

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**YARDLEY DISTRICT  
COMMITTEE  
29 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE YARDLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 1330 HOURS  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT:** - Councillors Sue Anderson, Nawaz Ali, Zaker Choudhry, Basharat Dad, Neil Eustace, Zafar Iqbal, Stewart Stacey, Paul Tilsley and Mike Ward.

**ALSO PRESENT:** -

Richard Davies	- District Lead
Amelia Murray	- Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership Manager
Mark Ward	- Chief Inspector, WMP
Chris Robinson	- Acting Senior Housing Manager
Marie Reynolds	- Area Democratic Services Officer

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

392 The District Committee was advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site and members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

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**APOLOGIES**

393 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dad for having to leave the meeting prematurely, Choudhry and Stacey for lateness and Harmer, Jones and O'Shea for their inability to attend the meeting.

**DISTRICT LEAD**

394 Richard Davies, District Lead, made introductory comments and reported to members how his role had changed from previously being a Head of a District, to now being responsible for a service portfolio and to support district committee in terms of implementing and developing the work programme.

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**MINUTES**

395 The Minutes of the meeting of the Yardley District Committee held on 21 July 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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No declarations were submitted

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**EAST COMMUNITY SAFETY GROUP - UPDATE**

Amelia Murray, Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership Manager submitted an apology on behalf of Superintendent Brandon Langley who had recently replaced Superintendent Bas Javid.

She confirmed that the local delivery group was now referred to as the local community safety partnership which reflected more of the type of work that was undertaken. She referred to the delivery plan which was funded through the Birmingham Community safety partnership which in turn received its funding through the Police and Crime Commissioner. She confirmed that funding allocation for this year was £60,000 of which £25,000 was for small grants projects, which were projects delivered by the community or voluntary organisations.

Amelia Murray detailed a number of priorities that the plan focused on which were in addition to any city wide plans that existed. One of the aims of the plan was to bridge the gap between the strategic priorities and local priorities. Reference was made over the last 12 months to the good working relationship that had built up with Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust and the anticipation in moving forward in this area.

Mark Ward, Chief Inspector, West Midlands Police, reported that the last indicators had shown that confidence in policing and how it was perceived by communities had increased from 69% to 82% across Yardley District. He highlighted that the most troublesome issue in the district was speeding and referred to the funding that had been provided in setting up a community speed watch which would be part of an event in addressing these types of issues.

Mark Ward referred to the increase in police and other emergency services' resourcing regarding the fortnight around Guy Fawkes and the Halloween period in meeting the increased level of calls. He referred to 'Operation Hercules' whereby West Midlands Police was responding to street racing which may or may not affect Yardley to any such degree. He added that they were at the moment trying to obtain a ban across the whole of city, which would then fall in line with the Black Country where an injunction was already in place.

At this juncture, Amelia Murray referred to the small grants programme that had been available last year where £55,000 had been allocated in total. She highlighted that there had been very few bids from Yardley and only one bid had been approved which was Community Speed Watch from Sheldon Action Traffic Group. She confirmed that the deadline for applications and proposals for the small grants programme for this year had recently closed and that the panel would be making decisions shortly regarding the applications, which would be communicated to members within the next few weeks.

She reported on the Safer Communities Group and the work they had undertaken in tackling anti-social behaviour together with other agencies that included the police and housing officers from Birmingham providers. She referred to the re-organisation of the group and as a result of this a number of cases were being turned over much more effectively. She highlighted that the most common features of the cases being brought to the meeting were mental health groups congregating in street buildings, neighbourhood disputes which were followed by alcohol and drug crimes, whereupon they were looking to use civil intervention in order to support prosecutions around crimes and vulnerable adults that could covered a wide variety of issues.

She reported on the work that had taken place with the mental health sector where there had been the establishment of a mental health and housing partnership, which was about how the 2 sectors could work more closely together. She confirmed that the one work stream that she would be looking at, was the learning and training that each sector required in order to understand how best each other could be used.

She referred to the other activities that had taken place in June which included the off road bike summit as a result of large number of complaints received across the east side of city relating to off road anti-social behaviour. It was noted that there had been an increased focus on enforcement by the police and city council in tackling this issue.

Mark Ward confirmed that 50 bikes had been seized over the last few months across the district which had arisen from warrants being issued and in some cases bikes being removed from the streets. He added that there was further work scheduled which included additional warrants and several planned days of action to be carried out. He confirmed that already there had been a reduction in the number of calls relating to that specific issue.

Amelia Murray reported on what was being done from a partnership perspective in order to support this area of work whereby it was highlighted that an officer had been seconded from BCC, to support the overall operation. At present they were exploring where civil enforcement options could be used against individuals, and where housing enforcement action could be taken with the issuing of warning letters on a case by case basis.

Amelia Murray concluded by stating that they would not like to see the level of problems that had been encountered this year repeated and therefore it was important to ensure that a proper evaluation and the necessary scheduling was in place early next year, in order that resources were in place to tackle issues within the appropriate timeframe.

In response to comments and questions from members, the following were amongst the points made:-

Mark Ward referred to the A45 and stated that there was an ongoing investigation as to the identification of the individuals involved and at present they were looking into the appropriate legislation in order to best progress the issue forward. He confirmed that he was not aware of a specific meeting point

however agreed to feed back to the appropriate officers the location which was used.

He referred to the garages that had been highlighted and agreed to investigate the possibility of a warrant in order to gain access. With regard to speeding within residential areas he agreed to investigate the possibility of targeting particular areas which was reliant on local intelligence.

He made reference to the travellers and reported that there was a citywide initiative taking place. He explained how the travellers were dealt with by the police and local authority and how they were looking to try and make the process much more simplified.

He referred to the issue of vehicle number plate theft and confirmed that there was now the introduction of shatter proof plates which could reduce this area of crime. He further referred to the ongoing drugs issue which was discussed every day within the police daily management meetings, where intelligence was shared and confirmed that there were police teams dedicated to the guns, gangs and drug opportunists.

He highlighted that he was not aware that the police had not been in attendance at Acocks Green Forum Meetings and agreed to make enquiries in order to ensure that there would be police presence in the future.

Amelia Murray referred to the scheduling of the 'Action Day' and confirmed that the reason for the time that had been chosen was to deliberately disrupt key individuals' movement patterns for the day. With regard to the unused garages, the intelligence would be shared with the local neighbourhood police team, place managers, and there would be the exploration with housing whether audits on the various garage sites had already been undertaken.

In response to a further enquiry relating to drugs, Mark Ward stated that when the intelligence was fed into the local team they would not be aware of the source that provided the information unless it was taken specifically by a phone call. He confirmed that when the information was received it would be fed through to the intelligence department where it would be graded based on a risk assessment and level of quality. It would then be progressed to the local neighbourhood team or appropriate authority to be dealt with accordingly. He subsequently detailed the amount of information required if it was reported that cannabis was being grown in a property which could take up to several weeks for evidence to be produced for submission to court.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Amelia and Mark for attending and providing a detailed co-ordinated report.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the information be noted.

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**HOUSING TRANSFORMATION BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT  
QUARTER 1 2016/17 & YARDLEY DISTRICT NARRATIVE**

The following report of the Service Director, Housing Transformation was submitted:-

(See document No.1)

Chris Robinson, Acting Senior Housing Manager, gave an overview of the report and the narrative. He highlighted that the department was undertaking a review of the garage sites and were checking those that were let for legal purposes, and those that were vacant to ensure that they were not being used. He added that it was a large task to work through highlighting that some sites were in poor repair and may be demolished, whilst others, the department was looking to improve in order for them to be brought back into use. He suggested that if anyone knew of any sites that were being used for unwarranted purposes to advise him accordingly.

As a result of comments and questions from members the following were amongst the points raised.

Chris Robinson referred to joint tenancy of husband and wife and where one partner died the remaining occupant could continue living in the property. However when both parents died and children were living in the property they had no rights to succeed to the tenancy which would result in the department investigating the circumstances, and in most cases, provide for them alternative smaller living accommodation.

With regard to anti-social behaviour being reported, he confirmed that people did report this issue which was generally low level however sometimes could involve mediation with an independent person. He added that in some cases people would not always participate and when all avenues had been explored and no action could be taken, the case would be closed.

With regard to the backlog in housing assessments, he agreed to take away and discuss with the appropriate officers and subsequently referred to the new allocations policy being introduced, whereby people were invited to renew their applications which would not improve matters.

He referred to the unpopularity of sheltered housing and how trends had changed compared to several years ago. He added that where in some cases sheltered housing stock was available in district tower blocks, not everyone considered this an attractive environment to live in and as people were living longer, they were tending to remain in their own homes and favoured the support of the use of extra care schemes. He further added that the more frail and vulnerable residents were choosing to live in extra care villages which provided support and a community within secured premises.

He referred to a review taking place regarding the tower blocks designated for mature tenants and the growing demand from young people to reside in this type of property, therefore, the need to review the demand for sheltered housing was very important.

Chris Robinson referred to the issues associated with the new contractor and agreed to obtain the appropriate information as requested. With regard to mediation, Chris confirmed that the tool existed for both residents of the council and owner/occupier accommodation and subsequently agreed to contact the Manager, Call Centre, to ensure that all staff was providing the correct information to clients.

Chris Robinson referred to the issue of bonfires in gardens and stated that although they were not outlawed, if regular fires continued containing certain materials, they would not be allowed and would be investigated.

Chris confirmed as he was moving to another area of work, Arthur Tsang would be taking over this role and would be in attendance at the next meeting.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Chris Robinson for attending the meeting and reporting.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the report and comments be noted.

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**AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT YARDLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING**

At the request of the Chairman, it was suggested that information relating to:-

Performance of Primary and Secondary Schools within Yardley District Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) – supporting schools in Yardley District and their outcomes.

It was noted that the Pre-Agenda meeting for the next Yardley District Committee would be taking place on Thursday 10 November 2016 and if members had any further suggestions for items to be included to contact the Chairman.

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**SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS 2016/17**

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The following schedule of meetings was noted:-

All meetings would be held on the following Thursdays at 13:30 hours in The Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham:

24 November 2016	– Room 6		
26 January 2017	– Room 6	23 March 2017	– Room 6

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**DATE OF NEXT YARDLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING**

400 The next Yardley District Committee Meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 24 November 2016 at 13:30 hours in Committee Room 2, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB.

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**AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

401 **RESOLVED:-**

In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 15:00 hours.

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CHAIRMAN