

## **NORTH WALSALL AREA PANEL MEETING**

**Tuesday 23 September, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre, Stephenson Square, Beechdale Estate, WS2 7DY**

### **Present**

Councillor K. Phillips (Chair)  
Councillor L.D. Jeavons (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor J. Fitzpatrick  
Councillor S.F. Fitzpatrick  
Councillor C. Jones  
Councillor P. Lane  
Councillor I.C. Robertson

### **Officers**

Michael Greenfield- Area Manager  
Vanessa Croft – Area Support Officer  
John Roseblade – Group Manager (Highways & Environment)  
Matt Underhill - Committee Business & Governance Manager

71/14

### **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

72/14

### **Apologies**

Apologies for the duration of the meeting were received from Councillors T. Jukes and P.E. Smith.

73/14

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

74/14

### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items to be considered in private session.

75/14

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The meeting considered the minutes of the meeting that took place on 24 July 2014.

## **Resolved**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2014, as amended, copies having been previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

76/14

### **Update on Walsall Council's Gully Cleaning Programme**

The presentation was introduced by the Group Manager (Highways & Environment).

It was explained that the Gully Cleaning Programme had been originally presented to a scrutiny panel. Councillor Shires requested that the presentation also be given to the Area Panels as he felt all Members would find the information useful.

It was explained that that the cleaning programme incorporated more than 30,000 gullies across the borough. It was also explained that previously the service operated on a reactive basis working to reports of blocked gullies and cleaning around ten gullies a day. This method was both costly and inefficient, with some gullies not receiving any form of routine clean in over three years. In response a rolling programme has been set up where each gully across the borough is cleaned systematically. This information is then recorded and mapped. It was further explained that the council is using software produced by KaarbonTech. The software enables the collection of gully cleaning data including the total number cleaned, location, silt levels and any problems such as broken lids. The mapping process also enables the identification of those gullies which are susceptible to problems, such as heavy leaf falls and flooding. To combat this the cleaning programme is linked in with the Clean and Green team.

In response to Member queries it was explained that to close a road to clean a gully costs £1,500. It was also explained that the type of challenges faced include poor access on roads with terraced housing with limited off road parking resulting in high numbers of cars parked in the road. It was further explained that the closing of roads is a procedure

undertaken in consultation with the Clean and Green Team. In response to a Member query regarding access to the mapping data it was explained that the software is hosted by KaarbonTech and there are currently issues with having additional licenses. However, officers are working with the company to provide regularly updated mapping guidance which can then be made available to all.

In response to a further Panel query it was explained that gully cleaning on busy routes, such as red routes, is undertaken at quiet times of the week, including early on Sunday mornings. In response to an additional Member query it was explained that the council is responsible for the maintenance of gullies to the point at which they meet the main sewer. A gully in Broad Lane Gardens was also discussed which has collapsed and will probably need to be replaced.

It was explained that the programme is running six days ahead of schedule. It was further explained that the service had a target of cleaning 400 gullies per week and this was being exceeded. In addition, it was agreed that the contact details of the Group Manager (Highways & Environment) would be circulated to Members.

**Resolved**

That the report be noted.

77/14

**Election of Representative to the Local Police and Crime Board**

Councillor Jones was nominated and elected as the Area Panel's representative to the Local Police and Crime Board.

**Resolved**

That Councillor Jones be the Area Panel's representative to the Local Police and Crime Board.

**Area Manager's Report**

The Panel considered the Area Manager's latest report. In response to a Panel query it was explained that the next monthly Open Meeting will take place on 7 October at the Forest Arts Centre. In relation to the Big Local it was explained that the Big Local representative is responsible for any reports and documents regarding the initiative.

In relation to the Goscote Corridor Strategic Partnership Group it was explained that a number of community based initiatives would be taking place over the coming years, based on community engagement. This included a photographic project with local residents in Goscote, projects with local school, together with projects aimed at creating local job opportunities for adults.

In relation to work being undertaken to tackle teenage pregnancy, Members were pleased to note that the number of teenage pregnancies had fallen over the last three years in one local academy. The meeting heard that schools placed those young people identified as at risk in a programme which links them to a toddler and discusses issues such as relationships, STI's and role models. However, while the project was successful there were a number of teenagers who were not identified as at risk but who had become pregnant. The meeting agreed that this reflected the types of challenge faced when trying to tackle this issue.

**Resolved**

That the report be noted.

79/14

### **Funding Report**

The Panel considered the funding applications as set out in the report.

It was explained that the Live Archive and Creative Arts Project was aimed at working with local residents in North Walsall in conjunction with whg, Keepmoat Housing Development and the Goscote Regeneration Team.

**The Panel approved the funding application for £2,500.**

It was explained that the Teens and Toddlers Youth Development Programme was an 18 week evidence based youth development programme that aims to reduce teenage pregnancy by raising aspiration and self esteem.

**The Panel approved the funding application for £1,467.**

It was explained that the Anotherstitch@Mend-It would enable 11 local ladies to begin stitch crafts.

**The Panel approved the funding application for £1,820.**

It was explained that Environmental Projects related to tackling issues such as the removal of fly tipped rubbish.

**The Panel approved the funding application of £2,500.**

80/14

### **Councillor suggestions for future sessions**

The Panel considered possible issues for future meetings:

A Member raised concerns regarding a family who were resident in Green Rock Lane who are causing significant problems for the local community.

The Area Manager agreed to follow up on this matter with Sergeant Nixon and Jo Lowndes.

A Member raised concerns on behalf of residents in Severn Road who had been experiencing problems with ASB and property damage. The Area Manager agreed to further investigate this matter.

Members highlighted a very successful youth project in Birchills and the importance of it continuing to operate.

A Member raised concerns regarding the problems suffered by Mossley residents as a result of loose horses.

A Member raised concerns regarding the Blue Bridge and fly tipping at the railway cutting. The Area Manager agreed to further investigate progress regarding the installation of a camera by Centro.

Members expressed concern regarding a number of derelict pubs. The Area Manager agreed to provide Members with a list of void pubs in North Walsall

The meeting terminated at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman: .....

Date: .....