

YARDLEY EAST WARD MEETING NOTES	
<b>WARD:</b> YARDLEY EAST	<b>DATE:</b> Thursday 5 March 2020
<b>VENUE:</b> St. Edburgha' s Church, Church Road, Yardley, B25 8PD	<b>START/FINISH TIMES:</b> 6.30pm – 7.52pm
<b>COUNCILLOR:</b> Neil Eustace	<b>NOs OF ATTENDEES:</b> 20
<b>OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b> Beverly Edmead - Community Governance Team, BCC PC J Gailee – Local Police Team, WMP Mark Gamble – Development Manager, Inclusive Growth Directorate, BCC  <b>Apologies For Absence</b> Sgt Michael Wilson – Local Policing Team, WMP	
MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>1. Notice of Recording</b>            Residents were advised that members of the press/public may record and/or take photographs of the meeting.         </li> <li> <b>2. Local Councillor News and Updates</b>            Cllr Eustace advised of the following:-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A recent meeting with residents to discuss the proposals for the former Sports Ground; concerns had been expressed about the plans by Persimmons for 110 houses to be built on the site – these included increase in traffic and access issues; the implications for wildlife, natural habitat and biodiversity and the intensity of the number of homes. Sport England had also strongly opposed the proposals. The Planning Application was due to be presented to the Planning Committee in May/June</li> <li>- Stechford Train Station – the improvements to the station had been going well, however the recent adverse weather conditions had delayed the completion of the works. Work would re-commence as soon as the weather improved. Limited disabled parking</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	

provision was being considered.

- Iron Lane Junction Improvements – works ongoing with the improvements to the junction had been progressing well.
- Former Cascades/Stechford Baths sites – asbestos had been found in the building and had to be removed by specialist crews which led to a delay with the demolition. This was expected to be completed by the end of the month. Lack of parking at the new leisure centre continued to be a problem and several local churches were in discussions with Council Officers regarding retaining the site for local/community use.
- Increase in fly-tipping in the ward. Residents advised to remain vigilant and to report any suspicious activity – providing as much information as possible if it was safe to do so. Residents also advised to be wary of tradespeople offering to remove rubbish or household clearance at low rates as they were unlikely to have a licence or permit to do so and were most likely to fly-tip.
- Tree planting was due to be carried out later in the year by Trees For Life. Residents suggested that areas of the park could be better used to grow on young saplings and that several trees in the park had been uprooted following the recent spell of adverse weather. Cllr Eustace agreed to raise the issues with the District Parks Manager.
- Covid-19 (Coronavirus) currently one case had been identified in the City. Residents were reminded of the symptoms of the virus, and what should be done if they have any of the symptoms, including contacting their GP or NHS Online for advice if their condition worsens. Regular handwashing (including the use of hand sanitisers if soap and water was not available) and minimising close contact, including handshakes and hugs to help prevent the spread of the virus.  
Full details, advice and information was available on the City Council website and updated daily as more became known about the virus and guidance from the government/Chief Medical Officers was given.

#### **West Midlands Police Update**

PC Gailee advised of the following:-

- An increase in vehicle and house break-ins particularly in the evenings/night. Residents reminded to lock vehicle doors and remove valuables from sight; to lock doors and windows to their property and to fit anti-snap locks where possible as well as additional locks and bolts as an additional deterrent.

- Graffiti/tagging had also increased – officers were investigating and working alongside school liaison officers to try to identify the perpetrator(s).

Residents advised an increase in drug use and anti-social behaviour, particularly around Old Yardley Park, the Church and Conservation Area and called for CCTV cameras to be reinstalled as a deterrent. Cllr Eustace advised that changes to the Data Protection Act meant the use of CCTV cameras had to be reviewed and had to be removed where they were no longer compliant with the legislation. The City Council was also seeking to purchase new mobile CCTV cameras which would be used in hot spot areas across the city, so residents must continue to report incidents to the police or Council Officers so that problematic areas could be identified and resources deployed as necessary.

PC Gailee added that the concerns raised would also be passed on to Sgt Wilson so that an increase in patrols could be considered along with suggestions of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch.

### **3. East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy**

Following introductions, Mark Gamble, Development Manager, Inclusive Growth Team gave details of the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy which was recently launched and currently out for extensive consultation/discussion with the wider community. (Copies of the Strategy were distributed at the meeting).

Key priorities for the ward and wider Yardley and Hodge Hill Districts, including jobs, skills, training, improvements in education and health were highlighted and residents views, comments, suggestions and general input was needed to help shape the priorities and build for the future and that partnership working across all sectors was the main key to the success of the Strategy.

During discussion, residents felt that proper investment was needed to improve the local shops and facilities like green open spaces, playing fields and community centres also need improving and health provision like GP Surgeries and Walk-In Centres which were currently over-stretched. Residents expressed further disappointment at the ongoing neglect and disparities across the East Birmingham Corridor which had been ongoing for the last 30 years or so and felt that the contents of the document were misleading and lacked detail on how local groups would be supported.

There was also a sense of trepidation and an unwillingness to trust or believe that residents comments, suggestions and concerns would be taken onboard when public consultations were carried out, and that the latter tended to be a 'box ticking exercise'.

Responding to residents' comments regarding the neglect and steady decline of Yardley and the wider Yardley & Hodge Hill Districts over the years, Mark Gamble explained that the Strategy had been developed in response to tackling these issues and by working with key partners and stakeholders like HS2, Clean Air Zone, Tyseley Energy Park, Midlands Metro and South and City Colleges across the East Birmingham Corridor provided an opportunity to help regenerate these areas and provide better opportunities for local people. A series of drop in events would be planned and officers were happy to meet with local residents and voluntary groups to discuss the Strategy and seek their views, comments and suggestions. This was an opportunity for residents to have their say on things that mattered most to them and actively encouraged them to contribute to the Strategy.

Resident further requested that community representatives were also included as members of any of the partnership and/or decision making boards once they've been set up and that regaining the trust of residents was key to successfully developing and taking forward the Strategy.

Mark further advised that extra copies of the Strategy document were available for residents/community groups as necessary.

Cllr Eustace and residents thanked Mark for his attendance and presentation.

#### **4. Birmingham Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Update**

The item was deferred as Officers had been unable to attend the meeting. However copies of Clean Air Zone area and relevant information were circulated to residents at the meeting. Details of the CAZ was also available on the Council website.

#### **5. Residents News and Updates**

It was suggested that Neighbourhood Watch Groups/Setting up a Neighbourhood Watch should be an Agenda item at the next meeting along with an update on the Clean Air Zone

Blakesley Hall Road/Church Road – STOP signage missing. Cllr Eustace agreed to contact the District Engineer.

There were no other issues raised.

**6. Petitions** – None submitted

**7. Any Other Business**

None raised.

**8. Dates of Next Meeting**

Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> May - to be held at 6.30pm, St. Edburgha's Church

**Meeting closed 7:52pm**