

WILLENHALL AND SHORT HEATH AREA PANEL

Area Manager's Report

Thursday 26th March 2015

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to inform Elected Members for the Willenhall and Short Heath Area Partnership of some of the work carried out within the local area.
- 1.2 Willenhall and Short Heath Area Partnership 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
- 1.4 Partners involved: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Unit, Integrated Young People's Support Services (IYPSS), West Midlands Police, residents, Ward Councillors, Walsall Housing Group (WHG), West Midlands Probation Service, Walsall Intelligence Network, Environmental Health, Reassurance Team, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Willenhall and Short Heath Area Partnership, Public Health, Caldmoreaccord Housing Association, Walsall Voluntary Action, West Midlands Fire Service, Social Care and Inclusion, Fibbersley Park Children's Centre, Lighthouse Children's Centre, Area Family Support Team, Trading Standards, Community Development, Substance Matters, Willenhall CHART, Willenhall E-Act, New Invention Methodist Church, Clean and Green, Sports and Leisure, Jobcentre Plus, Steps to Work, Darlaston JET, Welfare Rights, Walsall College, Holy Trinity Online Centre, Libraries

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

- 2.1 Crime and anti social behaviour continues to be discussed at the confidential tasking meetings in Willenhall chaired by the Area Manager. No major issues or incidents have been highlighted by the Police with exception to a spike in burglaries in the town centre and also due to the inclement weather an increase of car drive offs. Police have been raising awareness of these issues to local businesses and communities.
- 2.2 Youth related anti social behaviour has been identified by partners around the Rosehill area, as a result a number of young people who are to take part in a peer mentoring project involving a number of agencies led by local youth workers.
- 2.3 The Bell alleyway and back of the Bell Inn in the Town Centre has been flagged up by local partners as an area in need of clearing – Environmental Health are coordinating agencies to look at addressing the issues on this site.
- 2.4 Additional work is also underway around the Wakes Ground following an initial clear up by Community Payback and Clean and Green colleagues. New fencing, repairs to the walls and bridge as well as cleared pathways are being undertaken to improve access to the town centre, school and church from the Rosehill estate.
- 2.5 The fire education centre at the rear of Willenhall Fire St is currently in the process of being renovated and will be available for members of the community to use.

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

- 3.1 Youth services are currently still offered 4 nights a week with the detached team also being deployed 4 nights, Frank F Harrison Community Association are also commissioned to undertake some work in the area following the closure of Pool Hayes CA.
- 3.2 There are amateur boxing sessions being run from St Giles centre and a funding bid has been submitted to take a group of young people on an educational trip to Auschwitz in partnership with RAF Cosford .
- 3.3 The caretakers house on Allens Rough is still being utilised by youth services 3 nights a week.

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

4.1 Bridging The Gap shop in Willenhall has lost significant amount of funding which

means services that they have run for the previous 12 years including money and debt advice, bereavement advice as well as other will now have to stop resulting in the redundancy of 3 members of staff. Mike Batchelor will be staying on a voluntary basis and offering debt advice. At one time the CAB worker had a caseload of around 6million in debt which will be a massive loss to the area. The foodbank will continue to operate on a Thursday and will be looking at opening an additional day on a Tuesday.

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

5.1 British Gas have been promoting a insulation scheme that British gas are running for houses that due to their age are unable to have the usual cavity wall insulation. British Gas are offering another product that initially will be aimed at Willenhall North residents, the product is rendering based to houses. BG are undertaking some community engagement to get the word out. There is a possibility of up to £4000 in funding to assist with the installation, ideally links into the local RSL's and housing providers will be key contacts to roll out this programme. The allocated funding for the project is not benefit related and is part of the national Green Deal funding, there has been around 30 million allocated to the UK for this. The total cost of the project per household on a typical 3 bed semi is about 9k. The remainder can be spread out over 3 year's interest free loan.

5.2 The first of a number of Dementia Friends awareness sessions has been arranged in Willenhall for 2nd April at 2pm at Willenhall Fire Station

5.3 An initial community consultation event is taking place on 30th March at 2pm – 3pm at Holy Trinity Online Centre, Coltham Road as part of the Green Pathways project. Local people, partners and elected members are invited to find out more about the proposals with an intention of also setting up walking groups around the area. The intention is to encourage health and well being by encouraging local people to get fit and active in their local community using public open spaces complimented by outdoor gyms.

5.4 A memorial in New Invention removed from the Methodist Church is to unveiled on Sunday 29th March at 2pm on the New Invention Village Green.

Nicola Holmes
Area Manager