

Forum: Halesowen North and Halesowen South

Date and time: Thursday 4th November, 2021 at 6.30pm

Venue: Online on Microsoft Teams

Attendance: Councillors Ray Burston and Stuart Henley

Officers/Police: Sergeant Steven Crowe, PCSO Christopher Bilsby
Sally Cornfield (Area Liaison Officer, Dudley MBC), Charlotte
Fletcher, (Senior Health Improvement Practitioner) Davinder
Tiwana (Community Development Worker) and Carol Tromans
(Community Development Worker)

Members of the public: 8

1. Welcome and introduction to the meeting

The Area Liaison Officer welcomed attendees to the meeting, noting that it had been some time since the community forum had met and ran through the online etiquette and attendee guidelines for the meeting and explained the format of the meeting. Councillors, the Police and Council Officers introduced themselves.

Other attendees were asked to introduce themselves via the chat facility on Microsoft Teams.

2. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Councillor Taylor was appointed as Chair of the forum and Councillor Burston as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.

3. Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Joe Roberts, Parmjit Sahota, Alan Taylor and David Vickers.

Due to Councillor Taylor's apologies for this meeting Councillor Burston took the Chair.

Councillor Henley declared an interest as a member of the Shell Corner Partnership.

4. Communities Together

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Action/Response</u>
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Feedback from funding recipients:

Richard Morris, Leaps and Bounds Trust, conveyed feedback on its Halesowen Dementia Project.	Noted.
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To obtain a copy of the book, contact:

richard@leapsandbounds.org.uk

or purchase via:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Remember-Me-Lee-Benson/dp/1789962242>

Link to "Remember Me" video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNckBxGdXe4>

The Lifecentral Church provided feedback on the drive through Santa's Grotto held at Halesowen town centre last Christmas. A request was made for anyone with items of good quality furniture they wished to donate to please contact Lifecentral Church. Funding was required for a new van or to hire vehicles to collect and deliver furniture.

Action: Davinder Tiwana (Community Development Worker) to contact team to explore funding opportunities.

Information about the Elevate project could be found on link below:

<https://lifecentralchurch.org.uk/elevate/>

The Area Liaison Officer reported on behalf of Vicky Rogers, Halesowen BID, regarding the funding for the pocket park and benches in the town centre.

Story Board would be moved to Fingerpost Gardens shortly.

Halesowen in Bloom gave feedback on the wildflower garden at Earls Island. The area looked sparse currently, however, this was in preparation for next year's meadow.

Noted.

Opportunity for attendees to promote groups / share activities

Details were shared of the community outreach and engagement activities of Lifecentral Church.

Lifecentral Church provided details of the Kids and next Gen project on the link below:

<https://lifecentralchurch.org.uk/children/>

and provided information on its midweek youth activities

<https://lifecentralchurch.org.uk/youth/>

Councillor Henley provided details of the Shell Corner Remembers event on 5th November, 2021.

Noted.

Councillor Burston reminded people of the forthcoming Remembrance Event at the town centre on Sunday 14th November, 2021.

Noted.

Breakout group activity feedback:

1) what is great about our local community?

- Variety of groups
- Police
- Halesowen BID
- Halesowen in Bloom
- Access to green spaces
- Schools
- Town Centre community
- Creative ideas from committed community groups
- Free parking has made shopping in Halesowen more attractive

2) what we would we like to see in our local area and how can we make this happen together?

- Sharing of reasons why shops are empty
- Strengthen Neighbourhood Watch
- Youth Work
- More Police
- Better bus routes between Halesowen and Rowley Regis
- A night time economy

Opportunity for attendees to raise issues/concerns (non-police matters):

Concerns raised from resident regarding Footpath access within Leasowes/ Stennals Fields – routes had been closed by the Golf Club without consultation or prior notification. Attempts were made to liaise with the club directly, which had been unsuccessful. Councillors requested to facilitate an open discussion.

Action: Letter to be sent from Forum requesting justification and feedback and for residents to be informed of any future plans.

A resident offered to support the recruitment of Health Walk Leaders.

Action: Charlotte Fletcher (Senior Health Improvement Practitioner) to pass this onto responsible officer.

Concerns were raised regarding a proposed development on Spies Lane that had previously been turned down and had resurfaced. Residents were meeting on Saturday to discuss their concerns. A request was made for Member support (previously given by former Councillor Bills and James Morris MP).

Councillor Burston was aware of the meeting and was happy to be contacted to provide support to residents.

A resident not in attendance had reported concerns of suspicious behaviour to Crime Stoppers. It was reported that between 10pm – 10:30pm individuals were seen riding electric scooters dangerously with no lights. The riders meet outside the Lifestyle Express corner shop on Holy Grange Road and it was thought that they could be dealing drugs.

Noted.

The resident would like to thank Councillor Vickers for swiftly dealing with an abandoned car, which had no tax or insurance and was towed away within 3 days.

Noted.

Residents gave thanks and praise to Manor Pharmacy and Team for the vaccination centre. It was well organised and was appreciated by the residents. A request was made to whether this could become a permanent feature.

Action: Davinder Tiwana (Community Development Worker) to pass on feedback / suggestion.

The resident also expressed concerns about rising levels of robbery and car theft in the area, particularly the Lapal area.

Noted.

5. Police update and discussion

Subject

Staffing levels were shared to manage expectations – Four PC's (1 student who rotated the three strands of policing) and four PCSO's was the establishment, however, they were currently operating with a reduction in staff due to sickness.

Action/Response

It was advised that the most effective way to share intelligence was:

- 1) Online at <https://west-midlands.police.uk/incident-report>
- 2) Call 101
- 3) Send Email to Halesowen Neighbourhood Team, however, there could be a delay in response due to rest days, etc.

In an emergency call 999

Find out about the police at <https://www.wmnow.co.uk/>

There was a national shortage of PCSO's.

Noted.

An uplift in staffing had been agreed, three students (also following a rotation) would be joining the Team starting in January 2022.

Noted.

Neighbourhood Team only worked until midnight and support from other Teams were required from 12am onwards. There was a good relationship with them, however, were reliant on public intelligence to work smartly.

WMNow was a free community messaging system that delivered up to date information from Police and partners direct to your inbox, from updates on crime, to local news, appeals and safety advice, don't miss out on information that is important to you.

Sergeant Crowe's background was from Covert Operations and he would be bringing this expertise to the Team and was employing tactics currently, which had led to arrests.

Noted.

Questions & Answers Session:

Questions raised included, what was the most effective way to get intelligence to Police and what was the level of encryption on the online reporting system.

Encryption was the same as any other Government website – websites were safe and reporting could be done anonymously.

6. Community form funding

Applicant

Shell Corner Partnership

Recommendation

That £2,570.00 to hire 25 solar powered Christmas trees to be mounted on lamp posts on Long Lane, Halesowen over the Christmas period be approved.

The light switch on is on 26th November, 2021 at Long Lane Library from 3:15pm and open to everyone.

7. Arrangements for next meeting

The format of the next meeting had not yet been agreed. Feedback on virtual sessions would contribute to the decision, therefore, thoughts and comments regarding the meeting would be welcome.

A short evaluation form can be accessed via the link below:

<https://forms.gle/8wWgq9XoaYBCF1zi8> please complete by 30th November 2021.

Or join the feedback session. To register your place click on the link below:

https://online_community_forum_feedback_sessions.eventbrite.co.uk

Meeting ended at: 19:56

