

HARPER GREEN AREA FORUM

MEETING 1st November 2010

Present – 26 members of the public attended the meeting

Councillor Clare	-	Harper Green Ward
Councillor Francis	-	Harper Green Ward
Councillor Mistry	-	Harper Green Ward

Also in attendance

Jeff Smethurst	-	Chief Officer
Dawn Hampton	-	Area Co-ordinator, Chief Executive's Department
Phil Bailey	-	Environmental Services
Emily Hewson	-	Positive Activities Team Leader, Children's Services
John Pye	-	Neighbourhood Manager Farnworth
Amina Jeewa	-	Neighbourhood Manager Great Lever
Shelly Williams	-	Neighbourhood Management Support Officer
Margaret Thornley	-	Community Housing Manager, Bolton at Home
Chief Supt Steve Hartley	-	Greater Manchester Police
Bob Cadwallader	-	Probation Services
David Lawrence	-	HM Courts Service
Gill Green	-	Community Foundation
Chris Peacock	-	The Office of Yasmin Qureshi MP

Councillor Mistry in the Chair

1. INTRODUCTION

Councillor Mistry welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself, fellow Councillors from the Harper Green Ward, Bolton Council officers and partners.

Councillor Mistry requested all attendees complete a diversity monitoring questionnaire and for those with an email address to register in order that information regarding Area Forums could be sent electronically.

Apologies for absence were received from Yasmin Qureshi, MP.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2010 were submitted.

Councillor Mistry updated the meeting on the issues raised at that ~~am~~am meeting in relation to Greenland Road and the public footpath near Freshfield/Glenside Avenue. A multi-agency group had been formed and site visits were carried out on 15 October 2010 by Ward Councillors, Area Co-ordinator, Police, Environmental Services, Probation Service, Street Lighting, Public Rights of Way Team and the Council's Corporate Property Services.

Update on Greenland Road was:

- Main issues included littering, drug dealing and fly-tipping.
- Community payback already carried out some work down there.

Area Forum had made arrangements to:

- Install new signage
- Improve the lightening on lampposts
- Cut back trees to improve natural lighting.

Consideration was also being given to installing CCTV cameras and:

- Longer term options would be explored to reduce litter working with schools and businesses.

- The bollards could be moved to a different point in the road.
- Installation of fencing along the embankment.

Update on the public footpath near Freshfield Avenue was:

- Main issues included littering and lack of lighting.

Elected Members were currently considering:

- Community Payback to pick litter and cut back bushes, nettles and overhanging branches.
- Lighting scheme for the stretch of footpath between Freshfield and Glenside Avenue.
- Lighting scheme for the stretch of footpath between Rishton Avenue up towards Freshfield Avenue.

Further discussions would take place with the Police on the alcohol related litter.

Resolved – that the update be noted and an update be given at the next Area Forum

3. THE FUTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Chief Supt Steve Hartley introduced himself to the Area Forum and went on to explain about the current situation regarding policing work in Bolton. There was 270,000 police officers working in Greater Manchester Police who worked hard with communities and other agencies to tackle crime in Bolton. Chief Supt Hartley advised that this had resulted in significant drops in burglary, robbery and vehicle crime. He confirmed that GMP was in a strong position to keep PCSOs on the streets of Bolton as these frontline officers are a priority in neighbourhoods. However, Chief Supt Hartley also confirmed that he couldn't make any promises and that there may be a reduction in actual police officer numbers due to the current economic climate.

A further discussion with residents identified a number of issues for Chief Supt Hartley to address:

- A need for better communication to residents from neighbourhood policing teams and updated police contact details.
- Concerns regarding continuity in local areas.
- Lack of police presence at local resident meetings.

Chief Supt Hartley concluded by explaining about the new PACT meetings and confirmed that Ward Councillors attended these meetings to represent local residents.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

4. JUSTICE SEEN JUSTICE DONE IN HARPER GREEN.

David Lawrence from the HM Courts Service and Bob Cadwallader from the Probation Service gave a presentation about the Community Payback Scheme and the role of the Magistrate. Mr Lawrence and Mr Cadwallader explained the details of the Community Payback Scheme and defined what is meant by offender, with the core principle of community payback being 'visible to the community'. Mr Lawrence and Mr Cadwallader advised that the biggest causes of offending in Bolton are through drink and drugs and stressed that these situations could prove to be very difficult for the magistrates to deal with as there were often mitigating circumstances to each case. Mr Lawrence went on to add that the Magistrate's Courts had very strict guidelines to adhere to and that the Magistrate had the final say when sentencing as they acted on laws passed by parliament.

A number of comments and questions were raised and answered on the night.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted and feedback on the suggestions raised by residents be given at the next Area Forum meeting.

5. YOU SAID WE DID – Area Forum Survey Results

Dawn Hampton, Area Coordinator, fed back on the Area Forum Consultation survey and explained that the purpose of the consultation was aimed at making improvements at the meetings. Dawn summarised by advising that respondents from Harper Green said:

- Most common ways they found out about Area Forums were from Bolton Scene, by leaflet and from someone they knew.
- People attended Area Forums to find out about local issues and developments and have their say about local issues.
- Over half the respondents thought that better publicity could encourage others to attend.
- Most people preferred the meeting to start at 7.00pm. Saturday daytime was least popular.

6. COMMUNITY INTEREST UPDATE

Gill Green representing Community Foundation gave a presentation to the Forum and advised that there was still £250k remaining in the pot from the Big Lottery Fairshare Trust for grants in the Harper Green and Great Lever areas, with £75k available immediately for this round. Ms Green went on to explain that all applications for funding must meet certain criteria, these being:

- Anti social behaviour/Community Safety
- Liveability/Health
- Community Cohesion

Any community group could apply straight away for grants between £5k and £30k. The deadline for these applications was 30 November 2010. Ms Green went on to advise that all applications would be looked at in February 2011 with decisions made in March/April of next year. Ms Green concluded by explaining that the results collated from the recent Harper Green community survey would determine what the remaining £140k would be spent on.

Councillor Mistry then invited any group present to share information in relation to their recent activities. A representative from Highfield Residents' Association updated the forum on what they had arranged for their local area and went on to list their recent fundraising activities; one such activity included a tribute night.

7. BUDGET UPDATE

Area Co-ordinator, Dawn Hampton, gave an update on the budgets and grants that were available to the Harper Green Forum for the year 2010-11, and confirmed that the following schemes and projects had been approved under the Council's Scheme of Delegation since the last meeting of the Area Forum:

Area Based Grant:

- Greenland Road improvements:
 - CCTV/No fly-tipping signage £400
 - Lighting/lamp improvements £450
 - Tree Cutting £190
- | | |
|---------|--------|
| Balance | £7,249 |
|---------|--------|

Area Forum Budget:

Balance	£14,060
---------	---------

Highways Maintenance:

Bollards on Highfield Road	£2,092
Balance	£7,029

Positive Contributions Budget:

Balance	£1,500
---------	--------

Voluntary Sector Grants:	Balance	£1,942
• Highfield AFC		£250
• Sunnyside Community Development Centre		£380
• Highfield Residents Association		£445
• Roseneath Residents Association		£427
	Balance	£440

8. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

Councillor Mistry invited residents to ask any questions or put forward any comments they had regarding issues and concerns in the Harper Green ward.

The following questions and comments were put forward

The Council was organising public budget meetings - would there be time to ask questions?	- Cllr Mistry advised that there would be an opportunity to ask questions.
Why were the 'Love Bolton Hate Litter' campaign signs replacing other roadside signs sponsored by resident associations, without any consultation with those groups?	- Cllr Mistry confirmed that this would be looked into and reported back at the next Area Forum.
Did Bolton Council own or lease the Sunnyside Community building?	- Cllr Francis advised that Bolton Council did not own the building but there were further investigations in to the terms and conditions of the lease as the original lease from Tootles Mill expired in 2000. Cllr Francis assured the meeting that as soon as he had an update that this would be shared with the forum.

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

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Councillor Mistry concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and their contributions and announced that the next Harper Green Forum would be on the 15th February 2011 from 6:30pm, venue to be advised.

(The meeting started at 7:00pm and finished at 9.00pm)