

Minutes of: BURY EAST TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 3 February 2015

Present: Councillor (in the Chair)
Councillors D Cassidy, M C Connolly, T Holt, K Rothwell,
J Smith, S Smith, T Tariq and S Walmsley

Also in attendance:

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Edwards, Councillor S Haroon and Philburn

676 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Connolly declared an interest as his partner was an employee at Bury Council.

677 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

In respect of Minute BETF.462 'Plan for Change Budget Proposals 2015/16', in relation to devolution, Mr Ainsworth asked why it was different from the previous referendum when Bury residents voted against an elected Mayor.

Councillor Connolly explained that Bury residents will vote for a directly elected Mayor of Greater Manchester in 2017. The leaders of the 10 Greater Manchester Authorities signed a deal with the Government and the new Mayor will oversee the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, a body made up of the leaders of the regions 10 Local Authorities which sets the strategy for transport and some economic development and regeneration. The existing Police and Crime Commissioner's role will be merged with the Greater Manchester Mayor's role.

In respect of Minute BETF.464 'Public Question Time', Mr Ainsworth stated concern in relation to 65 outstanding cases of people living in houses of disrepair within Six Town Housing properties. Councillor Connolly stated that following the last meeting of Bury East Township Forum and his grave concerns following these allegations, he had met with the Chief Executive of Six Town Housing, who had a completely different view to the comments made at the previous meeting by Victor Hagan.

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 November, 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

678 HEALTH WATCH BURY

Anne-Marie Poldkivi and Barbara Barlow, representing Healthwatch Bury, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the new consumer champion for both health and social care, Healthwatch Bury.

The meeting was informed of the key objectives for Healthwatch Bury, which were:

- To give adults, children and young people a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care are provided in Bury and to help people get the best out of those services.
- To provide advice and information services.
- To collect residents' views on local health and social care services.
- To work with a wide range of existing services and organisations in Bury.
- To provide evidence and feedback to organisations responsible for commissioning or delivering local health and social care services.
- To work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to help make sure that services really are designed to meet local people's needs.
- To provide information about what to do when things go wrong.
- Signpost people to the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

It was reported that the organisation had been keen to develop links with different NHS bodies and partner organisations; links have been established with the Pennine Acute and Pennine Care NHS Trusts, the local Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and CCG.

Questions and comments were invited from those present at the meeting and the following issues were raised:

- Councillor Rothwell asked if information leaflets were available in alternative formats, such as Braille, different languages or for people who were dyslexic.
- Anne-Marie stated that there are some easy read leaflets and some language translations available. Barbara stated that due to a diminished budget, unfortunately there were some challenges; however, they would like to speak to Councillor Rothwell regarding these issues for his ideas.
- Tim Boaden (Seedfield TRA) asked how the residents' association could be of help and Anne Marie stated that a member of the TRA could be a member of Healthwatch Bury and take back information to the TRA. Barbara reported that any logged information would be anonymous.

- Mr Ainsworth asked what powers Healthwatch Bury had and it was reported, statutory powers.
- Councillor Stella Smith stated that it was good thing to have one main organisation to collect all complaints from GP's, Dentists, Hospitals etc. and Barbara reported that as an independent organisation they had the power to make their voice heard.

It was agreed:

That Barbara and Anne-Marie be thanked for their presentation

679 THE BURY DIRECTORY

Heather Crozier, Social Development Manager and her colleague Katie Woods attended the meeting to give a presentation on the Bury Directory.

It was explained that the Bury Directory is a new 'one stop' online facility for Bury residents to find advice and information about local services and more in Bury

from a wide range of providers. The Directory has been launched in order to bring together links to services which would otherwise mean searching a number of websites. The home page is designed for services relating to either Adults or Children and Families. The service provider links included: Bury Council, NHS Choices, Direct Gov, GMP, local bus service times and real time journey planning.

The community directory had been established as a result of the new statutory duty on Councils to provide easy access for information services for local residents. In terms of the Bury Directory, this had been established from a social care and community perspective. The following key features of the Directory were presented:

- Market themed icons which would allow access to information, services, activities and support for either adults or children and families
- Search option for services offers for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities
- Information and advice to help adults live independently within the community and support for people when they need it the most
- Links to Bury Council's website
- The ability to personalise contacts and information lists
- Postcode search facility to access health services
- Map and distance calculator facility
- Basic information about services including contact details
- Review of services function including star ratings and comments
- Text language translation facility
- What's on guide
- Provider update function and community group pages

(Councillors John and Stella Smith left the meeting)

680 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited questions/comments from the audience:

- Victor Hagan asked how people were informed of the Directory and if information was sent back to services.
Heather explained that it was very important to get Partners engaged; they have visited departments in the Local Authority to raise staff awareness. They have attended all the Township Forums, Police, CCG, NHS etc and next it will be broadcast to the general public. Currently there were around 2,000' hits' per month on the website. In relation to feedback to services, it was up to the particular service to review their own feedback.
- Mr Ainsworth asked if this was Council or independently run how much it cost and why was this different from using a search engine such as google?
Heather explained that it was a statutory function to provide the Directory and the Local Authority work with Partners and the voluntary sector to provide for everyone. The Directory pulls all the information together within the local area and has different categories in order to find what is needed.
- Mr Ainsworth asked what happens to the 25% of people that don't use a computer.

Heather explained that for those residents who did not have access to the internet, arrangements were in place to introduce a number of volunteers to act as digital champions. The Council is moving towards a 'digital by default' for Council services and is working with the 3rd Sector Development Agency. Normal public access points would still be available if home access was not.

It was agreed:

That Heather and Katie be thanked for their presentation.

681 POLICE UPDATE

- Lesley Wildeman, Chair of the Forum, opened Public Question Time and explained that these meetings were an excellent way of giving information to the public and for individuals to bring issues that is of great concern to residents to the attention of local Councillors. Lesley stated that several issues however have never been addressed, including; flooding at the end of Nuttall Street, speed cushions disintegrating and no longer easily seen, parking on footpaths, causing danger to pedestrians having to walk in the road and yellow box junctions no longer being marked up sufficiently due to the lack of maintenance.

Councillor Connolly explained that all issues raised at Open Forum are recorded and actions required are tabled and the Township Co-ordinator passes these through to the relevant departments and Officers. However, due to funding constraints and loss of staff, which have not been replaced due to the budget cuts, all services have to be prioritised and unfortunately not every issue raised can now be addressed as there is no longer the staff or resources available.

- Harry Reed stated about the grid on Rochdale Road that always flooded and asked if it was correct that there was £10 million available now towards road maintenance.
Councillor Connolly stated that £10 million is available but for over the next 7 years and this is in fact another Government cut.
The Township Co-ordinator stated that he had met with the Highways engineers about this particular grid and it was to be sorted within the next 7 days.
- Mr Iqbal also reported further flooding at grids on Heywood Street and Fletcher Street which is a major health and safety concern as all the local children are leaving the Mosque and on these dark nights it is very dangerous.

Councillor Connolly stated that he would look into this.

- Victor Hagan reported that 8,000 residents of Six Town Housing properties had received a letter explaining a change to the tenancy agreement which he felt was threatening. He stated that he had contacted Six Town Housing and was told to contact the Council.

Councillor Connolly stated that the new tenancy agreement had been approved at Cabinet and this was designed to protect good tenants. There are tenants that can make others lives a misery and the new tenancy agreement is to

remove anti social behaviour from areas where the majority of residents make excellent tenants.

- Tim Boaden asked regarding Bury's Rangers' Service which has depleted from 10 to 2 following the budget cuts and how would the volunteer Rangers manage if there was no longer the equipment, tools or storage available. Could a report and feedback be reported back to the Township Forum regarding this?

Councillor Connolly stated he would be happy to investigate and report back, however, the cuts to the Rangers are directly from the Council's budget cuts and unfortunately, as explained previously, services had to be prioritised. Councillor Connolly stated how much the volunteer Rangers were appreciated.

Harry Reed explained that Tim should contact the Parks' Manager who was very helpful in relation to tools, equipment and storage which were still available.

- Mr Iqbal offered thanks from the local Muslim community to the Council following a funeral which had taken place in November 2014, in relation to their help with parking and organisation in the area, with the volume of people that attended the funeral. Councillor Connolly acknowledged the thanks and stated that he and Councillor Holt had been working closely with the Muslim community to try and solve any issues they may have.

Councillor Holt expressed how important it was for the whole local community to work together to try and resolve many issues as brought to the Forum this evening as unfortunately there is not the same budget or resources available to immediately address these.

682 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dave Thomas, Township Co-ordinator, brought to the attention of the Township Forum 'Thursday Night Club' which is a partnership between Early Break and Bury Youth Service and takes place every Thursday evening from 6.00 pm to 8.30 pm for children aged 11 – 16 years, at The Green, Clarence Park.

683 TOWNSHIP AREA PLAN - FOR INFORMATION

Bury East Township Co-ordinator, Dave Thomas, had submitted the Township Plan to members for information which provided an update on the progress of the themes contained within the Action Plan for 2012 -15.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

684 FUNDING REPORT - FOR INFORMATION

A copy of the Community Funding report for Bury East was submitted setting out

details of the funding allocations to date in support of the work of local voluntary and community groups.

685 VENUE, DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Bury East Township Forum would be held at Redvales Children's Centre on Wednesday 18 March 2015.

COUNCILLOR
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at Time Not Specified and ended at Time Not Specified)