

DARLASTON AND BENTLEY AREA PANEL

Area Manager's Report

Wednesday, 26 March 2014

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to inform Elected Members for the Darlaston and Bentley Area Partnership of some of the work carried out within the local area.
- 1.2 Darlaston South and Darlaston North and Bentley has a number of key priorities which have been identified through work with partner agencies, Walsall Intelligence Network and the local community.
- 1.3 The strategic priorities are:
 - Safer Walsall: Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities
 - Children and Young People: Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people
 - Business and Jobs: Supporting businesses to thrive and supporting local people in to work
 - Health and Well-Being: Improving health, including well-being and independence for older people

2. Safer Walsall: Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities

- 2.1 Strategic partners include; West Midlands Police, Walsall Council Community Safety Team, Integrated Young Peoples Support Services, Clean and Green Services, Reassurance Team, Social Care and Inclusion, Area Family Support Team, Environmental Health, Walsall Housing Group, Caldmore/Accord Housing, Heanton Housing, Sanctuary Housing, Victim Support.
- 2.2 Previous Area Manager reports have highlighted the development of the borough's first 'No Cold Call Zone' being introduced in Bentley, the scheme will shortly go live with a consultation exercise being carried out with all Bentley residents outlining the impact and benefits of the scheme and the background of its introduction.
- 2.3 Partners have reacted to local community concerns in the Whitton Street area of Darlaston regarding the multi-use games area and former play area. As a result the former play area, that had been closed for three years has now been returned as a community asset through landscaping, natural play facilities will be installed shortly.

The multi-use games area will be opened and closed during weekday evenings by colleagues in IYPSS to enable local community members to access the facility.

- 2.4 The past year has seen partners and elected members support the introduction and development of a new neighbourhood watch group in Darlaston North. The group meet on a regular basis and have benefited from police and council officer support at meetings to tackle long standing and entrenched local issues.
- 2.5 The issue of 'car cruising' along the Black Country Route and into Moxley has been a concern for local residents over the past few weeks and officers from West Midlands Police are working alongside Council officers to remove the problem. Officers and elected members are consulting with Aldi stores in Moxley with a view to restricting access to their car park which is a focal point for young car races congregating in the area.
- 2.6 Following a recent meeting with residents of the Victoria Mews Estate in Darlaston, Council officers and elected members have reacted to a number of issues raised by concerned residents. These have included removing the vandalised and closed play area and returning it back to a green space, improving landscaped areas and increasing security, tackling inconsiderate parking and restricting vehicular access. A follow up meeting with residents has taken place to review actions.
- 2.7 Two green space parks in the area are being prepared to have outdoor gyms installed. Kings Hill Park in Darlaston and Queen Street Park in Moxley will benefit from the additional facilities that will support and increase healthy activities for local people.
- 2.8 The Moxley Community Hub pilot has seen significant projects delivered in the area and key to this is the involvement of the local community in not only accessing local opportunities but also volunteering to support local initiatives and groups. As a result, Moxley Community Hub Project Management Group organised a successful volunteer awards evening that included presentations from Walsall's Mayor Councillor Mohammed Nazir.
- 2.9 Walsall Area Partnership continues to support, develop and recognise the borough's Street Champions and an event was held in March to celebrate the good work of Street Champions, the event also provided the opportunity to enable Street Champions to highlight new ways to develop the role more effectively to support local communities and neighbourhoods.
- 2.10 Council officers have started to undertake a consultation exercise with residents of the Bentley area to determine how an improved library service could be delivered in the area. Several options have been identified and the consultation period will enable local people to comment on the proposals. The first event, held at Bentley Leisure Pavilion in March was well attended by local community members and ward Councillors.

- 2.11 Following a review of Inspector roles across Walsall's Local Policing Unit, Inspector Fliss Keane will be taking over from Inspector Beth Bridges as police lead for the Darlaston and Willenhall Sector. Inspector Keane will take up duties from April.
- 2.12 As discussed at the last Area Panel meeting, plans have been developed to improve traffic accessibility across Bentley Cairn to ensure there is clear entrance and exit routes, entrance to the area will be gained from Queen Elizabeth Avenue with all vehicles required to exit via Churchill Road.

3. Children and Young People: Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people

- 3.1 Strategic Partners include; Integrated Young People's Support Services, Bentley West Children's Centre, Darlaston Sure Start, Area Family Support Team, Grace Academy, Darlaston Schools Cluster, Walsall Housing Group, West Midlands Police, Moxley Community Hub Project Management Group, Old Hall People's Partnership.
- 3.2 Following an initial pilot approach towards the end of 2013, partners are now delivering a co-ordinated approach to tackling and supporting identified families as part of the national 'Troubled Families' agenda. An initial screening exercise has identified relevant families and lead agencies that a working more closely with families to achieve better outcomes.
- 3.3 A series of consultation exercises have been undertaken with young people in the Darlaston area to identify how positive activities can be better co-ordinated and delivered. Old Hall Peoples Partnership lead several sessions at Darlaston Sure Start to determine what local young people wanted to see in the area. In addition, colleagues from the Council's Integrated Young People's Support Services consulted with young people on opportunities to deliver activities from Darlaston Town Hall. The outcomes will be formulated shortly and will form the basis of activities over the coming months.
- 3.4 Officers from West Midlands Police are engaging with young people in Grace Academy School to bring groups closer together with an intention to improve community cohesion. Officers talk openly with young people about the affects of racism and how this can escalate beyond the classroom.
- 3.5 Following last years partnership approach to delivering 'joined up' activities for young people in terms of funding, promotion and accessibility, partners have agreed to adopt the same approach again this year learning from some of last years outcomes and ensuring activities for young people are delivered effectively.
- 3.6 Moxley People's Centre has been the venue for a successful youth club run by colleagues from IYPSS from funding secured by Moxley and Dangerfield Action

Group. There is now intention to seek longer term funding to enable the sustainability of the club.

4. Business and Jobs: Supporting businesses to thrive and supporting local people in to work

- 4.1 Strategic partners include; Walsall Council Economic Regeneration, Welfare Rights, District Centre Management, Darlaston JET, Walsall College, Walsall Housing Group, Caldmore/Accord Housing, Moxley Community Hub Project Management Group.
- 4.2 Following support from the Moxley Community Hubs pilot, Darlaston JET has delivered a successful 'Job Club' at Moxley People's Centre. The club has seen attendance increase week on week and local people have accessed jobs and training support that has seen some offered employment and apprenticeships. Local people have also been supported through confidence building and local volunteers are now helping to support the project.
- 4.3 Darlaston JET are also delivering a successful outreach opportunity at Old Hall People's Partnership's Bentley Hub building. Job matches, training and apprenticeships advice are available and footfall has increased significantly at the outlet that is supported by local volunteers.
- 4.4 As part of a series of community lunch events in Bentley, partners got together in November to offer a 'market place' of local services around jobs, training and employment. Partners including Walsall Works, Darlaston JET, Nova Training and Walsall Adult Community College supported the event. The intention is to deliver a similar opportunity in Darlaston this year.
- 4.5 Support to local businesses and the economy in respect of local events continues to be a focus across the area, both Darlaston Events Committee and Darlaston Town Centre Partnership continue to build on last years successful town centre events by planning for this year. Party in the Park has been scheduled for the 12th July and Christmas events planned for the weekend of 5th and 6th December.

5. Health and Well-Being: Improving health, including well-being and independence for older people

- 5.1 Strategic partners include; Walsall Council Public Health, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group, Sports Development, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust, Integrated Young People's Support Services, Walsall Housing Group, Social Care and Inclusion, Darlaston Sure Start, Moxley Community Hub Project Management Group.

- 5.2 Refreshed Area Health profiles produced last year highlighted two main areas of focus across the partnership area. Whilst a number of health inequalities are prevalent across both wards, it is the general health of people living in Rough Hay and Moxley, particularly, children's health that is the main consideration of partner activity.
- 5.3 As part of the Walsall Clinical Commissioning Groups community assets pilot in the Rough Hay area, a stakeholder listening event took place in March. The event enabled local partners and community members to hear how work in the area could be developed with examples of successful outcomes in other parts of the country, it also enabled local people to see how they can make a difference to the environment in which they live, the opportunities for local people and the health and well-being of the community. Over 40 local stakeholders and partners attended the event and will now start to work together to build on a successful start.
- 5.4 The work of partners in Moxley Community Hub continues to prioritise activities around improving health for local people and Moxley Medical Centre, the Wildlife Trust, Sports Development and Darlaston Sure Start are all contributing to increased opportunities for local people to access services. Planning is already underway to deliver more activities and services this year that will focus on better health outcomes for people across Moxley.
- 5.5 The Area Partnership has continued to support Walsall Healthcare Trust's Physical Activities Team over the past year, particularly through its delivery of aqua natal sessions at Darlaston swimming pool and areo mix activity classes at Darlaston Town Hall. In order to sustain these well supported activities, conversations are taking place with relevant partners to ensure the long term sustainability of these projects for local people.
- 5.6 The Area Partnership has also contributed to the development of Public Health's '5 Ways to Well-Being' strategy through the formulation of a local promotional campaign across each of the six Area Partnerships. Each area will have a 'directory' of local organisations and services that contribute to improved health and well-being opportunities.
- 5.7 Partners are working together to tackle child poverty through a series of activities including 'outreach' sessions at local community venues to support families with a simple way to switch to cheaper energy tariffs. Colleagues from Housing Standards will deliver the sessions over the coming months beginning with a focus on local Children's Centres.
- 5.8 Healthwatch Walsall (a consortium of whg, My NHS Walsall, Walsall LiNKs, Age UK Walsall and Walsall CAB) are keen to engage with local groups to develop an effective local network that can provide increased opportunities for local people to comment on health services within the borough.

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