

**Action Notes of the Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews/Quarry Bank and
Dudley Wood Community Forum**

**Tuesday 6th September, 2016 at 6.30pm
at Savoy Centre, Northfield Road, Netherton**

Present:-

Councillor B Cotterill, J Cowell, C Perks, D Sparks and E Taylor.

Officers:-

A Tromans - Lead Officer to the Forum (Information Systems Manager, ICT Services) and H Shepherd - Democratic Services Officer (Chief Executives Directorate)

Together with 13 members of the public

1 **Election of Chair for the 2016/17 Municipal Year**

Councillor Q Zada was elected Chair of the Forum for the 2016/17 municipal year.

2 **Appointment of Vice-Chair for 2016/17 Municipal Year**

Councillor B Cotterill was elected Vice-Chair of the Forum for the 2016/17 municipal year.

(Councillor Cotterill in the Chair)

3 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Zada.

4 **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Following general announcements, the Councillors and Council officers introduced themselves.

5 **Dudley: Have your say**

The Lead Officer to the Forum gave a brief presentation and outlined details in relation to the Dudley: Have your say consultation and event. The background to the consultation was highlighted and residents and Councillors were advised that an event would be held on Wednesday 28th September, 2016 from 6.30pm to 9pm at Dudley Council House.

It was commented that there was an online survey available on the Safe and Sound website www.dudleysafeandsound.org for people to complete if they were unable to attend the event in order to enable their views to be taken into account.

Reference was also made to the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction scheme and the information and consultation document that had been circulated at the meeting. Residents were actively encouraged to complete the questionnaire and submit all responses by 16th October, 2016.

6 **Listening to you – Questions and Comments by Local Residents**

Subject

Action

A resident raised concerns in relation to tenants leaving items for scrap collection, which were never collected and resulted in the items being left, causing fly-tipping and asked who was responsible for dealing with these issues.

The Chair confirmed that this was the responsibility of the Housing Manager for the affected area.

A tenant requested to purchase a new black bin but had been advised by Dudley Council Plus that this was not possible and only green bins could be purchased.

Referred for a response/action.

Anti-social behaviour issues in Heath Road. Police and the Dudley ASB team have previously been involved but incidents are still occurring and action needs to be taken.

Referred for a response/action.

Residents expressed concerns in relation to the recent influx of travellers within the borough and requested information as to how much it would cost Dudley MBC to clean up Netherton Park now the travellers had departed and how much in total it had cost to clear up all the sites across the Borough where travellers had recently visited.

Referred for a response/action.

During discussions it was confirmed that the Council was unable to charge West Midlands Police for any works undertaken to clear the site, however it was felt that West Midlands Police were not enforcing the powers in which they had to move travellers on or to deter them from entering an unauthorised site. However it was considered that the Council did do everything that was in their power to ensure that travellers were moved on as quickly as possible.

Members considered that it was an appropriate time for changes in law to be

made so that local authorities were not continually left with huge cleanup bills and it was suggested that alternative options be considered including the possibility of impounding vehicles until the fee to cleanup the site had been paid.

It was also commented that Dudley MBC was in the process of developing a digital platform so that residents could immediately report incidents for Dudley Council Plus to process. It was recommended that in the first instance, residents should contact one of their local ward councillors to report the arrival of travellers.

It was suggested that the protocols for residents reporting an issue relating to travellers should be widely publicised.

A resident raised concern in relation to the steps in the middle of Woodside Park which were overgrown and slippery and were considered to be hazardous to local residents and users of the park and requested that they were cut back.

Referred for a response/action.

A resident requested that the trees adjacent to Coppice Lane and Bath Road be looked at as they were considered to be rotten and ill maintained. It was also commented on the horrendous fly tipping on the same piece of land and requested that this be cleared.

Members commented that the land referred to was owned by INTU Merry Hill and was their responsibility for removing rubbish and maintaining the trees.

Reference was made to the establishment of a community group for the Saltwells Nature Reserve and Blackbrook Valley that was discussed at the previous meeting. Lead Officer to explore how the Council can support the establishment of a community group.

Referred for a response/action.

A resident asked if the Council had a printing budget to produce leaflets to encourage local residents to take part in a litter pick within the Woodside and Holly Hall area.

A resident commented that local Tenant and Resident Association representatives could arrange for the printing of leaflets.

Councillor C Perks agreed to discuss the issue with the resident after the meeting.

A resident referred to the Cleaner assigned to the Netherton area, but commented that the footways in the High Street and surrounding roads were not being maintained appropriately.

A Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews Ward Councillor to raise the issue with Street Care.

A resident requested that the shrubs and trees along the public rights of way leading from Knowle Hill to Hockley Lane be cut and cleared as it is becoming difficult to walk through.

Councillor E Taylor agreed to pursue this issue.

A resident asked why difficult families with anti social behaviour issues were housed within quiet family estates, causing trouble and disturbance to other residents.

A Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews Ward Councillor to pursue this issue with the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer.

7 **Working with you: Topics raised by Local Councillors**

Subject

Action

Councillor Cotterill referred to the speeding issues in Heath Road and Quarry Bank High Street.

Councillor Cotterill was pursuing the need for additional speed limit signage to be displayed in the area and for the possibility of having a digital speedometer installed to make drivers aware of the speed that they are travelling.

Councillor Cotterill requested a copy of the housing fencing policy, in particular in relation to tenants with young children.

Referred for a response/action.

8 **Community Forum – Love Your Local Community Funding**

Application

Decision made since the last meeting

Netherton Regeneration Group – for a memorial bench at the site of the Titanic Anchor in Netherton.

Approved £1125.00 from the Netherton, Woodside and St Andrew's High Street Improvement Fund allocation.

Netherton Regeneration Group - Queens 90th Birthday Community Event

Approved £2000 from the Netherton, Woodside and St Andrew's love your local community funding allocation.

West Midlands Police – to support their Think First Programme

Refused, as it was considered not to be an appropriate use of Community Forum Funding.

Application

Recommendation

Dudley CVS – to support an award ceremony for looked after children in the borough.

Refused, as it was considered not to be an appropriate use of Community Forum Funding.

Dudley MBC Environmental Services Division – Christmas trees in Netherton, Woodside and Quarry Bank.

Approved £2473.60 from Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews love your local community funding allocation and £1163.36 from Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood love your local community funding allocation.

Members although approved the application in relation to Christmas Trees, requested that Place Directorate pursued planting real trees for future years.

9 **Dates, time and venues of future meetings**

Noted.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm.