

ADJOURNED
WILLENHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Monday 29 January 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

**In the Board Room at the Community Offices, The Square, New Invention,
Willenhall**

Present

Councillor Ian Shires (Chairman)
Susan Peters (Vice-Chairman)
Peter Arch
Councillor Arthur Bentley
Councillor Sean Coughlan
Annette Harpin – Walsall Housing Group
Wendy Evans
Councillor Mrs. Eileen Pitt
Mr. Stanley Taylor
Councillor Angela Underhill

148/07 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor Val Woodruff, Councillor Carl Creaney, Ms. Vera Birch, Mr. Rupy Pandaal, Station Officer Walker (Fire Service), Sergeant Ashby and Raj Singh (Annette Harpin attended in place of Raj).

149/07 Public Forum

The Partnership was informed that members of the public wished to address the LNP on issues within the area. The Partnership agreed that the public forum take place.

John Loyns of Country Bridge, Willenhall, addressed the meeting with regard to problems that were being experienced by residents of the Cathedrals Estate and, in particular, York Avenue, Durham Avenue and Lincoln Avenue caused by youths visiting the Spar shop in the early hours of the morning to purchase alcohol, this often resulted in residents of the area suffering from a variety of nuisances, including damage to their vehicles. Mr. Loyns outlined details of meetings that had taken place with Blakemores who owned the Spar and agreement had been reached to close the Spar from midnight with effect from 1 March 2007 as the worst problems were experienced during the Summer. Blakemores had also agreed to loan to the residents CCTV equipment that could be sited in some of the areas in order to monitor the activity. The company had agreed to provide an electrician to install the equipment, but it would be necessary for the Council to provide additional lighting along the alleyway running to Wolverhampton Road/Worcester Road as well as approval to use the electrical supply.

It was common place for young people to travel to the Spar by taxi on their way home from nightclubs. They would purchase alcohol and walk to the Bentley side of the estate and the abuse/vandalism would take place. The worst time for such actions was between 2 and 4 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays and youths had been seen walking across parked cars that belonged to residents of the area.

Mr. Nightingale of Cathedrals Estate concurred with the previous speaker and informed the Partnership that Spar had addressed some of the problems by installing shutters inside the shop to prevent their goods and staff being targeted. The local police had indicated that they would assist in overcoming the problems.

Mr. Nightingale also referred to problems from heavy goods vehicles parking and leaving their engines running outside houses along Wolverhampton Road West whilst they visited the shop to purchase food. The LNP was requested to consider introducing parking restrictions along Wolverhampton Road West in order to alleviate some of the problems experienced by residents late at night.

With regard to the alleyway, it was common place for syringes and used condoms to be discarded, this posed a risk for very young people and the elderly.

Sue Peters suggested that the Community Safety Intervention Group that was currently in the Willenhall area be drafted into Cathedrals Estate to provide temporary CCTV cameras in order to assist. She suggested that Highways carry out a survey with regard to traffic parking problems.

Mr. Nightingale indicated that the junction of Durham Avenue and York Avenue would be an ideal location for a CCTV camera as a number of groups merged in this location. The problems had been on-going for some 12-15 months since the Spar was extended to 24 hour operation and meetings with Blakemores had been taking place over the last 4 months.

Peter Arch questioned the appropriateness of a 24 hour activity in a residential area and referred to the increasing number of problems that alcohol abuse caused the Health Service.

Councillor Coughlan referred to the lack of youth facilities in the area that exacerbated the problems.

Blakemores seemed to appreciate that, by reducing the licensing hours of the Spar, it would reduce the anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Chairman referred to a reference at the WBSP relating to the possibility of purchasing a Dome Hawk CCTV camera for each LNP area.

Resolved

- (1) That CSIG be requested to spend time in the Cathedral Estate area, as identified, at the weekend;
- (2) That Officers look into the possibility of introducing parking restrictions in the Wolverhampton Road West area and provide options to the LNP for consideration;
- (3) That a report on the issues be submitted to the Community Action Group meeting to be held on 15 March 2007, together with any recommendations that the local residents could consider.

150/07 Community Action Group Update

The report of the Senior Neighbourhood Partnership Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Sue Peters gave a brief update in respect of the Safer and Stronger Community Action Group meetings.

With regard to the advertisement on the island, the police had agreed to take this matter up in order to secure its removal.

Police Community Safety Officers were in post for Willenhall and some would be attending the next Community Action Group to introduce themselves.

The Chairman referred to issues around the different levels of operation within the Police Service and was of the view that Community Wardens would make a difference in the area, this matter needed to be taken up with the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership. It was recognised that Walsall Housing Group did fund Community Wardens and that other Partners would need to be included.

Resolved

- (1) That LNP Members continue in attendance at the Community Action Group meetings;
- (2) That the LNP note progress of the Community Action Groups;
- (3) That the Community Action Group Chairs feedback on progress be noted and further feedback be referred to the next LNP meeting.

151/07 Future of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships

The report of the Senior Neighbourhood Partnership Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Chairman highlighted the correspondence from the Portfolio Holder in respect of funding for LNPs and was of the view that the LNP budget was to enable projects to be kick-started as well as delivery of services issues.

Peter Arch referred to the PCTs involvement with LNPs and indicated that it would be helpful to hear some debate in the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership and recognition from Councillors of what was required from the PCT in relation to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Peter Arch referred to the possibility of dealing with health matters in the Neighbourhood Arena and it was necessary to consider where global health sat.

Mr. Arch referred to the need for the PCT and Health Trust to communicate with the community and felt that the LNP would be an appropriate vehicle for communication feedback.

Resolved

That the correspondence from the Portfolio Holder, together with the information included in the report and recorded above, be received and noted and the actions be approved.

152/07 Willenhall Centre Project – Membership Issue

Members referred to the issues arising from consideration of this matter at the last meeting.

Members were reminded that, in the event of them being unable to attend meetings of the Group, they could send a substitute Member, but it was important for the membership to be consistent as far as possible. The Group would also need to feedback to the LNP.

Resolved

That the membership of the Willenhall Centre Project, as decided at the 8 November Meeting, be endorsed.

153/07 Forest Gate/New Invention Library – Progress

The Board was advised that tenders for the work on the new accommodation at New Invention were returned in the middle of January and work should commence shortly afterwards. The projected completion of the new library would be May 2007 and agreement had been reached that the ramp at the entrance would not need to be replaced and the Local Committee had agreed joint access to the building. Staff from the old library had visited the accommodation and were happy with the new space. The project would go ahead and there was no problem with funding to complete it.

Resolved

That the progress in respect of the Forest Gate/New Invention Library be received and noted

Information Items

154/07 Feedback on issues raised following presentation by Walsall Housing Group

No information was available at the meeting

155/07 Update on items from the last meeting

Resolved

That the update on items from the last meeting be noted.

Late Item

156/07 Representative - Re: The New Hospital, Walsall

Mr. Western informed the Partnership that he was the patient representative on the Commission of Public and Patients in Public Health and worked in conjunction with the Manor Hospital. He had served on the Private Finance Initiative Board and asked if the LNP would allow someone from the hospital (a senior representative) to address the LNP at one of the future meetings on the new hospital and the ramifications for the people of Walsall.

It was **agreed** that the presentation be made to the Health Community Action Group at its meeting to be held on 14 February 2007.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: