

ST. MATTHEWS AND BIRCHILLS/LEAMORE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Monday, 23rd January, 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

At the Butts School, Butts Road, Walsall

Present

Councillor Tim Oliver (Chairman)
Councillor Joan Barton
Mr. Malcolm Barton
Mr. Hilson Carter
Mr. Terry Edis
Mrs. Jane Evans
Inspector Andy Gilbert
Councillor Haqnawaz Khan
Councillor Barbara McCracken
Mr. Aftab Nawaz
Mrs. Elaine Perrins
Rev. David Sims

In Attendance

Mr. Tim German, Education Walsall
Mr. Glen Buglass } Community
Mr. Bruno Edwards } Arts
Mr. Ross Bell, WBSP

87/06

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. Martin Cain, Mr. Chris Jones and Councillor Mohammed Arif.

88/06

Minutes

Resolved

That, subject to the inclusion of Mr. Hilson Carter in the list of apologies for the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October, 2005, a copy having previously been circulated to each Member of the Partnership, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

89/06 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

90/06 **Petitions**

There were no petitions submitted.

91/06 **Public Forum**

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Partnership.

92/06 **Feedback on issues raised by way of Public Forum/Petitions**

(a) Traffic problems/traffic calming measures - Blue Coat School

Mrs. Woodcock, who was to have addressed the Partnership on this issue, was unable to attend, in view of which, Councillor Mrs. Barbara McCracken gave the presentation.

Councillor Mrs. McCracken informed Members of problems being encountered by pupils of the Blue Coat School in Birmingham Street. The school was a split site which resulted in pupils needing to cross the road on a regular basis during the day. A meeting had been held with the Head Teacher and Governors several weeks ago and an allocation of £15,000 had been included in the draft budget for road improvements in that area, which was to be welcomed.

Jag Raan, Principal Engineer, Transportation Services, advised Members that the budget had not yet been approved but the allocation was also dependent on the road improvements being included in a cycle route scheme.

Members were of the view that this scheme needed to be expedited to ensure the safety of the pupils.

Resolved

That Cabinet be recommended to consider the safety issues in relation to the provision of additional traffic calming measures in Birmingham Street in the vicinity of the Blue Coat School and to allocate the necessary funds to implement this project as a matter of urgency.

(b) Outstanding Issues

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That with regard to the Mellish Road Church, the availability of the condition survey report be ascertained and that the Butts Action Group be advised accordingly;
- (c) That with regard to the re-opening of Green Lane, officers be requested to ascertain why the stretch of Green Lane between Birch Street and the 4 x 4 sales lot has not been tarmaced;
- (d) That the LNP supports objections made by WATMOS and the tenants of Burrowes Street in relation to a proposal to change the use of the former factory site in Birch Street to a car auction site and that the relevant section be advised accordingly.

93/06

Gateways Project

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Bruno Edwards and Glen Buglass, from Community Arts, were in attendance at the meeting and gave a brief presentation on the project.

A discussion on the wording, history and pictures to be displayed on the gateway signs took place and it was,

Resolved

- (a) That the gateway signs should display the words "Welcome to Walsall";
- (b) That in addition to those already suggested by the Community Arts Team, pictures on the gateway signs should also depict Walsall market, the canal system and Walsall Illuminations;
- (c) That the written history shown on the gateway signs should also include reference to Walsall Illuminations, Sister Dora and the multi-cultural make up of Walsall;
- (d) That the LNP considers that the size of the picture panels on the gateway signs is too small and that officers be requested to discuss this issue with the artist commissioned to do the work.

94/06

Children's Centres and extended schools

Tim German, from Education Walsall, was in attendance at the meeting to give the presentation. He briefly outlined the concept of children's centres and the locations of existing and proposed children's centres and also outlined the Government's Plan in relation to extended schools and how these would be introduced into the Borough of Walsall.

There followed a period of discussion, during which, Members expressed the view that these were very effective in other parts of the country. Concern, however, was expressed that some children in multi-cultural areas who were not achieving, may not get access to this facility because some of the families might be priced out of the equation.

Resolved

That the presentation be noted.

95/06

Partnership Plan and feedback from Task Groups meetings

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (a) That the report be received and that LNP Members continued to attend workshop meetings;
- (b) That individual LNP Members continue to encourage wider participation from community members within the Task Groups;
- (c) That the dates of future Task Group meetings and venues be noted as follows:-

13th February, 2006 - Croft Community Centre
15th March ,2006 - Walsall Leather Museum
12th April, 2006 - Walsall Leather Museum

96/06

Funding priorities for action

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (a) That progress to date be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that each project will be formally assessed by the LNP Project Team to ensure they meet all of the agreed criteria, and that each Project will be passed to the relevant Council officer who will liaise with the Project Champion when required;
- (c) That with regard to specific individual projects:-
 - (i) Social Cohesion Programme

It be noted that the next project will be organised next week involving the Croft, Butts, St. Patricks and Beechdale Schools and that Elaine Perrins will be reporting to a future meeting on this;
 - (ii) Rat on a rat campaign

It be noted that officers had spoken to the WBSP regarding a similar programme to be implemented by them and were awaiting a reply;
 - (iii) Birchills playing fields
 - (a) It be clarified that the LNP had recommended no allocation and that their disgust at the continued state of the land should be registered with the appropriate Service Manager;
 - (b) It be also noted that Members felt that as the land was still part of the school playing field, it should be looked at strategically;
 - (iv) Beechdale Bayou Project

It be noted that further feedback from the relevant Service Area is awaited;
 - (v) Alleyways/Gating

It be noted that there are 8 small alleyways in the Croft Street and Bath Road areas excluded from the scheme already approved and that an allocation of a further £8,000 to accommodate these schemes be recommended;

- (d) That it be noted that any funds unspent during the current Municipal Year from this allocation will be carried forward to the next Municipal Year.

97/06

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

Ross Bell, from the WBSP, was in attendance to give a presentation on this issue.

Members were advised that with effect from 1st April, Walsall Council would be appointed as an LAA Borough. There would be four themes:-

- Children and young people
- Healthier communities and older people
- Safer communities
- Economic development and enterprise

Each group would have a pillar executive who would take the views and opinions of the main pillar groups on board. The LNP would have an important input to these. Members were informed that there was a need to work out what the LNP wanted to achieve/deliver locally and to commission that work and, for this purpose, there were various funding streams available.

Mr. Bell informed Members that the role of LNPs would essentially be to develop a neighbourhood agreement for their areas that captured local pledges and actions to create cleaner, greener, safer and stronger communities, to secure agreement from agencies to deliver actions which would result in improved public services and identify those LAA outcomes which could be delivered in individual LNP areas and the level of impact that could be achieved.

Members were advised that LNPs would be acknowledged as part of the pillar group structure of the WBSP and would be informal partnerships and not formal Council Committees. LNPs would deliver action by changing mainstream through negotiations with individual service providers and by introducing innovation.

There followed a period of discussion, during which, Members expressed the view that there needed to be some form of monitoring of how the targets set by the WBSP would impact on the LNP community. In reply, Mr. Bell indicated that this initiative was not without risk in that the initiative was trying to empower communities to influence budgets in a way not done before. He added that the Government wanted Local Authorities to make local services more responsive to local needs and there was a need for each LNP to identify how they wanted the LAA to work at a local community level.

Resolved

That the presentation be noted.

98/06 **Improving security in neighbourhoods - Programme**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the report be noted.

99/06 **Date and venue for next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the LNP would be held on Wednesday, 19th April, 2006 at the Community Room, Burrowes Street at 6.00 p.m.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 8.06 p.m.

Chairman

Date