

WILLENHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Monday 18 September 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

At New Invention Junior School, Cannock Road, New Invention, Willenhall

Present

Councillor Ian Shires (Chairman)
Susan Peters (Vice-Chairman - LAPs)
WPC C. Archbold
Sgt. Garry Ashy – West Midlands Police
Mr. Peter Arch
Julie Ball
Councillor Arthur Bentley
Councillor Carl Creaney
Wendy Evans
Mr. R. Pandaal
Wendy Powell – Accord Housing Association
P. Sangha – LNP Team
S. Tranter

114/06 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mrs. V. Birch, Station Officer Walker, Councillors J. Cook, S. Coughlan and Mrs. D. Shires.

115/06 Introductions

Members, Officers and members of the public present introduced themselves at the meeting.

116/06 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2006, were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2006, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

117/06 Update on items from the last meeting

The Head of Neighbourhood Partnerships and Programmes gave a brief update on actions from the last meeting as follows:-

Minute No. 101/06:

(a) Affordable Warmth Strategy for Walsall

(b) Advertising on Street Lighting Columns

The above items would be dealt with by the Community Action Groups.

(c) Funding Update

This would be considered later in the agenda

(d) Health Link to the LNP

A presentation would be made later in the meeting.

(e) Partnership Plan

This would be monitored through the Community Action Group.

Minute No. 105/06:

Urban Design Framework for the A454 and A461

This matter was scheduled to be referred to a Community Action Group

Minute No. 106/06:

Community Action Groups

The 10 August meeting was used as a scoping exercise and it was recommended that the Local Neighbourhood Partnership Vice-Chairs would Chair the Community Action Groups with Sue Peters chairing the Safer Stronger Community Action Group and Raj Singh chairing the Health and People Community Action Group.

Minute No. 108/06:

LNP Funding

Louise Worton's request towards Summer bandstand concerts had been processed.

Minute No. 110/06:

Re-selection of Locally Appointed Partners

This item would be considered later on the agenda.

In response to points raised, Julie Ball indicated that the Community Forum could put forward nominations for a Local Partner until a standard approach had been arrived at for the other Local Neighbourhood Partnerships. Information relating to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships and Community Action Groups was passed to the Community Forum.

Minute No. 111/06:

Sponsorship of Traffic Islands

A number of suggestions had been put forward and Members had been requested to respond direct to Steve Chapman before the deadline of the end of September.

Resolved

That the updates be noted.

118/06 Appointment of Chairs of the Community Action Groups

Resolved

That Sue Peters be appointed as Chair of the Safer Stronger Community Action Group and Raj Singh be appointed as Chair of the Health and People Community Action Group.

119/06 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

120/06 **Petitions**

There were no petitions submitted.

121/06 **Presentations**

(a) Walsall Urban Regeneration Company

Peter Cromar (Director of Walsall Urban Regeneration Company) gave a brief presentation on the work of the company and its links with the Local Neighbourhood Partnership.

Mr. Cromar circulated documentation to the meeting:-

(see annexed)

and highlighted investment in the URC area, enterprise, economic and community growth and the need to create an environment that would encourage people to stay in Walsall. The URC identifies a small number of key projects to be focused on and, at present, one project involved looking at Development in Darlaston and bringing the area back into use.

Members referred to the need to improve the communication system, including rail communications between the Borough and the rest of the country. There was no direct route to London or the north-west and there was no railway station in Willenhall, the links were important in order that people could access new facilities in Walsall.

Peter Cromar undertook to raise with Centro the inclusion in the Capital Programme of a new station in Willenhall.

Members were interested in the introduction of the "Park and Ride" facility in Willenhall and felt that facilities should be improved rather than maintained. There were also problems relating to bus services to and from Willenhall.

Resolved

That the presentation be received.

(b) Local Neighbourhood Partnership Links to Health Issues

Peter Arch gave a brief presentation to the Partnership highlighting the links between health and other factors existing in the Partnership area:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Arch referred to the need for additional doctors in the Borough as they fell below the national average in terms of doctor – patient ratio.

Mr. Arch was asked about the strategy for disposal of redundant sites as these could be utilised for affordable housing.

Members referred to the need to identify a small number of priorities, including the link between housing, health and regeneration as opportunities to help improve health in the area.

Resolved

That the presentation be received and that health and housing representatives be invited to attend the next Health and People Community Action Group.

(c) Walsall Housing Group

Mr. Jameel Malik (Regeneration Manager of Walsall Housing Group) gave a brief presentation to the Partnership on the focus on Willenhall:-

(see annexed)

He highlighted the following key issues:-

- Priority investment appraisal on key strategic sites
- Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative
- Master planning in Willenhall

He referred to the principles of the strategic redevelopment framework and the need for urban renaissance to reduce the extent of migration.

With regard to the future development of the area, it was questioned whether the Local Neighbourhood Partnership and Community Action Groups could be used to scrutinise issues prior to the planning application stage.

Mr. Pandaal referred to three empty flats at The Square, New Invention, and anti-social behaviour on The Square and it was questioned whether the flats could be used as a youth base.

Resolved

That the presentation be received and that Raj Singh be requested to provide information on issues raised at the next meeting of the Local Neighbourhood Partnership.

(d) Local Accessibility Action Plan

The Neighbourhood Team Officer circulated the action plan presentation and the local accessibility action plan:-

(see annexed)

The Partnership was requested to feed-back any comments on the action plan and to return the questionnaire to Marie Newton to enable comments to be included in the plan.

Resolved

That the presentation be received.

122/06 LNP Funding

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

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the progress on the projects be noted;
- (2) That project champions feed-back progress at the next LNP meeting;
- (3) That the following projects for 2006/07 be recommended for approval:-
 - **New Invention** - £5,000 to improve War Memorial on High Road;
 - **Willenhall South** - £5,000 to improve War Memorial on Little London which will enhance the current investment to improve the monument
 - **Willenhall North** - £5,000 to improve open space adj. to Rugeley Avenue going onto Forest Gate/Lichfield Road

123/06 Update from Community Action Groups

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

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That LNP Members continue to attendance at the Community Action Groups;

- (2) That the progress from Community Action Groups be noted;
- (3) That the feedback from the Community Action Groups as set out be noted;
- (4) That Community Action Groups monitor progress of the corridors developments.

124/06 Reselection of Locally Appointed Partners

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

(see annexed)

The Partnership was reminded that there were four vacancies existing and no requests for nomination packs had been received. With regard to Selection Panels, it was anticipated that they would consist of three Ward Members, a representative from the WBSP, a representative from Local Partners and an independent observer from the CEN Partnership Board.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be received;
- (2) That nominations be sought and the process be referred to the Community Action Groups.

125/06 Standing Items

(a) Planning Enforcement Issues – Update

The report on enforcement progress was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the report be received.

(b) Community Forum Progress

Wendy Evans informed the Partnership that the Community Forum had been requested to work with youth in the area with a view to setting up a Youth Forum. Nigel Patterson had spoken with young people at The Square and was considering events that they could be involved in. WHG was not able to offer the use of the empty properties at The Square, New Invention and the Community Forum had been requested to accommodate the young people at their community offices. The Community Empowerment Network would be looking into this further in view of access, etc.

With regard to funding for a youth project, the LNP was informed that Beacon Road was no longer being used as a youth club and it would appear that the school had taken over the site. The young people had expressed an interest in the park at the rear of Sandlands Road, but this was bounded on three sides by properties. The Beacon School grounds would be more appropriate.

Wendy Evans referred to funds from the CEN, when they ceased at the end of March, being allocated between eight Local Community Forums for administrative functions. A bill presented to them was return unpaid and a meeting would be taking place to look into this in due course.

Reference was made to the College of Continuing Education Over 50's Group and that it could no longer be funded as an OAP's Group in view of Government ruling on eligibility. The LNP would be kept informed of the progress.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposals to set up a youth forum be noted;
- (2) That investigations take place into the use of the Beacon Youth Club and the LNP be informed of the outcome;
- (3) That youth services be requested to identify funding for youth services in Willenhall and inform the LNP accordingly;
- (4) That the external funding team be requested to investigate funding for youth services in Willenhall;

(c) Forest Gate and Willenhall Libraries – Progress to Date

An update report on the matter was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the Chairman look into this matter and report back to the LNP at a future meeting.

126/06 **Public Forum**

There were no items for consideration in the public forum.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 9.10 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: