

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

Date of Meeting: 7 January 2014

Venue: Elms Community Centre, Green Lane, Whitefield

Present: Councillor Grimshaw (In the Chair)
Councillors, R Caserta, E FitzGerald, D Jones,
A Matthews, and B Vincent and Wiseman

**Advisory Group
Representatives:** Leonard Lott – Whitefield and Unsworth Homewatch Assn.
Theresa Heyworth – ELMS TRA
Marlene Dawson – Victoria Estate TRA
Pamela Taylor – Hollins Village Community Assn.
Yvonne Moore – Old Hall Park Residents Assn.
Mrs S Bannister – Jewish Representative Council

Public attendance: 32 members of the public were in attendance

**Apologies for
absence:** Councillors A Audin and K Audin and Mr A Stacey

WUTF .645 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made in respect of any of the items to be considered at the meeting.

WUTF .646 MINUTES

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

WUTF .647 MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

With reference to minute number WUTF.531 Mrs Ashcroft stated that the bus service number referred to should be 92 and not 93. Also there was no direct service to take residents from Sunnybank to the Blackford Medical Centre.

WUTF .648 PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

The meeting was attended by representatives from Transport for Greater Manchester (Sam Tysoe and James Lewis) and First Buses (Paul Turner).

Sam Tysoe acknowledged the receipt of a petition regarding the decision to no longer include Pilsworth on the 154 route. The meeting was informed that a postcode check had been made on the location of the petition contributors.

It was reported that the 154 service could not achieve the set timetable after analysing strong data which indicated that 68% of bus services were not operating on time. It was decided that 8 Minutes were needed to ensure the timetable could be achieved and a section of the service was cut. The analysis of bus service users is detailed taking into account various factors. There were alternatives for residents of the Parr Lane area involving the 92 or 93 services.

The meeting was informed that the cost of maintaining the 154 service would be an additional £85,000.

The Chair invited questions.

- If 68% of the services are not running on time then surely the timetable is wrong and needs reviewing.
 - This was a sample view of bus services taken over a 2 month period.
- Could additional time be added to the route to ensure that all stops are served and arrive at the time specified by TfGM rather than late as at the moment?
 - There are limitations on the services due to budgets reductions and adding time to the timetable is not possible. Two buses must cover the timetable every hour. We are trying to provide the best service possible with the resources available.
- Pennine Care Trust is locating more services to NMGH. The 154 goes to NMGH. As a public service it is important that these services are accessible for Bury residents on one bus journey. Service planners need to look at the bigger picture.
- Residents of Prestwich are unhappy with the loss of the 154 service and have lost direct access to Pilsworth. There is a concern that people travelling to Pilsworth are required to change services in an area without a bus station which is set out in the open. Members of the public are left feeling vulnerable.
- Would it be possible for the 92 service to continue on the 152 service route and use the motorway?
 - will look at this.
- On a Sunday the 98 service is outsourced to another operator from 5pm to 10pm. Service users who have bought a First Travel Saver ticket are being charged again by the other bus company which will not accept the pass. This could result in some people being left in vulnerable position at if they have no money to pay the fare. Is this correct?
 - This is a problem across Greater Manchester. Subsidised routes are tendered on non-profit routes. The subsidised operator is not obliged to accept saver tickets or cards issued by the day time operator. If the service user has a TfGM saver ticket it is acceptable across Greater Manchester, although the cost is higher than that charged by First.
- Is it possible to reroute the 93 to Hollins Brow to Pilsworth and take out Parkhills Road to Market Street, as it was before, to miss out congestion on market days. This would also allow residents of Sunnybank to access Blackford House Medical Centre.

- This suggestion was raised at the last meeting. The area suggested to be included is substantially longer than the area to be taken out and would increase the time to complete the route.
- A petition of 450 signatures has been submitted for the reinstatement of the 154 service to help workers and shoppers get better access to the Pilsworth ASDA store. Workers and shoppers are in some cases required to get 2 buses to get to work. People want the 154 service back.

The Chair thanked the TfGM Officers and representative of First for their attendance and requested them to consider the comments, questions and suggestions made to help improve bus services in Whitefield, Unsworth and Prestwich. The Chair also requested their attendance at a future meeting.

WUTF .649 RING AND RIDE SERVICE

The Chair introduced Chris Berry (Ring and Ride District Manager – Bolton, Bury and Rochdale) to the meeting to explain the Ring and Ride service.

Ring and Ride is a service for those members of the public who find it difficult to travel on public transport. All vehicles are fully accessible and users are invited to register which allows them to book a trip 7 days in advance. This is done through a call-centre which is open between 8am and 4pm Monday to Sunday. The charge is 80p (concessionary rate) and £1.60 (standard rate) and there is no age limit on service users. When registering it is necessary for the individual to state what issue they have with public transport.

The Chair invited questions.

- Since the move to a central call-centre in Manchester, some users have commented that the service is not as good as it use to be.
 - The introduction of a call-centre out of the area was a cost effective measure for the service. The level of local knowledge is reduced as a result. The buses are stationed in Heywood and the drivers are able to help in the planning of journeys and this will improve the service over time.
- A service user who is blind was left at their block of flats on the other side they are usually left by the Ring and Ride driver which resulted in the person not recognising their location.
 - Drivers are trained to escort service users to the door from the pick up point. The matter will be investigated.
- A service user has had difficulty in getting the pick up time they wanted. Also, some drivers don't appear to be familiar with the area and on one occasion a different colour bus was used.
 - Some of the vehicles will be replaced this year and on occasion a bus will be hired.

The Chair thanked Chris Berry for his attendance.

WUTF BURY CAREERS SERVICE
.650

The Chair introduced Sheila Blackman from the Carers Service which is based on Silver Street in Bury. Sheila gave a presentation on the services and support offered to carers within Bury. The presentation covered the following areas:

- What is a Carer
- What a Carer is entitled to
- Who we are
- What we do
- How we can help
- Our aim for Carers of Bury
- How you can help

Information packs were circulated for anyone interested in the Carers Service.

The Chair thanked Sheila for her attendance.

WUTF POLICE UPDATE
.651

Inspector Kenny gave an update on crime within Whitefield. He reported that crime rates had reduced with 32 fewer crimes reported than at the same time last year. The GMP has a proactive leadership approach to policing across Greater Manchester. PACT meetings would be tailored to meet the needs of the community.

The Chair invited questions.

- Has there been a reduction in the number of hate crimes?
 - There has been a reduction in the south of the Borough with fewer anti-Semitic crimes. In these cases an investigation is held and a follow up care plan will be introduced.
- Could a reassurance be given on what the Police are doing to address the issue of child grooming in view of the investigations and prosecutions of individuals in Rochdale.
 - The GMP have learnt lessons from the investigations in Rochdale and will move forward accordingly.
- Can action be taken to address the problem of parents parking on a yellow line on Mersey Close when dropping their children off for school?
 - The contravention of a sign is the Council's enforcement responsibility and the causing of an obstruction is the responsibility of the Police. Forward an email setting out the complaint and we will look at the whole issue.
- How does the GMP police Metrolink Stations and is CCTV used at each station?
 - The police will respond to incidents in accordance with 999 (inprogress) or 101 (if not in progress). CCTV is operated by Metrolink. The GMP also works with Metrolink.

- Could Metrolink be invited to a future meeting to talk about CCTV at Metrolink stations?
 - We will invite Metrolink to a future Township Forum meeting.

The Chair thanked inspector Kenny for his attendance.

WUTF .652 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited the members of the public present to ask questions or raise items of concern relating to the provision of local services.

- Could action be taken to address the problem caused by uneven paving stones in Whitefield where members of the public have tripped and been injured as a result? In particular: Wingate Drive, the area outside the Forts of India Indian Restaurant on Bury New Road. An Officer from the Council did visit the site outside the restaurant but could not take action because the paving stones were not judged uneven enough to relay them. Councillor Isherwood has been emailed with this complaint. Can the Council undertake surveys of these areas?
- Yvonne Moore reported that one of her neighbours had raised the matter of leylandii trees growing in a garden that were now so big they were damaging a boundary fence. The Council requires a deposit of £400 for a tree surgeon survey. Why is this so expensive?
 - The Council will charge the £400 fee before undertaking a survey. Action will then be taken to retrieve the sum from the owner and then refund it.
- A street light at Top of the Fields needs attention.
 - The Council needs to be aware of the post number.
- What is the position of the 'Hit the North' cycling event usually held in Philips Park which was cancelled this year due to access issues?
- Can action be taken to address a drain located at 34 Elms Close which has caused flooding to the adjacent properties over the last three and a half years.
- How can the Elms Community Centre get funding for the website that has been created to promote the centre?
 - Apply for Community Funding.

WUTF .653 COMMUNITY NOTICES

The Chair gave notices of forthcoming events that would be taking place within Whitefield and Unsworth.

WUTF .654 PRESENTATIONS

The Chair reported that Mrs Yvonne Moore had received British Empire Medal for Service to the Community in the Queens New Year Honours list. Mrs Moore was presented with a bouquet on behalf of the Township Forum.

The meeting was also informed that Kim Griffiths would be moving on from her role as Township Co-ordinator following her successful interview for a Recycling Enforcement Officer post.

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Kim was presented with a bouquet on behalf of the Township Forum and thanked by the Chair for her work and commitment.

COUNCILLOR J Grimshaw
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 1:00 pm and ended at 3.15 pm)