

# **ST. MATTHEWS AND BIRCHILLS/LEAMORE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP**

**Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 at 6.00 p.m.**

**at Croft Street Community Association, Croft Street, Walsall**

## **Present**

Councillor Tim Oliver (Chairman)  
Mr. Terry Edis (Vice-Chair)  
Mrs. Jane Evans (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Mohammed Arif  
Councillor Joan Barton  
Mr. Hilson Carter  
Mr. Rod Dickson  
Inspector Andy Gilbert  
Mr. Christopher Jones  
Mr. John Kempson  
Councillor Haqnawaz Khan  
Ms. Margot Lambert  
Councillor Barbara McCracken  
Mr. Aftab Nawaz  
Councillor Jonathan Phillips  
Mrs. Maureen Woodcock

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## **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. M. Barton (LAP), Mr. G. Brookes (CAP), Mr. M. Cain (LAP) and the Rev. David Sims (LAP).

161/07

## **Declarations of Interest**

Margot Lambert declared an interest in Item 8 on the agenda relating to LNP Funding - Fencing in Brace Street and Buckle Close and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

162/07

## **Welcome to new Member**

Councillor Oliver welcomed Maureen Woodcock, the newly appointed Locally Appointed Partner, to the meeting.

163/07      **Petitions**

There were no petitions submitted.

164/07      **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2006, a copy having previously been circulated to each Member of the Partnership, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

165/07      **Former Mellish Road Methodist Church**

With reference to the former Mellish Road Methodist Church, Maureen Woodcock asked what was meant by the building being secure, as the cracks in the tower appeared to be widening. John Kempson (Fire Service representative) replied that the building was securely fenced.

Maureen referred to the fact that the building had been erected on consecrated ground and it would need to be de-consecrated before it could be used for any other purposes.

166/07      **Progress report**

**Gulley area at rear of library, Beechdale**

Councillor Oliver reported that some pruning of overgrown bushes and shrubs had been carried out but further tidying work needed to be undertaken on the area of disputed land. At present, neither the BCHA, Frank F. Harrison School or the Council would accept responsibility for the area.

**Gladstone House**

Margot Lambert reported that a proposal to use the site for private housing was being considered.

**Environmental issues in Caldmore**

Keith Stone confirmed that the Highways Section was currently severely under-staffed. He added that there was an opportunity for some of the issues to be addressed through the Bus Showcase Scheme. A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the LNP on this issue.

### **Derelict flats above shops in Stephenson Square**

Councillor Oliver reported that the BCHA Board had rejected a regeneration scheme for the area as not viable. He suggested that the Council's Estates or Strategic Housing Sections should be requested to consider the improvement of the derelict flats with the assistance of a private partner.

#### **Resolved**

That the progress report be noted.

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### **Public Forum**

Dennis Latham, a Minister and Youth Worker, reported that his Group had been successful with young people in the Bloxwich area and were hoping to extend their activities into the St. Matthews Local Neighbourhood Partnership area. He added that, ultimately, his Group hoped to be able to network with all the Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.

#### **Extension to Surestart area**

Hillary Hastings, of Surestart, informed the meeting that approval had been given for Surestart's area to be extended to cover the Butts, Mellish Road and Aldridge Road, Walsall - a further 1,200 homes.

Councillor Mrs. McCracken referred to the difficulty residents of the Butts would have in crossing the ring road to get to the Centre in Birchills. Hillary replied that Surestart worked out of six schools in the area and satellite facilities would be provided there. She added that outreach work would cover the whole of the area. She produced a map and newsletter explaining Surestart's activities, copies of which were available to the Partnership.

#### **Resolved**

That the comments from Surestart be noted.

#### **Alleygating**

A member of the public referred to gates that had been erected in the area under previous initiatives which were either left open or had been broken. He felt that the provision of further gates would be a waste of money.

Councillor Oliver stated that gating had worked in some areas but not in others. It was largely dependant upon how well residents policed the schemes. He indicated that if gates were not provided in Lewis Street and the surrounding area, then the problems of fly tipping would continue to blight the area. He added that if local residents were keen to have them and ensured they were used properly, then they could be successful. Hilson Carter stated that alleyways had caused problems for a long time and gating had been tried since the days of City Challenge.

He also referred to the need for car parking in the Caldmore area to be upgraded and expanded. Councillor Oliver reminded the meeting that the bus showcase route would allow parking on one side of the road after 7.00 p.m. so this should help the situation. Terry Edis expressed concern that there was no one to enforce waiting restrictions when they were put in. Keith Stone indicated that there had never been enough traffic wardens. With the de-criminalisation of parking enforcement, Wardens would be employed by the Council rather than the Police from April, 2008 and more Wardens would be employed. Whilst their main priority would be Walsall Town Centre, it will be possible to use them to target problem areas, such as Caldmore Road, from time to time.

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### **LNP Funding**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

### **Resolved**

That the LNP:-

- (1) notes the progress and current spend on funding priorities from the 2005-2006 allocation;
- (2) agrees not to continue the Rat on a Rat leaflet campaign;
- (3) notes the progress and current spend on funding priorities from the 2006-2007 allocation.

169/07

### **LNP Funding - supplementary report**

A report was circulated at the meeting:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Oliver suggested the following:-

- Fencing in Brace Street - support the scheme subject to consultation between Caldmore Housing and Ward Councillors
- Fencing in Buckle Close - support the proposals
- Caldmore Green Working Party - development costs - maximum of five workshops (£1,500)
- Environmental improvements to car park - rear of Beechdale Lifelong Centre, Stephenson Square - support the proposals
- Concrete bollards in Leamore Lane, Bloxwich Road and Green Lane - support the proposals
- Match funding for Internet café in Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre - support the proposals
- Community development/sustainability funding for Croft Community Association - support the proposals
- Compost bins - provision of twenty one bins at £8 (£168) - support the proposals
- Re-surfacing works - Providence Close - place on reserve list

### **Resolved**

That the Local Neighbourhood Partnership notes the detail of new projects proposals and recommends approval of the following:-

- Fencing in Brace Street - support the scheme subject to consultation between Caldmore Housing and Ward Councillors - recommend funding of £2,044.50
- Fencing in Buckle Close - support the proposals - recommend funding of £4,785.18, including VAT (noting that the project would not attract match funding from Caldmore Housing Association as suggested in the report)
- Caldmore Green Working Party - development costs - recommend funding for a maximum of five workshops (£1,500)
- Environmental improvements to car park - rear of Beechdale Lifelong Centre, Stephenson Square - support the proposals - recommend funding of £300
- Concrete bollards in Leamore Lane, Bloxwich Road and Green Lane - support the proposals - recommend funding of £2,400

- Match funding for Internet café in Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre - support the proposals - recommend funding of £3,960
- Community development/sustainability funding for Croft Community Association - support the proposals - recommend funding of £2,000
- Compost bins - provision of twenty one bins at £8 (£168) - support the proposals - recommend funding of £168
- Re-surfacing works - Providence Close - estimated cost of £1,000 - place on reserve list

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**Presentation Re: Increasing life expectancy by reducing inequalities**

Jane Evans (tPCT) made a presentation concerning increasing life expectancy by reducing inequalities with the aid of Powerpoint. A copy of the slide show was available to Members present at the meeting:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the presentation be received.

Councillor Oliver thanked Jane for her presentation.

171/07

**Community Action Groups**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

- (1) That LNP Members continue in attendance at the Community Action Group meetings;
- (2) That the Local Neighbourhood Partnership notes the progress of the Community Action Groups.

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**Date and venue of next meeting**

**Resolved**

That the next meeting of the St. Matthews and Birchills/Leamore Local Neighbourhood Partnership be held on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 at 6.00 p.m. at St. Mary the Mount Pastoral Centre, Glebe Street, Walsall.

**Termination of Meeting**

The meeting terminated at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman .....

Date .....