become blocked.
- HMOs/Exempt/Supported Accommodation – regular checks on housing conditions, tenants/occupants of these types of properties, to address concerns and ASB generally associated with these types of accommodation and to speak to local residents/neighbours whose day to day lives are affected, and to ensure problems are addressed/resolved as soon as possible
- Mainstream Funding/resources allocated to Small Heath Ward – would like details of how much monies/financial aid spent in the ward annually. In addition, greater efforts should be made to ensure that staff working in the ward was reflective of the local community
- A more flexible approach to Ward Forum meetings, including evenings so that all sections of the community are given the opportunity to attend one.

Cllrs thanked residents for their attendance and very active participation with contributing to the Small Heath Ward Action Priorities and Planning Meeting , and to those who had been unable to attend but had contributed to the process via email.

Meeting closed 13.17pm