

ASTLEY BRIDGE AREA FORUM

MEETING – 12th March 2014

Present –18 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
Ian Taylor	- Environmental Services Representative
Sharon Pendlebury	- Community Safety Officer
Inspector Wayne Readfern	- Greater Manchester Police

Apologies for absence were submitted by David Crausby MP, PCSO Helen Thoburn and PCSO Tracy Rollings

Councillor Paul Wild in the Chair

9. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Wild welcomed everyone and introduced the Officers in attendance.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

There were no Declarations of Interest.

11. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th June 2013 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

12. CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Inspector Wayne Readfern, Greater Manchester Police, and Sharon Pendlebury, Community Safety Services, Bolton Council gave a presentation on crime and community safety:-

The main points were as below:-

Crime update:

- The update covered the period from November 2013 to February 2014
- Crime levels in the Astley bridge ward were lower than the Bolton average
- Burglaries had reduced over the period and theft from motor vehicles had increased during December and January
- The majority of burglaries from dwellings and sheds, and thefts from motor vehicles, were due to insecurities (unlocked/open doors and windows)
- Residents were reminded to keep doors and windows locked and keep valuables out of sight, especially in warm weather.

Protecting the most vulnerable in Astley Bridge campaign:

- The Aim was to identify vulnerable and elderly residents utilising networks used by the Police, Churches, voluntary groups and housing providers
- Free target hardening devices and advice against door step crime would be available
- The Campaign would be funded by Astley Bridge Area Forum and Bolton Council's Community Safety Team

Target hardening equipment was free and included;

- Memo minders, which provided a verbal reminder to residents to secure doors and windows and verify identity of callers
- Mirror for the side of the door chains.
- Window locks and door chains.

Residents were asked to report suspicious activity, or a crime, to Greater Manchester Police.

For non-emergency calls or to report a crime call 101.

To Call 999 in an emergency or where there is a threat to life or a crime is in progress.

Alternatively, they could provide information about crime by calling Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 1111, or visiting www.crimestoppers-uk.com

Officers from the local policing team could be followed on www.facebook.com/GMPboltoneast. On twitter: @gmpboltoneast

Sharon Pendlebury, Community Safety Officer, provided an update on preventing fires:-

- The Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service provided free home safety assessments
- The assessments could be arranged by calling 0800 555 815 or visit: www.manchesterfire.gov.uk
- Wheelie bins should be returned to dwellings after emptying
- For more information about the work of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue visit: Twitter@manchester and Facebook at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue service.

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

Resolved – That the presentation be noted

13. 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.

Flower troughs:

- Councillor Fairclough thanked the Florence Avenue allotment society for preparing 78 liners for the flower troughs.

- All troughs and greenery were provided by the Area Forum and Friends of Astley Bridge.
- 800 mixed bulbs had been planted in Astley Bridge on roundabouts and on Moss Bank Way to Sharples Hall.
- A fund raising event would be held on 7th June at St. Pauls Church.
- A tapestry would be created to celebrate Astley Bridge. Local Schools and professional embroiderers would be involved in the work. The tapestry would be displayed in public buildings. There would be a meeting on 3rd April at Astley Bridge Baptist Church for anyone interested in becoming involved in this work.

Councillor Fairclough explained that the Friends of Astley Bridge would be looking for sponsorship for the troughs, and that it would be ideal if local businesses could provide sponsorship. The cost of full summer advertising for local businesses providing sponsorship would be approximately £100 - £150.

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

Resolved – That the update be noted

14. 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 - £13,750

Targeted Forum Budget; Allocation - £5,464 Balance £5,464

(Must be spent on activity in the deprived areas of the ward to help improve outcomes and “narrow the gap”)

The following approvals were made since the last meeting from the carried forward budgets from 2011/13

Area Forum Flat rate Budget (2011/13)

Astley Bridge in Bloom 2013, £4,582; Audio-visual equipment at Astley Bridge Baptist Church, £370; Litter bin at Belmont Road/Wilkinson Road, £450; Award to Team Eagley Bank; £100; Award to St Pauls Community Group, £100; Support for the 2013 Christmas lights event, £2,000; Award to Astley Bridge in Bloom 2014, £2,165; Award to Friends of Astley Bridge, £3,908.

Highways Maintenance Budget (2011/13)

Resurface at of junction at the Beeches and Belmont Road, £3,000; “Keep junction clear” sign at Ashworth Lane/Blackburn Road, £300; Cut and seal pothole repairs across ward, £5,000; Set aside for contribution to repairs/resurface of Ashworth Lane, £8,000.

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

15. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION

Councillor Wild 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. What is happening regarding the management of vehicular access to Smithills Hall Farm and Ravenden wood?

A1. The Council was currently in negotiation with the owner

of Smithills Hall Farm regarding this issue; the question would be passed to Corporate Property Services for a response.

Q2. The footpath from Smithills Hall Farm to Belmont Road needs clearing and cleaning up, can this be pursued?

A2. The question would be passed to Environmental Services a for response, it was suggested that the Community Payback programme may assist.

Q3. Can the blocked gully outside No's 90 to 100 Broad O'th Lane be cleared? It has caused flooding at this location.

A3. The question would be passed to Environmental Services for a response.

Q4. Can the trees at the Oaks Primary school backing on to Lakenheath Close be trimmed back?

A4. The question would be passed to Environmental Services for a response. Councillors would arrange to meet with the resident to discuss

Q5. Can traffic congestion on Sharples Hall Lane/Thornham Drive at school drop-off and pick up times be resolved?

A5. It was noted that this issue affected many primary schools in Bolton; a site visit would be arranged to assess the current position at the Oaks Primary School

Q6. Could the recent resurfacing of Oldhams Terrace be reviewed? The surface has started to deteriorate already.

A6. The issue would be investigated and passed to Environmental Services for a response

Q7. Could the bushes at Hillview be trimmed back?

A7. The issue would be investigated and passed to Environmental Services for a response

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

16. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

Councillor Wild thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next meeting of the Astley Bridge Area Forum would be Wednesday 23rd July 2014.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 8.15pm)