

**Minutes of: BURY EAST TOWNSHIP FORUM**

**Date of Meeting:** 21 March 2012

**Venue:** Peel Room, Town Hall, Bury

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Councillors: I Ahmed, D M Cassidy, M Connolly, T Holt, K Rothwell, J Smith, T Tariq, S Walmsley

**Advisory Group**

**Representatives:** Tan Ahmed – ADAB (Chair), Tim Boaden - Seedfield TRA, Janet Edwards – Older People’s Forum, James Hill - Pimhole Residents’ Association, Lesley Wildeman - Topping Fold TRA

**Public attendance:** 10 members of the public were in attendance

**Apologies for absence:**

Anne Clayton - New Springs Community Project Group, Darren Durham - Freedom Church, Bury and Gemma Philburn - Streetwise 2000

---

**BETF.735 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made in relation to any items considered at the meeting.

**BETF.736 MINUTES**

**Delegated decision:**

That the Minutes of the Bury East Township Forum meeting held on 9 February 2011, be approved and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Connolly referred to the BESA Olympic Festival which had taken place at Broad Oak High School in October 2011 and took the opportunity to inform the Bury East Township Forum that it had been announced that the Olympic flame will arrive in Bury on Saturday 23 June 2012 and that several local people in Bury will be the torch bearers. The torch will be carried from Rochdale and travel from Rochdale Road through the Rock, past the Town Hall on Knowsley Street onto Manchester Road and up to Bury Old Road, Prestwich.

Councillor Connolly stated that this was fantastic not just for Bury but also for Bury East as the torch would be carried through this part of the Borough on its journey.

**BETF.737 POLICE UPDATE (BRIEFING ON PARTNERSHIP TASKING TEAM)**

Tan Ahmed (Chair) explained that Inspector Cadden had unfortunately had to offer her apologies to the Bury East Township Forum and that Dave Thomas, Township Co-ordinator, would give a brief update on the Partnership Tasking Team under item 6 on the Agenda (Township Area Plan – Priorities Update).

Councillor Connolly expressed disappointment that there was no Police or Highways representation and stressed the importance of Officers attending future meetings.

**BETF.738 BARDOC**

Rukhsana Huq, Community Engagement Worker, was unable to attend the Bury East Township Forum and offered her apologies.

**BETF.739 BACKING YOUNG BURY**

Tracey Flynn, Principal Strategy and Resources Officer, gave a presentation at the meeting on promoting employment opportunities for 16 – 24 year olds and supporting the local economy.

Tracey gave statistics on youth unemployment and stated that in Bury there was an 18.6% increase of Jobseekers Allowance claimants and of that number 31.3% were 16 – 24 year olds.

It was reported that the scrapping of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and the increase in University tuition fees could result in a potential increase in the number of youths unemployed in the future and that the current economic climate could be in danger of pushing young people further away from the job market as more experienced jobseekers enter the market.

Tracey explained that the Backing Young Bury offer was to increase the number of corporate apprenticeships over the next three years and expand the offer of work experience placements and promote apprenticeships with local businesses and for Bury businesses to support the Council, offering apprenticeships, work trials and work experience.

Backing Young Bury was a co-ordinated Team Bury campaign to raise awareness of youth unemployment and the role of apprenticeships to reduce this, with public and private sector investment.

Bury Council, with its partners in Team Bury, is expanding its Backing Young Bury campaign in 2012 to provide 16 - 24 year olds a better chance of succeeding in the job market. Integral to this is generating more apprenticeship opportunities with Bury employers. Bury Schools are a potential source of apprenticeships.

The Backing Young Bury offer is that 16 – 18 year old apprentices have their training costs fully funded and 19 – 24 year old apprentices require a financial contribution to training costs, with incentives available for qualifying private sector businesses. Also, to identify local training providers or source more specialised training where required and arrange for vacancies to be advertised through Connexions, Jobcentre Plus and NAS website.

Questions and comments were invited from Members of the Township Forum and the following issues were raised:

- § Would equal opportunities be given to youths with practical skills not just academic?

It would depend on the particular business as to what they require from a young person in terms of either practical or academic skills.

Councillor Connolly informed the Forum that he and the Chief Executive had visited a number of schools and businesses. At Parrenthorn High school, the Head Teacher gave a positive example of a non academic pupil who had undertaken work experience at a Garage which had proved to be very successful.

Councillor Connolly agreed that achieving five A - C GCSE's was a barrier and that Backing Young Bury offered a diverse range of opportunities. He stated that he and the Chief Executive would continue to talk to local businesses about the scheme.

- § Councillor Ahmed welcomed the initiative but stressed there was a diverse community in Bury and how would the initiative be pro-active for everyone?

Tracey replied that Partner Organisations are aware of the scheme and the opportunities are widely advertised throughout the Borough. Backing Young Bury would not deal

with businesses for 'cheap labour' but in getting the best value for all young people.

The Chair, Tan Ahmed, stated that so far 9 BME young people had started on apprenticeships.

- § Councillor Walmsley reported that she knew several young people who didn't know yet what they wanted for employment and asked if Backing Young Bury would be targeting careers advice services in schools?

Tracey stated that Bury Council's Organisation Development Team are visiting schools to promote Backing Young Bury and the Chair, Tan Ahmed, also reported the Connexions involvement also.

**It was agreed:**

That Tracey Flynn be thanked for her presentation.

**BETF.740 TOWNSHIP AREA PLAN – PRIORITIES UPDATE**

Dave Thomas, The Township Co-ordinator, submitted the Draft Bury East Township Area Plan detailing the key achievable priorities for Bury East arising from the discussions which had taken place at the last meeting of the Township Forum. These were:

- Employment/worklessness/income – Raising aspirations and improving interventions
- Crime/perceptions of crime – Drug related crime and perceptions of crime, anti-social behaviour and burglary dwelling
- Health and wellbeing – Physical activity and promoting healthy lifestyles
- Educational Attainment and learning opportunities – Promoting reading from a young age
- Community cohesion and integration – Cohesion initiatives and integration
- Township Forum participation and involvement – Promoting Township Forum meetings and increasing attendance and involvement

The next steps in identifying the key issues and priorities are:

- Meet with advisory group members, elected members and key partners
- Finalise the priorities for inclusion in the final draft plan
- Add themes to template as demonstrated
- Publish the Bury East Township Area Plan in April 2012

Questions and comments were invited from Members of the Township Forum and the following issues were raised:

- Jimmy Hill, Pimhole Residents' Association, asked the Township Co-ordinator where he had obtained statistics relating to deprivation levels within Bury East specifically areas such as Pimhole Road, South Cross Street and Cecil Street. He felt the figures were unjust as the Pimhole area was undergoing a transformation. The Township Co-ordinator stressed that it was not to paint a bad picture but the statistics were official Government figures.

Councillor Connolly stated that Pimhole was a Super Output area of which he was proud to represent but some inequalities existed of which problems and issues needed to be diagnosed and issues addressed.

Councillor Holt stated that Pimhole was a remarkable project and a tribute to the strength of the Community.

- Councillor Cassidy asked if there was a Homewatch Officer in the area as she was aware of a PCSO that could undertake this task.

The Township Co-ordinator replied that although he was unsure if there was an Officer, there were home watch groups to promote initiatives and assist expansion.

- Kath Bond stated that she felt the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings were more productive than the Township Forums.

The Chair, Tan Ahmed replied that the resources for the PACT meetings were no longer available. The Township Co-ordinator stated that although the PACT meetings were successful, the Partnership Tasking Teams would compliment that work.

Councillor Tariq explained that the role of the Township Forums was different as it addressed issues on a more strategic level, whereas the PACT meetings were based more on a neighbourhood level.

- Kath Bond stated that she wanted to raise issues at the Township Forums to Officers of Police and Highways but so far there had been no representation from either at the Forum meetings.

Councillor Walmsley replied that the Township Forums were to deal with more collective issues and improve the lives, health and well being of local people and move away from individual issues.

The Township Co-ordinator then explained to the Township Forum about the Bury East Partnership Tasking Group which would provide regular updates to the Forum on progress of the Group and other successes for GMP, using Forums to promote Homewatch and encouraging groups to access Township Forum funding.

The Group would meet every six weeks and consist of key partners including the Police Inspector, the Township Co-ordinator and Homewatch Groups. Key stakeholders have also been approached to become members and the initial meeting had been held in February.

**It was agreed:**

That the Township Co-ordinator, Dave Thomas, be thanked for his presentation.

**BETF.741 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair, Tan Ahmed, invited questions, comments and representations from members of the public present at the meeting. Questions were asked and comments made on the issues detailed below.

The Township Forum Co-ordinator, Dave Thomas undertook to obtain a reply to matters which could not be dealt with at the meeting.

Harry Reid presented to the members of the Forum two pictures of a sculpture which was to be erected in Openshaw Park. Harry expressed his disappointment at the sculpture as 2013 would be the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of Openshaw Park and he had hoped to commemorate in some way Thomas Openshaw, who was the mill owner who had paid for the park and had given the land in 1888. Harry informed the Forum that the Sculpture was to cost £20,000.

Jimmy Hill, Pimhole Residents' Association stated that Openshaw Park previously had a bad reputation but not now. He was aware that there had been a meeting to discuss the sculpture but he had not been invited and he felt it was unfair as it was not something that residents wanted.

Councillor Connolly stated that he was unaware of the sculpture and asked who had commissioned it and who would be providing funding?

A member of the public replied that she was aware that the sculpture was an art installation with outside funding and informed the Forum that Tony Traeh, Arts, and Mike Bent, Parks, were responsible for the sculpture and that others had already been erected in other parks, including a dinosaur, cup cake and a cheetah. Councillor Connolly stated he would try to find out more about the sculpture and report back to the Township Forum.

Kath Bond enquired about the grounds at St. Paul's which had been converted to flats as residents had been promised a memorial garden.

Councillor Holt replied that he was unsure now of the funding available as he was aware that the Developer of the flats was no longer in business.

The Township Co-ordinator, Dave Thomas, explained that if it met the criteria, funding could be available through the Township Forum.

Councillor Walmsley stated that there was still some Ward and Cross Ward funding available and the Tennant's Residents' Association could submit a request for funding. The Township Co-ordinator had application forms available to complete.

## **BETF.742**

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair, Tan Ahmed, informed the Township Forum that Councillor Ahmed would be stepping down as a Councillor for Redvales Ward and took the opportunity to thank him for his contribution and dedication to his Bury East. Councillor Holt also thanked Councillor Ahmed and wished him all the best in his future endeavours.

The Chair also asked the Forum on the views of the venues and layout of rooms for the last four meetings. The following comments were made:

- Councillor Cassidy stated that she felt that the round table layout of the previous meeting at the Freedom Church was less formal.
- Councillor Connolly agreed that he felt the last meeting at the Freedom Church, Bright Street was a fantastic venue and would also favour informal meetings. He stated that

this Township Forum should not meet at the Town Hall as it was a community meeting and therefore the meetings should be held within that community. He felt it necessary to hold a meeting within each of the three Wards and it was hoped the next meeting could be held in Redvales Ward.

- Harry Reid stated that elderly people struggled to get to the meetings on Winter evenings and Councillor Connolly suggested meeting during the day during Winter.
- Lesley Wildeman – Topping Fold TRA, agreed with the venues away from the Town Hall but said it was essential all facilities were available, including sound and loop systems, parking and disabled facilities.
- Councillor Walmsley informed the Forum that currently there was an undertaking of the operational framework of Township Forums and an online survey was available on the Bury Website until Friday 23 March 2011 and it would be an opportunity for people to leave feedback regarding the Township Forums. Councillor Walmsley explained that the outcome of the framework would go before Council on 16 May 2012. So far there had been over 200 responses.
- Councillor Rothwell stated that for personal reasons he felt that the Town Hall was a better venue but if the induction loop was available for outside venues that would suit him and he too was in favour of the informal round table approach.

Councillor Holt took the opportunity to congratulate Tan Ahmed on how well he had Chaired the meetings of Bury East Township Forums and felt it was due to his expertise as Chair that the meetings had run so successfully.

**TAN AHMED (ADAB)**  
**Chair**

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.10 pm)