

**DARLASTON NORTH/BENTLEY/DARLASTON SOUTH
AREA PANEL**

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 at 6.00 pm

at Darlaston Town Hall, Victoria Road, Darlaston

Present:

Councillor Burley (Chair)
Councillor Chambers (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Underhill
Councillor James

In attendance:

Nicola Holmes – Area Manager
Jo Lowndes – Area Partnership Manager
Mike Smith – Regeneration Team
Sandy Urquhart – Regeneration Team

119/15

**Consultation on draft of Site Allocation Document;
Walsall Town Centre Action Plan;
Community Infrastructure Levy**

Mike Smith (Regeneration Team) explained the Site Allocation Document with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation. He indicated that the draft plans were the subject of public consultation with residents (there were over 200 members of the public present at the meeting) expressing their support or concerns over the proposals and these representations would be used in evidence to the Secretary of State when the plans were adopted in 2016. The consultation period ran from 7 September to 2 November 2015.

Mike Smith drew attention to the proposals regarding housing and indicated that it was intended to provide another 1,000 new homes in Darlaston, many of which already had planning permission. The Site Allocation Document also proposed providing 39 travelling pitches in Walsall borough. Two sites in Darlaston had been earmarked; the former multi-purpose centre site and a site in Poplar Avenue. He added that in the past travellers' sites had been provided on the edge of the green belt but the Government now ruled out such sites, requiring them to be close to facilities like schools, doctors' surgeries, dental surgeries etc, so they needed to be closer to town centres.

Mike Smith then drew attention to the importance of Darlaston for jobs and manufacturing. He explained the additional events which would be held to discuss the plans, including a drop-in event in Walsall on 9 October 2015; a meeting in Bentley/Old Hall at the beginning of October and a drop-in session in Darlaston on a date to be arranged.

There then followed a question and answer session where members of the public present raised concerns over the proposals. These included the proposed travellers' sites; the future use of the multi-purpose centre; developments around junction 9; lack of school places in Darlaston; lack of local infrastructure and the need for additional housing for young families in Darlaston.

Mike Smith reported that the multi-purpose centre had been allocated for a housing/travellers' site so at present it was still not clear what its allocation would be.

Members indicated that they would support residents in their concerns over land use in Darlaston and it was

Resolved

That the presentation of the Site Allocation Document, Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy be noted.

The meeting adjourned to allow Members of the public present to leave the meeting at 8.00 pm. The meeting re-convened at 8.20 pm.

120/15 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2015 (Special), and 15 July 2015, copies having previously been circulated to each member of the Panel, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

121/15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

122/15 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items to be considered in private session

123/15 **Funding Report**

The joint report of the Area Manager and Area Partnership Manager was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Nicola Holmes) enlarged upon the report and explained the projects contained therein.

124/15 **Road Safety Awareness in Darlaston**

The Area Manager reported that the aim of the project was to purchase promotional materials and signage for local schools to assist in promoting road safety messages. It was intended to promote a consistent message across the area, working with Police and Council colleagues to have signage outside every school with the same message to drivers.

Resolved

That funding in the sum of £1310 for road safety awareness in Darlaston be approved.

125/15 **Teens & Toddlers Youth Development Programme**

The Area Manager reported that the aim of the project was to reduce teenage pregnancy by raising aspirations and self esteem through an 18 week youth development programme.

Resolved

That funding in the sum of £1270 for the Teens & Toddlers Youth Development Programme be approved.

126/15 **Walsall Tenants and Residents Federation – Community Training Programme**

The Area Manager reported that the aim of the project was to train 2/3 members of local community groups to improve skills and capacity of groups. The training would benefit both the individuals attending and the groups who would have better structures and skills in place. The training included basic food safety, emergency first aid, risk assessment, equality & diversity, safeguarding of vulnerable adults, health & safety and fire awareness.

Resolved

That funding in the sum of £915 for the Walsall Tenants & Residents Federation – Community Training Programme be approved.

127/15 **Darlaston Christmas Festivities – Darlaston Town Centre Partnership**

The Area Manager reported that the aim of the project was to provide a

fun day taking place in December in Darlaston to bring together residents, businesses and community organisations.

Councillor James asked if traders and market stall holders would also be providing contributions to the funding.

Resolved

That funding in the sum of £2095 for the Darlaston Christmas Festivities be approved.

128/15 **Area Manager's Report**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Area Manager (Nicola Holmes) enlarged upon the report for the benefit of the Panel

After a brief discussion it was

Resolved

That the Area Manager's report be noted.

129/15 **Themed Meetings**

Jo Lowndes (Area Partnership Manager) referred to the proposed themes for forthcoming meetings. It was AGREED that Highways Maintenance and Community Safety be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Panel.

130/15 **Dates for future meetings**

The dates for future meetings of the Panel were submitted.

Resolved

That the dates for future meetings be noted.

Termination of meeting

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 8.45 pm

Chair.....

Date.....