

Minutes of: **WHITEFIELD AND UNSWORTH TOWNSHIP FORUM**

Date of Meeting: 6 January 2015

Present: Councillor (in the Chair)
Councillors Adams, J Grimshaw, D Jones, Mallon,
A Matthews, Whitby and M Wiseman

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

**Apologies for
Absence:** Councillor R Caserta, Councillor E Fitzgerald, Moore and
Taylor

WUTF.558 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to any items to be considered.

WUTF.559 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 were submitted. An update on those matters raised at the meeting was circulated.

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

WUTF.560 BURY DIRECTORY

The meeting was attended by Heather Hutton and Katie Wood who gave a presentation to introduce the Bury Directory. 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 and organisations. 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 services times and real time journey planning.

The Directory is new and is still developing to include further information and services and suggestions on what to include would be welcomed.

Residents would be able to register as a user and can comments on how well the system/service was operating.

For those residents who did not have access to the internet, arrangements are 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 a 3rd Sector Development Agency. The usual public access points will still be remain if home access was not available.

The Bury Directory is available on www.theburydirectory.co.uk and is AAA+ compliant and has multi-language options.

The Chair invited questions.

- Inspector Kenny asked if it was possible to include a facility for residents to be able to report a crime on line.

It was reported that this would be looked at by the working group.

- A question was asked if negative contributions received would be shown.

It was reported that contributions received would be vetted before being placed on the site.

It was agreed:

That Heather and Katie be thanked for their attendance the information and responses provided be noted

WUTF.561 FIRST BUS SERVICES

The meeting was attended by David Longmate and David Rutherage from First Bus to talk about bus services in the Whitefield and Unsworth area. Councillor Noel Bayley also attended the meeting in his capacity as a Council representative on Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

The Chair invited questions.

- Why are the bus arrival times in the bus shelters not accurate?

The shelters are owned by TfGM. Bus times are available in real time at the bus depot only and not at the bus shelters. The cost of placing time displays at the 11500 bus stops in Greater Manchester would be extremely high. Also timetables on shelters are sometimes stolen and maybe out of date. It is not always possible to replace these in view of the £7.1million of cuts that have been imposed. The development of apps for phones would be the way forward rather than bus shelter displays.

- Why do buses wait at certain locations?

There are certain spots on a route where the driver needs to be because the bus is being monitored to ensure it stays to its schedule. These spots mean that a driver may wait if they are ahead of schedule so they can be on time. A bus can arrive 1 minute early or be 5 minutes late at a stop. With the introduction of new technology it will be possible to better control how buses run so the service operates more efficiently along the route.

- On the 135 route there were three busses all together and then no further buses after them. Why does this happen?

The 135 route is a high frequency route with buses every 7 to 8 minutes. Sometimes it is inevitable that there will be bunching of buses at points along the route due to traffic density and time spent picking up passengers.

- Some bus drivers are rude to passengers?

With all customer facing services it is sometimes the case that there will be a problem driver who does not provide a high level of customer service. In situation like this First Bus asks that you pass on information of your experience.

- Why do drivers not scan passes and not accept them at the time they should?

85% of concessionary passes are now scanned. There were issues with the older passes which were not fit for purpose. Let First Bus know if your pass is not accepted with the details of the bus and time it happened.

- People are complaining about the 92 and 93 services which have changed without the passengers knowing. Will you consult with bus users when you are planning to make changes in future?

There is a reliability issue on both routes. There is a problem from the works being carried out on Croft Lane. Getting workers to the medical centre was the initial focus but getting out of Bury to get to the motorway is now the issue. There are limited resources and the 93 and 92 are not working efficiently. We will consult users on planned changes in the future.

The bus services are hindered by ongoing road works that are taking place in Manchester, Salford and Bury. This slows the traffic flow down and in turn resulted in late buses First Bus cannot control this and as a result cannot provide the service to passengers it wants.

- Why was the 154 service stopped?

This service starts from the Cheetham Hill depot. This was a tendered service and was stopped after a decision was made by TfGM. The service was never on time and the route was then altered.

- Disabled people and older people need time to sit down when they have got on the bus. Sometime drivers set off before they have sat down and it is unsafe.

First Bus are going to distribute PAWS cards for bus users. PAWS means 'Pull Away When Safe'.

- Will First Bus return to a future meeting of the Township Forum to meet service users and answer questions?

Yes First Bus will attend the March Township Forum meeting.

It was agreed:

That the representatives from First Bus be thanked for their attendance at the meeting and arrangements be made for their attendance at the March meeting of the Township Forum.

WUTF.562 POLICE UPDATE

Inspector Mark Kenny and Sergeant Richard Garland addressed the meeting on the work of the Police in the Whitefield and Unsworth area.

- Mr Boden asked that in view of the violence reported during recent robberies that have taken place, were the police looking to address these through strategies to quickly deal with offenders?

It was reported that operational tactics of the police are constantly assessed to check the efficiency of how it does business. Violent crime is a priority area for the police to deal with. The police will look to adjust its tactics and how it involves its partners in the rehabilitation and /or treatment of offenders.

- How many beat police are there in Whitefield?

There are PCSOs and back office staff who provide a fantastic service in helping the police operate efficiently. Whitefield has 3 beats and 4 beat officers.

It should be noted that that 1400 officers have been lost as a result of cuts to funding and we need to deliver the service with the resources we have.

There has been an increase in burglaries which have taken place in the evening so residents are reminded to make sure that doors and windows are always secured and that a light is on at home. Timer switches are very good at preventing break-ins. Also make sure older neighbours are safe.

Mr Lott encouraged residents to get involved or set up a local Homewatch Group to improve security of your local area and get to know your neighbours better.

It was agreed:

That the update be noted.

WUTF.563 HEALTHWATCH BURY

The Chair welcomed Barbara Barlow (Chair of Bury Healthwatch) and Anna Marie (researcher) to the meeting. A presentation was given on the work of Bury Healthwatch.

Healthwatch is the new consumer champion for both health and social care in England which is available at local and national levels. Healthwatch is an independent company and plans to become an influential and effective voice of the public to help shape and improve the services the public use. Healthwatch finds out what people think of health and social care services and presents the information to the people who plan and run services. Statutory powers allow Healthwatch to approach the Care Quality Commission and service providers in cases where there is evidence and information to suggest a service is poor, or people are at risk in any way.

Healthwatch Bury will be undertaking visits and studies to various local organisations and service providers. Anyone wishing to be involved can contact Healthwatch at:

Healthwatch Bury, 3 Manchester Road, Bury, BL9 0DR.

Telephone: 0161 253 6300, Website: www.healthwatchbury.co.uk

or Email: info@healthwatchbury.co.uk

The Chair invited questions.

How is Healthwatch funded?

The Government give money to the Council and the Council then allocates funding locally.

How is confidential information stored?

Information is stored on a database and confidentiality statements are signed by staff and representatives.

It was agreed:

That the presentation be noted and Barbara Barlow and Anna Marie be thanked for their attendance.

WUTF.564 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited questions from the members of the public present about the work or performance of the Council or Council's services relevant to the Whitefield and Unsworth area.

There is hogweed growing on the river bank at Springwater Park. There are signs up to notify this. United Utilities were working in the area before it appeared. What is being done about this?

There is currently no funding available to remove the hogweed. At his time the Council is monitoring the area and ensuring signs are in place to notify the public.

Councillor Mallon undertook to raise this with Environmental Services officers. There was also Japanese Knotweed present in the park and information was needed on the areas affected. Park groups are available for local people to join and improve their local park. Getting people to take back their parks will prevent parks becoming no go areas.

Trolleys are being dumped following a decision by Morrisons to stop the £1 returnable deposit for their use.

The Township Co-ordinator asked for the local of trolleys and would contact the stores they belonged to for their removal.

There is an un-adopted road off bank Street in Whitefield behind the Porada Restaurant where cars are being parked and this is extending to the small piece of land adjacent to it. Could something be done to address this in view of the conservation area status?

The Township Co-ordinator would look into the matter.

Sunnybank Woods footpaths are in a bad state and have never been maintained.

The Township Co-ordinator would look into the matter.

The parking at Unsworth Pole is causing a problem because drivers are ignoring the double yellow lines and there is a potential for an accident to happen. Also outside Tandra on Bury New Road.

The Township Co-ordinator would look into the matter and contact NSL and the Police to take action.

WUTF.565 TOWN PLAN UPDATE

It was agreed:

That the Township Plan be noted.

WUTF.566 FUNDING REPORT

Consideration was given to a Community Funding report which provided an update on the levels of funding available in the Whitefield and Unsworth wards for 2014/15.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

WUTF.567 PUBLIC NOTICES

The Chair invited attendees to give any dates of events taking place in the Whitefield and Unsworth area.

COUNCILLOR

Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 1.00 pm and ended at 3.40 pm)