

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**HALL GREEN DISTRICT  
COMMITTEE TUESDAY  
30 NOVEMBER 2016**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HALL GREEN  
DISTRICT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 30  
NOVEMBER 2016 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE  
ROOM 1, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT** : - Councillor Claire Spencer in the Chair;

Councillors Mohammed Azim, Barry Bowles, Mohammed Fazal,  
Shabrana Hussain, Kerry Jenkins, Martin Straker-Welds, Habib  
Rehman, Tony Kennedy, Victoria Quinn.

**ALSO PRESENT** :-

Karen Cheney - Interim District Head (Hall Green)  
Wesley Williams - Station Commander, Highgate  
Mark Rodgers - Housing Manager  
Arthur Tzang - Housing Officer  
Danny Bishton - Inspection and Enforcement  
Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick – West Midlands Police.  
Sarah Stride - Committee Manager

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

237 The Chairman advised that the meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site ([www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com)) and that members of the press / public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.

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**APOLOGIES**

238 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Lisa Trickett and Sam Burden for their inability to attend the meeting.

Councillor Tony Kennedy apologised that he would have to leave the meeting before its conclusion.

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**MINUTES**

239 The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- 240 The Chairman stated that she had a couple of corrections to the Minutes of the last meeting:
- i) Share Point Update – Page 209, Minute No. 233 : the point made was that there was no budget available for the appropriate technology required.
  - ii) Birmingham Cycle Revolution : noted that the item had been requested to appear on the agenda. However, Officers had requested that the issue be discussed at the District Committee following a report to be submitted to the Cabinet Committee in December. An update will be available in the new-year.
  - iii) The Future of Neighbourhood Libraries in Hall Green District – the topic was currently out for public consultation and therefore deferred to a future meeting.

241 Councillor Tony Kennedy stated that he no longer wished to be appointed to serve as the District Champion for Employment, Jobs and Skills and that he wanted to hand the position over to Councillor Mohammed Azim.

The Chairman asked if there were any objections to the motion and it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Mohammed Azim be appointed to serve as the District Champion for Employment, Jobs and Skills.

242 Councillor Victoria Quinn noted that libraries were currently open to public consultation on the future operating model but she expressed concern that the Committee should note that Balsall Heath Library closed in May for what was meant to be six weeks of refurbishment and was due to re-open very shortly. The refurbishment in total has taken over six months to complete which has given the general public the impression that the library had already closed. She felt that to ask the public to comment on a library that the public had already perceived to be closed was an insult and was damaging to the consultation process.

The Chairman agreed that the time taken to complete the refurbishment was unnecessary and damaging because members of the public had been denied a service and had thought that the library had already closed.

The Chairman stressed that the future of libraries and other aspects such as where the general public can submit verification forms or gather advice such as benefits advice etc if libraries were closed will be discussed at a future meeting of the District Committee.

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At this point in the meeting the Chairman agreed to consider agenda item 8 as Councillor Kennedy had requested to leave the meeting shortly after.

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**NEIGHBOURHOOD CHALLENGE 2016/17**

243 Karen Cheney advised that Members had received recent information on the Neighbourhood Challenge 2015/16 concerning co-producing road safety via email as well as being tabled at the meeting and she briefly went through the salient points of her briefing note.

## **Hall Green District Committee – 30 November 2016**

Councillor Tony Kennedy stated that Hall Green was one of, if not the first District to introduce the 20 is Plenty Campaign. The Campaign had been a resounding success and several other Districts had followed suit. Clear and visual signage had proven to be a problem but not un-surmountable.

The Campaign had secured the recruitment of ten road safety champion apprentices who would be active in the District advising residents, children, schools and motorists on road safety. He urged Members to spread the word throughout their Wards and conform to the 20 is Plenty Campaign.

Councillor Victoria Quinn stated that she felt delight when she watched the Children's Court at Montgomery Primary School. Speeding drivers were stopped and summoned to attend the Children's Court whereby year 6 students then admonished them for their actions. The Court was shown on television and she was immensely proud of the pupils and the School within her Ward. She expressed concern that the momentum for the 20 is Plenty Campaign needed to continue for it to be a success and to eventually become the norm Citywide. She added that it was important to also work with the Police in a partnership arrangement to enforce and catch drivers with no motor insurance.

Councillor Barry Bowles stated that the Stratford Road was notorious for speeding vehicles and over the years many pedestrians and other road users had been badly injured or died in serious accidents caused by speeding vehicles or pedestrians crossing the road at inappropriate points. He requested information on fatality statistics on the Stratford Road over the last ten years and expressed concern that nothing had been done to reduce the speed of traffic over that period of time.

Councillor Kerry Jenkins stated that she fully supported the 20 is Plenty Campaign and urged Officers and fellow Members to Campaign and roll out the scheme in the Hall Green Ward.

She made reference to the poor response given to the questionnaire that accompanied the road safety campaign and asked whether there were more efficient ways of obtaining residents views than completing a questionnaire.

Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick, West Midlands Police stated that if key areas of speeding can be identified then the Police can work with residents and carry out a speed radar exercise.

He fully supported the Children's Court and felt that it was a positive way to communicate and change the behaviour of careless and speeding drivers.

Councillor Habib Rehman advised the Committee that the Trusts and Charities Committee had recently approved the formation of the 'Young Active Travel in Birmingham Charitable Trust' which enabled Schools to apply and obtain a grant of up to £1000 for funding behaviour changes around transport choices. All Schools, Citywide, could apply for a grant.

The Chairman thanked Members for their comments and requested that it be placed on record that the young people and Schools in the Hall Green District had shown a huge lead in the road safety agenda and that they should be congratulated and proud of all their effort and hard work.

## **Hall Green District Committee – 30 November 2016**

Councillor Tony Kennedy summed up the debate and stated that this was the first phase of the first phase and that a further report would be submitted to the District Committee in the future on the next steps to be taken in driving the message forward.

The District Head advised that Selly Oak District's Neighbourhood Challenge was around road safety and Selly Oak Members had requested permission as to whether they could use the same practice that was used for Hall Green District.

Members of the Hall Green District Committee had no objection to the request.

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### **PETITIONS**

The following response to a petition requesting that Avondale Road be made a one way street was submitted by the Hall Green District Engineer:-

(See Document No 1)

Councillor Habib Rehman stated a Traffic Regulation Order could be sought Citywide and not just for the Road in question. He requested that the District Engineer attend a site visit with Ward Members so that the problems and concerns could be highlighted. Slight incidents which do not result in injury or a fatality should be recorded. Action should be taken before a death was recorded.

It was –

244

### **RESOLVED:-**

That the response be noted and that the District Engineer be requested to revisit his findings and liaise with Ward Members to find a reasonable and cost effective outcome.

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### **BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS BUDGET 2016/17**

The following report of the Strategic Director, Place was submitted and a revision to Appendices 2 and 3 were circulated at the meeting:-

(See Document No's 2 and 3)

Mark Rodgers, Housing Manager introduced the report, highlighted the salient points and paid particular attention to the revised appendices 2 and 3 which were tabled at the meeting.

Members requested that the specific Ward be included next to each project listed in all future reports.

He responded appropriately to Members comments with regard to contractors and costings and upon a show of hands it was unanimously –

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**RESOLVED:-**

- i) That the progress in connection with the projects previously initiated at Appendix 1 be noted;
- ii) that approval be given to the projects as outlined in the revised Appendix 2;
- iii) That the budget position statement provided at the revised Appendix 3 be noted.

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**HOUSING TRANSFORMATION BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2016/17 AND PERFORMANCE NARRATIVE**

The following report of the Service Director, housing Transformation was submitted together with a performance narrative: -

(See Document No's 4 and 5)

Arthur Tzang, Housing Manager introduced the report and discussed each point as mentioned in the performance narrative attached to the agenda papers.

Members expressed concern that the actual reality of introductory tenants and voids and lettings were not showing in the target figures. It was felt that the targets listed in the report were incorrect and did not reflect the true figures.

Concern was also expressed that the Council's repair call centre and the contractors repair call centre were not working in conjunction with each other. It was not acceptable that residents were often left without heating because customer services were not working in partnership. The service needed to be more robust and should be performing in sync with each other. Communication was vital.

Arthur Tzang responded appropriately to concerns raised and stated that he would liaise with the appropriate officer with regards to rent arrears and email Members with the response.

It was -

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the Housing Transformation Board Performance Report Quarter 2 2016/17 and the performance narrative be noted.

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**LICENCING AND ENFORCEMENT**

Danny Bishton, Inspection and Enforcement gave a verbal report and in response to questions raised by Members made the following particular points:

- Cars sold illegally on driveways, traffic islands, side of road – depends on where and who is selling the car and whether the car was MOT'd or insured. If parked on TRO streets then the City Council can take enforcement action.
- Fly posting – he reported that he had removed several posters himself personally. If Members could alert him to the hot spots then he would ensure that the posters were removed.

The Chairman thanked officers for the good work completed in targeting fly-posting on and around the Stratford Road.

It was -

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the verbal report be noted.

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**MEMBER CHAMPION – CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE**

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Councillor Barry Bowles gave a verbal report on his role as the Member Champion for Corporate Parenting and made the following particular points:-

- Visits to children's homes were going well.
- Regulation 44 Visits – he stated that he had recently been denied access to a private children's home. He had shown his identification pass and Section 44 Notice to staff and was allowed to enter the children's home. However, minutes later a telephone call was received from the Manager of the Home asking him to leave the premises straight away. He had tried to explain the situation and was informed that she did not understand what a Regulation 44 Visit was.
- He had reported the incident to the appropriate Council Officer and it was being investigated.
- Over the Christmas period elected Members had raised a collection for children in children's home and had collectively raised over £1,200. He thanked all elected Members for their generosity and good feeling.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Barry Bowles for his informative presentation and congratulated him on all the good work that he had completed throughout the District. He urged Members of the District to accompany him and become engaged in visits to the children's homes in the District.

Members of the District Committee echoed the Chairman's comments.

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**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE UPDATE**

The Chairman invited Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick, West Midlands Police to give a brief verbal presentation update on recent Police structural arrangements:

- Structural changes have worked well.
- Changes have been made to the Neighbourhood Team to make Policing more effective in the District.
- WMNow website – digital communication messaging tool. Citizens to help in partnership with the Police to act as eyes and ears for the Police. Messages can be sent to the streets to inform members of the public what is going on in their neighbourhood. Criminals and certain individuals can be identified at the earliest opportunity.
- Police patrols targeting robbery in the Hall Green District. Satisfied that burglary crime statistics in the District are low compared to Citywide statistics.
- Staffing – three new Police recruits have been appointed. Offer a good service to regular Police Officers.
- A presentation has been submitted to each of the Wards in the District.

Members thanked and congratulated Inspector Neil Kirkpatrick for his verbal presentation and it was –

349

**RESOLVED: -**

That the Police verbal update be noted.

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**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2017**

It was -

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**RESOLVED: -**

That the District Committee note the schedule of meetings for 2017: -

1 February 2017	-	Rooms 3 & 4
29 March 2017	-	Rooms 3 & 4

All meetings will be held at 1400 hours at the Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham.

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**HALL GREEN DISTRICT WORK PROGRAMME**

351

Karen Cheney, District Head made the following points:

- Member Champions will continue to give a feed back at each meeting. Will keep Corporate Parenting as a rolling agenda item.
  - Will liaise with the Chairman and integrate points made by Members into the future work plan.
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**THE FUTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD LIBRARIES IN HALL GREEN DISTRICT**

352 This item was deferred to a future meeting.

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**OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (REPORTS BY OFFICERS)**

**A. Flooding in the Sparkbrook Area**

Councillor Mohammed Azim expressed concern that recent inclement weather conditions had caused severe flooding in the Sparkbrook area, damaging several homes and destroying property. The contractors Amey had completed some works but the situation had not been resolved. Three schools were in the area and had been affected by the floods. He stated that something was wrong with the drainage and requested that urgent action be taken to rectify the situation.

353 The Chairman agreed that the situation was a serious concern and stated that Amey officers and Highway officers should meet at the location and find a solution as to why the storm drains were not carrying the water away correctly, thereby resulting in flooding.  
The Chairman asked the District Head to investigate and report back on findings.

**B. Schools/Education and Missing Children**

Councillor Kerry Jenkins requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting on missing children from the education service. She further advised that the issue was discussed on West Midlands This Morning television show.

354 The Chairman requested that Councillor Barry Bowles, Member Champion for Corporate Parenting investigate the concern and inform the District Committee of the number of children who were missing from the education service in the Hall Green District.

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**AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

355 **RESOLVED:-**

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

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The meeting ended at 1555 hours.

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CHAIRMAN