

**Minutes of: BURY EAST TOWNSHIP FORUM**

**Date of Meeting:** 21 March 2017

**Present:** Councillor (in the Chair)  
Councillors M C Connolly, T Holt, J Kelly, S Smith,  
Sarah Southworth and T Tariq

**Also in attendance:**

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

**Apologies for Absence:** Ahmed, Councillor S Haroon, Councillor A McKay and Councillor S Walmsley

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**634 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

*Councillors Trevor Holt and Mike Connolly informed Bury East Township Forum that since the last meeting, Mick Ainsworth, a keen attendee at the Forum and Lesley Wildeman, Advisory Group Member and former Chair of the Forum had unfortunately passed away. Both Councillor Connolly and Councillor Holt expressed their condolences and sadness at the loss of both Mick and Lesley and their contribution to the Forum. All attendees of Bury East Township Forum showed their respect by standing for a minute's silence.*

There were no declarations of interest.

**635 MINUTES ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING**

**It was agreed:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**636 LIBRARY REVIEW**

Elizabeth Binns, Head of Libraries, attended the meeting to give a presentation on the progress of the Library Review and the options for Library service provision included in a public consultation. Elizabeth explained the financial position of the Council and the decisions required to ensure that a comprehensive Library Service continued to be provided within Bury. In making the decisions the Council was aware of the value the people of Bury have for Libraries through the services they provide.

The consultation process started last Summer (2016) and was considering the following six principles:

- Library services across the borough
- Protecting the vulnerable
- Cost effective
- Technology

- Volunteers
- Communities

The following key issues are what have come to the forefront of what is important to people in what the libraries can provide; books and reading, community, staff, volunteers, children, access, technology and learning and from the first two consultations it was important to provide for the people of Bury the core offer of reading and literacy, digital inclusion, information and learning and community support and development in order to provide a service to meet the needs and aspirations of residents of the Borough.

However, there have been financial losses to the Council and the Government expect all Councils to be self sufficient by 2020. The Libraries budget is currently 2.4 million but deducted from that must be resources including HR, IT and Payroll Services, therefore, effectively making the budget 2 million and this will be cut by a half by 2020, meaning that the Council will not be able to continue to provide the buildings, staff and resources it does currently.

There are two options being considered, which are; to retain Bury, Ramsbottom and Prestwich Libraries plus a service wide team, or, option two which is; to retain Bury, Ramsbottom, Prestwich and Radcliffe Libraries plus a smaller service wide team.

Elizabeth explained that it was important for all residents to have their say and take part in the survey. The consultation ends on 26 April and the final report will be put to cabinet on 18 May with a view to implementing the agreed decision by August 2017.

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

- A local resident stated that the local Library in Topping Fold acted as a community centre especially to residents over 65 and to close this would be detrimental to the local community in the area. Money has been allocated from the Government to help with Social care and it should be recognised that it was very important to keep older people both physically and mentally stimulated and could some of this allocated money not be spent in order to keep the Libraries open.

Councillor Holt acknowledged that it was distressing to residents having to close the Libraries but the situation in relation to the budget to the Council was now unprecedented. 7 million was being provided from the Government but this must be spent directly on Social care in order to provide care packages. It was a fact that people were living longer and would need to be cared for in later life.

- A local resident stated that Topping Fold Library held a youth group on a Friday evening for more than 50 youths. This was a very important youth group as it had proved to cut down on the anti social behavior within the area. If this building was closed this would be very detrimental to the local youths and community overall in the Topping Fold area.

- Harry Reed stated that with the increase in Council Tax this should alleviate some of the financial burden and Councillor Holt explained unfortunately this did not solve the problem.

Elizabeth stated that there would be support for local community groups that wanted to use the buildings but there were limited resources that could be provided. Councillor Connolly stated that the closing of the Library in Topping Fold will be a huge loss to the area.

Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Communities, explained that there was an infrastructure in place within the third and voluntary sector in relation to mapping all the community groups with a view for bigger organisations supporting smaller groups in terms of bid writing etc. and it was hoped that this would be a success.

**It was agreed:**

That Elizabeth Binns be thanked for her presentation.

**637 POLICE UPDATE**

The chair, Jimmy Hill, explained that an Officer from GMP had been present from 6pm until the start of the meeting to meet local residents on a one to one basis but that unfortunately there was not an Officer available to stay for the meeting. Any questions would be forwarded to the Police from the local residents at this meeting, by the Township Coordinator.

- A local resident stated that the parking on the double yellow lines outside the shops at the top of Walmersley Road was still an issue and so far nothing had been done to resolve this problem.
- Councillor Southworth explained that this was an ongoing problem. There had been a number of meetings with Officers and local Councillors to try and find the solution. There had been a keen Enforcement Officer presence in this area which had resulted in 11 penalty charges being issued, however, the Officers had been verbally abused, one assaulted and also a theft of equipment and therefore there was a reluctance from Officers to patrol this area. There was a meeting taking place with the Assistant Director (Localities) shortly to hopefully find a solution once and for all for this issue.

A member of public stated that cars park on the pavement on the streets also behind these shops, which was preventing wheelchairs and prams getting past safely. A local resident stated she had contacted an Officer in Parking Services about these issues but had been informed that due to the lack of resources there could be no additional enforcement. Councillor Southworth acknowledged this problem and explained that there was currently a review of the car parks within the town centre.

- A local resident complained about the anti-social behavior, including drug and alcohol issues, on Wilson Street and that he felt the Police were not addressing these issues.

The Township Coordinator stated that there was a regular meeting with the Joint Engagement Team which includes a Police representative and he would raise this issue and feedback.

- A local resident of the Fishpool area stated that there were no longer local meetings with the Police over these issues. Councillor Tariq explained that he has recently met the new Sergeant for the Redvales and Moorside areas and has raised concerns of the local residents and it has been agreed to hold a PACT meeting in the first week of April, which the Sergeant will attend and which will re-establish the links with the Police and the local community.

A member of the Forum explained that he was an independent advisory group member for the Police and explained about citizen contract, of which leaflets were issued around the Forum, explaining that GMP is improving the way it works to provide the best service. They needed the views of the public to help shape the Policing for the next four years and more details could be found on the GMP website or via email, twitter or facebook.

#### **638 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

- Harry Reed stated that the charity bins had reappeared in areas around Bury East. However, these had proved to be non beneficial previously as they had been set on fire in the past and it was requested that they be removed. It was agreed that as they were on Council property they could be taken away.
- A local resident of the Fishpool area stated that there was a lot of waste dumping in the back Streets which was causing great concern as this was also bringing rats. The Chair, Jimmy Hill, explained that they had the same ongoing problems in the Pimhole area and they had now organised a meeting with the local Police, Councillors, ADAB and the Jinnah centre over this issue and when the evenings were lighter every door in the area would be knocked on to try and explain the difficulties of just dumping waste.

Councillor Tariq agreed this was an issue but that it was not necessarily household waste but that new businesses were not taking responsibility for their waste and this was something he would also take up to try and resolve this problem.

- A local resident explained that there was to be a local free community fun day on Saturday 25 March 2017 at Springs Community Green and Bury East Spoke Children's Centre and everyone was welcome to attend.

#### **639 FUNDING UPDATE**

A copy of the Community Funding Report for Bury East was submitted setting out details of the funding allocations to date in support of the work of local, voluntary and community groups. The Township Coordinator reported that there had been 2 successful applications to the Township

Forum Funding Panel for Openshaw Green Park Management and Openshaw Veterans.

**It was agreed:**

That the report be noted.

**640 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

As this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, Councillor Holt thanked Jimmy Hill for Chairing the Bury East Township Forum and to Dave Thomas, Township co-ordinator and Democratic Services for their services also.

**COUNCILLOR  
Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at Time Not Specified and ended at 1.00 am)**