

Birmingham City Council

Quinton Ward Meeting **Thursday 25 January 2018** **7.00pm** **The Church Hall** **St. Boniface Church** **Quinton Road West** **B32 2QD**

Meeting Notes

Present: Councillor Kate Booth

Officers: Beverly Edmead – Community Governance Team
Ken Brown – Neighbourhood Development & Support Officer
Marie Brown – District Engineer
Zahid Mahmood - Capital Programme Manager, Education Infrastructure

There were 23 residents present.

Cllr K Booth in the Chair

1. Notice of Recording

Residents were advised that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Gregson and Clancy as well as several local residents who were regular attendees.

3. Councillors News and Information Updates

Cllr Booth advised of the following:-

- Leo McKevitt, Senior Park Ranger had sadly passed away earlier in the day. Residents expressed their shock and sadness at Leo's passing and a number of tributes were paid to him.
- Percy Lee - former Chair of Governors at Woodhouse Primary School and a very active, community minded resident had also passed away. A number of tributes were paid to Mr Lee by residents.

Following a request from the Chairman, a minute's silence was held in memory of Leo and Percy.

There were no other updates.

4. Yewcroft Centre Site /Harborne Primary School Annexe– Planning Application Update

Following introductions, Zahid Mahmood, Capital Programme Manager, Education Infrastructure advised that:-

- There was currently a shortage in Reception places in Harborne ward which had resulted in some pupils being displaced to neighbouring areas.
- An expression of interest in expansion was initially submitted from Harborne Primary School and Lordswood Girls School following the high demand for primary school places.
- The existing Harborne Primary School site was not suitable for expansion. The original proposal was to create an annexe on the Lordswood Girls School site, however due to difficulties relating to planning, a new site had been identified on the land at the former Yewcroft Centre, Court Oak Road, Harborne.
- The proposal for a 1 form entry annexe to Harborne Primary School on the former Yewcroft Centre site would meet current demand and would also have potential for future expansion should demand for school places in the area require it.
- The proposal was currently out for consultation until 27 February however comments and representation could still be made until the date of the Planning Committee meeting when a decision on the Planning Application would be determined.

Residents advised of the following concerns:-

- Court Oak Road was a very busy road; there were daily problems with traffic congestion, dangerous driving, obstructive parking/highway obstruction and road traffic collisions.
- Residents living on the road were often subjected to verbal abuse and dangerous driving practices from impatient drivers on a daily basis.
- Driveways were often blocked, leaving residents unable to access or leave their homes until the volume of traffic reduced.
- There were several specialist support agencies on Court Oak Road, including the Queen Alexandra College, which caters for approx. 200 students over 16yrs old, all of whom have special needs/disabilities and were transported to and from the college on a daily via special minibuses. The road was also very well used for Guide Dogs training.

- Little or no provision appeared to have been made for additional staff parking at the annexe as the number of available car parking spaces had been reduced to 7.

Residents added that whilst the extra primary school education places was very much needed, greater consideration must be given to managing the existing traffic problems as well as providing adequate parking provision for staff. Consideration must also be given to providing a safe place for parents to be able to drop off/pick up their child/ren without adding to the existing problems. Residents further advised that a drop off/pick up/turning facility within the school grounds should be considered as there was adequate space within the grounds to do so and this would be enormously beneficial to everyone.

Responding to residents comments, Mr Mahmood advised that discussions were ongoing with Highways/Transportation Officers regarding better traffic/parking management. Proposals included relocating the bus stop closest to the annexe; installing a puffin crossing; increasing the zig-zag lines outside the school as well as several Traffic Regulation Orders. Discussions were also ongoing with Harborne Primary School to consider some of the national initiatives such as Modeshift STARS and the Walk to School (WOW) to encourage parents not to drive their child to school.

Responding to further residents' concerns relating to the monies specifically allocated to Quinton Ward for the loss of education places following the sale of the Martineau Centre and confirmation that the monies had not been allocated to the Yewcroft site, the Chair advised that Cllr Gregson was dealing with the issue.

The Chair thanked Mr Mahmood for his attendance and reminded residents to submit their comments/concerns regarding the application before the consultation closing date.

5. **The Martineau Centre S106 Monies Information Update**

Following a request from the Chair, local resident Barry Husband gave details of the consultation regarding recreation provision in the ward.

Mr Husband advised that:-

- An explanatory letter and sample questionnaire was sent to Woodhouse, Worlds End Lane, Four Dwellings and Quinton C of E Junior Schools. Woodhouse School was the only school that had responded.
 - A small project group (Cllr Booth, Barry and wife Helen) attended the Woodhouse School Fayre on 7 December 2017 and spoke to a number of parents, staff and pupils
 - Barry and Peter Beck (QLHS) carried out site visits from Quinton Village to Quinton Meadows, discussing the area and small parcels of "parks land".
 - Cllr Booth and Barry met with the Head of KS3 and a number of pupils at Four Dwellings Secondary School on 18/12/2017. A significant number of questionnaires has since been completed and returned by the School.
- A meeting was held with Sue Amey (Head of Parks, Edgbaston District) on 2 Jan 2018 and the results from over 200 questionnaires handed over, along with a copy of a quote from Kompan Ltd (specialists in play equipment).

Examples of the type of play equipment available as an option were displayed at the meeting.

Assurances had been given by Sue that the S106 funding of £246,400.20 for recreation use was safe from budgetary pressures and changes to the ward following the local elections in May.

Following the consultation, a MUGA was the overwhelming choice of equipment for use by young people. Large Climbing Frames, Adult Swings and Outdoor Gym Equipment were also popular choices.

Barry advised that the following concerns had been identified:-

- The cost of the required 15 year maintenance agreement was still to be advised.
- A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Tennal Lane could be a problem given the close proximity to the residential houses and policies/legislations regarding distance/noise etc.

Barry added that a further update on the progress made would be given at the next meeting.

The Chair and residents welcomed the update and commended Barry for his hard work carried out to date.

Cllr Booth agreed to follow up on the possible availability and re-use of the redundant play equipment at Four Dwellings Secondary Academy.

Action:

- (i) Item to remain a Standing Item on the Agenda – All to Note**
- (ii) Further update on the progress of the Play Equipment/discussions with Sue Amey/Parks Dept. to be given at the next meeting**

ii) The History of Quinton Recreation Ground (est. 1901)

The Chair invited Peter Beck, QLHS (Quinton Local History Society) to give a presentation on the history of the Recreation Ground and the Quinton Village Plan.

Mr Beck drew residents attention to the visual displays around the room and briefly advised of the history of the park, which dated back to 1901 when a local resident donated acres of land to Quinton Parish Council with a covenant.

The park was very well used back in the 1950s, with tennis courts, a football pitch, swings, a shelter as well as having a very natural environment bordering fields, recreation grounds and the former Bourne College.

The construction of the M5 motorway through the middle of the recreation ground

Saw the removal of the tennis courts, and Local Government reorganisations led to the park being separated, with parts being managed by Birmingham City Council and Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Hopes of restoring and improving the parts of the park managed by BCC were raised in 2003 when the Quinton Village Plan was published by the Planning Department, with a number of encouraging recommendations to the Quinton Ward Committee.

The Quinton Village Plan

Attempts to bring about the regeneration and conservation of Quinton Village were made by active, likeminded people including the Green Party and the Old Quinton and Ridgacre Neighbourhood Forum over a 10 year period.

It had been very disappointing that many of the recommendations in the Village Plan had not been taken on-board or implemented. Following further changes to the Local Government boundaries, the Village had become even more isolated from the rest of the Ward as Hagley Road West was the main boundary dividing the Village between the three neighbouring Local Authorities of Birmingham, Sandwell and Dudley Councils.

Concluding his presentation, Mr Beck added that both areas were historic and much valued assets to the ward, and many residents would welcome their restoration and improvement.

The Chairman thanked Peter Beck for his presentation.

6. Quinton Meadows – Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS Maintenance Amended Plans

Peter Beck advised that:-

- He had attended the Planning Committee meeting with Cllr Booth on 21 Dec 2017.
- The Planning Committee had voted unanimously to amend Condition 2 of the Planning Application. This seemed to require what QMCC and the Planning Committee had requested and that the key wording of the Condition included “the drainage scheme shall demonstrate how its ecological value can be maximised, particularly with respect to predicted water levels in the attenuation pond”. It was also suggested that the Environment Agency should take responsibility for the SUDS due to the difficulties and expense to maintain them.
- The Planning Case Officer also advised that Planning Officers should still consult with other relevant BCC Departments regarding the Conditions and that QMCC could also seek to discuss the Conditions with them.

However, Mr Beck felt it was disappointing that the Planning Committee had accepted the assurances of Senior Planning Officials that the City Council had the expertise and resources through a commuted sum to take responsibility for the management and maintenance of the SUDS. Further explanations and clarity sought by QMCC regarding how, when and by whom it was proposed to address

the non-functioning ponds A1 & A2 in Compartment 6 of Quinton Local Nature Reserve remained unanswered, and that the matter would be passed to the City Council's Economy Ecologist.

Summing up, Mr Beck advised of the following actions QMCC would like to see:-

- That the Area Planning Officer is requested to attend the next QMCC and/or Quinton Ward Forum meeting in order to explain how, when and by whom it is proposed to address the problems of the first two phases of drainage – i.e. how, when and by whom the non-functioning of ponds A1 & A2 in Compartment 6 of Quinton Local Nature Reserve was to be addressed.
- That QMCC would write to the Directors of Economy and Place Directorates asking them to arrange a meeting with the developer St. Modwen to discuss and agree that St. Modwen would carry out improvements to the depth, width and design of the non-functioning of ponds A1 & A2 in Compartment 6 of Quinton Local Nature Reserve. This being the way such issues were required to be addressed by the Quinton Meadows and Business Park Management Plan 2002 (Planning Condition S/06397/02/FUL)
- That Quinton Ward Forum Members also do the same as outlined above.
- That QMCC would contact BCC Parks and other appropriate BCC Departments to discuss the Planning Conditions and the failure to carry out the requirements of the Quinton Meadows and Business Park Management Plan 2002 (Planning Condition S/06397/02/FUL) and its' Review of 9th May 2013.

The Chairman and residents commended Peter Beck/QMCC for their ongoing drive and efforts in trying to secure the right outcome for the SUDS and the Nature Reserve.

Residents expressed further frustrations at the unwillingness of Planning Officers to meet with residents or to take their concerns/comments on-board regarding Planning Applications, especially when residents were left to deal with the problems caused by approving a Planning Application or not enforcing Planning Conditions, and that the strength of residents' feelings were certainly not reflected in the Planning Officer's recommendations.

Residents added that a more robust approach towards Planning Enforcement was needed as developers were no longer held to account and very often flouted the imposed conditions with impunity.

Action:

- i) **Ward Members to invite the Area Planning Officer to the next/future Ward Forum Meeting or the next QMCC meeting to address the concerns raised above regarding ponds A1 & A2.**
- ii) **Cllr Booth to contact the relevant Cabinet Member to advise of the concerns outlined above.**

7. Pitts Wood Information Update

Cllr Booth drew residents attention to the video presentation shown in the

background on the clearing and redevelopment works being carried out at Pitts Wood by Roots to Fruits alongside pupils, staff and parents from Woodhouse Academy School. The School was very keen to hold an Open Day at Pitts Wood for residents to come along and see the work carried out to date.

The Head Teacher was also keen for local residents to become involved with Pitts Wood and discussions were ongoing regarding setting up a 'Friends Of' Group or similar local voluntary group. Interested residents should contact Cllr Booth for further information.

Action: All to Note

8. Residents News/Updates/Concerns

Martineau Community Room

Following a request from Cllr Booth, local resident Barry Husband advised that:-

- It was announced at the last Ward meeting that Persimmon had sold the Clock Tower Building on the Martineau Garden Site to Luxury (Bournville) Homes Ltd.
- It was noted at the Planning Committee meeting in 2014 that permission had been reluctantly given to the Persimmon Application 2014/05096/PA for the demolition of the majority of the existing buildings on site and residential development of 121 dwellings and associated works; the change of use of the Clock Tower building from office to 6 residential dwellings (Use Class 3) and community floor space. The Planning Officer dealing with the application at that time (Ben Plenty) had outlined details of the community use in his final report (para 6.26).
- In 2016, the Planning Committee approved the Persimmon Application 2016/00346/PA for a further increase of 13 dwellings, instead of the 19 that was initially proposed, which was strongly opposed by the local community. Again, the "retention and conversion of part of the Clock Tower building for 6 flats and a community room" was noted in the proposal (para 1.1).

Barry added that the Ward meetings remained the only platform for Quinton residents to express their concerns, views and opinions and requested that the following statement was put to the vote:-

"We object in the strongest possible terms to the manipulation of the whole Martineau Development. We condemn the failure/negligence of the Planning Department (over the past 3 years) to ensure the development of the Martineau Clock Tower flats and community area as Persimmon had built a large estate around this part of the site. Persimmon had been allowed to manipulate this sale to Luxury Homes Ltd – both would know that recent Government Legislation could be used to circumvent retention.

Subject to this vote, the statement and results should be formally recorded in the Minutes and relayed to the relevant City Council Cabinet Member and other officials by a designated Councillor.

Cllr Booth thanked Barry for his presentation and following his request, put the aforementioned statement to the vote.

Following a show of hands, the vote was recorded as follows:-

23 residents voted in favour of opposing the pending development

0 votes in favour of the development

No one abstained from voting

Action: Cllr Booth to action as above

West Midlands Fire Service – Cllr Booth reminded residents that free Safe and Well Home Safety advice and checks were carried out by the Fire Service. Residents should contact the Service on 0800 389 5525 to arrange a home visit.

No 24 Bus Service - Cllr Booth gave details of a recent meeting with National Express and TfWM (Transport for West Midlands). Whilst the arrangements made by National Express regarding the consultation was not widely publicised, they had agreed to extend the consultation period until the end of the month for service users comments and views. Any changes to the service would not come into effect before the summer. Residents were advised to let Cllr Booth have their comments as soon as possible.

No 10/10s Bus Services – consideration to the extension of the bus route and terminus at a more suitable location was being given by TfWM.

Action: All to Note

Local Innovation Fund/Community Hub – Cllr Booth advised that a date for the Steering Group meeting would be arranged in the near future. Residents and volunteers interested in helping to develop the Hub were encouraged to contact Cllr Booth following the meeting.

Action: All to Note

Budget Consultation – local resident Elliot Hirst drew attention to a section of the consultation document and the reference made to the withdrawal of approx. £170k from Harborne Pool & Leisure Centre by the City Council as part of its budget savings plan, and expressed his concerns about the implications this could have for the long term future of the facilities.

Action: Cllr Booth agreed to investigate the matter further and to raise with her fellow Ward Councillors in Harborne Ward.

Cllr Matthew Gregson – A Very Special Thank You

Peter Beck QLHS/QMCC placed on record his thanks to Cllr Gregson for his hard work and commitment to the Ward in his role as Councillor following his election in May 2010, and the active encouragement given to local residents to participate and contribute to issues of concerns in the ward.

Residents joined Mr Beck in wishing Cllr Gregson well for the future.

9. Review of Outstanding Actions/Action Tracker

Due to lengthy discussions and presentations on the earlier Agenda items, the schedule of Outstanding Actions was deferred to the next meeting.

10. Any Other Business

None raised.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Residents were advised the Quinborne Centre was available for use for ward meetings on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.

Following discussion, it was suggested that the next meeting should be held on Thursday 1 March 2018, subject to Cllrs availability.

12. Authority to Chairman and Officers

It was noted and agreed that:-

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

The meeting closed at 9:03pm