

SMITHILLS AREA FORUM

MEETING, 12th March 2009

Present, 38 members of the public attended the meeting.

Councillor Hayes (Chair)	- Smithills Ward
Councillor Swarbrick	- Smithills Ward
Councillor Silvester	- Smithills Ward

Also in attendance

Idris Jeewa	- Area Co-ordinator
Nicole Buhagiar	- Area Working Support Officer
Nick Maher	- Head of Policy, Improvement and Area Working
John Kelly	- Environmental Services
John Dean	- NHS Bolton
Beverley Andrew	- Royal Bolton Hospital
Joanne Meany	- NHS Bolton
P.C. Harry Rigby	Greater Manchester Police
P.C.S.O. Bhav Makwana	- Greater Manchester Police
P.C.S.O. Philip Gough	Greater Manchester Police

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Sue Strange and Andrew Bolan, Bolton Council Officers.

Councillor Hayes in the Chair.

24. INTRODUCTION

Councillor Hayes welcomed everyone and introduced Councillor Swarbrick and Councillor Silvester. He also introduced Idris Jeewa, Area Co-ordinator, all other Council Officers and police officers present.

25. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2008 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

26. THE BIG BOLTON HEALTH DEBATE

Doctor John Dean, Medical Director, NHS Bolton, gave a presentation on the Big Bolton Health Debate and the changes that were taking place in Bolton regarding health centres and facilities. He explained the “Triple Aim” of NHS Bolton that would lead to better health:

- Best Care
- Patient Centred Care
- Value For Money

Mr. Dean explained that they had “Four Big Ideas” which would lead to improving the health of Bolton residents:

- Increasing life expectancy
- Increasing the life expectancy in certain areas of Bolton as some communities lived 15 years less than others
- Providing support and services that were easily accessible and, increasing the availability of early screening
- Encouraging residents to improve their own health

The Medical Director, NHS Bolton, informed the Forum that NHS Bolton were focusing on certain priorities which would help to achieve the “Four Big Ideas”.

Health Outcomes for More Years of Life

- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease (Stroke and Heart Attack)
- Diabetes
- Alcohol Related Disorders
- Respiratory Disease

Health Outcomes for Better Quality of Life

- Mental Health

Health Outcomes for the Next Generation

- Maternal and Child Health

Mr. Dean explained that they needed to engage with the people of Bolton to find out what they wanted and needed. He invited Forum attendees to fill in a questionnaire concerning the future of the health service in Bolton. He also explained that Bolton residents already felt their health was improving and premature deaths from heart attacks, cancers and strokes were preventable. He informed the Forum that NHS Bolton knew the health conditions that caused premature deaths in Bolton and the Big Bolton Health Check was already identifying people in the community at higher risk. The health centre plans would deliver new buildings for new services and, combined with the community improving their own health, their aims were achievable. Mr. Dean informed the Forum that the life expectancy on average in the Smithills area was 78 years old but only a few miles away this could be as low as 67 years old or as high as 82 years old.

Following the presentation, Mr. Dean invited Forum attendees to ask him any questions regarding the changes. A number of questions and comments were put forward:

- General Practitioners were already performing to a high standard. With this in mind, was there a need for new health centres to be built?
- What would NHS Bolton be doing to provide sufficient dental care and what would be happening regarding water fluoridisation?
- Would a consultation be taking place regarding fluoridisation and where would this be?
- How would a mass dosage of fluoridisation be administered as fluoride drops had been known to cause lasting damage to teeth?

Q4

- Why was the chlorine in water stronger on certain days in certain areas?
- When patients were discharged why was it the case that on numerous occasions they were moved to a smaller room for several hours as beds were in short supply?
- Lead piping was still being used in Council Houses - could this be dangerous?
- What was the situation regarding mixed wards as this was still an issue for some patients?
- Why were mixed wards in operation?
- The number of health visitors had decreased – were there any plans to rectify this?

Resolved – That the report be noted and the questions that have not been answered at the meeting be directed to the appropriate Council Department or external agency.

27. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES DISCUSSION

Councillor Hayes introduced this item on the agenda and explained that as Andrew Bolan, Environmental Education and Enforcement Officer, was unable to attend the meeting, this item would be presented at a future Forum meeting. Some questions and comments regarding environmental issues were raised by Forum attendees:

- Would it not be more beneficial financially to install more bins for animal waste as opposed to installing CCTV cameras?
- Why were there no dog fouling bins on Church Road?

Resolved – That the report be noted and the questions that have not been answered at the meeting be directed to the appropriate Council Department or external agency.

28. UPDATE ON THE BIG ISSUES AND ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Idris Jeewa, Area Co-ordinator, gave a presentation regarding the progression of the Big Issues in the Smithills area. He explained that the first Forum of the financial year involved

attendees providing ideas regarding the issues they felt needed to be addressed in the Smithills area. Mr. Jeewa explained that as we were nearing the end of the municipal year, it was important to provide feedback as to how the Big Issues for the Smithills area had progressed. He informed the Forum that there were four Big Issues for the Smithills area:

- Parking and access problems for residents on Kenilworth Square
- A traffic scheme for Smithills Dean Road
- The Harrow Road garages were in a state of disrepair and had been subject to vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- Smithills needed to improve access to activities for children and young people

The Area Co-ordinator explained that a meeting had taken place with the Harrow Road garage owners, the police and planning and enforcement officers. The owners had now appointed a solicitor to look into the future of the land.

Regarding Smithills Dean Road, the proposed improvements would be advertised and any feedback from residents would be welcomed.

Mr. Jeewa explained that Smithills Dean Road was a priority for the Forum, and residents would continue to receive updates. Also, the gaps had been identified regarding provision for children and young people, and Councillors were working with Children's Services to rectify this.

Resolved – That the report be noted

29. BUDGET UPDATE

Idris Jeewa, Area Co-ordinator, then gave a presentation on the subject of budgets and grants available to the Smithills area. He explained that there were four areas to consider:

- Highways Maintenance Budget - £10,245
- Area Forum Budget - £25,000

Q6

- Area Based Grant - £8,180
- Voluntary Sector Grant - £2000

Mr. Jeewa informed the Forum that the following decisions had been made regarding the Highways Maintenance Budget:

- The resurfacing of Hazelwood Road - £9,000
- The redesign of Kenilworth Square - £1,245

Area Forum Budget:

- The redesign of Kenilworth Square - £16,446.25
- New raft at Doffcocker Lodge for terns to breed - £1,068.08

Area Based Grant:

- Redesign of Kenilworth Square - £8,180

Voluntary Sector Grants for Smithills:
Budget 2008/9 - £2000

Less grants awarded to date this year under arrangements detailed in the Council's Scheme of Delegation

Rawlyn Road Allotment Society - £500
Johnson Fold Youth and Community Support Group - £500
5th Bolton Scout Group - £500
"R" Place Toddler Group - £390
Nuffield Bowling Club - £110

Balance to spend - £0

The Area Co-ordinator informed the Forum that the grants and budgets for 2009/10 would be as follows:

Area Based Grant - £8,180
Area Forum Budget - £15,000 (+£7,485.67 carry over from 2008/9)
Highways Maintenance Budget - £10,245
Voluntary Sector Grant - £2000

Youth Services Budget - £10,000

Mr. Jeewa informed the Forum that this funding would be allocated at the discretion of the Ward Councillors.

Resolved – That the report be noted

30. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION

Councillor Hayes introduced this item on the agenda and invited residents to ask any questions or put forward any comments they had regarding issues and concerns in the Smithills Ward. A number of questions were raised by residents:

- What was the status of the land between the ring road and Smithills Dean Road and who owned it?
- The Area Forum was a very useful way to solve problems in the area and in particular regarding drug dealing. After speaking with the police assigned to the Smithills area, the problem had improved and continued to do so.
- Would the Area Forum be using different venues around the Ward?

At this point, a discussion took place between the Smithills Ward Councillors and it was agreed that Idris Jeewa, Area Co-ordinator would meet with Councillors to decide on an outcome at a later date.

- What would happen to Stanley Road playing field?
- Was there an option to have a playing field elsewhere that was not close to properties?
- Stanley Park had been vandalised three times. This problem should be addressed prior to finding an alternative playing field.
- A resident's vehicle was damaged whilst travelling along Smithills Dean Road. What could be done about this?
- On Captains Clough Road there were excessive cars during football matches. Also, residents were parking on the field. Could anything be done about this?

- Could anything be done about residents parking on Moss Bank Park?
- Could an explanation be given as to how Area Forums operate so first time attendees know how to put their problems forward?

Resolved – That the question be noted and the questions that have not been answered at the meeting be directed to the appropriate Council Department or external agency.

31. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

Councillor Hayes concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and announced that the next Smithills Area Forum would be held on Thursday 21st May at 6.30pm.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.35pm)