

DARLASTON NORTH/BENTLEY/DARLASTON SOUTH AREA PANEL

Monday, 16th September, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.

at Darlaston Town Hall, Victoria Road, Darlaston

Present

Councillor Burley (Chairman)
Councillor Underhill

In Attendance

Lyndon Parkes - Area Manager
Jo Stewart – Communications
Paul Leighton – Traffic Management
Lynne Hughes – Community Safety Manager
Sergeant Lonsdale - West Midlands Police
PC Khalid - West Midlands Police
Mr and Mrs Dulleston – Local residents
Mr Wells – Local resident

12/13

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Chambers and James.

13/13

Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June, 2013, a copy having previously been circulated to each Member of the Panel be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14/13

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

15/13

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

There were no items to be considered in private session.

16/13

Funding Report

The joint report of the Partnership Manager and Area Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parks) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel and drew the meeting's attention to appendix 1 which summarised budget applications deemed valid against Area Partnership funding criteria and referred to the Panel for approval. He added that there was currently £19,267.20 available for the Panel to distribute during the remainder of the Municipal year.

Members carefully considered the applications and Councillor Burley referred to the fact that the land in Pugh Crescent had recently been sold at auction so the new owner should be responsible for fencing the site.

After further discussion it was

Resolved

1. that reducing the impact of dog fouling and litter; MOVE AND REACH UP DEPLOYMENTS and Moxley Youth Club projects be approved;

and;
2. that the security fencing – Pugh Crescent project be deferred in view of the fact that the land has recently been sold.

17/13

Ongoing updates on the actions for Darlaston and Bentley Area Partnership

The report of the Area Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel. Councillor Burley referred to paragraph 6.2 of the report and indicated that the Community Network Lunch hosted by the Old Hall People's Partnership at Bentley Leisure Pavilion in June had been a great success. Further lunches would be held throughout the year to support local organisations and communities.

Councillor Underhill felt that Darlaston was changing for the better but it was of necessity a slow process.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

18/13

Community Safety Plan 2011 – 2014 Refresh

The resolution of Cabinet from its meeting held on 24th July, 2013 and the report of the Deputy Community Safety Manager were submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Community Safety Manager (Lynne Hughes) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel and drew attention to the salient points contained therein. She added that for Walsall as a whole total recorded crime had fallen by 15.4% during the plan period. However, the perception of crime was still high in the area. She continued that the Police and Crime Commissioner had stated that he wanted the Boards to be more community orientated and Walsall was working towards this. However, Walsall was very diverse so each area's needs were different.

Councillor Burley referred to the figures for Darlaston and Bentley and expressed concern that serious acquisitive crime; vehicle crime and domestic violence had all increased. Lynne Hughes replied that this reflected the fact that people were more willing to report such crimes now than in the past which was a good thing. She advised the meeting that it was normal for drink and drug abuse to go up during a recession. She added that anti social behaviour was also beginning to increase again with 486 complaints being recorded in the first six months of 2013.

Members asked a number of questions which Lynne Hughes responded to then it was

Resolved

That the resolution of the Walsall Community Safety Plan 2011 – 2014 be noted.

19/13

Participatory Budgeting Within Area Partnerships

The joint report of the Head of Communities and Partnerships and Partnership Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel and drew the meeting's attention to the salient points contained therein.

He reminded the meeting that the Council was having to make savings of £100 million over the next four years. This would mean that services provided by the Local Authority would be reduced so finances would have to be spent wisely. This scheme was looking specifically at verge parking.

Paul Leighton (Traffic Management) reported that over the years residents had submitted petitions requesting that grass verges should be converted to car parks throughout the borough. As part of participatory budgeting, local residents would be invited to put forward proposals for verge parking schemes. These schemes would be evaluated and costed then each Area Panel would be invited to agree to one scheme being carried out at a cost of up to £40,000. Having looked at information relating to the Darlaston Area, only one scheme had been identified for Bull Lane, Moxley. However, this grassed area was surrounded by trees which might make it difficult and expensive to develop. A resident had contacted the service to request that parking areas be provided outside numbers 18 – 26 Bull Lane opposite Moorcroft School. He added that this scheme was achievable within the budget constraints highlighted.

Members agreed with Mr Leighton that the scheme proposed in the report would be difficult to achieve and suggested that a consultation exercise should be carried out over both Wards to obtain a number of alternative schemes which the Panel could consider at their next meeting.

After further detailed discussion it was

Resolved

1. that the report be noted;

and;
2. that residents of Bentley and Darlaston North and Darlaston South Wards be invited to submit proposals for verge parking to the November meeting of the Area Panel for prioritisation. The schemes to be referred to public consultation and final short listing before the successful scheme is selected at a special meeting of the Area Panel to be held in December, 2013.

20/13

Discussion on future topics/matters to be considered by the Area Panel

A report of the Head of Democratic Services was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Burley reported that she had asked for this item to be included on the agenda to consider what the Panel should discuss at future

meetings to encourage residents to attend meetings and have their say on important issues to the community. She added that Councillor Chambers had suggested that education from Nursery to Secondary provision might be a suitable topic for discussion in view of the perceived shortages in places for children in parts of the borough.

The Area Manager (Lyndon Parkes) suggested that the four key priorities could also provide areas for discussion.

After further debate it was

Agreed

1. that the November meeting consider participatory budgeting in relation to grass verges;
2. that the January, 2014 meeting consider education matters;
- and;
3. that the March, 2014 meeting consider health and wellbeing matters.

21/13

Dates and venues for Darlaston North/Bentley/Darlaston South Area Panel meetings

It was **agreed** that the meeting of the Darlaston North/Bentley/Darlaston South Area Panel meetings be held on the following dates:-

2013

12th November

2014

26th January

26th March

All meetings to be held at Darlaston Town Hall commencing at 5.30 or 6.00 p.m.

Termination of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman

Date.....