

Birmingham City Council
Notes of the meeting of the Sparkbrook Joint Police Tasking & Ward Meeting
23 February 2017 at 6pm
at Balsall Heath Forum, 82-89 St Pauls Road B12 8LS

Present: Councillor Mohammed Azim (Chair) & Councillor Victoria Quinn
Sergeant Chris Rigby, West Midlands Police
PCSO Lorriane Whelan, West Midlands Police
Austin Rodriguez, Neighbourhood Development & Support Unit
Lucy O'Grady, Amey
Mike Davis, Service Head
Tracy Melbourne, Sparkbrook Health & Community Centre
Kay Thomas, Neighbourhood Development & Support Unit

There were 38+ residents also in attendance

1. **Notice of Recording** – Noted
2. **Apologies** – Councillor Kennedy
3. **Petitions** – none submitted

4. **POLICE TASKING ISSUES**

Sergeant Rigby circulated crime statistics for the Balsall Heath area and updates on recent arrests. In response to residents questions Sergeant Rigby made the following points;

- He welcomed working with local groups and would speak at the conclusion of the meeting to those involved with the local youth football club.
- There had been an increase in burglary across the force, particularly in Moseley & Kings Heath & Solihull. The importance of crime prevention was stressed, joint patrols were working in the area but resident's assistance was needed.
- In respect of numerous complaints about speeding vehicles he had spoken to West Midlands Fire Service about borrowing cameras that captured data
- In respect of double parking/obstruction residents should phone 101 and depending on priorities officers would attend. Tickets had been issued in hotspot areas including Runcorn Road and would continue to be issued.

Residents made the following comments;

- Concern expressed regarding speeding vehicles by Clifton Road bridge which made it unsafe for children and parents
- Issues with parking on Ladypool Road had been exacerbated since the opening of new restaurants and it was queried whether a transportation officer could assist residents with a vehicle count.
- Inconsiderate parking on Runcorn Road was a particular problem and a resident advised that he was often unable to move his car from his driveway to go to work. He had contacted the police and council and was becoming desperate for help.
- Clifton Road (Stoney Lane end) had a particular parking problem – vehicles were double parked, parked on the pavement, blocking access ways, parking behind properties preventing residents leaving. No parking signage had been removed. Councillor Quinn said that one option was a resident's parking scheme but this would have to be considered carefully and would not be popular with all residents.
- Parking charges on Clifton Road car park had made the situation worse.

- Residents suggested that warnings be issued to drivers found illegally parked and that if found illegally parked again they would be sanctioned. Photographs of illegal parking could be sent to the police for them to take action. Sergeant Rigby said photos could be sent to him but warned residents to be mindful of personal safety.
- It was queried whether the CCTV cameras on the corner of Cheddar Road were active and the sergeant confirmed that they were. Residents asked for more CCTV in the area.
- A local resident drew the meeting's attention to the area around St Mary & St Ambrose Church, Raglan Road that was being used for drug dealing and drug use. This had been reported to the police and a log was being kept. Residents added that Calthorpe Park and the Pavilion was also being used for drug activity. Councillor Quinn advised that a CAT had given the pavilion to the community so all parties needed to come together to find a solution to the issues at the Pavilion. With regard to the church, she undertook to speak to the Inspector as the church was on the boundary between two wards and also to speak with Optima.
- There had been an abandoned car in Oldfield Road for some time and it was being used for drug taking. The car park was also being used for drug selling.

Councillor Quinn suggested and the following actions were agreed;

- Action: a) that a future meeting focus on the hot spot areas across the ward and look at key traffic management issues, with the District Engineer and senior highway engineer.**
- b) re: drug issues raised, Councillor Quinn to raise St Marys & St Ambrose Church with police inspector & Optima housing**
- c) Update to next meeting on CCTV camera in Cheddar Road**

5. LOCAL INNOVATION FUND

Austin Rodriguez gave a brief outline of the purpose of the Local Innovation Fund, the criteria, the process for submitting proposals and other funding sources that were available. Any proposals should be sent to the councillors and copied to Austin. Residents made reference to a deadline that was set at the last meeting and that a proposal had been submitted by that date. The progress was queried. Other residents said they had not been aware of the LIF having not attended the previous meeting but would like the opportunity to submit a proposal.

Councillor Quinn said she had not received any proposals, the Chair said he had not either. After some further discussion the following action was agreed;

- Action: a) All proposals to be sent to all councillors and Austin**
- b) An outline proposal rather than full application form could be submitted at this stage**
- c) Those proposals already submitted will be considered (no need to re-submit)**
- d) Deadline for proposals 31 March 2017**

6. SPARKBROOK HEALTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE – CHANGES TO ADVICE SERVICE

Mike Davis provided an update on changes to services at Farm Road. Changes had to be made due to budget pressures. From today the open door service had been withdrawn, some appointments could be made but would be prioritised; people would now be directed to phone line. The telephone number for the advice service was 216 3030. There

would be a reduced reception service, reduced numbers of advisors but the verification service was still available.

Tracey Melbourne advised that while the transition was taking place there would be floor walkers available to explain the new system and offer advice.

Councillor Quinn stressed the need of residents in Sparkbrook to access services and still see an advisor if necessary as not all could use/had access to computers. She therefore urged the meeting to let other people know about the changes and to feedback their observations. The Chair said that people from outside the area also used Farm Road for the service it offered and felt residents might suffer.

Tracey said staff were still committed, for the transitional period at least, to ensure that there was always someone there to offer help and minimise any difficulties. Home visits were still available by appointment.

7. AMEY

Lucy O'Grady gave an overview of Amey's roles and functions.

Councillor Quinn referred to Beach Road and said the road had not been inspected for years consequently the pot holes and road surface were in a terrible condition. There needed to be a better uniformity of service. Lucy confirmed that Beach Road was in the programme for resurfacing.

Residents queried why none of the street lights in the avenues had been upgraded to LED and Lucy advised that public rights of way had not been upgraded at the same time as main roads, largely due to column condition. In response to un-adopted street lights the meeting was advised that the Deputy Leader was looking at a way to resolve the issue. Austin referred to a report on accessways and alleyways and measures to address the problem that would be made public soon. Residents said that the lighting in the avenues off had been an issue for some time and it was a safety concern for residents. In the avenues off Runcorn Road the brick pavements had been stolen and residents were walking on a very uneven surface with little light. Lucy undertook to look into the matter.

A resident referred to a street light which needed a bulb replacement to the rear of Kensington Villas. Lucy undertook to investigate and report back to the councillors.

8. RESIDENTS ISSUES

Balsall Heath Park

A local resident drew the meetings attention to the fact that 2 picnic benches had been removed from Balsall Heath park. One had been vandalised and removed but no-one appeared to know about the other bench. Councillor Quinn undertook to investigate and email the resident with a response.

Event

Stand Up Against Racism & Islamaphobia – 2 March, 6-8pm, George Street

9. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Traffic Measures in relation to speeding & parking across the ward.

10. AUTHORITY TO ACT BETWEEN MEETINGS

Noted and agreed

Meeting ended at 7.50pm