

SPARKHILL WARD MEETING NOTES

WARD: Sparkhill	DATE: 13 th September 2023
VENUE: St Johns Church, St Johns Road B11 4RG	START/FINISH TIMES: 6.30pm – 8pm
COUNCILLORS Nicky Brennan & Rashad Mahmood	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 8
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Amer Khan, Neighbourhood Action Co-ordinator Fabian Gayle-Rice & Michael Agada, Street Intervention Officers Sal Naseem, Assistant Director, Insight, Policy & Strategy Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	VISITING SPEAKER Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for Environment

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING INCLUDING LOCAL CONCERNS:

1. Welcome & Notice of Recording

Councillor Brennan welcomed all to the meeting and advised that members of the public/press could record/take photographs, except where there were exempt or confidential items.

Councillor Brennan gave a brief update on the Section 114 Notice and provided the link to the council's website for further information.

2. Parks & Open Spaces

Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for the Environment explained his portfolio and responsibilities, including parks.

The meeting was advised that there were 3 parks in the ward – Sparkhill, Percy Road & Avon Park – the only funding available was for play equipment repairs, however, the cost was usually prohibitive therefore equipment often had to be removed for safety reasons. Friends of Parks groups were welcomed and were an invaluable asset and working with Birmingham Open Spaces Forum were able to generate funding, as Friends of Sparkhill Park had successfully managed.

In response to questions regarding the S114 Notice, Councillor Mahmood said that parks were not a statutory service, but he was discussing with the S151 Officer ways to maintain play equipment and the grant to BOSF in respect of the council's duty of care to citizens through parks and open spaces.

During discussion residents referred to fly tipping and rubbish that blighted the area. Councillor Majid Mahmood advised that Sparkhill would receive 2 visits a month from the MHRC and the trucks were being reconfigured to take more recyclables and the fridge collection crews and black bag collections had increased, especially along the Stratford Road. Sparkhill was the 16th highest ranked ward for fly tipping across the city and therefore Love Your Environment crews visited once per month and there had recently been several days where there had been no reports of fly tipping. Going forward households were now entitled to a second recycling bin on request in an effort to increase recycling rates. It was highlighted that none of the initiatives mentioned were statutory services, but Councillor Mahmood was in discussion with officers regarding retention of services.

In response to questions Councillor Rashad Mahmood said notification of the locations of MHRC's was on the council's website and that the councillors advertised details via social media and through their local leaflets. Local litter picking groups also let residents know when the trucks were due. A local newsletter for the ward was suggested as a way of keeping residents informed of services and events. Councillor Brennan undertook to email residents with MHRC details.

In response to a query regarding gating to prevent fly tipped rubbish in alleyways, the meeting was advised that private alleyways were not the council's responsibility, but help could be offered via Love Your Streets provided residents were willing to assist.

Residents referred to the rubbish and food waste accumulations at the rear of some of the businesses. Councillor Majid Mahmood outlined the trade waste contract that all businesses needed to have in place and that an educational programme was being rolled out to schools. It was reported that trade waste bins on Springfield shopping parade were blocking pavements forcing pedestrians to walk in the road. Amer Khan advised that the issues in this area were known and were being tackled. Enforcement officers were dealing with the bins and waste management with rubbish sacks from flats above the shops. There were multiple issues in this location and Amer undertook to follow up and provide the Cabinet Member with details.

3. Street Intervention Officers

Fabian & Michael talked about their work as Street Intervention Officers, working with partner agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour, issues around beggars, rough sleepers and drugs. The importance of reporting anti-social behaviour was stressed as it acted as a community trigger and brought agencies together to tackle. Reported issues also helped provide evidence towards a Public Space Protection Order. The meeting was advised that the officer covering Sparkhill, Sparkbrook & Hall Green was Gloria Arthur and contact details would be provided to the councillors. A local resident referred to constant drug dealing to a multiple occupied house in College Road and Fabian undertook to take the details to pass onto Gloria.

4. Local Updates/AOB

a) Councillor Updates

Beyond Birmingham 2022 Grant applications

Councillor Brennan reported that the following applications had been recommended for approval:

- Strikes 19 (football for young people and volunteer training) - £7,700
- Friends of Sparkhill Park (regeneration) - £10,000
- Springfield Project Family Friendly Festival - £10,000

Councillor Mahmood reported on the locations of upcoming MHRC as follows and that details would be circulated to households in respective areas –

College Road – 18 September

McKenzie Road (Wake Green Road end) – 6 October

St Johns Road (Dolphin Rd end) – 27 October

Showell Green Lane – 10 November

Wesley Gardens – 27 November

Percy Road – 1 December

College Road – 21 December

All 7am – 12pm

b) Residents Issues/Updates

- **Pavement Encroachment** – a local resident expressed serious concern at the extent of pavement encroachment by local businesses along Stratford Road, in particular around Forman's Road, commenting that the situation had been ongoing for a number of years with seemingly no action being taken by the council. This was an offence and a safety issue for pedestrians, and it was queried why no legal action had been taken against the businesses. During the pandemic people had been unable to safely social distance due to the blocked pavements. Councillor Mahmood explained that action was taken and there was an exercise tomorrow with enforcement officers and residents were welcome to join. Councillor Brennan said she would invite police and relevant officers to a future meeting to explain about the work being done.
- **Pavement Parking** – residents complained regarding obstructive and dangerous parking around the ward, highlighting Ivor Road and Anderton Park Road where parking on corners obscured the view of drivers coming out of the side roads. Residents also commented on cars that were

now being left in the middle of roads causing obstruction and parking over dropped kerbs blocking residents in their homes. Councillor Brennan referred to the recent attack on enforcement officers and suggested that the Cabinet Member for Transport be invited to a future meeting to talk about road safety.

- **Car Noise Stoney Lane** – in response to concerns raised Councillor Brennan undertook to raise car noise with the police in line with the road safety operation currently being undertaken.
- **Speeding College Road** – request for cameras or road safety measures. Councillor Brennan said that if residents were interested, she would arrange a site visit to look at traffic calming.

ACTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	WHO	BY WHEN
1. MHRC details to be emailed to local resident as requested.	1. Cllr Brennan	1. asap
2. Pavement encroachment – police/relevant officers to be invited to future meeting.	2. Cllr Brennan/Cllr Mahmood	2. Future meeting
3. Car Noise Stoney Lane	3. Cllr Brennan to raise with police re road safety operation	3. asap
4. Traffic Calming site visit College Road	4. Cllr Brennan to arrange	