

Minutes of: RAMSBOTTOM, TOTTINGTON AND NORTH MANOR TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 12 September 2013

Present: Councillor I Bevan (in the Chair)
Councillors J Columbine, J Daly, L Fitzwalter, I Gartside and D Gunther

Advisory Group Representatives: Gina Ball – Ramsbottom Business Group
Dr Falmai Binns – BRIF/The Holcombe Society
Alistair Waddell – Greenmount Village Community Group

Public Attendance: There were 15 Members of the public in attendance.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor S Carter and Councillor Y Wright

RTNM.356 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

RTNM.357 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed:

That subject to the following amendments and additions the minutes of the last Meeting of the Township Forum held on 11 July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair:-

- Dr Falmai Binns was in attendance at the meeting as a representative of Holcombe Village not Hawkshaw as stated
- Alistair Waddell's apologies were submitted
- Minute Number RTNM.204 - Conservation Areas

Dr Binns referred to the Conservation Appraisal for Holcombe Village and changes that were being made in the Village lessening the character. Dr Binns asked that a letter be sent to residents to remind them of their responsibilities.

David Marno stated that he thought a letter had been sent to residents but those present at the meeting were unaware of this.

A question was raised in relation to the pinch-point in Holcombe village and the reason for its installation and there was some debate around this.

RTNM.358 MATTERS ARISING

Further to the approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting, Councillor Bevan asked for any matters arising from those minutes:-

- (i) Councillor Fitzwalter reported that the Ramsbottom Credit Union had been launched and could be accessed in Ramsbottom Library every Monday from 10.30am - 1.30pm with a £5 joining fee.
- (ii) Further to Minute RTNM.202, "Matters Arising (ii)", Dave Thomas updated those present on the issue of the Vintage Markets at Ramsbottom Civic Hall and issues relating to the Market Charter:-

A meeting had been held with relevant officers and Councillors Lewis, Smith, Isherwood and Columbine on 26 June 2013 to discuss the expansion of market events and the refusal of Manchester Vintage's request to hold monthly markets in Ramsbottom.

The issues involved were discussed in detail and it was resolved that:

1. For a trial period, Markets would licence one further commercial market to one operator, or in one location, per annum, making a total of two.
2. Officers within DCN would draft objective criteria over what constitutes a Council Supported Market Event. These are events that can potentially be held at a greater frequency than the limit described above.

Initial draft criteria has now been produced, although all involved accept that further work needs to be done to make the criteria far more objective. It is anticipated that a second draft will be produced by the end of the week commencing September 2013.

Once a final draft has been produced and agreed with the Council Solicitor it will be submitted to the three Cabinet Members having an involvement in this issue for approval. It is suggested that the meeting with the Ramsbottom Business Group should happen as soon as the criteria described above has been agreed with Elected Members.

It was agreed:

That the Township Forum would receive updates on the markets issue when appropriate.

RTNM.359 DRAFT LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Fran Smith, Planning Officer attended the meeting to report on the current consultation that was being carried out on Bury's Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy had been produced in response to new duties placed on the council under the Flood and Water Management Act - 2010. It focuses on local flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses, but also considers flooding from rivers. It identifies the responsibilities for flooding within the borough and seeks to encourage a range of organisations to work together to improve the management of flood risk.

The Local Strategy will form the framework within which communities can have a greater say in local flood risk management decisions, and enable land owners, communities, business and the public sector to work together.

It was explained that the Council had been able to develop an understanding of the flood risk in the borough through modelling, past records and officer knowledge, but, there was always more information needed about areas in local neighbourhoods which may have experienced flooding or where actions have been taken which have had an impact on flood risk.

The Council were also looking for views on the proposed plans for managing and alleviating flood risk. The plans were still at an early stage and the Strategy would only be able to give an outline of potential schemes for managing flood risk in the future. Fran explained that the Council were very keen to hear of any issues which will need to be considered when the detail for these schemes is developed.

It was explained that public consultation on the strategy runs until Monday 14 October 2013 and can be accessed online or at the Planning Offices at Knowsley Place in Bury.

Comments from the Township Forum will be included also.

In response to questions invited from those present the following issues were raised:-

- Dr Binns referred to flooding incidents in Holcombe Village at Moor Road and explained that some works had been carried out but asked that the site still be included as there may still be issues there that the authority needed to be aware of.
- Councillor Gunther explained that there were a number of different hotspots around all three wards and some of those were exacerbated when the gullies weren't cleaned. Councillor Gunther asked whether gully cleaning should be included within the strategy.
- Fran explained that this was already included and the current regime would be looked into to evaluate whether changes were required.
- Alistair Waddell asked whether residents were able to clear grids themselves.

Fran explained that all suggestions were welcomed.

It was agreed:

That Fran be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

(Please note - Councillor Columbine left the Meeting after this agenda item and did not return).

RTNM.360 POLICE UPDATE

Inspector Bryn Williams attended the meeting to report on the work being carried out by the Police across Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor and to update those present on statistics relating to crime across these areas from 1 April 2013 to 31 August 2013.

It was explained that the numbers of crimes reported had reduced across the wards in all categories except 'burglary other'. Bryn explained that this category included thefts from sheds and commercial properties and it was due to a rise in thefts from sheds that this figure had increased. There had been 52 incidents reported, 24 in Tottington, 17 in North Manor and 11 in Ramsbottom with the majority of these being thefts of pedal bikes from sheds.

It was also reported that there had been an increase of reporting of anti social behaviour and this had been seen across all areas of the borough and further afield. Inspector Williams explained that there were a number of reasons that should be considered including the fact that the summer had been dry and hot and more people were spending time out doors. There was also the change to policing across the borough which had seen a reduction of police presence in some areas. The issue of youth unemployment should also be considered.

Inspector Williams reported that there had been some changes to staffing across the wards and two of the officers had recently been trained in speed enforcement which they would be putting to good use in the near future.

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

- Councillor Gartside asked whether there was still an issue with bicycle thefts in the area.

It was explained that there had been a spate of this type of crime and the police had arrested somebody in connection with the thefts which had seen a decrease in incidents. It was explained that the security of sheds should be considered when storing expensive bicycles in them and that alternative storage may be considered.

- Councillor Gartside also reported that there had been some incidences of vehicles speeding on Turton Road and asked that this be looked into.
- Mr Booth asked how well the Police and the Council's security services communicated as there had been some incidents in Summerseat and it seemed like neither were aware that the other had been involved.

Inspector Williams reported that the police had a good relationship with the Council's security services to the point where the police sometimes went out with the security teams to incidents.

- Mr Booth also asked how many of Bury's Police Officers were sent to work in the City to help out there.

Inspector Williams reported that he did not know of this happening in the recent past. The main concern that he had was with the police presence being moved from the villages into the town centre.

- Councillor Fitzwalter asked that the Township Forum inform the Chief Superintendent of Bury and the Police Commissioner of Greater Manchester that they are concerned that police officers are being taken away from villages and rural areas and moved into the town centre.
- Dr Binns asked that the newly trained officers dealing with speed issues visit Holcombe Village as it was more of an issue now that the hedgerows had been cut back.
- Councillor Bevan referred to the fact the Ramsbottom Music Festival would be taking place during the coming weekend and asked what preparations the police had made with regard to this.

Inspector Williams reported that the number of police that would be at the festival had reduced from previous years but it was felt that there would still be enough of a presence at the event.

It was agreed:

1. That the Township Forum ask that its concerns relating to the policing of villages and rural areas be noted and forwarded to the Chief Inspector of Bury and the Police Commissioner for Greater Manchester.
2. That Inspector Williams be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

RTNM.361 TOWNSHIP PLAN - UPDATE

David Thomas, Township Forum Manager, gave a presentation on the updated Township Plan. The following key priorities had been identified and were included within the plan:-

- Improved Employment Opportunities
- Improved Community Safety
- Improved Educational Attainment/Learning
- Rural Issues / Promoting Outlying Areas
- Improved Health and Wellbeing
- Improved Community Cohesion and Integration

The action Plan had been updated to incorporate the new priorities and inform on the work that had been carried to date. Dave gave information in relation to how the work would be undertaken and who would be involved.

It was agreed:

That the updated plan be agreed.

RTNM.362 OPEN FORUM

- Mrs Golby from Shuttleworth referred to the recent planning application that had been submitted by Peel Holdings to build an anaerobic digester at Fletcher Bank Quarry and explained that objections to the application could be submitted to the Council's Planning Department up until the 11 October 2013.
- Mags Wilcock asked what Councillors were doing to ensure that people were made aware of the application to allow them the opportunity to object.

It was explained that Councillor Bevan had delivered a number of leaflets to local residents, as had Councillor Daly. Councillor Bevan also updated information via social media and his website and was in contact with the Bury Times about the issue. Councillors Gartside and Fitzwalter were working along side the website Ramsbottom Against Waste who had submitted a petition of signatures objecting to the application.

Councillor Fitzwalter explained that the Council would not be in a position to set up or support pressure groups and had to deal with the application as they would any other but local Councillors and residents could become involved. It was also noted that the two Councillors from the forum who were also on the Planning Committee were absent from the discussion of this subject.

- Mr Peter Cooper a local resident explained that he was in the process of recruiting volunteers to help establish a young people's project in the town. A meeting had been organised for 24 September at 7.30pm at the Ramsbottom British Legion and all those present were welcome to attend.

RTNM.363 AMENDMENT TO BURY'S CORE STRATEGY

Councillor Gartside explained that the Core Strategy for Bury had been approved by Council; however, the Secretary of State had reported that comments would still be accepted up until the end of the day on 13 September 2103.

Councillor Garside referred to 3) page 168 of the Strategy and asked that the Forum support an amendment to this wording as follows:-

delete:-

"Along the western boundary, north eastern boundary and north of the Irwell Valley along the M60 corridor - where there are opportunities to harness wind energy";

Replace with:-

"Suitable areas in the borough where there are opportunities to harness wind energy whilst avoiding undue harm to the natural environment or amenity of residents. Such opportunities should also be consistent with all other local and national planning policies and in line with Government guidance whilst taking into consideration the wishes of the local community. Additionally, all key stakeholders will be involved in the creation of a "wind Turbine" policy for Bury setting out acceptable separation distances of wind turbines from residential properties based upon the size of the wind turbine".

Following a public show of hands, all public present except one agreed.

A vote of Members present (Councillors I Bevan (Chair); J Daly, L Fitzwalter, I Gartside, D Gunther and K Hussain) was requested and this was agreed unanimously.

It was agreed:

That the suggested amendment as set out above be approved by the Township Forum and referred to the Secretary of State

COUNCILLOR I BEVAN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.40 pm)