

## **TWO TOWNS AREA FORUM**

MEETING, 20TH MARCH, 2007

Present – 20 Members of the public attended.

Councillor Rock (Chairman)	-	Horwich North East
Councillor Hamilton	-	Horwich and Blackrod
Councillor Cox	-	Horwich and Blackrod
Councillor Hollick	-	Horwich and Blackrod
Councillor Mrs. Ronson	-	Horwich North East
Councillor R. Ronson	-	Horwich North East

### Also in attendance

Mr. P. Molyneux	-	Environmental Services
Mr. A. McCreesh	-	Environmental Services
Mr. M. Lee	-	Environmental Services
Mr. A. Doodson	-	Adult Services
Ms. M. Moore	-	Adult Services
Mr. T. Lomax	-	Development and Regeneration
Mr. G. Mitchell	-	Development and Regeneration
Mr. J. Berry	-	Development and Regeneration
Ms. C. Calderbank	-	Development and Regeneration
Mr. T. McKean	-	Bolton at Home
Ms. M. Hill	-	Children's Services
Ms. L. Burley	-	Commercial Services
Mr. P. Seddon	-	Community Transport
Mr. G. McGann	-	Greater Manchester County Fire Service
Mr. Urmston	-	Greater Manchester County Fire Service
Mr. Moss	-	Greater Manchester County Fire Service
Ms. A. Boles	-	Chief Executive's Department
Ms. V. Cloynes	-	Chief Executive's Department
Ms. J. Roe	-	Chief Executive's Department

Mrs. V. Ridge - Legal and Democratic Services  
Mr. J. Kerambrum - Legal and Democratic Services

Councillor Rock in the Chair.

### **39. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME BY THE CHAIR**

Councillor Rock welcomed and introduced everybody to the meeting.

### **40. MINUTES**

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Forum held on 23rd January, 2007 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

### **41. FEEDBACK SESSION OF ISSUES RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETING**

Ms. A. Boles, Area Co-ordinator, tabled a paper which provided an update on responses to questions which were raised at the last meeting of the Forum.

Resolved – That the feedback be noted.

### **42. SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE BOROUGH, CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Mr. T. Lomax, Principal Planning Officer gave a presentation which outlined the process for shaping the future of Bolton through a sustainable Community Strategy.

This Strategy would guide renewal, lead improvement of Services and tackle deprivation.

Coupled with this, were a number of key aims and objectives, viz:-

- a strong and confident Bolton;
- a prosperous Bolton;

- a healthy Bolton;
- a safe Bolton; and
- an attractive Bolton.

The Forum was advised that the Strategy would take two years to prepare and set out how each locality in Bolton would change over the next 10-15 years. The strategy would be adopted in December, 2009.

Mr. Lomax went on to indicate that the Council were seeking ideas and comments from individuals on what the plan should contain.

In terms of possible issues for the Two Towns Area, it was indicated that these were:-

- maintaining a good quality visual environment;
- ensuring that residential areas had good access to services;
- the future of the Borough's local town centres;
- the future of the Middlebrook/Horwich Loco works; and
- the future of British Aerospace.

In conclusion, it was indicated that a consultation leaflet was available and responses should be submitted to the Council by 13th April, 2007.

Various questions and comments were responded to.

Resolved – That the position be noted.

#### **43. TWO TOWNS AREA FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2006/2007**

The Chairman gave a presentation which informed the Forum of the activities of the Two Towns Area Forum since June, 2006, including issues addressed, Forum budgets spent and ongoing issues for 2006/2007 and beyond.

The presentation stated that a total of 107 residents had attended four meetings of the Area Forum since June, 2006 and continued to gain new attendees at each meeting.

The presentation explained that the Area Forum had used a range of mechanisms to tackle local issues raised by residents which included:-

- the Drop-in session at the Forum meetings;
- the use of informative presentations and displays at Forum meetings;
- the Open Forum question session;
- theme meetings; and
- the allocation of the Forum's devolved budgets.

Residents were informed that this Area Forum had access to almost £70,000 from its devolved budgets to tackle local issues and support projects which made a difference to local people. The presentation gave residents a breakdown of the amount allocated to each project run by the Forum.

The presentation went on to explain that the Forum would continue to work in partnership with agencies and local residents to tackle a range of issues. The presentation detailed some of the key issues highlighted by residents, that the Forum would continue to focus on.

A discussion ensued regarding venues for the Area Forum and it was felt that a thorough review needed to be undertaken of venues within the area to ensure that adequate facilities were available.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

#### **44. HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP (COMMUNITY SAFETY) 2006/2007 UPDATE**

Ms. A. Boles, Area Co-ordinator, tabled a paper which put forward a proposed scheme to be funded from the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget as well as proposing that members of the Forum delegate any subsequent urgent decisions on the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) 2005/2008 to the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Forum for the rest of the Municipal Year.

The Forum was advised that an allocation had been received for 2005/2008 of £10,000 for the period 1st April, 2005 to 31st March, 2008. The budget was made available by the Highways Partnership to tackle issues of persistent anti-social behaviour and improving the environment and liveability in the Two Towns Area Forum area.

The proposed scheme involved the processing of an order to install a set of gates at the ginnel between Lower Makinson Fold and Mount Pleasant Street which had experienced persistent problems with anti-social behaviour, increased levels of crime, public safety, environmental and liveability issues for local residents.

The Forum was informed that the cost of the scheme would be £5,000 and, if approved, there would be £5,000 unallocated in the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget 2005/2008.

The report stated that, given the need to expend the available monies within a relatively short timescale, it was proposed that decisions on the implementation of future projects be delegated to the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Forum for the rest of the Municipal Year.

Resolved - (i) That the proposed project, as now detailed, to be funded from the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget be approved.

(ii) That the Forum delegates any subsequent urgent decision on the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) 2005/2008 to the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Forum for the rest of the Municipal Year.

#### **45. NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND 2006/2008 UPDATE**

Ms. A. Boles, Area Co-ordinator, tabled a paper which put forward a proposed scheme from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund 2006/2008 and requested members to note the action taken by the Chair and Vice-Chair to reallocate projects from the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for 2006/2008.

The scheme proposed was the Blackrod Easter Scheme which would involve a maximum of 30 young people from the age of 13 to participate in activities and trips which would offer opportunities to gain further accreditations and recorded outcomes through such things as Assessment Qualification Alliance awards and other nationally recognised awards. The Forum was advised that the above scheme amounted to £2,116 and, if approved, this would leave £6,034 unallocated from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund 2006/2008.

The Forum was advised that, given the need to expend the available monies within a relatively short timescale, decisions on the implementation of future schemes had to be delegated to the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Forum. Under these delegated powers, the projects funded by the Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget were now funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Budget at a total cost of £13,000, leaving an amount of £8,150 unallocated. The Highways Partnership (Community Safety) Budget of £10,000 would be reallocated.

Resolved – (i) That the Blackrod Easter Scheme, as now detailed, be approved.

(ii) That the Forum note the action taken by the Chair and Vice-Chair under delegated powers.

#### **46. OPEN FORUM**

Ms. A. Boles, Area Co-ordinator, tabled a paper which answered questions submitted in advance of the Forum.

In addition to this, verbal questions were received which detailed the following issues:-

- a) Would the 617 bus service be returning to Victoria Road?

It was indicated that this issue had been raised with the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (GMPTA) and any further updates received would be brought to a future meeting of this Forum.

- b) What action would be taken to tidy up the gardens on Mount Pleasant Street that were owned by Bolton Council?

The Area Co-ordinator stated this matter would be investigated and referred to the relevant Council Department.

- c) Would there be Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) appointed to work on the streets of Horwich?

The Area Co-ordinator informed the Forum that the newly appointed PCSOs would be fully trained and operational within 14 weeks.

- d) Were there any plans to close Blackrod Tip?

The Forum was advised that Blackrod Tip had been awarded a new contract by the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority and

there were no plans to close. The Forum was further informed that there were some plans to refurbish the site.

- e) Residents requested an update on the impact of the traffic calming measures taken by the Council on New Chapel, Claypool and Ainsworth Roads.

The Area Co-ordinator stated that this matter be referred to the Environmental Services and that an update be provided to a future meeting of this Forum.

- f) Concerns were raised regarding anti-social behaviour that had gone on outside St. John's Methodist Church, Horwich.

The Forum was advised that measures had been put in place by the Police to monitor this situation and as a result this problem had greatly reduced.

- g) Residents brought to the Forums attention the problems caused by large vehicles travelling through the Horwich Market area. Residents explained that the wall at the back of the Market had been knocked down by these vehicles on a number of occasions.

The Area Co-ordinator stated that this matter would be investigated and referred to the relevant Council Department.

- h) Concerns were raised over the new car park at the bottom of Makinson Avenue, which was designed to reduce the off street parking which had previously caused congestion. Residents explained that the high kerbs had meant people had difficulty getting on and off the car park and so therefore cars still parked



off street which impinged on road space.

The Forum was advised that there had been insufficient funds available to the Forum to drop the kerbs when the project was taken on originally. It was also stated that a letter was sent out by Bolton Council explaining where residents were meant to park.

- i) Residents informed the Forum that a large amount of earth had been deposited at the back of Crown Lane and requested that the Council clean it up.

The Area Co-ordinator stated that this matter would be investigated and referred to the relevant Council Department.

- j) Were there any plans to improve Blackrod Train Station?

The Forum was advised that it was anticipated that work on building a new car park and updating the station was expected to start soon. However, at present, there was insufficient land to put in place a ramp for wheelchair access.

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

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

The Chairman thanked Members, Officers and the public for their attendance and the views expressed during the course of the meeting.

(The meeting started at 7.00 p.m. and finished at 8.45 p.m.)