

## **ASTLEY BRIDGE AREA FORUM**

MEETING – 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

Present – 25 members of the public attended the meeting

Councillor Hilary Fairclough	Astley Bridge Ward
Councillor John Walsh	Astley Bridge Ward
Councillor Paul Wild	Astley Bridge Ward

### Also in attendance

John Shannon	- Area Co-ordinator
Marion Griffin	- Chief Executives Department
Pauline Dixon	- Environmental Services Representative
Wendy Stephens	- Bolton Community Transport
Hannah Carrington	- NHS Healthier Together
PCSO Helen Thoburn	- Greater Manchester Police

Apologies for absence were submitted by David Crausby MP, and PC Stephen Hilton.

Councillor Hilary Fairclough in the Chair

### **1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Fairclough welcomed everyone and introduced the Officers in attendance.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

#### **4. COMMEMORATING THE OUTBREAK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

Local historian Norman Hindley gave an overview of Astley Bridge as it was in 1914 including housing, businesses and community life; developments in the area since then were also outlined. He highlighted incidents related to WW1 that affected Astley Bridge and commemorated those from Astley Bridge who fought and died in the war.

A number of questions followed the presentation and were answered at the meeting.

Resolved: That the report be noted and Mr Hindley be thanked for his contribution to the Area Forum.

#### **5. FRIENDS OF ASTLEY BRIDGE, EVENTS AND PROPOSALS**

Councillor Hilary Fairclough provided an update on events which had taken place since the last meeting and on the proposals for 2014.

It was explained that there would be a meeting on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> July at Astley Bridge Baptist Church for anyone interested in becoming involved in the work of The Friends of Astley Bridge.

Friends of Astley Bridge were formed in 2013 and aimed to improve the Astley Bridge area through various projects, events and initiatives. The Astley Bridge Councillors were involved and representatives from other groups in the Astley Bridge area.

A tapestry was being created to celebrate Astley Bridge. Councillor Fairclough thanked Christine Bolton, the Community Champion for Asda Astley Bridge, for co-ordinating the work on the tapestry in partnership with local Schools and local embroiderers who had been involved in the work. The tapestry would be completed by end of 2014 and be displayed in public buildings.

A number of questions followed the update and were answered on the night.

Resolved – That the update be noted

## **6. BUDGETS**

Area Co-ordinator John Shannon gave an update on current balances for budgets and grants devolved to the Area Forum for 2013-15 financial years as follows:

**Budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are as follows;**

**Highways Maintenance Budget; Allocation - £19,200 Balance - £19,200**

(Note new criteria for HMB; any proposal should extend the life of adopted highways or footways, for example, reconstruction, refurbishment, patching and slurry seal)

**Area Forum Flat Rate Budget; Allocation - £13,750 Balance - £12,836**

Schemes approved since last meeting:

1. Support cost of 'Memo Minders' and other materials to help reduce burglaries - £500
2. Cover cost of new street nameplate and road linings at Maxwell Street - £418

Resolved – That the report, together with those schemes approved under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, be noted

## **7. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION**

Councillor Fairclough 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 Ward.

- Q1. Can some action be taken to resolve the problem of the vacant property at No 5 Thorns Road? The property is causing concern due to dereliction and the rear garden is especially overgrown.
- A1. Attempts had been made to have the property tidied up but current legislation and restricted budgets meant that this proved unsuccessful. The issue would be raised again with the relevant department for further action.
- Q2. What was planned for the chapel in Astley Bridge cemetery? The building is vacant and in poor condition, there was also concern that it was not fully secured.
- A2. Following a number of complaints from residents regarding this issue, Councillor Wild had contacted Planning Enforcement who confirmed that English Heritage had advised the Council that the building should be retained. Action would be taken soon to make the building safe, secure and weather tight.
- Q3. Would consultation for local residents take place with regard to the future of the chapel in the Cemetery?
- A3. Councillor Wild explained that the residents should be consulted before the start of the work.
- Q4. Why is only one class for the over 50 year olds in Astley Bridge included in the 'Exercise and have fun - physical activity for Adults 2014' booklet that is produced by Bolton Council? Other areas in the borough had several different classes and events publicised.
- A4. Councillor Fairclough explained that she believed that it was Age UK who had collated the information, whereas Bolton Council compile the directory, and that she would contact Age UK to discuss the resident's suggestion.

Q5. What activities for older people take place at Oldhams UCAN? There does not seem to be many advertised activities.

A5. The question would be referred to Bolton at Home for response

Q6. Are there any plans to resurface Thorns Road?

A6. Councillor Fairclough explained that the scale of this work was beyond the scope of the Area Forum's Highways Maintenance budget. The question would be forwarded to Highways Services.

Q7. Could a right filter be installed at the junction of Moss Bank Way and Blackburn Road? At the moment, only one car is allowed through the traffic lights per change. People tend to redirect through Thorns Road, which had now becoming a busy cut through for traffic.

A7. The question would be forwarded to Highways Services.

Q8. The Council had taken the street name plate off the wall at Andrew Lane. When will this be replaced?

A8. The question would be forwarded to Environmental Services.

Resolved – That the questions be noted and the questions which were not answered be directed to the appropriate department or partner agencies.

## **8. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS**

Councillor Fairclough thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next meeting of the Astley Bridge Area Forum would be 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 8.20pm)