

Agenda Item No. 14

PELSALL AND RUSHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

30 OCTOBER 2006

UPDATE ON VARIOUS ISSUES RAISED IN PUBLIC FORUM AT THE LAST PELSALL AND RUSHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP MEETING

This report provides an update on various issues raised in Public Forum at the last Neighbourhood Partnership meeting.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Cartbridge Lane, Rushall

At the last meeting, the Local Neighbourhood Partnership received complaints from local residents relating to anti-social behaviour in Cartbridge Lane, Rushall, in particular, noise and nuisance from gangs of youths and children riding mini motorbikes at high speed on Council-owned land that backed on to Cartbridge Lane (Whateley Road Fields).

This matter was the subject of discussion at the Community Action Group meeting on 18 September 2006, and is referred to in the Community Action Group update report (agenda item 12).

Cessation of 158 Travel West Midlands Bus Service

A local resident expressed her anger at the last meeting that Travel West Midlands had axed the 158 direct Pelsall to Birmingham bus service without prior notice and consultation. The effect of this had been devastating on the service's many regular users.

A meeting with Mr. Dave Donaldson, General Manager of Travel West Midlands, was held at the Autumn Close Meeting Room in High Heath, Pelsall, on 5 September 2006, to discuss the complaints of local residents about bus services in the area, including the cessation of the 158 service.

The Sustainable Travel Officer of Walsall Council was also contacted about this matter following the meeting. She has been in contact with Mr. Donaldson who has now responded.

In his reply dated 4 October 2006, Mr. Donaldson said that his decision to change the 158 to the 958 service, thereby removing the service from Pelsall has caused a lot of feedback. The decision had been reached as a consequence of the minimal demand for the service in this area. Two weeks' notice was given on the buses, though he has accepted that further notice might have been appropriate.

Mr. Donaldson advised that Councillor Longhi would be chairing the next Transport Users' Forum. He referred to the concerns of residents expressed at local meetings in the High Heath area and the lobbying for the service's re-instatement.

In conclusion, Mr. Donaldson informed the Sustainable Travel Officer that he would be organising market research in the area to establish any potential demand.

Use of land as a Caravan Site in Cartbridge Lane

Concerns were raised in Public Forum at the last meeting as to why travellers were still using the land at Cartbridge Lane, Rushall, as a caravan site when they had previously been given notice to quit.

The Partnership was informed that the travellers had been granted a two-year extension which had now expired. Enforcement action was on-going, but it was understood that a planning application had been submitted for a renewal of the travellers' rights to remain on the land.

Since the meeting, the relevant Council Officers have advised that this matter had not been highlighted as a Public Protection Matter. However, the Officers who deal with enforcement of unauthorised encampments confirm that the site is privately owned. This matter is, therefore, a planning issue which is not within their remit.

In response to residents' concerns about fly tipping, dog excrement and problems from briar bushes encroaching in Cartbridge Lane South, the Environmental Health officers confirm that they have replaced the signs and carried out patrols in the area. They state that, although the alleyway is difficult to control, they will continue to do their best to do so.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to indicate any further action they wish officers of Community Action Groups to investigate in respect of the various issues identified in the report.

Contact Officer

Lesley Jones

Constitutional Services Officer

Tel: 01922 652011

joneslesley@walsall.gov.uk