

Willenhall North/Willenhall South/Short Heath Area Panel

Monday, 3rd November, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

Winehala Court, 50a Sandbeds Road, Short Heath, WV12 4GA

Members in Attendance: Councillor G. Illmann-Walker (Chairman)
Councillor C. Creaney (Vice Chairman)
Councillor D. Barker
Councillor D. Coughlan
Councillor D. Hazell
Councillor E. Hazell
Councillor Mrs D. Shires
Councillor I. Shires

Officers in Attendance

Kate Bowers – Interim Head of Communities and Public Protection
Jo Lowndes – Partnership Manager
Laura Terry – Interim Area Manager
Craig Goodall - Committee Business and Governance Manager

Others in Attendance

Mandy Holcroft – Director of Operations – Caldmore Accord Housing
Simon Williams –whg

81/14 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S. Coughlan.

82/14 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest for the duration of the meeting.

83/14 Local Government Access to Information Act, 1985 (as amended)

It was noted that there were no items to take in private session.

84/14 Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting which took place on 2nd September, 2014, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

85/14 Social Housing Standards and Maintenance

The Panel considered social housing standards and maintenance in Willenhall and Short Heath.

The Chair explained that as the main social housing providers in the area Caldmore Accord and whg have been invited to attend a meeting.

The Director of Operations – Caldmore Accord provided the Panel with an overview of the social housing standards and planned maintenance for their housing stock in the area. She noted that good work had taken place with updating windows and doors for the properties. Thermal improvements were now being sought subject securing the necessary funding. The group had 21 properties with electric heating. The Panel urged for these properties to be upgraded to gas central heating as a matter of priority.

Simon Williams, whg, provided an overview of housing standards and a verbal update for whg's planned maintenance and upgrading of stock in the area. He explained that there was a substantial number of solid brick properties in Willenhall and Short Heath. Whg had recently entered into a partnership with British Gas that would see these properties thermally wrapped in the next three years. He explained that following the completion of internal updates to properties focus would move to improve the local street scene.

Members felt that where owner occupiers lived in neighbouring social housing properties receiving updating works such as thermal wrapping or new boundary walls more could be done by the relevant registered provider. Members felt that the registered providers should contact the owner occupiers in advance of any works taking place to offer the owner occupier the opportunity to pay to have the work done by the registered provider's contractor at the same time. This would assist in improving the appearance of neighbourhoods.

The meeting discussed unused garage areas and the detrimental affect they had on the area. The providers present commented that where possible they were looking to work with local people to identify a solution.

A Member complained about problems with security doors at a group of properties that were suffering from recurring break-ins.

A Member raised an issue of footpath ownership and the importance of sharing information with partners to improve the situation.

Whg inspected all work undertaken by their contractors.

No whg properties would contain back-boilers within two years.

Resolved

That:-

- 1. The Panel consider the number of properties with electric heating at Caldmore Accord and whg in 12 months time;**

2. **More information be provided to Members on the Thermal Wrapping Programmes being completed in the Willenhall and Short Heath areas. These details should include the areas covered and the date the works will be completed;**
3. **Owner occupiers should be offered the opportunity of home and street improvement works at the same time as social housing tenants;**
4. **Simon Williams, whg, contact Diane Coughlan to discuss issues with scaffolding in Thorne Road.**

86/14 Introduction to Interim Head of Communities and Public Protection

Kate Bowers – Interim Head of Communities and Public Protection introduced herself to the Panel.

87/14 Area Managers Report

The Partnership Manager introduced the Area Managers Report.

The meeting discussed the physical improvements being made at Holy Trinity Church Hall. It was noted that Community Payback was assisting with this work. There were some issues to resolve due to the location of a culvert in the area.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

88/14 Funding Report

The Interim Area Manager introduced the funding applications.

She highlighted each application, the cost for each Participatory Budgeting pot and the number of votes received from members of the public in support.

Resolved

That:-

1. **£1,995.00 be awarded to the Willenhall Festivities Project. Money allocated to this project should be split in the following ways:-**
 - a. **£365.00 from the Willenhall North budget**
 - b. **£365.00 from the Willenhall South budget**
 - c. **£365.00 from the Short Heath budget**

2. **Winter Lights - £2,000.00 be awarded to the Willenhall Winter Lighting Scheme. The money being awarded in the following way:**
 - a. £666.66 from the Willenhall North budget;
 - b. £666.66 from the Willenhall South budget;
 - c. £666.66 from the Short Heath budget;

3. **£1200.00 be awarded to the Facilities Update Project from the Short Heath budget;**

4. **Caldmore Close/Darvel Road Security Improvements be awarded £1,856.00 from the Short Heath budget;**

5. **£1,000.00 be awarded to the Fire Education Centre. The money being awarded from the following budgets:**
 - a. £333.33 from the Willenhall North budget;
 - b. £333.33 from the Willenhall South budget;
 - c. £333.33 from the Short Heath budget;

6. **£3410.00 be awarded to the Hub and Spoke in Willenhall South and Short Heath Project. The money being awarded in the following ways**
 - a. £1,136.00 from the Willenhall North budget;
 - b. £1,136.00 from the Willenhall South budget;
 - c. £1,136.00 from the Short Heath budget;

7. **That a further Participatory Budgeting exercise be undertaken to enable funding applications to be considered at the 20th January, 2015 meeting of the Panel.**

89/14 Date of Next meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was Tuesday 20th January, 2015.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.09 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: