

NORTH WALSALL AREA PANEL MEETING

Tuesday, 15 July, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

**Burrowes Street TMO, Tenant Management Resource Centre,
Burrowes Street, Walsall, WS2 8NN**

Present

Councillor L. Jeavons
Councillor I. Robertson
Councillor K. Phillips

Officers

Michael Greenfield- Area Manager
Vanessa Croft- Area Support Officer
Matt Underhill - Committee Business & Governance Manager

52/14

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair explained that the meeting was inquorate. It would therefore not be possible to formally approve any agenda items. Introductions were also made.

53/14

Apologies

Apologies for the duration of the meeting were received from Councillors Young, Harrison, J. Fitzpatrick, S. Fitzpatrick, T. Jukes and P. Lane

54/14

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

55/14

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

There were no items to be considered in private session.

56/14

Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chair explained that approval of the minutes would be deferred until the next quorate meeting.

57/14

Update on Walsall Council's Gully Cleaning Programme

The Chair explained that this item would be deferred until a subsequent Panel meeting.

58/14

Area Community Plan Refresh 2014-15

The Chair explained that this item would be considered earlier than in the published agenda. The Area Manager explained that the refresh was in association with 'The Walsall Plan 2013 – 16'. The North Walsall Area Community Plan Refresh highlighted the range of activity undertaken in the area in support of The Walsall Plan's four strategic priorities.

The Chair explained that approval of the Area Community Plan Refresh 2014-15 would have to be deferred until the next quorate meeting.

59/14

Area Manager's Report

In relation to Safer Walsall: Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities the Area Manager introduced Inspector Bridges who had recently become responsible for policing in the North Walsall area. It was explained that the resources of partners were focused on key hotspots in tackling anti-social behaviour (asb).

It was explained that Beechdale Community Housing (BCH) has been working with the Area Partnership to address parenting and asb issues with young people on the estate. This has included the identification of parenting programmes that could be delivered locally. It was also explained that the Beechdale ASB Group met in early April where a number of challenges were identified, including young people climbing on private property in Stephenson Square and general nuisance. The police have identified a small cohort of individuals who appear to be leaders in the group. The actions to address this include engaging with Mirus Academy, Community Champions and the Integrated Young Persons Support Services (IYPSS). IYPSS aim to attend areas where incidents have been reported with a view to signposting young people (aged 13-19) to Positive Activities in their local area.

It was explained that the monthly North Walsall Open Meetings are an opportunity for partner agencies to share ideas, information and co-ordinate strategy based on the Walsall Plan and Members were welcome

to attend. The Partners include the police, IYPSS, local housing associations, Walsall College, community associations and Community Payback. The Area Manager agreed to send Members the dates and locations of future Open Meetings, as well as provide Members with the notes of meetings.

It was explained that local partner organisations have visited shops in Stephenson Square to discuss asb issues. The issue of illegal sales of cigarettes and alcohol was also discussed with local business owners and Trading Standards posters distributed to promote legal sales. This activity forms part of work to promote the Proof of Age Card.

It was also explained that local partners have been working with BCH to address traffic speeds along Stephenson Avenue and Cavendish Road. A traffic speed survey was undertaken and as a result it has been recommended that traffic calming measures, including the CCT 'Reduce Speed Sign' are used along these roads.

It was explained that the Big Local has been developing across Mossley. It is intended to submit the Big Local Plan to the National Big Local by September 2014. The key message emerging through this process was the importance of all partners and the local community "thinking big" in terms of the submission proposals.

In relation to crime statistics for North Walsall from 2012/13 to 2013/14 the Area Manger and Inspector Bridges, now responsible for the North Walsall area, both highlighted the fall in police reported asb. In response to a Panel query Inspector Bridges explained that there was no specific asb reduction target. It was also explained that work had been undertaken to open up channels of communication in order to encourage more people to report incidents of asb and other crimes. Panel Members highlighted the perception they were aware of amongst many local residents that there was no value in reporting criminal activity to the police as often little follow up action was taken. In response to further Panel queries Inspector Bridges explained that with reduced funding it was not possible for the

police to deliver foot patrols to the extent that they had historically. The Area Manager explained that the distribution of the domehawk cameras, deployed to tackle criminal activity, was determined at the monthly Confidential Partnership Tasking and Co-ordination Meeting.

It was also explained that the verge parking work had been completed at Lancaster Place. Local residents have commented that it has improved traffic flows.

It was explained that Green Lane Baptist Mend-it Project took place earlier in the summer showcasing various work. The Area Manager highlighted the Near Neighbours grant programme. This scheme offers small grants between £250 and £5,000 providing funding for local groups and organisations who are working to bring together neighbours to develop relationships across diverse faiths and ethnicities in order to improve their communities.

In relation to issue of fly-tipping under the Blue Bridge in Coalpool it was explained that the bridge was owned by Centro who also operate the CCTV.

In relation to Children and Young People: Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people it was explained that IYPSS has had success in engaging with young people. This includes through a range of activity during Easter, with a summer programme of activities having also been developed in conjunction with local community partnerships.

It was explained that the Challenge Network (a Citizenship Scheme) based at Forest Arts continued to work with local schools in the engagement of young people.

In relation to Business and Jobs: Supporting business to thrive and supporting local people into work it was explained that Steps to Work are seeing over 100 first time users per month. Some of the problems that are

being identified include that individuals have a low level of skills and they have difficulty in completing online application forms. As a result a Job Club has been established to assist individuals in using the internet as part of their jobs search. In addition, the Regeneration team have produced a number of documents to inform individuals about how to 'get into work'.

It was explained that whg has a range of funding streams that will need to be allocated by December 2014. Groups can apply for up to £2,500 and the Area Partnerships and whg are actively seeking applicants for these funds.

It was explained that local businesses based on business parks are planning to undertake some environmental work in the area. Meetings are being planned to ensure any works coordinates with local plans of the council.

In relation to Health and Well-Being: Improving health, including well-being and independence for older people it was explained that Beechdale Health Centre Practice did an Easter egg hunt as part of their Health Information Open Day in April.

It was also explained that the Joint Commissioning Unit (JCU) are seeing views on the Carers Strategy.

In addition it was explained that the New Physical Timetable, provided by the Lifestyle Team, for July 2014 is available. All sessions are free if you live or work in Walsall. Elsewhere, Parks Teams are putting on a variety of fun day events, including a Birchills Fun day and Blakenhall-on-the-Beach Community Summer-Fun-Day. While there will also be a range of events at the Stan Ball Centre.

The Panel Members present noted the update.

The item was introduced by Dr A. Rischie, GP and Clinical lead for urgent care at Walsall CCG and Roxanna Modiri, also Walsall CCG. Dr Rischie explained that the current system of urgent care in Walsall was patchy. For example, some will receive care via A&E at Manor Hospital, while others will receive treatment via their GPs. The CCG is inviting consultation responses on its plans for the future urgent and emergency care system in the next 3-5 years which includes bringing some of the urgent care services together in one building, whilst improving the wider urgent care system. The other element of the consultation relates to the immediate changes needed for the Walsall Walk-in Centre because the building will not be available from April 2015. In this respect the consultation is seeking views on three proposals: 1. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre to a new town centre location; 2. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre to a new out of town location in the north of Walsall; and 3. Move Walsall Walk-in Health Centre and merge it with the existing Emergency and Urgent Care Centre based at Manor Hospital. It was also explained that the consultation would close on 14 August.

A Panel Member expressed concern that many local people are not aware of the different urgent care services available. He also expressed concern that the consultation option to merge with services based at the hospital would create access difficulties, including in relation to parking. Dr Rischie expressed the view that where possible individuals will seek help in the first instance from their GP. However, that option is not available outside a practice's operating hours. A further Panel Member recalled his experience of local NHS out-of-hours services. This included being directed to the Walk-in service via NHS Direct. He noted that the benefit of moving all Walk-in services to the Manor Hospital site would be that all resources could be focused in one place. However, he stressed it would be important for the Walk-in service to be placed at the front of the hospital site. The Chair explained that she had previously used the Walk-in centre within the town centre and felt that it was the ideal place for the service to be placed. The Chair expressed concern regarding the possibility of the service being based at the Manor Hospital given the access and parking issues.

Members noted that the low number of responses was worrying. Officers explained that consultation packs and promotional material had been placed at both dental and GP practices. In addition, a range of consultation methods including events had also been carried out. Members were encouraged to complete the survey either online or through completing the form at the back of the consultation document. Officers confirmed that it is very important for them to receive as many comments as possible.

The Panel Members present noted the presentation.

60/14 **Funding Report**

The Chair explained that consideration of the Funding report would have to be deferred until the next quorate meeting.

The meeting terminated at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: