

Notes of: WHITWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Venue: Whitworth Civic Hall

Date of Meeting 17th March 2008

**Present: Councillor A Neal (Chair)
Councillor T Aldred
Councillor R Wilson
Councillor L Barnes
Inspector Neil Wilkinson, Lancashire Constabulary
Catherine Taylor, NEAT Officer
Chris Markham, Assistant Operations Manager
Jenni Cook, Democratic Services**

Also Present: 25 members of the Public and 1 member of the press

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillor D Barnes (Whitworth Town Council) and County Councillor Serridge.

3. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH JANUARY 2008

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

a) Action Sheet:

The Action sheet was discussed and updates since publication of the Agenda were noted.

The Chair read out a statement provided by Lancashire County Council in respect of gully cleaning throughout the Borough and encouraged all present to report problems with gullies to the 0845 053 0011 number.

4. POLICE UPDATE

Summary of Update from Inspector Wilkinson

Crime for the period November 2007 – February 2008 was clarified as follows:

Auto crime had decreased by 5 crimes.
Burglaries had decreased by 7 crimes.
Violent Crime had increased to 46 reported crimes.
Damage had increased to 51 reported crimes.

The overall crime detection rate was noted as being the highest in the area at 37.5%. It was noted that there had been a change in the way that crimes were reported and this may have had an impact on the increase in reported crimes.

Initiatives had been carried out within Whitworth which had resulted in offenders being caught. It was also noted that 2 more mobile speed enforcements had taken place, although not at the times requested at a previous forum.

It was noted that an 'Information Reward Scheme Initiative' aimed at teenagers was being implemented in order to tackle the recurring issue of racist graffiti.

Questions to the Police

Inspector Wilkinson took questions from the public and the following matters were discussed:

- Arson attacks at Mill premises within Whitworth.
- Clarification that Crime Stoppers could be used to report crimes anonymously.
- School visits
- Road safety, recent accidents and speeding concerns.
- Implementation of SPIDS signs on Cowm Park Way.

5. DETERMINING OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

Three applications had been determined as follows:

Organisation	Application Details	Amount Awarded
The Fudge Factory	Provision of disabled lift.	Nil
Whitworth Valley Football Club	Purchase of new mower to replace one stolen	£300
Moorland Crescent, Moorland Avenue and Tonacliffe Neighbourhood Watch	Room hire for meeting and provision of newsletter.	£75
	Total Awarded	£375
	Total in Budget	615
	Total carried forward to 2008/09 budget	£240

The Chair noted that the refusal of funding for the Fudge Factory application was due to the fact that the Neighbourhood Forum Grants were designed to assist voluntary and community groups, not businesses. It was noted that the applicant had been advised of alternative organisations to contact.

It was noted that £240 remained in the 2007/2008 budget and that this would be carried forward to the next financial year.

The Chair confirmed the 2008/09 budget as follows:

2008/09 Budget	£2,200
Carried forward from 2007/08	£ 240
Total for 2008/09	£2,440

Grant forms could be obtained from Democratic Services on 01706 252424 or by emailing democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk

It was noted that the 2008/09 committee schedule was not yet approved by Annual Council, however the deadline for submission of grants for the June/July round of Neighbourhood Forums was 6th June 2008.

Update from previous recipients

The representative from the Whitworth Historical Society confirmed that funding had been received and quotes were being obtained.

It was noted that there had been a letter of thanks received from Whitworth Playgroup and the climbing frame had been purchased.

6. NEAT UPDATE

The NEAT Officer provided the Forum with a brief update of works carried out since the last meeting:

- Purchase of new litterbins and expected installation in April 2008.
- Purchase of new benches.
- Dog fouling reward scheme and update on fixed penalty notices.
- Racist graffiti
- Street sweeping (paperwork distributed)

A member of the public thanked the Council for 2 incidents of dealing with graffiti and removal of an animal carcass.

Questions to the NEAT Officer and Assistant Operations Manager

Questions and discussions took place on the following matters:

- Accuracy of the circulated street sweeping schedule.
- Request for attendance of Senior Street Scene Officers and Deputy Chief Executive at the next Forum.
- Damaged wall on Market Street and pipes left by United Utilities.
- Dog fouling issues at John Street and St Anslems.
- Liability for sheep straying in the Whitworth area.
- Concerns regarding road quality along Market Street (Promenade area).

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2008/09

The Chair informed the meeting that members of the public were being consulted on what they would like to see reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to improve the quality of local services. Forms requesting feedback were distributed and should be returned to Democratic Services. Spare forms were also available on request from the Democratic Services Team.

A suggestion made at the meeting included:

- More engagement with the community in general.

8. OPEN FORUM

Members of the public raised the following issues:

- Concerns regarding plans for Anglo Felt premises in Whitworth.
- Progress on repair of the iron bridge and provision of cycleway at Shawforth.
- Clarification of car parking provision at the former Methodist Chapel.

9. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair noted that this was the last Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum of the 2007/2008 municipal year and asked that the following be recorded:

Thanks were given to Mr Jack Dalton and Greenvale Homes for their work to secure funding for the Brookville development.

Thanks were given to the Whitworth Town Council Members for their participation in the Forum.

Thanks were given to the Committee Officer for her participation in the Forum.

Thanks were given to all present and it was noted that the Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum was the best attended out of all 4 Forums.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and finished at 8.35pm