

Notes of: WHITWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Venue: Whitworth Civic Hall

Date of Meeting 17th March 2009

Present: Councillor L. Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Aldred and Neal
County Councillor S Serridge
Whitworth Town Councillor D. Barnes
Mike Riley, Communities Manager
David Presto, Economic Development and External
Funding Manager
Anne Storah, Senior Forward Planning Officer
Catherine Taylor, Area Manager, Communities Team
Jenni Cook, Committee Officer
Inspector Neil Wilkinson, Lancashire Constabulary

Also Present: 18 members of the Public

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting and introduced the Councillors and Officers present.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Wilson.

3. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH JANUARY 2009

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. It was agreed that those actions that were outstanding would be carried over to the next meeting so that an update could be given.

A member of the public expressed dissatisfaction that a Rossendale Borough Council Officer had investigated and answered a query raised at the last Forum in respect of the Cycleway, rather than a Councillor.

4. POLICE UPDATE

Inspector Wilkinson provided an update on crime rates and policing in the area. It was noted that there had been 137 instances of antisocial behaviour, 27 burglaries, 38 instances of vehicle crime and 18 instances of criminal damage.

Inspector Wilkinson updated the Forum on measures taken since the last meeting, which included excellent results from the Automatic Number Plate Recognition Scheme and a 'Stay Safe' operation which had identified 37 vulnerable children in a scheme run in conjunction with Social Services.

County Councillor Serridge requested that the Forum record their thanks to Inspector Wilkinson following his actions after the surge in crime reported at the last Forum.

In response to queries from the public, Inspector Wilkinson agreed to provide more resources along the Tonacliffe Road area in respect of speeding cars using the road as a 'rat run.'

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS REFRESH

Mike Riley, the Communities Manager delivered a presentation to the Forum which outlined future proposals for the Neighbourhood Forums, currently being considered by the Council.

Discussions took place on the presentation and it was agreed that all views and concerns would be taken on board before any final decisions were made.

6. CREDIT CRUNCH

David Presto, the Economic Development and Senior Funding Manager, delivered a presentation to the Forum which outlined initiatives that Rossendale Borough Council were implementing, to assist both businesses and individuals in the current financial recession.

No questions were asked of Mr Presto in respect of the actual content of the presentation, however County Councillor Serridge praised Rossendale Borough Council for being proactive and assisting both businesses and individuals.

7. AREA STRATEGY FOR WHITWORTH

Anne Storah, the Senior Forward Planning Officer provided the Forum with a presentation on a Draft Area Strategy for Whitworth. It was noted that this was in draft form only and would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

A brief discussion took place on the document as follows:-

- References to 'Greater Whitworth' would be removed from any future drafts.
- Cycling Facilities and Pennine Bridleway would be included in the future document
- Orama Mill – it was noted that this was likely to have an impact on the Area Strategy, however this was outside the scope of the current document.

Mrs Storah stated that it was intended to take the Area Strategy to the Cabinet in June/July and asked all present at the Forum to complete the feedback form and return it to her.

8. AREA MANAGER COMMUNITIES UPDATE

Catherine Taylor, the Area Manager Communities Team, provided the Forum with an update on activities since the last meeting as follows:-

- 90 new litterbins were due to be installed within the next week.
- 15 new benches would replace old/broken ones and Ms Taylor asked the Forum to contact her with details of any more benches that needed replacing.
- Under the 'Pride in Rossendale' Scheme, it was noted that Eagley Bank had been strimmed, flowers had been planted and a waste enforcement exercise had been carried out. In addition, work to re-seed, gate and fence off an area of the Leavengreave pitch would shortly be carried out.

Ms Taylor stated that 'Pride in Rossendale' postcards had been distributed to all present and urged the Forum to participate in the scheme.

Questions and Concerns were raised by the public as follows;-

- Resurgence of fly tipping at Old Lane and Springmill.
- Incidence of fly tipping at Albert Street,
- Collection of textiles.

- Suggestion of a community ‘contract’ scheme, similar to one in use at Bury Council.

9. DETERMINING OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Chair reported the receipt of three applications for neighbourhood forum grant funding.

It was agreed that the following would be allocated:-

£250 for the Whitworth Town Twinning Committee to contribute towards travel costs for the 2009 visit from Kandel representatives. This would be met from the new Area Based Grant funding for events. Whitworth had been allocated £2,200.

£750 for the Whitworth and Healey Horticultural Society to purchase plants, compost, fertiliser and other incidentals for the 2009 project.

The application from the Whitworth Elderly and Disabled Care Trust was to be deferred to the next meeting so that further information could be obtained in respect of ownership of the land.

FORUM FUNDING

Starting balance from last meeting	£1400.00
Funds allocated at this meeting	£750.00
Remaining in budget	£650.00

AREA BASED GRANT FUNDING FOR EVENTS

Starting balance	£2,200
Funds allocated at this meeting	£250.00
Remaining in budget	£1950.00

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

9. OPEN FORUM

Members of the public raised the following issues:-

- Market Street Car Park – concerns were raised about the lack of clearly marked parking bays. It was agreed that concerns would be passed to the Parking Manager.

- Land at Knowsley Crescent – stones were requested to keep this land free of travellers and it was noted that a scheme was underway for residents to plant and maintain the land. Catherine Taylor agreed to investigate who the land belonged to.
- Shawforth Chapel bus stop – concerns were raised about buses stopping for excessive amounts of time and the risk of road accidents. Councillor Barnes agreed to raise this issue with Rossendale Transport,
- ‘Welcome to Whitworth’ sign at Healey Corner – in response to queries from a member of the public, it was confirmed that a new sign would be purchased and the Council was considering a stone sign, rather than metal or plastic. It was stressed, however, that the use of stone was only a possibility at this stage.
- Number 16 bus to Manchester – it was noted that the absence of this bus was due to laws on how long a bus driver was allowed to physically drive a bus for. Councillor Barnes noted that any concerns should be passed to Rossendale Transport.
- Healey Dell public toilets – Catherine Taylor agreed to investigate making the key available to walking groups.
- Market Street Road Surface – County Councillor Serridge stated that works were due to begin soon.
- Re-planting of trees at Market Street following legal action by the Council – it was agreed that concerns regarding an access onto Market Street would be passed onto the Rossendale Borough Council Enforcement Officer. In addition, County Councillor Serridge agreed to investigate this from a Highways perspective.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and finished at 9.10pm

Signed: _____
(Chair)

Date: _____