

**ACTION NOTES OF THE MEETING OF NETHERTON, WOODSIDE AND
ST ANDREWS/QUARRY BANK AND DUDLEY WOOD
COMMUNITY FORUM**

Held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 17th April 2013 at The Savoy Centre,
Northfield Road, Netherton

PRESENT:-

Councillor Zada (Chair)
Councillor Cotterill (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Cowell, Duckworth, Sparks and Wood

Officers

Mr M Williams (Lead Officer to the Forum) (Assistant Director, Environmental Management – Directorate of the Urban Environment) and Mrs M Johal (Directorate of Corporate Resources)

Together with twenty-five members of the public.

7 **INTRODUCTIONS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews/Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Community Forum and in his remarks commented on the purpose of the new Community Forums set up by the Council. Following the making of other general announcements the local Councillors and officers introduced themselves.

8 **LISTENING TO YOU – QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

The following written queries/complaints were raised:-

<u>Nature of Query/Complaint</u>	<u>Referred to/Action Taken</u>
1. It was queried why the Council did not have emergency provision to clear blocked drains on the weekend. Photographs were circulated of a particular incident whereby the Council had not come out and Severn Trent had instead unblocked the drain even though it was not their responsibility. However, Severn Trent had not cleaned up after them and had left the area in a state.	Director of the Urban Environment

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| 2. | A resident indicated that he had lived in Bournbrook Close for several years and the road had never been resurfaced. | Director of the Urban Environment. Lead Officer to arrange an appraisal. |
| 3. | Reference was made to a derelict private house on Stourbridge Road and that the garden was full of rubbish and had attracted rats. There were also bricks strewn in the nearby park. | Director of the Urban Environment |
| 4. | A mattress had been dumped on Rayboulds Fold. | Director of the Urban Environment |

Other Issues Raised Orally:-

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| 1. | Potholes in roads particularly on Baptist End Road outside the fish and chip shop and Halesowen Road – The Lead Officer indicated that additional funding had been made available to combat the problem and that additional teams had been deployed to tackle the backlog. | Lead Officer to arrange for checks to be undertaken |
| 2. | Complaint made that certain Councillors only had mobile contact numbers and that some people did not have access to a computer and could not afford to ring mobiles. | Chair and Councillor Wood to have discussion |
| 3. | An update on the provision of toilet facilities in Netherton – The Chair indicated that discussions had been held and consideration was being given to various options. | Democratic Services Officer to include reference at item 4 on the agenda for the next meeting. |
| 4. | Complaints about air pollution in Netherton and particular mention was made with regard to Crossley Street – Councillor Wood gave an update and stated that there were fifteen areas in the Borough with Action Plans and that Netherton was in the top five. Some work had already been undertaken to combat the problem. Further meetings were due to be held with the Director of Public Health and the Assistant Director for Environmental Management with a view to discussing more inventive ways to improve the environment. | Lead Officer to consider whether results of pollution monitoring can be publicly made available. |

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| 5. | Illegal parking of cars in Netherton Street and it was suggested that consideration be given to the top part of Cradley Road being closed to stop people turning right. | Chair and Lead Officer to meet with various representatives on site.

Lead Officer to arrange spot checks. |
| 6. | Rubbish across Cinder Bank Island particularly worse when children were at school – The Lead Officer indicated that in order to minimise disruption all maintenance works were undertaken at the same time. | Lead Officer to consider possibility of an educational officer and an environmental officer to attend Hillcrest School with a view to educating children on litter problems. |
| 7. | The lack of enforcement officers in the area which had exacerbated since the service had become the responsibility of the Council. Concerns were expressed that resources were targeted only in the Town Centre. | Lead Officer to arrange for statistical information to be provided on how enforcement resources were deployed across the Borough. |
| 8. | A resident referred to a letter received from the Police stating that the gulley way leading to Linbrook Close was to be closed and she indicated that this was regularly used as a walk through by residents living nearby – The Chair stated that this action had been taken following complaints that the gulley was being used by youths committing a crime and then using the gulley as a means of escaping from the police. However, this was a consultation exercise and no decision had been made. | Questioner to raise issue and express views at PACT meeting to be held the following week. |
| 9. | It was stated that certain people had been knocking on doors of a flat block with a view to getting a petition signed to knock down the flats which had led to residents being worried – Councillor Duckworth reported that he was not aware of any petition and the exercise had been undertaken to gauge the views of residents on a number of issues. | Councillor Duckworth to speak to tenants following the meeting. |

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| 10. | Referred to the repairing of void properties undertaken by the Council and indicated that items that were clearly not rubbish were being thrown out – The Leader to the Council stated that he had raised the issue with the Assistant Director of Housing Services and indicated that it would be useful to convey feedback from this Forum to reinforce the issue. | Lead Officer to write to the Assistant Director of Housing Services |
| 11. | Concern expressed that land around Nethercrest Nursing Home had not been cleaned up – The Lead Officer reported that the management of the home had been written to making them aware of the concerns | Councillor Cowell was pursuing the matter and asked that residents should contact her so that information could be collated with a view to escalating the matter. |
| 12. | Scaffolding left on buildings following work that was undertaken. | Councillor Cotterill had raised the issue several times. |
| 13. | Residents in the bedsits on the opposite side of Stourbridge Road were not putting their bin bags out at the front of the building and instead were putting the bags against the sidewall, which resulted in dogs shredding the bags and rubbish strewn. | Lead Officer to pursue the matter. |
| 14. | Reference was made to the planned Dispersal Order for the Bowling Green area and it was commented that these types of orders did not get rid of the problem and just moved it to another area. The Chair suggested writing to Bob Jones to ensure Dispersal Orders were policed properly. | The Chair to speak to Councillor Foster with a view to steering the issue through to the Police. |

WORKING WITH YOU – TOPICS RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILLORS

- (a) Councillor Cotterill
- (i) Reported that he had visited Birch Coppice with a view to ascertaining the extent of the potholes, he had taken photographs and the matter was now being pursued.
 - (ii) Had asked the Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety to reduce the width of the pavement on Victoria Road to allow ease of traffic flow.

- (iii) Referred to grass verges at the bottom of Woodland Avenue as being a quagmire and indicated that he had sent a photograph to Councillor Foster for attention.
- (b) Councillor Wood reported on the St George's Day parade that was due to take place on Saturday 20th April from 10.30 am in Dudley Town Centre.

- (c) Councillor Duckworth
 - (i) Reported on a road that was to be resurfaced on 23rd April, 2013.
 - (ii) Queried the position with regard to the ceasing of cutting grass on steep banks, as he understood that the equipment was no longer available.

The Lead Officer stated that not all grassed steep banks had ceased to be cut and that the majority of equipment had been disposed of with the exception of one set, which was used to cut banks that were considered to be dangerous.

- (d) Councillor Sparks referred to a passageway to the top of Queen Street and stated that he had complained several times about the accumulation of litter. It was requested that a litterbin be provided and that the cleaning regime across the area be looked at due to the endemic problem.

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AREA GRANTS

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

The Lead officer reported that he had also received two further applications following the submission of the report for consideration at this meeting.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND

That the Director of Corporate Resources approve the following:-

- (a) A grant in the sum of £300 to West Midlands Police (Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Police Team) to purchase two camcorders to help Saltwells Nature Reserve Wardens to identify persons riding motorbikes/quad bikes on the reserve and canal towpaths.
- (b) A grant in the sum of £3,500 to West Midlands Police (Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Police Team) to purchase additional barriers and gates to be installed at strategic locations around Saltwells Nature Reserve to help address the issues of motorbikes/quad bikes.
- (c) A grant in the sum of £2916.84 to Woodside Crafts to assist with equipping their office as part of a larger project.
- (d) A grant in the sum of £5000 to Netherton Central Tenants and Residents Association to assist with Christmas lighting and decoration.
- (e) A grant in the sum of £2150.50 to Derby End Tenants and Residents Association to buy soil

DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the details of future meetings would be available following the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16th May, 2013.

The meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.