

Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall - Sheffield Area Partnership

Area Manager Report

Updated January 2016

Ongoing Updates on the Actions for Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall - Sheffield Area Partnership

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The headings of our work streams reflect the four main priorities of the Walsall Plan 2013 - 16, which are as follows:-

- Supporting Businesses to thrive and supporting local people into work
- Improving Health including well being and Independence for older people
- Creating Safe and Sustainable Communities- Reducing levels of crime and providing the right Environment for people to live in
- Improving Safeguarding and Life Chances for Children and Young People

2. Area Plan Development

2.1 The Area Plan for the local Area Partnership has been developed in line with strategic priorities as set out for the Borough through the 'Walsall Plan' and the strategic plans identified by each of the thematic strategic boards. Local intelligence has been adopted to ensure a local delivery plan is adopted that meets the needs, challenges and aspirations of local communities across the partnership area

3. Supporting business to thrive and supporting local people into work

Partners involved – Town Centre Management Team, the Area Partnership, Brownhills Town Centre Partnership, Walsall Housing Group, Local Primary Schools, Community Payback Team, Princes Trust

3.1 **Brownhills Town Centre Partnership** – The Area Partnership has proposed to work in conjunction with the Town Centre Partnership to deliver a focused clean up activity as part of the nationwide 'Clean for the Queen' initiative. We have highlighted the accumulation of waste to the rear of Ravenscourt and along hedges, embankments and around existing waste facilities for businesses along Silver Street and Ferrie Grove in the town centre. This initiative would see a

targeted clean up focused in this area to take it back to a clean condition which would be easier to maintain.

3.2 Christmas Events 2015 – Festive events across the area saw the opportunity for local community groups, charities, fundraisers and businesses to increase their footfall and attend events that have boosted their business reach. Local businesses in Brownhills benefitted from the successful event organised and hosted by the town centre partnership and district centre lead officer for the area.

3.3 The radio link for shops in Pelsall High Street is currently being reviewed and discussed by the local neighbourhood police team and the area partnership to look at the possibility to re-launch this scheme and better connect our retailers following some concerns over the festive period in connection with shop theft and congregating groups outside of premises.

4 Improving Health including well being and independence for older people

Partners involved – Public Health Walsall, Walsall Housing Group, Area Partnership, Social Care and Inclusion, IYPSS, Green spaces, Sports and Leisure, Pelsall Medical Centre, Holland Park Surgery

4.1 Safeguard open space users – As part of a partnership with Walsall Probation we are undertaking a programme of works to safeguard the open space in key locations throughout Pelsall to ensure users of the common land areas are safe from traffic and issues caused by vehicles accessing the common. Uneven surfaces, vehicles driving at speed and parking adjacent to facilities used for leisure activities and improving health locally have been a concern for some time. The installation of physical barriers to restrict car access

4.2 Active Steps, Brownhills and Rushall – Walsall Council active lifestyles team continue to deliver the weekly active steps programme at the Parkview Centre in Brownhills, each Wednesday at 10.30am, costing £2 for participants, and for Rushall based residents there is a session at St Michael and the Archangel Rushall Parish Church, Leigh Road, all sessions are delivered as part of the NHS Walsall Falls pathway provision. Active Steps is a specialised exercise programme for people who have previously experienced a fall or are worried or at risk of falling. Sessions provide people with the opportunity to take part in low impact supervised activity sessions in a safe and enjoyable environment.

4.3 Walsall Walk On - A newly developing walk for community members who are suffering with / have suffered with cancer is being established in the area partnership, more details of this will be available shortly. Ongoing, the popular Walsall Walk on activity continues to take place across the borough, with two specific to this area partnership. A free weekly guided walk in Rushall sees attendees meet each Friday at 1.45pm for a 2pm start at Park Lime Pits, lasting a duration of approximately 45 minutes. A monthly walk also takes place at Pelsall North Common on the third Saturday of each month, meeting at the Pelsall North Common Nature Reserve car park in Wood Lane at 10.15am for a

10.30am start. This lasts for approximately 2 hours. All walks are free and are suitable for all levels of fitness and ability.

- 4.4 Brownhills Activity Centre** – Activity continues through a busy timetable of activity sessions and groups utilising the space within the centre, delivering activities for a range of ages and interests such as craft sessions, canoe skills, yogalates, nursery provision, indoor bowling, to mention a few. This is in addition to the partnership working with Manor Farm CA who are delivering vocational courses from this venue.

Work continues on the small arts venue, which is creating excitement amongst the local community and provides opportunity for live performances and shows amongst other things for the surrounding community. A recent grant claim sees the reimbursement for the installation of windows through the area partnership monies allocated in support of this initiative.

- 4.5 Manor Farm Community Association** –The association continues to see delivery of initiatives for all ages, ranging from nursery provision to sports facilities, luncheon clubs and the increasingly popular silver scheme amongst many other things available on site.

- 4.6 Pelsall Community Centre** – Currently going through a series of internal developments the centre has seen improved accessibility for users of the centre, creating a welcoming and safe entrance to the venue with the replacement of the flooring in the foyer. Further through into the venue the committee and providing a new and fresh centre to keep up with the needs of users and potential users of the centre. Exercise classes, healthy lifestyle sessions, dances, social events, meetings and a variety of leisure pursuits are carried out here.

5. Creating Safe and Sustainable Communities

Partners Involved - Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, IYPSS, Police, Area Partnership, Walsall Housing Group, Trading Standards, Clean and Green services, Countryside Services, Friends of Parks groups, local schools, Fire Service, Prince's Trust

- 5.1 CCTV for Brownhills, Rushall-Shelfield and Pelsall** - We currently have access to two cameras that can be deployed in the area:

Camera ;1currently located in Vicarage Road, Pelsall.

Camera 2; Out of service

In addition to our Area Partnership cameras we continue to work in partnership through the confidential tasking and coordination group meetings to utilise CCTV opportunities across partner organisations where need is identified and relevant to their areas of work.

The camera located in Vicarage Road has seen recent requests for downloaded footage from police colleagues who are in the process of reviewing the information in relation to recent incidents taking place on top of the rail bridge.

Requests for cameras in other locations are considered based on intelligence and data, the community are encouraged contact relevant departments where concerns require reporting;

Private residents can report matters directly to the Anti Social Behaviour Unit by any method below;

Telephone (01922) 648291

Email asb@walsall.gov.uk

It may also be possible that one of the following council departments can assist in the first instance:

- Walsall MBC 01922 650000
- Environmental Health 01922 652223
- Clean & Green 01922 653344
- Trading Standards 01922 652210
- Walsall Mediation 01922 637713

5.2 Fordbrook Bridge, Pelsall – The final design layout for this project have been developed by Sustrans and Community Safety, initial conversations with planning having taken place to ascertain the requirements for a submission and we are now at the point of instructing a set of drawings to be completed and a design and access statement completed to support the planning application submission. Local media have been increasingly interested in this location following a further incident over the Christmas period. Police continue to include this location in their daily patrol strategy and the Area Partnership Camera remains in situ for the short term.

5.3 Rushall Rail track, Station Road – Comprehensive work has been undertaken to address the issue of mini moto use in this location. Crossing over into North Walsall the two area partnership areas have conducted a joint site visit to look at the layout and possible re-design of entrance and exit points to this location to engineer out the opportunity to access the site with mini moto type vehicles. There are completed designs now in place, with final pieces of the jigsaw coming together to ensure delivery is possible.

5.4 Neighbourhood reports of crime and ASB – Residents have raised issues of concern in connection with a number of areas as we are now into the darker nights. Residents, the community and visitors to the area are advised to report crime to police through the 101 facility if the situation is not an emergency, using 999 for urgent calls. Following a series of shed break ins throughout January in Rushall – Sheffield and Pelsall we have worked closely with the police team to provide limited community safety items, fitted and supplied to victims of crime and those at risk of

crime, for free. A recent joint press release went out to inform residents of recent activity and to encourage them to be more alert with outbuilding security.

5.5 Fly-tipping enforcement – Reports continue to come in to the council regarding unacceptable fly-tipping activity at various locations around the partnership area. Enforcement from environmental health continues. Action is currently progressing in relation to two key areas of concern, further updates will be provided when available. We worked with a variety of partners to successfully provide solutions for business owners in Brownhills who were experiencing large costs for removal of flytipped material at their premises within a business park.

6 Improving safeguarding and learning chances for children and young people

6.1 Youth sport activity, Pelsall– Increased engagement with young people has been taking place locally with a massive interest in junior football being identified and progressed through the development lead at Pelsall Villa Colts. The youth activity within the cricket club continues with junior training and winter nets ongoing throughout the closed season.

6.2 School traffic flow / parking – Concerns were raised at several primary schools regarding the worsening parking issues and traffic flow problems experienced at pinch points throughout the day. The risk this places for young people accessing schools was a key concern, with many examples of reckless parking and frequent use of areas restrictively marked at key times. The enforcement vehicle has been seen in and around these locations over several weeks with local primary schools improving communication with parents to raise the issue with the parking and drop off activity which is posing a threat to the safety of the pupils and community. A meeting with the AStars lead is imminent to further support this. To further add to this activity we are working with the AStars programme to provide promotional material to support a high profile campaign around a 5 minute walk zone around schools.

Cross cutting;

7.1 Please see the attached Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall – Shelfield Area Partnership, December 2015, Policing and Crime Board report for a partnership overview and summary at Appendix 1.

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LOCAL POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

December 2015 Quarterly Update;

Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall – Sheffield Area Partnership

Purpose of Report

To update the Board on crime and community safety activity in Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall-
Sheffield Area Partnership.

1. Reduce the vulnerability of children and protect them from harm

- 1.1 A recent performing arts project at Sheffield Ormiston Academy has explored the issue of cyber bullying, to raise awareness and encourage young people to stay safe online and feel confident to seek support where issues occur. This flagship production has been developed, performed and produced by the academy students with the intention of rolling out the final DVD to peers across the borough.

2. Reduce the vulnerability of adults and protect them from harm.

- 2.1 Through Area Partnership tasking meetings we have seen an increase in mental health issues across the footprint, resulting in greater demand for support across our partner services. We are mindful that duplication of support and contact is an issue and have engaged with the vulnerability form lead to provide an overview and information session where procedure for referral will be presented and advice provided.
- 2.2 We are currently financially supporting a variety of projects supporting vulnerable adults, encouraging involvement in community activities to reduce isolation and maintain positive activities. Within Rushall for example we have provided funding to support a disabled group to continue with physical activities which improve quality of life through low impact sporting opportunities and have also linked in with the Silver Scheme at Manor Farm Community Association to bring on board bespoke activity to improve health and wellbeing.

3. Reduce crime levels in the borough, focusing particularly on those areas that have historically experienced higher levels (Priority Areas)

- 3.1 Total recorded crime for the Area Partnership is at comparable levels when compared to November 2014. There is no significant change overall with a total of 147 In November 2014 compared to 153 for November 2015.

3.2 In relation to Burglary dwellings for November 2014 for the Area Partnership we saw 6 offences with a 50% reduction for November 2015 where only 3 offences of this type were recorded. We have contributed to the reassurance of local residents through the approval of funding to provide prevention measures in the form of window alarms, prikka strips for perimeter fencing and selecta DNA kits for property marking.

3.3 Our communities have recently been concerned with vehicle crime, we have seen a reduction in this area compared to last year with offences in November 2014 reducing from 21 to a total of 17 In November 2015.

4. Reduce the level of anti-social behaviour and increase the levels of satisfaction with how ASB is dealt with in the borough

4.1 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) forms a key part of our area tasking processes, within the monthly reporting documents we review recently reported and repeat incidents across our partner organisations and look to facilitate support collectively where one partner alone cannot resolve the issue. We currently have several projects underway, including;

- Designing a comprehensive set of physical measures to reduce mini-moto activity along the former rail line in Rushall, in conjunction with the North Walsall Area Partnership to ensure we are not displacing the issue to the neighbouring area.
- Exploring the 2014 changes in ASB powers to look at a public space protection order (PSPO) for a section of highway currently experiencing a variety of issues including unauthorised encampments, drug taking, flytipping, noise nuisance in the Brownhills ward.
- Information and advice packs combining partner and voluntary & Community sector support sent to targeted areas within Pelsall ward where residents were feeling vulnerable from the fear of ASB. Providing key contact information and tools to reduce vulnerability from this form of incident has anecdotally improved the satisfaction in the way in which ASB is dealt with locally.

4.2 Looking at police ASB across the whole Area Partnership incorporating all three wards, we have seen a reduction over all with the following breakdown over the summer / autumn period in comparison to the same period in 2014;

- July 2014 to July 2015 saw a reduction of 26%. (July 2014, 72 calls compared to July 2015, 53 calls.)
- Sept 2015 compared to Sept 2014 showed that this year we decreased the number of calls regarding ASB by 45 %. (Sept 2014, 89 calls. Sept 2015, 49 calls).

- Oct 2015 compared to Oct 2014 shows a reduction of 33%. (Oct 2014, 61 calls. Oct 2015 41 calls).
- Both August 2015 and November 2015 saw a small increase in ASB incidents, August 2015 had 2 more calls compared to last year, while November 2015 had 8 more calls this year, although those months had an increase it was not massively significant.

4.3 In relation to identifying key hotspots for ASB on a seasonal basis, we have supported community venues to review their procedures and improve their connections with enforcement and diversionary services to reduce the opportunity for ASB to take place.

5. Ensure support is provided to divert offenders from crime (includes adults and young people)

5.1 Offender management is a field that the West Midlands Police has invested heavily in over the past few years, offenders rated high are managed solely by the Offender Management Unit (OMU), each offender has a tailored management plan and a specially assigned officer with ownership. Some Medium and Low offenders are also managed by the OMU if they fall within certain criteria.

5.2 Neighbourhood police teams do still manage some Low and Medium offenders, from an Area Partnership perspective we connect with police to focus our work on area based issues, where this presents us with a cross over with offenders we look to contribute collectively to support police with their work. This has recently included injunctions to restrict the impact on our communities.

5.3 In an area experiencing multiple problems we have worked with Midland Heart housing association to develop an action plan to reduce the impact offenders have upon this community, interventions included positive engagement with the fire service through home fire safety checks, security improvements, challenging the set up of illegal cannabis grows, and taking positive steps through the improvement of CCTV services in this location. The risk of losing accommodation has impacted upon the offenders operating in this area and a reduction in the frequency of issues has been seen.

6. Reduce harm caused by drugs and alcohol misuse

6.1 Liaising with licensing colleagues has seen a variety of test purchases undertaken at licensed premises within the area, particularly within our identified hot grid area where youth ASB has been seen periodically. From test purchase exercises undertaken at our licensed premises, all were founds operating within the rules for the sale of alcohol and tobacco products at the time of testing.

6.2 An increase in legal high paraphernalia was identified in specific locations, namely small 'laughing gas' canisters. Where this debris was found in large quantities we connected key partners to undertake joint patrols to engage with suspected / potential users of these substances to improve their knowledge around the impact and risk

related with this activity, and to attempt to divert them into positive activities available that are of interest to them.

- 6.3 Working with a local community venue we have supported the removal of drugs paraphernalia through connecting relevant service providers, in addition to this through liaising with pharmacies to ensure the relevant safe disposal information is reiterated to intravenous drug users utilising the needle exchange service we haven't seen this issue re-emerge.

7. Understand, engage and work with our communities and voluntary sectors to enhance community cohesion

7.1 Several exciting projects in relation to developing communities to create greater cohesion have taken place in Brownhills. These include;

- A local explorer scout group for 14 – 18 year olds formed in Brownhills following an identified need to provide engagement, personal development, positive activity. This contributes to wider community cohesion around the ASB issues experienced in the town centre and surrounding areas.
- Community contributions through the local Duke of Edinburgh scheme see the local church grounds in Brownhills receiving the offer of ongoing improvements to the natural area through a gardening project.
- A local community venue has been jointly funded by the area partnership and Arts Council, to bring a new performance arts venue to the area.

8. Increase the opportunities for local people to have a greater role in local decision making

8.1 As a formal committee of the council, the area panel received a report to develop the co-optee arrangements currently in place. The community attendance at our area panel is already positive, the suggestion of a public discussion session at the start of the meeting was welcomed and members reflected on the increased opportunity this would bring to enable to community to become more involved at a local level.

8.2 As part of the future development of Walsall Council highways maintenance plan, the area panel welcomed a discussion around improving local opportunity to influence decision making for maintenance investment in their locality. Highways maintenance schemes for 2015-16 are currently scored against engineering and road safety criteria, we welcomed an additional allocation of points to the area panel to contribute to the scoring system for 2016-17. As the current area panel welcomes community involvement following the main meeting, this work was welcomed by all in attendance.

9. Ensure the housing needs of local communities are met

9.1 A large proportion of housing within the area partnership is owner occupied with pockets of social housing and private rental throughout all communities. As an area partnership we work with private owners and social / private landlords to address concerns that are impacting upon the wider community. A recent intervention saw the installation of an improved ventilation system to reduce the odours created in a block of flats, which resulted in the improved quality of life for all residents.

9.2 As part of the open partner meeting and area panel meeting we received a presentation from the council's planning department, detailing the proposed Site Allocation Document and Community Infrastructure Levy. The community and partners we engaged in consultation on the following items;

- Site Allocation Development Plan Document (SAD) to allocate sites for development for housing (general housing and permanent gypsy and traveller sites), employment and other uses across the borough (except for town and district centres)
- A Charging Schedule, to support the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regime to levy charges on certain types of development, replacing a large part of the regime of s106 obligations.

10. Sustain and improve the natural and urban environment

10.1 Within the partnership we are fortunate to have a large proportion of green spaces. Extensive common land, recreational space and outdoor leisure facilities are important to our communities and through a variety of channels we have supported the improvement of our open space. Activity has included; Litter picks, improved signage around dog fouling and littering, installation of outdoor gym equipment and tree planting.

10.2 A local community initiative in both Rushall – Shelfield and Pelsall wards has seen the take over of ownership for village planters. Blooms for the summer period were planted by a collective of local people from community groups, local schools, elected members and resident volunteers to improve the natural environment of the village centres whilst developing cohesion with a variety of different groups and ages. The sustainability of the initiative will come from the local groups growing flowers and plants for future seasons.

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