

SMITHILLS AREA FORUM

MEETING, 4th July 2013

Present, 20 members of the public attended the meeting.

Councillor Hayes	- Smithills Ward
Councillor Radlett	- Smithills Ward
Councillor Swarbrick	- Smithills Ward

Also in attendance

John Shannon	- Area Co-ordinator
Malcolm Fairhurst	- Environmental Services Representative
Marion Griffin	- Business Support Officer
Anne Burns	- Bolton at Home
Kate Porter	- Animal World Conservation Action Project
Inspector Wayne Readfern	Greater Manchester Police
PCSO Bhav Mahwana	- Greater Manchester Police

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Julie Hilling MP and John Kelly, Environmental Services.

Councillor Hayes in the Chair.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Hayes welcomed everyone and introduced Councillors Radlett and Swarbrick. He also introduced other Council and partner officers present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2013 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. UPDATE FROM ANIMAL WORLD CONSERVATION ACTION (AWCA) PROJECT

Councillor Hayes introduced Kate Porter who gave an update on the Animal World Conservation Action project as below:

- The AWCA Project formed as a volunteer led community group in March 2011 and since then had been working in close partnership with Bolton Council to continue to keep the facility open and improve this popular visitor attraction, with a greater emphasis on education and conservation.
- The long term aim would be to create a 'not for profit' sustainable attraction to benefit all in the community.
- A small group of dedicated volunteers had helped at Animal World on a regular basis, with animal based jobs, general site maintenance and gardening.
- This year the number of volunteers helping at weekends had decreased due to other commitments and opportunities

Options to ensure the future of the AWCA project were being developed and included:

- Finding further funding in the region of £80,000 to keep the site open with the current staff; and
- Finding a partner organisation to work with the AWCA group to share responsibility for the site and help generate income.

A further update would be available in the autumn.

Councillor Hayes thanked Kate Porter and asked her to pass on a thank you from the Area Forum to all the volunteers at the AWCA project for their work to date.

A series of questions were asked and answered on the night.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

5. UPDATE ON BUDGETS AND PROGRESS

The Chair introduced Area Co-ordinator, John Shannon, who gave an update on budgets focused on Smithills Ward.

Budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15

Highways Maintenance Budget (HMB)

Allocation - £19,200

Attendees were asked to note the new criteria for HMB; any proposal should extend the life of adopted highways or footways, reconstruction, refurbishment, patching and slurry seal.

Area Forum Flat Rate Budget

Allocation - £13,750

This budget could be used on projects which benefit residents of Smithills ward

Neighbourhood Management Budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15

Neighbourhood Renewal Area: Allocation - £8,046

Based on deprivation in Ward: Allocation - £14,750

This budget had to be spent on activity in the targeted areas of the ward to help improve outcomes and 'narrow the gap' to try to tackle deprivation.

6. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Q1. Why is the Area Forum Flat Rate budget reduced to half of the last year's budget?

A. The Allocation covering 2011/12 and 2012/13 had been topped up with a one off amount of £10,000 from the Airport Dividend.

Q2. Why are the new speed bumps on New Church Road different from the previous ones?

A. The new speed cushions complied with the latest regulations for traffic calming measures on this width of carriageway

Q3. When will the driver feedback sign on Moss Bank Way be installed?

A. The signs had been ordered, however, there had been a delay. The new sign will be installed as soon as possible on the approach to Johnson Fold facing traffic travelling towards the pedestrian crossing.

Q4. Had planning approval for the development at Smithills Coaching House been given?

A. Yes, the planning application had been approved; the covenant restricting development on the car park had been removed.

Resolved- That the questions and answers be noted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillor Hayes concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and he advised that the date, time and venue of the next Area Forum Meeting would be confirmed nearer the time.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 7.25pm).