

## FARNWORTH AND KEARSLEY AREA FORUM

**MEETING, 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2007**

**TRINITY CHURCH, HIGHER MARKET STREET, FARNWORTH**

Present – 28 Members of the Public attended the meeting.

Councillor Lord (Chairman)	-	Farnworth Ward
Councillor A.N Spencer	-	Farnworth Ward
Councillor Rothwell	-	Kearsley Ward
Councillor Mrs. Rothwell	-	Kearsley Ward

Also in Attendance

Isabel Southern	-	Adult Services
Gemma Pearson	-	Bolton at Home
Jo Pitchford	-	Children's Services
Ros Baxter	-	Environmental Services
John Martin	-	Environmental Services
Helen Williams	-	Planning Department
Colette Kelly	-	Farnworth Neighbourhood Management
Andrew Chalmers	-	Development and Regeneration
Lynne Jones	-	Children's Services
Paula Connor	-	Children's Centres
Adrian Wolstenholme	-	Area Co-ordinator
Liz Whitworth	-	Area Co-ordinator

Altaf Ahmed	-	Area Co-ordinator
Kate Treadwell	-	Democratic Services

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burrows, Stones and Brian Iddon MP.

Councillor Lord in the Chair

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

Councillor Lord welcomed and introduced everybody to the meeting.

### **34. MINUTES**

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Forum held on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

### **35. OPEN FORUM FEEDBACK**

Mr. A. Wolstenholme, 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.

### **36. PRESENTATION: FARNWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT**

Ms Colette Kelly, Great Lever Neighbourhood Manager, gave a presentation which outlined the role of the Farnworth Neighbourhood Management Board and its purpose.

By way of background information, the Forum was informed that Neighbourhood Management Boards had previously been piloted within the Great Lever Area and had been judged to be a success. Such Management Boards had been considered in light of the National Government's growing focus on the regeneration of neighbourhoods.

Ms Kelly stated that the Board was intended to make good use of existing resources in Farnworth and would involve the participation of elected members, service providers, residents and local businesses. It was hoped that local services could then be shaped to meet local

needs.

Ms Kelly outlined what the Management Board would mean for Farnworth:-

- local board made up of elected members, community representatives and service providers;
- local small team bringing in services;
- communities involved;
- addressing the issues that made communities feel safe and clean;
- working on co-ordinating the physical environment;
- bringing communities together;
- helping to co-ordinate services; and
- trialling new ways of working.

Ms Kelly stated that in Great Lever the following results had been seen from having a Management Board:-

- satisfaction rates with the area and services had improved;
- 71% in 2006 satisfied with the area as a whole compared to 51% in 2003;
- proportion of residents who thought litter and rubbish dumped in the street was a problem dropped from 78% to 58% (Borough average 56%); and
- proportion of households that felt young people 'hanging around' was a problem dropped from 74% to 60%.

Various comments and questions were raised on the following issues:-

- the Management Committee covered parts of Kearsley, Harper Green and Farnworth but did not cover the Stoneclough Area;

- the importance of health awareness being part of the agenda for the Board; and
- that funding would come from existing funds given, in part, by the National Government.

Resolved - That the presentation be noted.

### **37. FARNWORTH PRECINCT**

Councillor Lord updated the Forum regarding the progress made with the regeneration of the of the precinct and market area in Farnworth.

Councillor Lord reminded the Forum of the rundown state of the precinct area and market which had suffered from vandalism and a general rundown appearance.

The Forum was told that elected members had met with representatives of the leaseholders of the Farnworth Market and Centre and Council Officers. Elected Members were informed that plans would be submitted within the next few weeks regarding the future design of the area and that a national retailer had agreed to be part of this redevelopment.

Once the plans had been agreed and tenders had taken place it was hoped that work would take place from September, 2007.

Resolved - That the update be noted.

### **38. BOLTON'S CORE STRATEGY – PLANNING STRATEGY**

Mr. A. Chalmers from the Planning Division 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, as follows:-

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

- an achieving 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. Chalmers 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 Farnworth and Kearsley area, it was indicated that these were:-

- the future of the older established employment area;
- the future role of existing mills in the area;
- providing training and employment opportunities for residents;
- future role and potential for Farnworth Town Centre;
- visual environment of the inner areas; and
- range and choices of housing.

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.

### **39. OPEN FORUM**

Verbal and written questions were received which detailed the following issues:-

- (a) Could anything be done regarding the safety of the Mills situated on Campbell Street and Cawdor Street as

members of the public were concerned, after the recent storms, about glass falling out of the windows?

Mr Chalmers informed the Forum that the mills were privately owned. However, Building Control inspectors could be contacted to investigate this problem. The Area Co-ordinator stated that this matter would be looked into and reported back to the next Forum.

- (b) Could it be recorded that Campbell Street Community Group never asked for double yellow lines on Campbell Street?

It was agreed that this would be recorded.

- (c) When would the Green Space Assessment be published which was intended to underpin the Council's Five Year Strategy in Bolton and would Bolton Council disregard the recommendations of this report as it had done with previous publications from the same consultants?

The Area Co-ordinator stated that the report had not, as of yet, been published. However, when it was this information would be feedback to the Forum. The Forum was informed that the Council's Planning Committee had not been able to take the advice of a publication from these consultants, in this particular case, due to National Policy restricting their decision.

- (b) In 2005, no. 87 Cawdor Street was reported to the Area Forum. Since that time there have been other areas around Cawdor Street such as the nearby dilapidated mills that were in need of regeneration. What was being done around the Cawdor Street area?

The Area Co-ordinator stated that he would approach representatives from Bolton at Home and the Development and Regeneration Department and co-ordinate a response to bring back to the next meeting of the Forum.

- (c) Were there any initiatives currently in place in the Stoneclough, Kearsley area to tackle anti-social behaviour? Although Stoneclough might not be the most deprived area in Bolton it was suffering badly from anti-social behaviour such as damage to cars, houses and intimidation of

residents.

The Community Support Officer for Kearsley stated that Inspector Makin had ensured that sixteen Community Support Officers had started work in this area. However, because most of these Officers were in training they were still under supervision. It was recognised that this was a difficult transitional period but that the Officers' training should be completed by the end of March. The Area Co-ordinator also added that this Forum had funded a Youth Project in the Kearsley area. At a future Forum Greater Manchester Police would be invited to give a presentation on policing initiatives in the Farnworth and Kearsley area and to introduce themselves to residents.

- (d) On Pilkington Road and Moses Gate the litter pickers had made a great difference to the overall appearance of the area. They were due to finish their contract for the Council this April, could they not be asked to continue after this time?

The Area-Co-ordinator stated that this matter would be looked into and reported back to the next Forum.

- (e) What was being done to stop the sale of cars on open land around the bottom of Bolton Road near Moses Gate?

The Area Co-ordinator stated that the legal position was that if two or more cars were parked in such a way then this was an enforceable issue. Enforcement Officers had been asked to continue to look into this matter in this area and Officers had made a commitment to tackle this problem.

- (f) Could a pride day for Farnworth be arranged to increase morale amongst residents and generate a better reputation within Bolton about Farnworth?

The Area-Co-ordinator stated that this matter would be looked into and reported back to the next Forum.

- (g) Were the double yellow lines on Alexandra Street going to go ahead?

The Forum was informed that this matter was currently out for consultation and it was therefore the residents'

responsibility to make their views known.

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

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

Councillor Lord then closed the meeting and thanked Council members, Officers and Members of the public for their attendance at this Forum meeting and other Forum meetings throughout the municipal year. He also thanked Members, Officers and Members of the public for their contribution during this time.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.45pm)