

Minutes of: RAMSBOTTOM, TOTTINGTON AND NORTH MANOR TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 7 March 2016

Present: Councillor D Gunther (in the Chair)
Councillors I Bevan, J Daly, L Fitzwalter, R Hodgkinson,
K Hussain, Keeley and Y Wright

Also in attendance:

Public Attendance: There were 18 members of the public present at the meeting

Apologies for Absence: Councillor I Gartside

RTNM.778 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

RTNM.779 BRENDA HEADLEY

Councillor Gunther reported that it was with great sadness that she had to inform those present of the recent death of Mrs Brenda Headley. It was explained that Mrs Headley had been a regular attendee and contributor at the Township forum for a number of years. It was also reported that Mrs Headley had been very active in helping people across the borough.

RTNM.780 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Township Forum held on 11 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

RTNM.781 MATTERS ARISING

Dave Thomas reported that following the issue raised by Mr Booth regarding the use of drones on Council land at Summerseat Lane South he had spoken with the Assistant Director to seek guidance on the issue. It was explained that the use of drones would be dealt with the same way that radio controlled aircraft were and as such were governed by specific guidelines. If a resident was concerned about the use of drones near to themselves or their property they should report it to the Council on the 0161 253 5353 telephone number.

Police Sergeant Angela Freudenberger explained that there were specific distances that drones should comply with which were 50 metres away from a house, vehicle or structure. Sergeant Freudenberger asked that residents report breaches of the guidelines to the Police 101 number so that regular breaches could be investigated.

RTNM.782 PENSION WISE

Claire Whittle from Pension Wise attended the meeting to explain the Pension Wise service that was available to all 50 year olds and over. It was explained that Pension Wise was a Government scheme that was being provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau. Trained, qualified advisers were available to discuss pension issues with anybody that required it.

The service was impartial and strictly confidential and helped people in all different circumstances understand the different options available to them with regards to their pension options. They would also signpost to different financial services that were available and help customers feel more confident with their pension choices.

It was also explained that the service alerted people to the different scams that were being carried out in relation to early release of funds.

The service was available on an individual one to one basis or information could also be provided to groups.

The Pension Wise website also contained a lot of useful information and could be accessed through www.pensionwise.gov.uk

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

Sergeant Freudenberger suggested that a session should be provided to the Police so that they were aware of the scams that were being carried out and could advise their customers on this.

RTNM.783 POLICE UPDATE

Sergeant Angela Freudenberger and PCSO Graham Lee attended the meeting to give an update on the work of the Police across Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor wards.

PCSO Graham Lee reported that since 1 February 2016 there had been 24 cases of criminal damage reported over the three beats, 12 of which were damage to vehicles. There had been 12 reports of burglaries to dwellings and 16 burglaries other. Most of the incidents reported were due to people leaving windows open and doors unlocked.

Sergeant Freudenberger reported that there had been significant work carried out in relation to a specific group of youths and it was hoped that she would be able to report a positive outcome to this at a future meeting.

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

Councillor Gunther referred to illegal parking around local schools and asked if anything could be done about this as it was dangerous.

Sergeant Freudenbereger asked which schools were having the most issues and stated that she would ask that the police officers in those areas carry out enforcement at the schools in question.

It was agreed:

That Sergeant Angela Freudenberger and PCSO Graham Lee be thanked for their update and their attendance at the meeting.

RTNM.784 FUNDING FOR ARTWORK/ SCULPTURE IN RAMSBOTTOM

Dave Thomas reported that there was £30,000 available from Section 106 money to fund a piece of contemporary sculpture or artwork in Ramsbottom. The piece must contribute to the visitor economy.

It was explained that an artist selection panel would be established to consider the piece.

Consultation would be undertaken and all views were welcomed.

Those present were asked for their thoughts on the location of the piece should and what it should be.

Councillor Hussain asked that whatever it was it should have a capacity to earn money which could then be put back into Ramsbottom.

Councillor Fitzwalter stated that it should be something that reflected the heritage of the town and could possibly have links to Dickens or the Dickens Trail. Councillor Fitzwalter stated that this would definitely be something that would bring in more tourists.

Mr Farlow stated that a feature had been made of a chimney at Worsley Green which was a tourist attraction. He suggested that something similar could be done with the Chimney at the site of the old Ramsbottom Paper Mill. This would show links to the industrial heritage of the town.

Dave asked that any suggestions be e-mailed to him and he would pass onto the relevant officer.

RTNM.785 OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Kate Slingsby, a resident of Ramsbottom explained that extremely large HGVs were regularly using the town as a cut through to the motorway and causing serious damage to the highways and possible structural damage to the buildings.

The vehicles were so large that they were taking up the whole junction at the top of Bridge Street to get around the corner. Kate asked whether it would be possible to consider banning HGVs through the town except for access. It was also stated that Bridge Street would be closing for repairs during the summer and it would be possible to install a weight restriction at this time.

Councillor Fitzwalter explained that she had discussed this issue with the Assistant Director over highways and she would follow this up. Councillor Fitzwalter also explained that she would set up a meeting with Councillors, Officers and residents to discuss a way forward.

Alistair Waddell suggested that a referendum could be carried out regarding the issue if it was felt necessary.

A member of the public asked why the 481 Rosso bus service through Ramsbottom on a Saturday had stopped running.

Dave Thomas stated that he would contact the bus company about this issue.

A member of the public explained that they were aware that Bury Council were selling off playing fields across the borough. None in Ramsbottom, Tottington or North Manor had been sold to date and she asked that this remain the case. It was also questioned how the Council were allowed to do this when some of the land had been gifted to the Council.

Mr Booth reported that the poles for the proposed traffic calming measures in Summerseat had been installed but the signage was still missing. He also asked when the speed humps would be installed.

Hazel Badjie explained that she had attended the last meeting of the Township Forum to report flooding issues on Manchester Road. Since then she had received a lot of support from the Council and they had committed to undertake investigation work in the summer. Hazel thanked the Council for the positive response she had received.

Mr Farlow referred to the issue of Ramsbottom having its own Town Council and asked whether this would be happening.

Councillor Bevan explained that for this to be adopted there would have to be a local referendum on the issue.

A resident of Peel Brow asked for an update on issues around the Boxing Day floods in Ramsbottom.

Councillor Fitzwalter explained that work was ongoing and it could take around 6 months. It was also reported that grants were still available for residents to apply for.

Councillor Gunther reported that Kay Bridge in Summerseat should be open for pedestrians by Easter. This would help with children walking to the primary school as this was currently an issue when accessing from the other side of the bridge.

RTNM.786 TOWNSHIP PLAN - UPDATE - FOR INFORMATION

Dave Thomas presented the Township Plan for information.

RTNM.787 TOWNSHIP FORUM FUNDING REPORT

Dave Thomas reported that 5 applications for funding had been received.

The panel had confirmed that all 5 of the applications had been granted.

COUNCILLOR D GUNTHER
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.50 pm)