

Minutes of: RADCLIFFE TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 5 July, 2016

Venue: Radcliffe United Reform Church, Blackburn St, Radcliffe

Present:

Councillors: Councillors S Briggs, R Cathcart, C Preston and R Skillen

**Advisory Group
Representatives:**

Colin Jones (Chair) - Radcliffe Girls and Boys Club
Colette Jones – Friends of Close Park

Barbara Law representing– Chapelfield Village
Association

Gill Stainthorpe - Withins Community Association
Carol Kemp – Chair of Friends of Radcliffe Manor

Public attendance: 13 members of the public were in attendance

**Apologies for
absence:**

Councillors N Parnell, A Cummings, J Lewis, R Shori, J
Walker

RTF.83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

RTF.84 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Township Forum held on 7 March, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Chair.

RTF.85 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR 2016/2017

Nominations were sought for the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair of Radcliffe Township Forum for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year.

It was agreed:

That Colin Jones, Advisory Group Member representing Radcliffe Girls and Boys Club be appointed Chair of Radcliffe Township Forum for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year and Councillor Briggs be appointed Deputy Chair of Radcliffe Township Forum for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year. Both appointments were moved by Councillor Skillen and seconded by Councillor Cathcart.

RTF.86 LOCAL POLICE UPDATE

Inspector Jones, newly appointed Inspector for Radcliffe East since May 2016 attended the meeting in order to provide an update on key police issues in Radcliffe, as follows:-

- There had been a drop in all crime category statistics, the exception being for those relating to burglary (other) which had seen a rise of 4 since June 2015.
- Anti-Social Behaviour statistics since June 2015 to May 2016 - there had been a drop of 1, however since May 2016 there had been an increase of 43 reported incidents.
- Increase in reports of Hate Crime relating to residents from other European countries, from an average of 8 per week to 12 per week following the EU Referendum. A meeting between representatives from the Polish community and the Police would be taking place in the near future. Councillor Cathcart commented on the increase in the visual presence of PCSO's in Radcliffe and if this was connected to the increase in Anti-Social Behaviour incidents. Inspector Jones reported that the new Inspector posts would have influenced the PCSO presence. Despite the Euro 2016 football, the police had not seen an increase in reported incidents of domestic violence in the area as expected.
- A member of the public present raised concerns relating to the public footpath on Stand Lane by the golf course where a number of slabs had been removed from the wall. Inspector Jones gave an assurance that this would be looked into.
- Councillor Briggs raised concerns relating to reports of someone seen tampering with cars in the back streets of Ainsworth. Inspector Jones gave an assurance that this would be looked into and asked that residents report any suspicious activity to the police.
- Carol Kemp informed the meeting of children seen playing on piles of stones at Radcliffe Tower and dislodging bricks.
- A resident raised concerns about cars being parked on Glenvale Close near to the Metrolink causing obstruction for pedestrians trying to access the pavements. It was unclear who was responsible for dealing with these obstructions. Inspector Jones explained the protocols for reporting car parking obstructions in relation to the law and who to report to. Councillors Preston and Cathcart had been in touch with residents and were in the process of discussions with relevant officers of the Council regarding this issue.

It was agreed:

That Inspector Jones be thanks for his attendance and that the information provided be noted.

RTF.87 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS ON THE FUTURE PRIORITIES FOR RADCLIFFE TOWNSHIP FORUM

Christine Maksymowski, Township Co-ordinator gave a presentation on the future work of Radcliffe Township Forum in terms of determining the key priorities for the Forum for 2016/2017. The presentation put into context the work done by the Forum over the past 12 months in relation

to the key priorities set by the Forum in collaboration with residents who had contributed to the round table discussions in 2015 and the progress made in meeting the key priorities. The Forum representatives were introduced as Councillor Shori, Leader of the Council; Councillor Tariq, Portfolio Lead and Councillor McKay, Portfolio Deputy with Councillor Briggs as the flagship Trailblazer for Radcliffe.

The overall aim of the Forum's work, "To improve the Health and Wellbeing of our residents and deliver a better quality of Life for our Communities" would be based upon the 6 key themes for revitalising Radcliffe:

- Improved Employment Opportunities
- Improved Community Safety
- Improved Health and Wellbeing
- Educational Attainment/Learning
- Improved Public Transport
- Community Pride & Belonging

It was reported that Locality Workshops would help to improve the way we communicate with our community and would help to develop the list of assets in identifying the priorities for the Township.

All those present at the meeting were asked to contribute to setting the priorities for Radcliffe Township Forum for 2016/17 by discussing, in groups what is good about Radcliffe; what are the concerns; to identify 3 key priorities to take forward and what people can do to help?. Feedback from the discussions was provided as follows:-

Positives in Radcliffe:

Radcliffe Market; new retail outlets in town centre; good schools; great library facilities; architecture of buildings; heritage of Radcliffe; strong sense of community; good transport links; green spaces and local parks; leisure facilities; active community groups and volunteers; Radcliffe Carnival; new bus station; regeneration; new housing; Empty Property Strategy.

Concerns for Radcliffe:

Barclays Bank and Co-Op Bank closures; empty retail premises in town centre; precinct owners lack of investment and initiatives; lack of positive PR for the town; design of bus station seating; lack of High School provision; lack of parking at Health Centre and misuse of free parking by Metrolink users; health inequalities and 10 year less life expectancy rates compared to other areas of Borough; flood defences particularly in relation to new housing; future of library?; inadequacy of school bus services for pupils travelling to other areas of the Borough; new housing and demand for school places; market regeneration and retail outlet provision; lack of night time economy in town centre; need pedestrian crossing near Health Centre; fly-tipping and graffiti particularly near to Metrolink; lack of Park Rangers.

Priorities:

Lobby precinct owners to come up with initiatives to redevelop retail - possibly in collaboration with Council in terms of business rate offers;
Report back to GMPTC on issues relating to seating provision in the bus station;
Free school plans - need to support and keep up pressure on DfE re: decision;
Health Centre parking issues - look into possibility of introduction of parking restrictions;
Need to promote Radcliffe as good place to live;
Need to promote green spaces;
Expand use of Market Hall;
Continue to promote Heritage and history of Radcliffe;
Re-establish Radcliffe Arts Festival
Create community hubs to encourage community groups working together more;
Establish stronger links with Town Hall.

It was reported that the information provided at the meeting would be collated and presented at the Radcliffe Community Event to be held in September 2016 where the community would be asked to decide the priorities (date to be confirmed on Council's website) and also be presented at the next scheduled meeting of Radcliffe Township Forum on 13 September, 2016.

All those present at the meeting were thanked for their contributions.

It was agreed:

1. That an update be provided at the September meeting of the Township Forum.

RTF.88 OPEN FORUM

The Chair invited questions/comments and representations from members of the public present at the meeting. The Township Co-ordinator undertook to obtain a reply to matters that could not be dealt with directly at the meeting:-

- Barbara Law raised concerns relating to pot-holes in Radcliffe. Councillor Preston reported that there was an on-going schedule of works for the Borough to fill pot-holes. Councillor Cathcart asked residents to report pot-holes on the Council's website.
- Colette Jones raised concerns regarding United Utilities who were not repairing collapsed drains following the flooding. They were also not actively dealing with the giant hogweed on their land nor were the Council taking seriously the spread of hogweed on Council owned land in Radcliffe. Councillor Cathcart reported that he had been in contact with Officers at the Council particularly in relation to an empty property at Parkside which had hogweed in the gardens and the possible health risk for new tenants if this is not dealt with. A member of the public also

raised concerns regarding Japanese knotweed at the rear of Kelville Close and the need for this to be treated.

- Barbara Law asked who was responsible for dealing with the collapsed riverbank near to the Market?

RTF.89 FLOODING UPDATE

Colette Jones provided an update on the Flood Action Group as follows:-

- The membership of the group had expanded to cover all areas affected by flooding in Radcliffe which had helped bring the community together
- The group's Facebook page had expanded;
- Following a meeting with the National Flood Forum, the group had been assigned a "Mediator" who would represent the group. The Mediator had arranged a flood event with over 100 attendees, the next event would be a multi-agency meeting on 27 July;
- Despite the £5,000 Government flood relief payment to residents; insurance quotes for repairs and to protect houses averaged £30,000
- The group had asked the Council for a 7.19 report but had not been able to obtain a copy of it. The AGMA report into the flooding was now also delayed;
- Private landlords had left some flooded properties unrepaired which was creating damp issues for neighbouring properties. The Group would like to see a scheme introduced to encourage landlords to dry out the properties left with the help of the Council by off-setting rents for repairs;
- Questions relating to EU funding following the referendum result.
- St Mary's church - more damage found which would mean the church would have to close;
- Those uninsured were unable to obtain a dry certificate for their property which would mean that they would be unable to secure insurance against any future flooding;
- All monies donated to the flood "Just Giving" page had been distributed.

Councillor Preston asked that the Township Forum thank the Flood Group and all volunteers for their hard work and persistence in dealing with the aftermath of the flooding in Radcliffe. Members of the Forum wished to express their appreciation to the volunteers who had not given up and who continued to work for the good of the whole community in dealing with the devastation caused by the floods.

It was agreed:

That Colette be thanked for her update and that a further update be provided at the next meeting of the Township Forum.

RTF.90 COMMUNITY FUNDING REPORT

A copy of the Community Funding Report for Radcliffe was submitted setting out details of the funding allocations to date in support of the work of local, community and voluntary groups. The Township Co-ordinated

provided clarification of the amounts still available to groups and on which funding panels to apply to in relation to a query from a member of the public present at the meeting.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

RTF.91 COMMUNITY FUNDING PANEL

The Township Forum Funding Panel had considered applications for grants from the Community Fund from the following organisations:-

East Lancashire Papermill Cricket Club - £500

It was agreed:

That the application for funding be approved by members of Radcliffe Township Forum.

RTF.92 ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS – UPDATE

Colette Jones, Friends of Close Park provided the following update:-

Colette sought clarification on the rumour that the gardeners would be leaving the hut and that the police would be utilising this space? Councillor Preston would be attending a meeting to find out what the plans are for the hut and would report back at the next meeting.

Colette confirmed that there had been no activities at the Park since the flood.

Barbara Law, Chapelfield Village Association provided the following update:-

The group were working with the Ranger to upgrade the nature reserve in terms of landscaping. This work was being done with funding support from Viridor.

Councillor Cathcart, on behalf of Radcliffe Carnival Committee provided the following update:-

This year's Carnival had been a great success with positive feedback received all round. The event had raised nearly £700 which had distributed to local worthy causes. The costs involved in staging the event were approximately £10,500 and the Committee were working hard to look into ways of sustaining the funding needed in difficult times when funding streams were being cut.

Andrew, the Chair of the Committee had undergone surgery following his ill health on the day of the Carnival. A campaign to raise funds for him

had raised £1400, thanks to all for their support. All donations welcome to "Go Fund Me. Help Andy's Heart".
The Carnival Queen Sub-Group would be holding a car boot to raise funds for next year's Carnival.

Carol Kemp, representing Friends of Radcliffe Manor, provided the following update:-

The enclosures were still too wet following the flooding which had delayed work. A number of events were in the pipeline such as the re-enactment group event. The ground needed to be fit to hold marquees before events could be staged, hopefully by November. The Township Co-ordinator offered to publicise any event once a date had been secured.

It was agreed:

That the information provided be noted, with thanks.

RTF.93 OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO A TOWNSHIP AWARD TO COLETTE JONES

The Township Co-ordinator presented Colette Jones, Advisory Group Member representing Close Park with an "Outstanding Contribution to a Township Award" following her nomination from a member of the public.

The Township Forum congratulated Colette for her much deserved award in recognition of her voluntary work in Radcliffe. Colette asked that all volunteers be thanked for their hard work and dedication in support of the whole Radcliffe community.

RTF.94 DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed:

That the next meeting of Radcliffe Township Forum would take place on Tuesday 13 September, 2016 at 6 pm, at Radcliffe United Reform Church.

In the Chair – Colin Jones (Chair)

(Note: The meeting started at 6.03 pm and ended at 8.07 pm)