

**ACTION NOTES OF THE CASTLE AND PRIORY,
ST. JAMES'S AND ST. THOMAS'S COMMUNITY FORUM**

Monday, 17th March, 2014 at 6.30 p.m.
at Wrens Nest Community Centre, Summer Road, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor K. Finch (Chair)
Councillor A. Ahmed (Vice Chair)
Councillors K. Ahmed, Ali, M. Aston, A. Finch and Roberts

Lead Officer - S Griffiths, Directorate of Corporate Resources

20 members of the public

29 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Following general announcements, the ward Councillors introduced themselves.

30 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Waltho.

31 **LISTENING TO YOU: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Local residents raised questions and made comments, as set out below. Where necessary, these issues would be referred to the relevant Directorate or appropriate body for a response:-

Nature of Question/Comments

- (1) Various issues were raised concerning parking at Russells Hall Hospital and on the Russells Hall Estate. A request was made for the Council to participate in a partnership approach with the NHS and the private sector to provide a multi-storey car park on land opposite the Hospital, with the adoption of reasonable car parking charges. Reference was also made to speeding, congestion, parking on pavements, vehicles blocking driveways and heavy goods traffic using the Estate as a short cut. The Cabinet Member for Transport noted the ongoing issues and responded to specific points. Concerns about parking at Russells Hall would remain under consideration and be raised with the Hospital Trust as necessary.

- (2) The Cabinet Member for Transport indicated that, following public consultation, the scheme for residents' parking permits would not be taken forward.
- (3) Issue concerning the road surface in Wrens Nest Road. The Chair indicated that officers had investigated this issue previously.
- (4) Request for extra lights to be put on the corner of the cul-de-sac of Cedar Road, off Meadow Road, to help with the security of vehicles.
- (5) Concern about the deterioration of a previously resurfaced pavement outside a property in Myrtle Road.
- (6) Issues concerning dangerous parking at the only exit (of three) currently being used from the North Priory Estate (ie: the exit nearest to Donkey Pool fields). Ward Councillors undertook to raise this issue at a forthcoming meeting with Bromford Housing Association.
- (7) Request for action concerning an overgrown garden of private tenants at a property in Middlepark Road.
- (8) Issue concerning a drain cover in Corbyn Road, which had recently been covered with soil during works in the area.
- (9) Concerns about the timing of traffic light signals at Parkes Hall Road/Wrens Nest Road/Sedgley Road and associated traffic congestion.
- (10) Request for an update on the provision of a community building in the North Priory area. Ward Councillors indicated their support to local residents and undertook to raise the issue at forthcoming meetings.
- (11) Concerns about the provision of public toilets in Dudley Town Centre; requesting an explanation for the closure of toilets on the Inhedge car park and the reason why these toilets could not be refurbished. Reference was made to the ongoing works to regenerate Dudley Town Centre and the public consultations.

- Councillor Roberts repeated previous concerns about traffic speeding between Eve Hill Island, along Himley Road, to Milking Bank Island. This related to normal traffic flow accentuated by lorries taking waste to the disposal centre exceeding the 30mph speed limit.
- Councillor A Finch requested a progress report on the situation concerning the Estate Office in Summer Road, Wrens Nest. He expressed concern about the lack of progress and anti-social behaviour taking place around the building.

- Councillor Ali repeated concerns about the functioning of traffic light signals in and around Dudley Town Centre causing traffic congestion in parts of St. Thomas's ward. The Cabinet Member for Transport noted the comments and reported that action would be taken with a view to reducing traffic congestion problems.
- The Chair reported on the severe budgetary problems faced by the Council. The Council had already made significant savings and additional savings were required over the next three years.

33 AREA GRANTS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted on applications for funding. In addition to the four applications contained in the report, the Lead Officer reported on a further three applications received.

AGREED:-

- (1) That the Director of Corporate Resources be recommended to:-
 - Approve a grant in the sum of £6,848.80 to St Francis Parish Centre for the supply/installation of a new boiler and radiators to replace the heating system.
 - Approve a grant in the sum of £2,995 to West Mercia Scout County towards funding a Unit attending the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan in 2015.
 - Approve a grant in the sum of £2,500 to the Destined to Reign Church to support a project to tackle social isolation amongst community groups with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and encouraging healthier lifestyles; and that the applicant be advised to submit a similar application to the St Thomas's Community First Panel for consideration.
 - Approve a grant in the sum of £1,800 to the Sycamore Adventure to urgently replace items that had been stolen from the centre during January, 2014.
- (2) That the following applications be deferred pending confirmation of the funding allocations for the 2014/15 financial year and that the Director of Corporate Resources be recommended to deal with the funding applications as matters of urgency, if appropriate, following the receipt of any necessary further information and in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and ward Councillors:
 - Dudley Arts Council – funding of up to £5,000 to support the delivery of the Black Country Festival across the Borough.

- Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre – funding of up to £8,000 to run and manage welfare community focused projects.
 - The Young Smiles Project – funding of £9,341.25 to furnish and equip a dedicated area of the applicant’s new building to enable the extension of the project to run sessions for children with obesity, mothers and toddlers and providing fitness nutrition courses.
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34 NEXT MEETING

Subject to the approval of the Council at its annual meeting in June, 2014, the provisional dates of the Community Forum for 2014/15 were as follows (all 6.30pm with venues to be confirmed):

25th June, 2014

3rd September, 2014

5th November, 2014

28th January, 2015

18th March, 2015

The meeting ended at 8.15 p.m.

CHAIR