

Minutes of: WHITEFIELD AND UNSWORTH TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 10 September 2013

Present: Councillor A Audin (in the Chair)
Councillors K Audin, R Caserta, J Grimshaw, D Jones,
A Matthews, B Vincent and M Wiseman

Also in attendance: Leonard Lott – Whitefield and Unsworth Homewatch Assn.
Marlene Dawson – Victoria Estate TRA
Pamela Taylor – Hollins Village Community Assn.
Alex Stacey – Whitefield and Unsworth Business Group
Yvonne Moore – Old Hall Park Residents Assn.
Mrs S Bannister – Jewish Representative Council

Public Attendance: 30 members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor E Fitzgerald

WUTF314 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made in respect of any of the items to be considered at the meeting.

WUTF315 MINUTES

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

WUTF316 MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

The Township Co-ordinator submitted a report on the action taken on issues raised at the last meeting of the Township Forum.

(A) Whitefield House, Whitefield

The meeting was attended by Dave Marno (Head of Development – Planning) and Alex Holland (Head of Asset Management) to update the Township Forum on the latest information regarding Whitefield House.

The meeting was provided with a brief summary of what had taken place following the purchase of Whitefield House by the present owners. This included applications for planning permission for a nursing home, the proposed purchase of land from the Council and the inclusion of the site within a conservation area. The planning inspectorate is currently considering an appeal by the owner regarding a proposal to demolish what remains of Whitefield House. This appeal has remained undecided for 18 months. It was reported that the owners architect had made contact regarding a change of scheme, although no detail had been submitted.

(B) Core Strategy

The Township Forum was informed of the response made to the Core Strategy consultation following a productive meeting held with the planning officer and members of the Township Forum.

It was agreed:

That the update be noted.

WUTF317 FLOOD RISK INFORMATION

The Chair reported that a consultation had started to allow the public to make comments on the Flood Risk Strategy for Bury.

It was reported that Whitefield and Unsworth was a low risk flood area.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

WUTF318 FOSTER CARERS

The meeting was attended by officers from the Bury Council Fostering and Adoption services regarding the need for more foster parents within Bury to provide a home for Bury children. It was reported that support and training would be provided to anyone interested in fostering as well as financial assistance. Fostering is open to all areas of the community and there was no upper age limit for those wishing to find out more.

The training for prospective foster carers takes place over an eight month period to improve the skills and knowledge of the individual.

Anyone interested in fostering is welcome to contact the Family Placement Team at Bury Council for further information.

The Chair invited questions from the Township Forum and members of the public present.

It was agreed:

That the presentation made be and the officers from the Family Placement Team be thanked for their attendance.

WUTF319 POLICE UPDATES

An update was given by Inspector Mark Kenny (GMP) on Policing issues within Whitefield and Unsworth.

The meeting was informed that changes to the Greater Manchester Police were ongoing in the way its service was delivered, however 3000+ incidents were taking place across Greater Manchester on a daily basis.

The police had introduced Integrated Neighbourhood Policing Teams across Bury with a view to working closely with communities. It was reported that the new Chief Superintendent for Bury (Tim Forber) had introduced an expectation that officers should be Personable, Professional and Proud in the manner they conduct themselves in their duties.

The Township Forum was reminded to take extra care to ensure they protect their homes and belongings with darker evenings approaching. There was usually an increase in crime such as burglary. There would be advice available to residents as part of the 'Darker Nights' operation currently ongoing.

The Chair invited questions.

Alex Stacey: Are Police Cadets still used by GMP or they to be disbanded?

Inspector Kenny: I will check and let you know.

Derek Boden: Can something be done using electronic signs regarding the speed of vehicles using Thatch Leach Lane rather than cutting back trees?

Inspector Kenny: The Police take speed reduction very seriously and there are officers specialising in speed detection. A sign was used on Sunnybank to reduce speed successfully. Local police will be contacted to take action on this matter.

WUTF320 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited the members of the public present to ask questions or raise items of concern relating to the provision of local services.

Mr Marshall requested consideration be given to remarking the road on the roundabout located on Bury New Road (junction 17 M60) for the reason that the present markings were confusing to drivers. Reference was made to the markings at the Heap Bridge roundabout and efficiency of the system used.

The Township Co-ordinator undertook to raise the matter with the Traffic Section.

Councillor Bayley asked for action to address the problem of taxi vehicles parking on bus lanes on Bury New Road and the problems caused to the flow of traffic this causes. Parking bays were available close to the taxi-office that are not used. The problems were taking place outside of the Tandra taxi office.

Councillor Caserta reported that matter will be raised with the taxi Licensing Enforcement Officer.

Councillor Vincent asked if more bus services could be provided for Bury Old Road which has one service (135)

It was reported that a representative from First Bus would be attending the meeting of the Township Forum in November.

Councillor Bayley reported that Bury New Road had been allocated as the main route into Manchester. Previously TfGM had been asked to run the 137 and 138 services.

Alex Stacey - Can action be taken to re-instate the double yellow lines outside of the NatWest Bank.

Mrs Blunt – What is the position regarding the future of the Whitefield Health Centre and the Uplands. The information provided by the health centre and the Bury Time is misleading regarding the refurbishment.

Councillor Vincent reported that contrary to the story published by the Bury Time the Health Centre was not closing down.

Could action be taken to address the noise and public health issues resulting from people leaving the Old Bulls Head premises late in the evening which is open until 2am.

Councillor Jones reported that the police require residents to provide information on establishments before they can take action against the licence holder. For this reason residents are requested to report issues to the police so information can be recorded. The police will also make the licence holder aware of any issues and the police will monitor the premises or take appropriate action.

John Mallon suggested that a review take place of the Whitefield area to look at the issue of businesses and car parking and general planning and development of the area.

Councillor Jones reminded the meeting that the Council was in the process of a consultation period for the production of the Core Strategy which was considered at the previous Township Forum. The consultation was open until 20 September 2013. The Strategy will consider all aspects of planning within the borough.

WUTF321 UPDATE FROM WHITEFIELD BUSINESS GROUP

Alex Stacey gave an update of the work of the Whitefield Business Group.

The meeting was informed that the role of the Whitefield Business Group was to support business and encourage footfall within the Whitefield area through regular meetings and organising events to raise the interest of the public such as markets and festivals.

The upcoming Halloween Festival on 27 October which would be covered this year in case of bad weather and would appeal to all age groups.

The Business Group were also working with the Police to help promote 'Operation Treacle' in the lead up to Halloween and bonfire night.

WUTF322 COMMUNITY NOTICES

The Chair gave notices of forthcoming events that would be taking place within Whitefield and Unsworth.

WUTF323 COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE AND FUNDING UPDATE

An update on the Whitefield and Unsworth Township Action Plan and a report of the Programme Support Officer was submitted providing details of ward funding for 2013/2014 was submitted.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

COUNCILLOR A AUDIN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 8.15 pm)