

ACTION NOTES OF THE MEETING OF AMBLECOTE, CRADLEY AND WOLLESCOTE, LYE AND STOURBRIDGE NORTH COMMUNITY FORUM

Held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 26th June, 2013
At Wollescote Community Centre, Wassell Road, Stourbridge

PRESENT:-

Councillors Body, Crumpton, Hanif, Herbert, Lowe, Mrs P Martin, Perks and Mrs Walker.

OFFICERS:-

Miss J Porter (Lead Officer to the Forum - Director of Children's Services) and Mrs K Taylor (Directorate of Corporate Resources)

Together with 14 members of the public.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Herbert was elected Chair of the Forum for the 2013/14 municipal year.

2. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Councillor Perks was elected Vice-Chair of the Forum for the 2013/14 municipal year.

3 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

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

4 **INTRODUCTIONS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Forum. Following the making of other general announcements the local councillors and members of the public introduced themselves.

5 **LISTENING TO YOU - QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

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

Nature of questions/comments

- (1) Concerns regarding the trees, hedges and branches overhanging the pavements by the corner of Penfields Road, Stamford Road by the Railway Bridge, Lindale and Martindale Road. This matter had been raised at the previous Forum meeting.
- (1a) A resident requested that improvements be made to the footpath and overgrown trees cut back at Stour Valley Walk from the viaduct through to Bagley Street and Speedwell Close.
- (2) A resident referred to the road sign on entering the Borough from Cradley Heath along Cradley Road, which states 'Halesowen', this should read 'Cradley'.
- (2b) Ongoing problems concerning the parking on Oakfield Road outside and along the road from Wychbury Surgery. The traffic flow needed to be re-assessed to determine a new solution for parking. Councillor Body agreed to undertake a site-visit with the resident.
- (2c) Car Parking on Chapelhouse Lane causing obstruction to driveways and buses. The parking was due to patients visiting Chapelhouse surgery. There were also problems with cars and motorbikes travelling at a high speed along the road.
- (3) A resident requested that the chainshop in High Town, Cradley be looked at as it was part of Cradley's heritage and was the only remaining chainshop with possible public access. It had been neglected with overgrown trees causing damage to the roof – there should be public discussions with a view to obtaining funding for improvements. Local schools wish to take children to see the shop and experience it.
- (4) Ongoing problems with parents parking over driveways by Withymoor School, and when asked to move their car the resident and his wife received abuse. Members of the Forum stated that if anyone received any form of abuse to contact the Police. The Lead Officer agreed to re-address the matter in readiness for the start of term in September, and stated that the resident would be welcome to attend any meetings if he wished to do so.
- (5) Councillor Mrs Martin, on behalf of a resident, referred to the bollards at 7 Dwellings Bridge, which had been raised at the previous Forum and actioned, however it was requested that the bollards could be made irremovable to make them permanent as they could be easily stolen.
- (5b) An issue was raised in regard to public parking at Wollescote Park, where a resident was informed that the responsibility for repairs was that of the Council's Green Care organisation who had stated that there was no budget to repair the parking. As Social Services staff used the parking space when attending meetings it was queried whether they could use some of their budget to help with repairs.

Other issues raised :-

- A resident referred to an article in a newspaper with regard to Ernest Stevens Trusts, and asked what had happened to the money made available for grants. Following a discussion it was confirmed that bids for funding could still be made to the Ernest Stevens Trusts.
 - The Chair advised the forum that the police were in attendance and residents could discuss any issues after the meeting.
 - Sergeant R Gardener updated the Forum on crime figures within the three wards, and encouraged members of the public to routinely lock their vehicles, as a number of thefts were occurring in the borough.
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6 WORKING WITH YOU - TOPICS RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILLORS

- Councillor Mrs Martin referred to a recent planning project by a resident to build a Pharmacy and two small shops in the Amblecote area. She expressed her disappointment that although the planners were happy with the project, the Highways Section had recommended refusal.
- Councillor Mrs Walker referred to a recent case at Accident and Emergency at Russells Hall Hospital, and suggested that the department be looked at by various health bodies such as Public Health and Health and Wellbeing. Councillor Perks commented that she had spoken to the Director of Public Health, in respect of the case mentioned and would be writing a letter to the contact provided by the director. Councillor Crumpton encouraged people to use the complaints procedure for Hospitals or Healthwatch if they had any bad experiences during their visit to hospital.
- Councillor Hanif referred to the site near Yardley Street, Lye where a manufacturing company was sited. Metal fencing and a building extension had been erected without planning permission, and enforcement action had been taken. Councillor Hanif would report the outcomes at a future forum meeting.
- Councillor Hanif commented on the parking bays in Lower High Street, Lye and explained that he had met with traders and residents to discuss the possibility of realigning the bays. A consultation process would be taking place.
- Councillor Lowe reported on the overhanging trees near Lye Football Club and Cemetery Road. The Chair also commented on the trees and parking in Mears Coppice.

- Councillor Crumpton referred to the Remembrance March in Lye, in particular that the march would be taking place this year. He also referred to the march in 2014 given that it would be the 100th anniversary, of the start of World War One, and that the possibility of incorporating two local schools into the march was being looked at.
- Councillor Crumpton referred to the introduction of the first Friends of Cradley Library Group.
- Councillor Crumpton commented on the Community First Funding available within the ward. Applications for funding could be received by contacting the Ward Members.

7 AREA GRANTS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted on three applications for funding.

It was noted that an application from Lye and Stourbridge North Neighbourhood Team was received after the report had been circulated, for the sum of £1630.32 towards the purchase of a variety of sports equipment. The Lead Officer reported that a number of required documentation was not submitted, and therefore requested that the application be dealt with under delegated powers in consultation with Members of the Forum, once all documentation had been received.

Following consideration of the applications, it was agreed that any applications received from West Midlands Police in respect of different Neighbourhood Teams would be considered as a separate entity, rather than as a whole organisation.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the action of the Lead Officer, in consultation with members of the forum, in recommending approval of an application in the sum of £2880 from West Midlands Police for the purchase of pitch hire, be noted.
- (b) That the application received from Lye and Stourbridge North Neighbourhood Team be considered under delegated powers, in consultation with members, following receipt of the required documentation.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND

That the Director of Corporate Resources approve the following:-

- (a) A grant in the sum of £1374.35 to Wychbury Patients Participation Group towards the cost of a healthcare event aimed at providing advice and guidance to men in the Cradley, Foxcote and Wollescote area regarding prostate cancer.

- (b) A grant in the sum of £3286 to Bethel Chapel to repair and replace the exiting flat roof which had been causing damage.
- (c) A grant in the sum of £5000 to New Life to extend the kitchen to allow more meals to be served, better quality meals to be provided and the capacity to take on more volunteers. It was noted that New Life had requested whether the Forum could approve additional funding, however following a discussion it was agreed that New Life could contact and obtain additional funding from the Brierley Hill Forum.

8 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Forum would be on Tuesday 10th September, 2013, starting at 6.30pm at Lye Community Centre, Cross Walks, Lye.

The meeting ended at 8.20.