

Minutes of: BURY WEST TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 12 March 2015

Present: Councillor (in the Chair)
Councillors S Southworth, R Walker and J Walton

Also in attendance:

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J Frith, Councillor Kerrison and Councillor S Nuttall

BWTF.549 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

BWTF.550 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 15 JANUARY 2015

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Township Forum held on 17 January 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

BWTF.551 POLICE UPDATE

PCSOs Shelley Flitcroft and Sue Eckersley attended the meeting to update those present on police issues across Bury West.

More redundancies of civilian staff had been recently announced. There was some movement of officers across the borough and there were a number of police staff off work with stress related illnesses. To assist with this a wellness initiative had been implemented which offered stress related help to those who required it.

It was reported that there had been a rise in burglaries across the area and the number of cannabis farms detected had also risen and in what were perceived to be nicer areas of the borough.

Most complaints received were in relation to parking issues, dog faeces, inconsiderate driving and issues around parking near schools.

There had not been any complaints relating to door knocking offering repairs etc but there had been complaints regarding telephone calls from abroad trying to con money from people.

During half term there had been a rise in reports of domestic violence.

It was also reported that there had been issues regarding thefts particularly from the Co-op on Ainsworth Road. The thieves had taken large amounts of chocolate and chewing gum and had moved on to stealing packs of meat. The police were working with the shops and looking at CCTV to help catch those involved but they were very good at concealing their faces with large hats.

Shelley explained that the crimes she had outlined were still quite low level and Bury was one of the safest places to live in Greater Manchester.

Shelley also reported that Sue had recently been nominated for an award within Greater Manchester Police.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- A member of the public asked whether the people stealing from the shops were known to the Police.

It was explained that they were usually the same group of people all dressed in a similar fashion who were stealing to pass on goods in order to fund some sort of a habit.

- Councillor Walker referred to the rise in cannabis farms and explained that there had been an incident a few years ago where a house had been raided and it turned out not to be a cannabis farm at all. Councillor Walker asked how this type of incident would not happen again.

It was explained that most of the cannabis farms reported were due to the smell coming from the properties and neighbours noticing the smell. It was also explained that for the Police to enter a property that was suspected of being a cannabis farm they would have to have permission from the Chief Inspector beforehand.

It was agreed:

1. That Shelley and Sue be thanked for their attendance
2. That the update be noted.

BWTF.552 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME/OPEN FORUM

The Chair, Councillor Southworth invited those present to ask questions relating to Council services or raise any issues in open forum:-

- Mrs Anderton representing Bury Croquet Club explained that the Club had recently taken over the old bowling greens at Whitehead Park in order to expand. The Club still had the original site located at Coronation Road in Radcliffe but had found that they had needed to expand in order to offer more opportunities to those wanting to play.

Mrs Anderton explained that the club had relayed all of the grass on the bowling greens which had given them 3 full size croquet lawns and the flower beds had all been replanted.

The club house would be redesigned to allow for storage of mowers and the provision of a kitchen and changing rooms.

New members were welcome and the club currently had 8 teams in the North West League and the opportunity to take part in tournaments all over the country.

There would be open days held in the near future as well as coaching sessions. The Croquet Club website contained all of the information about these events as well as membership details.

A member of the public present asked Mrs Anderton what security was like at the site in Whitehead Park and it was explained that the lawns were fenced in and there were locked gates. The security was very good.

Councillor Southworth asked what ages were catered for. Mrs Anderton stated that all age groups were welcome and all heights were able to play with different sized mallets available.

Councillor Walker suggested that the club apply for a community grant as there was still some funding available.

Councillor Walker also stated that he had been sorry to see the bowlers leave the park but happy that the site had been taken over.

- A member of the public referred to ongoing issues with the 98 bus service and the 472/4 service. The services had improved in the past but there were once again issues of timing. Sometimes people were having to wait for over half an hour for a bus - particularly on the 472/4 routes. It was asked whether there were any Council representation that could take these issues forward.

It was explained that Councillor Bayley was the Councils representative on the TfGM Committee and the concerns raised would be passed on to him to carry forward.

- A member of the public explained that he had read a letter in the Bury Times stating that some other local authorities were recycling the plastic pots and containers that Greater Manchester were not and asked when this would be rectified.

Councillor Southworth explained that when she researched these reports she usually found that this was not the case or the Councils concerned had trialled a scheme and then given up a few months later. Councillor Southworth explained that the types of pots concerned were manufactured very cheaply using PVA and PVC based plastics which were not recyclable. It was also explained that there was a large amount of unnecessary packaging used which was not recyclable and the supermarkets should be encouraged to move away from this practice.

- A member of the public referred to the issue of potholes across the area and explained that where some had been patched up in the past they were starting to recur. Newington Drive was particularly bad at the moment.

It was explained that all pot holes should be reported to the 0161 253 5353 number so that the Council had a record and would patch them up as soon as was

possible. It was also explained that in emergencies the potholes were repaired by hand and these did not last as long as the ones that were repaired using the new equipment. Where possible the new equipment would be used.

- A member of the public referred to gas works that had been carried out on Throstle Grove and asked whether there was any agreement or scheme in place relating to the repair to the highway after the work was completed.

It was explained that the ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities and Transport for Greater Manchester had introduced the Greater Manchester Road Activities Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) which covered road works undertaken by a range of organisations including utilities companies, highways authorities and local councils' highways departments. The scheme allows for greater control on the works carried out on all highways across the Greater Manchester conurbation.

BWTF.553 MILE LANE UPDATE

Councillor Walker reported that the newsagent on Mile Lane had been scheduled to open on the 11 March. This had to be put back by a few days as work was still being completed on the interior of the shop. It was anticipated that it would be open within a matter of days.

The Post Office will re-open on Mile Lane but talks were currently still ongoing with the Post Office on issues such as the number of counters.

All of the other shops were occupied.

Councillor Walker also reported that he had written to Community Payback to enquire about cleaning up the land in between the shops and the medical centre. He had not heard anything back so would write again.

It was agreed:

The information be noted.

BWTF.554 LIDL UPDATE

It was agreed:

That this item would be carried over to the next meeting of the Township Forum.

BWTF.555 BURY WEST TOWNSHIP FORUM PLAN **FOR INFORMATION**

Christine Maksymowski, Township Manager, submitted a copy of the latest Bury West Township Plan for information.

It was reported that the progress plan would be submitted to the next meeting of the Township Forum to update on progress made in relation to the objectives.

It was agreed:

That the Plan be noted.

BWTF.556 COMMUNITY FUNDING REPORT *FOR INFORMATION*

A copy of the Community Funding report for Bury West was submitted, setting out details of the funding allocations to date in support of the work of local voluntary and community groups. It was explained that all remaining monies from all Townships had been put into a joint pot to be allocated before the end of the month.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

BWTF.557 HIGHWAYS NETWORK

Councillor Walker referred to traffic building up every morning on Bolton Road heading into Bury and every evening coming out of Bury stated that the Council should review the highways network across the borough. There were major issues with traffic congestion from all areas.

Councillor Walker explained that there had been discussion years ago about a bypass being built from Ramsbottom to Whitefield but nothing had ever come of it.

BWTF.558 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was reported that the date of the next meeting of the Bury West Township Forum had not yet been agreed. As soon as the date was known it would be published on the Council website.

**COUNCILLOR
Chair**

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.00 pm)