

TWO TOWNS AREA FORUM

MEETING, 9th November 2010

Present – 46 members of the public attended the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Ronson	-	Horwich North East Ward
Councillor Robert Ronson	-	Horwich North East Ward
Councillor Kevin McKeon	-	Horwich North East Ward
Councillor Stephen Pickup	-	Horwich and Blackrod Ward

Also in attendance

Val Cloynes	-	Area Co-ordinator, Chief Executive's Department
Jeanette Pemberton-Billing	-	Business Support, Chief Executive's Department
Ellen Miller	-	Forum Chief Officer and Assistant Director – Strategy and Commissioning
John McCarthy	-	Environment Agency
Tim Hill	-	Chief Planning Officer, Development & Regeneration
John Sharrock	-	Neighbourhood Services, Environmental Services
R. Moss	-	Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
R. Holden	-	Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
A. Loftus	-	Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
L. Whitehead	-	Greater Manchester Police

Q2

Town Councillor S. Rock	-	Horwich Town Council
Town Councillor L. Rock	-	Horwich Town Council
Town Councillor M. Hollick	-	Blackrod Town Council
Town Councillor K Thomson	-	Horwich Town Council

Councillor Mrs B. Ronson in the Chair

Apologies were received from Councillors Mr & Mrs Pat Barrow and Julie Hilling MP.

1. INTRODUCTION

Councillor Mrs Ronson welcomed everyone to the meeting, led the introductions and then explained the format for the meeting.

2. HORWICH LOCO WORKS – AN UPDATE

Councillor Mrs Ronson introduced Simon Godley, Development Manager for Planning Strategy, who gave a short update on the latest developments that had taken place at Horwich Loco works. He further stated that there would be more investigative work done into Red Moss area and the surrounding wetland and wildlife that inhabited the area before more houses would be built.

After the update a series of questions were asked and answered on the night.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

3. ARMSTRONGS: UPDATE FROM BOLTON COUNCIL & PARTNERS

Councillor Mrs Ronson introduced Tim Hill, the chief Planning Officer for Development and Regeneration and John McCarthy from the Environment Agency, who subsequently went on to brief the Area Forum about the latest developments with Armstrongs.

Q3

The Two Towns Area Forum had received requests for an update from the multi agency liaison group which exchanged information about the various Armstrong Environmental Services sites in the two wards making up Two Towns. Agencies had exchanged information with each other on a regular basis, and convened meetings as required to respond to particular incidents. The current position was reported by the various enforcement agencies, and a separate information sheet was made available at the meeting.

After the presentation two questions were read out:-

Q.1. It was noted that a multi-agency subcommittee had been set up to look into the problems caused by Armstrong's, and the Area Forum was asked if the sub-committee had come to any decisions, how often it had met, who sat on the committee and who the Chairperson?

A.1 Mr Hill reported that it was a multi agency liaison group and not a sub committee, which had met since 2005 at approximately yearly intervals apart from in 2008 when they had met twice. It had representatives from the Police, Fire Authority, Environment Agency, Legal Services, Planning, Development and Regeneration & Pollution Control, and one of the more senior officers chaired it. All partners would continue to exchange and update information with each other in appropriate ways; all partners would continue to use available and appropriate enforcement tools; it was appreciated that residents needed access to regular updated information so an information sheet had been made available for the Area Forum in November 2010, and information would be generated more regularly

Q. 2. What was the total cost of the actions of GM Fire and Rescue and others following the recent fire at Armstrongs?

A. 2. The Corporate Information Officer responded: "This is being treated as a Freedom of Information query and has been passed to the Corporate Information environment team for response. We will write to the enquirer and explain."

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

Resolved – that the report be noted.

32. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2010 were submitted and accepted as a correct record.

33. UPDATE ON BUDGETS DEVOLVED TO THE AREA FORUM

Val Cloynes, Area Co-ordinator, gave a brief update on the devolved budgets for 2010/11 for the Two Towns Area.

She explained the budgets and current balances:

Area Based Grant 2010/2011

- Horwich and Blackrod Ward (HOBL): remaining balance **£1,059**
- Horwich North East ward (HONE): remaining balance **£619.38**

Highways Maintenance Budget 2010/2011

- HOBL: **£9,400**
- HONE: **£6,266.40**

Positive Contributions Budget for Young People 2010/2011

- HOBL: **£2,500**
- HONE: **£2,500**

Decisions made by Councillors under the Council's Scheme of Delegation:

Area Forum Budget 2010/2011

- Each ward contributed £100 for 2 St Joseph's students
- to make an educational journey to S Africa in October

Q5

- Remaining balances **£14,900** for each ward

Voluntary Sector Grant 2010/2011

- Combined remaining balance of £722.76
 1. Horwich Heritage Centre: request for £500 towards annual running costs - £250 granted
 2. Kadenza Choir: request for £300 towards the cost of producing a CD - £272.76 granted
 3. Remaining balance **£200**

Resolved – that the report be noted.

34. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following questions were asked on the night.

Q.1 A resident highlighted the problem of vicious unmuzzled dogs when her cat was mauled to death 2 weeks ago in Brunswick Avenue. Although she had reported it to the RSPCA, GMP and the Council dog warden, she was told that there was nothing they could do until there had been 3 incidents.	A. 1 It was reported that the Area Forum would inform the Dog Warden and see if there was anything further that could be done. An update would be provided to the next Area Forum.
Q.2 Town Councillor Stephen Rock reported that he had not received an invitation to the Area Forum	A.2 The Town Clerks would be asked for Town Councillors' contact details so they could be added to the mailing list if not already on it. Also, everyone signing into an Area Forum meeting was added to the mailing list automatically.

Q6

Q.3 The bus/train interchange was highlighted as a problem area after 9pm at night with anti-social behaviour and the Area Forum was asked whether the police could be more visible to act as a deterrent?	A.3 The concerns would be reported to the GMPTE, GMP and transport police for them to look into.
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Resolved - That the questions that could not be answered on the night be noted, passed on to the relevant department to respond and the information fed back to the next Area Forum meeting.

35. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

Councillor Mrs Ronson concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and participation and announced that the next meeting of the Two Towns Area Forum would take place on Tuesday 22nd February 2011 with drop in at 6.30 p.m. and main meeting starting at 7.00 p.m. at Blackrod Community Centre, Greenbarn Way, Blackrod, Bolton BL6 5TG

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 8.30pm)