

PELSALL AND RUSHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Monday 10 October 2005 at 6.00 pm

at Pelsall Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Street, Pelsall, Walsall

Present

Councillor Al Griffiths (Chairman)
Councillor Clive Ault
Mr. Ron Carpenter
Mrs Margaret Hayes
Mr. Robert Hughes
Mr. Neil Jones
Councillor Marco Longhi
Councillor Catherine Micklewright
Mr. Colin Payton
Councillor Garry Perry
Mrs. Ann Rice
Mr. James Thomas
Councillor Rachel Walker
Ms. Lesley Woakes

In attendance:

Mr. Rod Williams
Mr. Keith Stone
Parveen Sangha

79/05. Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked each member of the LNP to introduce themselves to the meeting.

80/05. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. Terry Blyde.

81/05 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Pelsall and Rushall Local Neighbourhood Partnership held on 7 July 2005, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Partnership, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82/05 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

83/05. **Petitions**

Clearing derelict site at Sheffield Library and the Four Seasons Public House

A petition asking that derelict sites at Sheffield Library and the Four Seasons Public House be cleared was submitted on behalf of residents by Councillor Rachel Walker.

Speed bumps outside the Free Trade Inn, Pelsall

A petition asking that two speed bumps be provided outside the Free Trade Inn in Wood Lane, Pelsall due to the amount of children playing outside the public house and on the Common; also the speed of vehicles and motor bikes using the road and car park as a turning point was submitted on behalf of the licensee and customers of the Free Trade Inn by Councillor Clive Ault.

Resolved

That the petitions be received and noted and that they be referred to the relevant executive director/assistant director for consideration and action, as appropriate; progress of such action to be reported back to the LNP.

84/05. **Appointment of Locally Appointed Partners**

The report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That Mr. John Ree and Ms. Donna Ricketts be appointed as locally appointed partners of Pelsall and Rushall LNP for the remainder of the current municipal year

85/05. **Partnership Plan and Feedback from Task Group Meetings**

The report together with the action plan, was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The report was introduced by the Chairman who asked the neighbourhood partnership officer (Parveen Sangha) to speak to the report.

Ms. Sangha said that a Task Group meeting had been held focusing around elderly issues in the partnership plan. A number of actions had been agreed to move things forward. She called on the elderly issues task group champion, Mrs Sheila Sheasby, to brief the meeting.

Mrs Sheasby said that the elderly issues task group had had a very good meeting but hoped that more people would attend to share their views. She believed that the advertising of both LNP and task group meetings needed to be improved.

Mrs Sheasby said that she had contacted Ring and Ride to enquire how more elderly people could register for the service. She had been informed that people had to register individually and not as a group. Questions had been raised at the task group about whether elderly people had to demonstrate that they had a disability to be eligible for the service. She believed that Ring and Ride could be beneficial to many elderly people in the community as it would enable them to get out and about. Although many elderly people who attended various clubs were aware of the service, there were also many others in the LNP area who did not use it. An extension of its provision would be a great help in improving their quality of life.

Councillor Ault suggested that the Ring and Ride service and community transport be invited to a meeting to explain how their services were provided.

Mrs Sheasby said that health and environmental issues had also been discussed by the task group. This was a very important issue for elderly people. Many of them would like to see a new medical centre in Pelsall but it would need to be properly funded to ensure that it was adequately staffed with doctors and nurses.

Councillor Longhi said that the issue of a medical centre in Pelsall had been investigated previously and Pelsall councillors had raised this with the tPCT. A lot of ground work had already been done but one obstacle had been the reluctance of some doctors to support this venture. He said that other areas of the borough had benefited from having medical centres and he believed this was something the people of Pelsall deserved. He hoped that the LNP would be able to re-engage with the tPCT on this issue.

Ms. Lesley Woakes of tPCT said that she had only been in post for three months. Her role was a supportive one but she would be assessing health provision in Pelsall and its community needs over the next few months. Whether or not the doctors wished to buy into the provision of a medical centre would obviously need to be taken into consideration. She said that the people of Pelsall deserved the best services possible and suggested that a letter from the Pelsall Councillors to the Chief Executive of the tPCT would be very timely.

As a point of information, Ms. Sangha said that some of these issues were included in the partnership plan which the task groups were presently examining in great detail. The Chairman requested that these issues be investigated more fully at the next task group meeting on 17 October 2005.

Ms Sangha then asked Lindsey Smith of the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership to brief the meeting on the BRAG project.

Ms. Smith said that the borough resource allocation group (BRAG) was a management group of key partners and service providers who met monthly to review and analyse current community safety data across the borough. BRAG would be looking to co-ordinate resources across Pelsall, Rushall and Shelfield for a six-week period beginning in mid January 2006. It would then be making recommendations to the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership which was responsible for tasking and co-ordinating resources in a multi-agency response with a view to improving hot spot neighbourhood issues and meeting the strategic objectives outlined in the partnerships strategy. She said that resources would be delivered to areas where they were most needed. She requested that 3 to 5 priority themes be put forward by Pelsall and Rushall LNP for consideration by BRAG, and asked whether it would be possible to arrange a task group meeting before 14 November 2005, so that the priority themes could be brought to BRAG for consideration.

Ms. Sangha said that a date for a task group meeting to consider BRAG's request would be arranged. It was also intended to review the partnership plan in the next couple of months and to develop a clear set of actions and pledges that would demonstrate the impact that the LNP was making at local level. She said that the dates of the future task group meetings were included in the report and she hoped that as many people as possible in the local community would be able to attend.

With regard to forthcoming events, there would be a meeting for local neighbourhood partnerships to find out more about the local area agreements (LAA), how LNPs could become more involved in the process and how local areas could benefit. This meeting was currently being scheduled for early November 2005. A planning workshop was also being organised to help residents find out how they could influence the planning process.

Resolved

- (1) That the issues raised by the elderly issues task group in respect of the extension of the provision of the Ring and Ride service and community transport for elderly people in Pelsall and the possibility of a medical centre in Pelsall be explored further at the next task group meeting on 17 October 2005, at Rushall Community Centre;
- (2) That LNP members continue to attend workshop meetings;
- (3) That individual LNP members encouraged wider participation from community members within the task groups;
- (4) That the progress of the transforming your space scheme as outlined in the report now submitted be noted;
- (5) That the dates of future task group meetings identified in the report be noted;
- (6) That Pelsall and Rushall LNP undergo a partnership plan review.

86/05. Funding Priorities for Action

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Ms. Sangha reported on progress of funding priorities in the LNP area. She said that a high profile campaign relating to litter and dog fouling would be undertaken shortly. The project for improvements to High Heath Park had also been approved and a starting date was awaited for this. The Partnership Team were currently working with community arts to develop either a landscape garden or a feature around Sister Dora and her work in the Pelsall Colliery disaster on the space adjacent to Pelsall Common. It was hoped to process these schemes through the task groups with the support of the local community.

Councillor Perry said that the funding issue relating to improvements to High Heath park had now been resolved. The scheme included play

provision for under 12s which was something that had been needed for a long time. With regard to play area provision in Highfield Road North, local people had been unhappy that the Transforming your Space scheme had only involved teenagers. Applications had now been made for funding through the landfill task scheme and the Peoples Millions lottery to fund a play scheme for under 12s. Young people from Trevor Road and Highfield Road North who would be using the play area had been involved in the planning process.

Ms. Sangha said that the Christmas tree holders project in the LNP area was progressing. Councillor Griffiths and Ron Carpenter had undertaken a mapping exercise of which shop keepers wished to have christmas tree holders installed.

The Chairman said that the Christmas tree holders would be fitted free of charge but the shopkeepers would take ownership of the Christmas tree and lights. The hooks provided for the holders could also be used for hanging baskets in the summer. He believed this was a worthwhile scheme that would brighten up the area.

Ms. Sangha said that the project for increasing the number of litter bins in the LNP area had also been approved and additional litter bins had been installed in Stubbers Green.

With regard to the installation of physical measures to prevent access to the Pelsall Common areas by motorbikes, Ms. Sangha said that the LNP team were working with Councillor Micklewright to process this project.

Ms Sangha said there was also a project to employ a youth worker in Rushall. This proposal had been put forward to youth services and Donna Ricketts was talking to Lorraine Randell about this. The proposal would involve young people in the LNP area on a workshop based/residential programme focusing of crime prevention, drug awareness and other issues that affected their activities. There would be a series of workshops prior to a residential programme to develop team work.

Donna Ricketts confirmed that Lorraine Randell was working on the plans for this. She hoped the project would begin in January/February 2006.

In conclusion, Ms. Sangha referred to the project to develop greenhouses in local primary schools. She said that five local primary schools had been contacted and wished to participate in the project. The three proposed options had been circulated to LNP members prior to the meeting. £1000 had been earmarked for this project.

Following discussion it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That progress to date with funding projects be noted;
- (2) That progress be reviewed at the next meeting;
- (3) That with regard to the developing greenhouses project in five local primary schools the following option proposal be approved:-

Option 2 – Project to run May 2006 to July 2006:

Three weekly sessions (45 minutes each) provided by a tPCT school food co-ordinator, to cover healthy eating topics in a classroom setting which would link the food that is growing in the green house to a balanced healthy diet (15 sessions in total). Plus a fourth and fifth session to present activities to the school in an assembly/presentation.

Total cost: £400.

87/05. **External Funding**

A presentation on external funding was given by Mr. Andrew Rainsford the external funding manager.

Mr. Rainsford spoke about the work of the Council's external funding team and the reasons for their existence which were:-

- To stretch budgets;
- To resource delivery of Walsall's vision;
- To maximise European Union funding streams;
- To enable access to other funding streams by community/voluntary groups.

Mr. Rainsford said that the external funding team worked with a number of organisations across the borough and in conjunction with the Council's local neighbourhood partnerships. He said that he would be attending the quarterly meetings of Pelsall and Rushall LNP in future.

In conclusion, Mr. Rainsford said that the external funding team had arranged an external funding surgery at Pelsall library on 22 November 2005, from 11.00 am to 7.00 pm to assist groups and residents in the LNP area on all aspects of external funding.

On behalf of the Partnership, the Chairman thanked Mr. Rainsford for his presentation.

Resolved

That the contents of the presentation on external funding be noted.

88/05.

Children's Centres and Extended Schools

A presentation was given by Mr. Tim German of Education Walsall on proposals relating to children's centres and extended schools.

The partnership was advised that the children's centre concept was based on the following principles:-

- Children's centres will serve children and families;
- They will provide integrated care and education for young children, health services, family support and a base for child minders;
- This integrated approach by children's centres will provide holistic support for children's development, support to families with young children and will facilitate the return to work of those parents who are currently unemployed.

Mr. German said that it was planned that the children's centre for the Pelsall and Rushall LNP area would be based on the Greenfield School site in Shelfield.

The second part of the presentation related to extended schools. The partnership was advised of the following core issues:-

- Children's attainment cannot solely rest in school or the classroom;
- Health, diet and emotional well-being are crucial factors;
- A positive environment of learning is needed in the family and the wider community;
- Access to support and facilities – ICT, culture, sport;
- Opportunity for services with an interest in children's wellbeing to work together.

Mr. German said that the extended schools scheme was an ambitious programme that would have a real and positive link between partners, the Council and professional deliverers in respect of children's services. He said that he would be attending a future meeting of the LNP to report further on the development of children's centres in the borough.

On behalf of the LNP, the Chairman thanked Mr. German for his presentation.

Resolved

That the contents of the presentation on children's centres and extended schools be noted.

89/05. **Contacts with the Local Business Community in the LNP area**

The Chairman briefed the partnership on his discussions with the local business community. He said that he had spoken to representatives of the Chamber of Commerce who were interested in taking an active part in the development of LNPs. They had agreed to promote the LNPs through their monthly meetings and to mention them in their publicity leaflets. He said that they were happy to get involved and he hoped that they would be represented at LNP meetings in the future.

90/05. **Update on Issues Raised in the Public Forum at LNP meetings**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Access for Emergency Vehicles to the Bungalows in Rowley Place, Rushall

Mr. Robert Hughes said that WHG would be happy to look at the residents' proposals for parking facilities and to involve the Council in this. He said that unfortunately all of WHGs environmental fund had been allocated for the next 18 months on various schemes in the Aldridge/Brownhills area. It was not possible at the present time to focus funds on one particular area. This did not mean that this issue would not be addressed at some time in the future. He said that the cost of creating 10-15 parking bays could be up to £50,000 but it might be possible to look at more radical ways of alleviating this problem such as introducing parking restrictions for visitors.

91/05. **Voting Facilities in Rushall**

Mrs Rice requested that the Chief Electoral and Registrations and Elections Officer be asked to consider transferring the polling station back to Rushall Community Centre from New Street, Rushall. She said that many local people, particularly the elderly, had difficulty in travelling to New Street.

Mrs Hayes asked whether the voting facilities in Autumn Close could be reinstated for High Heath residents before the next elections. She said that many people found it very inconvenient having to vote at St. Francis Catholic Club.

The Chairman said that he understood that this change of polling station had been necessary because of boundary changes. He said that the points made by Mrs Rice and Mrs Hayes would be raised with the Chief

Electoral Registrations and Election Officer and his response would be reported to the next meeting.

92/05. **Problems of Underage Drinking**

Mr. Thomas said that local residents were concerned about underage drinking on Pelsall Common and Little Common. Pelsall Common was classed as common land but asked whether in spite of this enquiries could be made about the possibility of bylaws being introduced to prohibit drinking there. He understood that the effect of a drinking ban in Pheasey and Streetly had had an immediate effect. He said that children had been observed drinking on the Common until well after midnight on Friday and Saturday evenings and there had been many reports to Neighbourhood Watch from concerned residents. They were also concerned that children were being sold drugs. All these incidents had been reported to the Police but they had not attended.

With regard to shops selling alcohol to underage drinkers, Mr. Thomas said that a lot of work had been done in Pelsall and Rushall and action had been taken against one shop keeper. Neighbourhood Watch had received evidence, however, that underage drinkers were not buying alcohol from local supermarkets. Some of the drink was being brought in from abroad and then sold on to young people.

Mr Thomas said that he agreed with Inspector Ashley that more activities were needed for young people in Pelsall and Rushall. People in Pelsall were unhappy, however, that the Pelsall POP team had now been withdrawn and re-deployed to other areas of the Borough.

PC Stuart Clarke said that unfortunately under-age drinking was a national problem. He said that if residents told them where problems of underage drinking were occurring then they could, in certain circumstances, pursue anti-social behaviour orders. The problem with this, however, was that those subject to Asbos often moved to other areas.

Mr. Hughes suggested that these issues be discussed at the next Task Group meeting. They could then be raised with BRAG. He said that he would be willing to make representations on behalf of WHG about this.

Donna Ricketts said that the detached youth team had had discussions with the Police about this problem. They had been working with young people and trying to encourage them to take up other activities.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) That progress reports on voting facilities in Rushall and problems of underage drinking in Pelsall and Rushall, including the possibility of bylaws being introduced to prohibit drinking on Pelsall Common, be brought to the next meeting.

93/05.

Public Forum

Mrs Doreen Killford, 45 New Street, Shelfield

Mrs Killford asked what plans there were for the site of the former Shelfield Library.

The Chairman said that the library was in the process of being demolished and asbestos was being removed from the building. He understood the work would be completed by the end of the month. He was uncertain what the land would be used for as nothing was finalised at this stage. He said that a recent article in the Express and Star had spoken about the closure of many libraries in the borough but there were no plans to close any of the libraries at the present time as no decisions had been taken on the future of library provision in Walsall.

Mrs Maureen Payton, 177 Wolverhampton Road, Pelsall

Mrs Payton said that there had been some graffiti in Mayou Court, Pelsall for the past 2½ years. She asked whether it could be removed. She also enquired whether the Christmas decorations outside the fish and chip shop in the village could be removed when the Christmas season ended rather than being left up for the remainder of the year. In conclusion, she raised concerns about two very tall display shelves on either side of the counter in Pelsall Post Office. She believed these could be dangerous to elderly people, pushchair users and people suffering from claustrophobia who were queuing for counter assistance.

Parking in Springfields, Rushall

Mrs Ann Rice, a LAP member, said that the residents of Springfields, Rushall had asked her to raise the problem of parking in Springfields. They had asked her whether consideration could be given to removing some of the grass verges there to make parking easier.

Mr. B. Sheasby, 35 Green Lane, Pelsall

Mr. Sheasby raised concerns about parking in Pelsall village centre. He said that some cars were parked there all day which restricted use for shoppers. He asked whether any consideration had been given to introducing car parking restrictions in the village.

The Chairman asked that all the issues raised in public forum be investigated and that the results of these investigations be brought to the next meeting.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 8.45 pm.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....