

NORTH WALSALL AREA PANEL MEETING

Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at 6.00pm

**Burrowes Street TMO, Tenant Management Resource Centre,
Burrowes Street, Walsall, WS2 8NN**

Present

Councillor S. Fitzpatrick (Chair)
Councillor L.D. Jeavons (Vice-Chair)
Councillor I. Robertson
Councillor A. Young – left after agenda item 10
Councillor C. Jones
Councillor J. Fitzpatrick
Councillor T. Jukes

Officers

Vanessa Croft – Area Manager
Sarah Heath - Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
Jo Lowndes – Partnership Manager
Jane Bonner – Head of Educational Standards & Improvement
Nikki Gough - Committee Business & Governance Manager

22/15 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor K. Phillips.

23/15 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24/15 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended) was noted. The Panel agreed to receive item 10 'funding report' prior to item 4.

The Area Manager presented the report which set out project applications for consideration.

Wenlock/Dartmouth Fencing

The project application aimed to install fencing behind garages to alleviate issues of anti-social behaviour and reduce escape routes.

The Panel approved the application of £2300.00.

Reedswood P Gates

The project aims to install P gates at strategic positions to deter off-road bikes in the park which has been both a historic and current issue.

The Panel approved the application of £910.00.

Birchills Sure Start

The project aims to engage and re-engage children under 5 and their families.

The Panel approved the application of £250.00.

The Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Officer provided an update on anti-social behaviour initiatives in North Walsall. A Public Spaces Protection Order would be implemented to provide officers with a mechanism to deal with incidences of anti-social behaviour which included a fixed penalty notice of £100. Consultation for this would finish on Friday 5th February 2016. It was anticipated it would come into force early/middle March 2016 and would be in place for three years. It was acknowledged that this may disperse the anti-social behaviour elsewhere. It was confirmed that Members would be kept informed of the incidents of Public Spaces Protection Orders.

Members were informed that from 1 April 2016 enforcement officers would be part of a multi-disciplinary team. Officers also stated that Bloxwich Toilets had been closed since December 2015 due to anti-social behaviour and no complaints had been received about this. The intention was to close it permanently. This decision would be made by Cabinet

Resolved:

That the Panel approved the following funding applications-

- 1. Wenlock/Dartmouth Fencing - £2300.00**
- 2. Reedswood P Gates - £1500.00**
- 3. Birchills Sure Start - £250.00**

25/15

Co-opted Member Nominations

Mr Pat Dean was nominated as a co-opted Member. Members spoke of the positive work Pat did in the area.

Resolved:

That Mr Pat Dean be appointed, by Council, a co-opted member of the North Walsall Area Panel for the remainder of the municipal year.

Walsall Educational Performance

The Head of Educational Standards introduced herself to the Panel and ran through the aims of the item including:

- Performance in each of the wards
- Input of academies
- Overall summary of performance

Ward profiles for 2015/16 were tabled (annexed) Members were informed that the Government agenda was for all schools to become academies and the Local Authority supported that appropriately by providing information.

Members were informed that sponsored academies ceased to be accountable to the Local Authority and they reported directly to the Department of Education (DFE). Concerns had to be, and were, raised with the DFE.

Ward Profiles 2014 -2015 were tabled for the following areas:

- Bloxwich East Ward
- Blakenall Ward
- Bloxwich West Ward
- Birchills Leamore Ward

The Panel heard that Walsall had hosted a year of reading to encourage reading within the Borough. Members asked how they could get involved as local Councillors. Officers agreed to send information to Members. Attention was drawn to areas in which Walsall succeeded such as 'phonics'. Children were often starting at below average levels and made good progress to achieve the desired level. Members were invited to contact officers with any further queries.

In response to recent media interest, it was discussed that E-Act were undertaking a restructure in its secondary academies in Walsall. It was noted that academies were able to set their own governance arrangements.

Officers explained that Ofsted judgements were measured on a percentage of schools judged as good or better and although the gap between local and national was closing however, poorly performing sponsored academies affected the figures.

The issue of pupil premium was discussed and that parents were not signing up for free meals it was recognised that the school needed to increase take up. It was all clarified that national standards for truancy were the same for Local Authority schools and academies. A Member raised the issue of children not being 'school ready'. Officers clarified that provision for 2 year olds was targeted at this issue however parents may not always wish to participate.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

27/15

Internal Assurance of Area Panel Projects

The Partnership Manager introduced the report and explained that a report, on projects which had been allocated funding through the Area Partnerships, would be taken to each Area Panel. This report demonstrated that funding was utilised for the purpose for which it was allocated through an internal review of project documentation. A document titled 'North Walsall Funding 2014/15 and 2015/16' was tabled (annexed). This confirmed that funding was evenly distributed across the North Walsall area.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

28/15

Area Manager's Report

The Area Manager introduced the report, and informed Members that a motorbike had been seized on the Beechdale estate. Members felt that this sent a good message about anti-social behaviour.

Members thanked officers for their work in the area.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

29/15

Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was 7th April 2016 at 6.00 p.m. and would be held at Blakenall Village Centre. The focus for this meeting would be flytipping and CCTV cameras.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: