

DARLASTON LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Friday, 7 January, 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

at Moxley People's Centre, Queen Street, Moxley

Present

Councillor Bill Madeley (Chairman)
Sgt. Ashby
Denise Birkett
Cath Boneham
Ms. Sandra Borland
Councillor Rose Burley
Mr. Peter Burton
Councillor Keith Chambers
Mr. Andy Clarke
Councillor Ayshea Johnson
Ms. Sue Machin
Mr. Keith Middleton
Mrs. Sally Milne
Mr. David Owen
Mr. Tony Steadman
Mr. Rashid Varachhia

20/05 Introductions

Councillor Madeley opened the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

21/05 Tsunami Victims

The Partnership stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect for the victims of the recent Tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

22/05 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor Rowley, Mr. Ken Hopkins and Inspector Williams.

23/05 **Appointment of Locally Appointed Partners**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Denise Birkett and Rashid Varachhia, Locally Appointed Partners nominated by the Selection Panel, were welcomed to the meeting and invited to take their places.

It was reported that the final Locally Appointed Partner, Ismail Patel, was currently on holiday, but his nomination to the Partnership was accepted.

Resolved

That the Partnership welcomes the following Locally Appointed Partners and confirms their appointment:-

Denise Birkett
Ismail Patel
Rashid Varachhia

(The Local Neighbourhood Partnership now has its full quota of ten Locally Appointed Partners).

24/05 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2004, a copy having been circulated to each member of the Partnership, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

25/05 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Burley declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in any item relating to the Darlaston Housing Trust.

Councillor Johnson declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in any item relating to the Darlaston Community Association.

David Owen declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in any items relating to the Darlaston Housing Trust, Association of Boys Clubs or Rubery Owen.

Tony Steadman declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in any item relating to the Darlaston Community Association.

Sally Milne declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in any item relating to the Darlaston Community Association.

26/05 Petitions

It was reported that no petitions had been submitted for acceptance at the meeting.

27/05 Public Forum

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the Committee in the public forum.

28/05 Producing the First Partnership Plan

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Narinder Singh Chumber, Neighbourhood Partnership Officer, enlarged upon the report and referred to the amended "ensure a clean and green area" section of the report which had been handed to Partners present at the meeting:-

(see annexed)

Referring to paragraph 2 of the report, Narinder indicated that it was proposed to set up Task Groups to examine the themes of young people, environment, crime, health and education. He added that the Partnership might wish to set up key milestones to be completed by specific dates.

Councillor Madeley suggested that all members of the Partnership should be written to and invited to express their preferences for attending the Task Groups. He added that the Partnership Plan would provide an opportunity to improve Darlaston by obtaining external funding to put projects in place. Darlaston District Centre would be improved through collaboration with the Walsall Housing Group.

Narinder reminded the meeting that, if Partners knew of other groups or organisations which wished to be involved in the Partnership then, if he was advised of their contact details, they could be invited to take part in the Task Groups and forums.

Councillor Burley referred to the need to involve representatives from the local committees in order that their expertise could be retained once the local committees had ceased to be. She added that, as the Local Neighbourhood Partnership held only four meetings per year, it was necessary that much work was carried in the Task Groups so they should be as representative of the area as possible. She asked how quickly Task Groups would be set up. Narinder replied that it was hoped that the groups would be set up by the end of January so that their efforts could be reported back to the March meeting of the Partnership.

Mr. Clarke referred to Section 2 of the report and to the information relating to Darlaston Community Science College. He felt that the information needed to be more positive as the school had received a good Ofsted report.

After further discussion it was:-

Resolved

That the Partnership:-

- (1) approves the draft Partnership Plan and recommends acceptance of it to Council following its submission to Cabinet;
- (2) agrees that the details from the workshops held to date are used as part of the first Neighbourhood Plan;
- (3) agrees to the formation of Task Groups to progress the detail of the first Neighbourhood Plan.

29/05 Placecheck

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Jon Lord enlarged upon the report and, with the aid of a power point presentation, explained how Placecheck could assist the Partnership with its deliberations. A copy of the presentation was handed to the Partners present at the meeting:-

(see annexed)

He indicated that Placecheck could be used to show what is good about an area as well as what is bad. It is recognised by Central Government as a way of empowering communities. He then outlined the timetable for the establishment of Placecheck as a partnership tool. In response to questions from members about funding for leafleting, newsletters etc., Jon Lord indicated that funding for this was included in the budget.

Councillor Johnson hoped that the situation would not arise where Local Neighbourhood Partnerships were bidding against each other for funding for schemes.

Mr. Clarke, Secondary Head representative, commented that Local Neighbourhood Partnerships needed teeth and action to succeed. He was concerned that, if too long was spent gathering information, then expectations would be raised which could not be met, because funding was not available. Narinder indicated that the Neighbourhood Plan could help to identify funding for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships alongside key priorities outlined within the plan.

Partners felt that at least one project should be completed before the end of the Partnership's first year and co-operation was vital if funding was to be obtained.

Narinder reported that working together should make obtaining external funding easier and more successful.

Councillor Madeley hoped that Local Neighbourhood Partnerships would be able to tap into all external funding sources.

Councillor Burley asked if specific funding could be provided to obtain information from every household in Darlaston about their needs and aspirations. Jon Lord indicated that he would welcome this as it would help to keep people engaged.

Cath Boneham (PCT representative) asked whether Placecheck would identify good things in Darlaston as well as bad. Jon Lord replied that it would highlight successes as well as showing where actions were required.

Councillor Burley referred to the recommendation contained in the report and suggested that appropriate funding should be made available to carry out the technique.

After further discussion it was:-

Resolved

That the Partnership notes the contents of the presentation introducing Placecheck and agrees to implement the Technique to engage the wider community in the Local Neighbourhood process provided appropriate funding is made available to carry it out.

30/05 Local Neighbourhood Partnerships – Training and Development Plan

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Madeley asked whether Task Groups for the Partnership would identify training needs. Narinder replied that training courses would be tailored to specific LNPs for matters that were unique to that area or training could be provided to several LNPs together if the problem was common to all.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That an item entitled training and development be included on all future Local Neighbourhood Partnership agendas.

31/05 **Physical Access Audits**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Madeley enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Partnership.

Councillor Burley expressed concern that the Partnership had not been involved in the preparation of the report. She asked whether all Council properties in Darlaston had been audited.

Tony Steadman referred to the schedule to the report and stated that Moxley Neighbourhood Resource Centre had an induction loop operating through out the building so that induction loops would not be required in the reception or training rooms.

After further discussion it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That Sue Fox be requested to contact Tony Steadman regarding the provision of induction loops at Moxley Neighbourhood Resource Centre.

32/05 Crime and Disorder Strategy

Inspector Gwyn Bevan reported that a crime audit and consultation had been carried out which showed that crime had been reduced in Walsall by a further 14% between April 2004 and January 2005. However, Darlaston was the fourth highest area for crime within the Borough so there was still work to be done. Officers were working with Crime Concern to reduce crime by a further 20% over the next three years. Inspector Bevan then referred to the key strategic priorities of burglary and car crime and to the fact that drunkenness was a major contribution to such crimes. An alcohol strategy had recently been put in place with appropriate funding and problems of prostitution were being dealt with using anti-social behaviour methods. There were broad spectrum programmes covering drugs and alcohol in place, together with support for young victims of crime; hate crime and domestic violence. Work on the draft document should be completed by the end of January when it would be circulated for consultation to Partners. He added that the structure was developing and the anti-social behaviour section was in place with all posts mainstream funded. By the March meeting of the Partnership, the complete structure should be in place and could be explained.

Referring to neighbourhood policing, Inspector Bevan reported that Darlaston would receive extra help because it was a priority area.

Councillor Johnson asked about the logging of crimes. Sergeant Ashby replied that, if a crime had been committed and the police were informed, then it would be recorded. If members of the public had any problems with crime recording, then they should contact him directly.

Reference was made to the fear of crime and the lack of police presence on housing estates. Sergeant Ashby replied that extra resources had been obtained to enable patrols of two officers in fluorescent jackets to visit housing estates to provide a more visible presence.

Peter Burton expressed concern that people no longer reported crime because confidence in the police force had been lost. He felt that the community must be encouraged to support the police in their efforts to reduce crime.

Mr. Clarke informed the meeting that he had weekly meetings with the police at his school and response rates were good. Policing in Darlaston was now much more high profile than in the past. Sergeant Ashby replied that he had worked in Darlaston for five years and policing was at its strongest now.

Inspector Bevan commented that the causes of crime could not be resolved by increased manpower alone and the Partnership should play its part.

Councillor Burley referred to the regeneration of Darlaston and commented that only by raising aspirations could success be achieved.

Sergeant Ashby reported that attempts had been made to encourage neighbourhood watch in Darlaston with little success, but it appeared that, as crime diminished, so the interest in neighbourhood watch fell.

After further discussion it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal report be noted;
- (2) That the draft crime document be referred to the March meeting of the Partnership.

33/05 Termination of Meeting

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

Chairman:

Date: