

Minutes of: RAMSBOTTOM, TOTTINGTON AND NORTH MANOR TOWNSHIP FORUM

Date of Meeting: 5 March 2015

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

Also in attendance: Mr K Conley – Rotary Club of Ramsbottom
Reverend S Openshaw – RETM/CTIR

Public Attendance: 10 members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor S Carter and Councillor J Daly

RTNM.784 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

RTNM.785 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Township Forum held on 15 January 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

RTNM.786 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting.

RTNM.787 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

Councillor Wright explained that all residential properties in the borough had been sent a letter regarding electoral registration asking that residents check the information is correct and that they are registered to vote.

If the information is correct then nothing needs to be done but, if the information is not, the letter explains what the resident should do to register.

Councillor Wright explained that this exercise had been funded by the Government to ensure that all those eligible to vote would be able to.

RTNM.788 POLICE UPDATE

Angela Freudenburgh, Beat Office in Ramsbottom, Ashleigh Oxton, Beat Officer in North Manor and PCSO Dave Johnson attended the meeting to update those present on police issues across Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor.

It was explained that the Police had been carrying out some work in relation to young people causing a nuisance which was happening when the schools were on

holiday. Angela explained that she was working with Ramsbottom Youth Project to try and sort out some activity options.

It was explained that crime in general across the three townships was low.

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

- Councillor Hodkinson explained that he had been made aware that a recent planning application had been submitted to the Council for a change of use of premises on Bridge Street in Ramsbottom from a retail unit to a bar with a late license.

Councillor Hodkinson asked whether this was something that the Police should be concerned about with regards to anti social behaviour due to alcohol.

PCSO Johnson explained that the Police were aware of the application and if successful they would keep an eye on the area to ensure that any anti social behaviour was stopped. There had been a new wine open on Bolton Street late 2014 and this had not caused any issues in the area.

- Councillor Bevan reported that there had been a number of burglaries on Bury New Road and asked if a police presence could be stepped up in the area.

It was explained that the Police were aware of the rise in the number of burglaries in the area and they were keeping an eye on this.

- Councillor Bevan also reported that speeding vehicles was an issue along Bury New Road and asked if something could be done in this area.

It was explained that work was being carried out and the Police were in the process of identifying suitable locations where vehicles could be pulled over in order for the drivers to be spoken to. It was also explained that the possibility of undertaking a joint operation with Lancashire Police was being discussed.

- Councillor Wright referred to the Community Speed Watch programme and asked if this project could be carried out across the three Townships.

It was explained that work was being carried out to try and get this up and running. Ramsbottom was on target to submit an application for the loan of the equipment and a number of volunteers had been identified to carry out the training. Once this had been done the speed watch equipment would be loaned to them for a three month period during which time speed watch exercises would be carried out across Ramsbottom and further afield as required. It was stated that this would be carried out this year.

It was also hoped that similar applications would be submitted for Tottington and North Manor and would be completed towards the back of 2015.

Angela stated that an exercise would be carried out with the pupils from Emmanuel Holcombe Primary School to highlight drivers' speeds through the village. This exercise had been carried out previously and was very successful.

- Councillor Gunther explained that there was an issue with speeding traffic through Hawkshaw Village and asked if this could be dealt with.

It was explained that Hawkshaw could be included in the Community Speed Watch programme for Ramsbottom.

- Councillor Gunther also reported that there was a large red van parked at the top of Walmersley Road at the junction with Burnley Road near to where the bus stop was. She asked if there was anything that could be done about this as it looked like it was parked illegally.

Angela stated that she wasn't aware of this until now but she would liaise with Ian Lord to see if the vehicle was parked illegally.

- Councillor Fitzwalter explained that Ramsbottom no longer has a regular PACT meeting and asked if these could be reinstated.

Angela stated that she would contact Councillor Fitzwalter directly to discuss the arrangements.

- Councillor Fitzwalter also referred to an issue that had been raised at an earlier meeting of the Township Forum regarding the installation of double yellow lines on Woodhey Road which was privately owned. Councillor Fitzwalter asked if the lines were enforceable.

It was stated that the Police or the Council could not carry out enforcement on private land and it was illegal for clamping to be carried out on private land.

- Mr John Ireland representing Holcombe Society referred to the speed signs on the entrance into Holcombe Village and the fact that one of them had a white background. Mr Ireland asked if this could be replaced as it wasn't a legal sign.

It was stated that this would be looked into and if required the sign would be upgraded.

It was agreed:

1. That the information provided be noted.
2. That Angela, Ashleigh and John be thanked for their attendance at the meeting.

Alex Holland, Head of Property and Asset Management, Ian Lord, Engineering Manager and Mike Owen, Executive Director of Resources and Regulation attended the meeting to report on work that had been carried out in relation to a number of issues raised at a previous meeting of the Township Forum.

It was explained that issues had been raised regarding the market in Ramsbottom. The market took up too many parking spaces meaning fewer visitors could park, the containers were old and unsightly and the traders' toilets were smelly and also unsightly.

Alex explained that a number of options had been considered including moving the Saturday market up to the site at the Toppled Urn at the top of Bridge Street. This was used for the artisan markets which were held monthly and had proved a popular site. It was explained however, that this site would not be suitable for the Saturday market as it was not a big enough site to accommodate the stalls. It was also reported that the current traders had been consulted and had stated that they would not be happy to move up to the Urn.

The other option that had been considered was to shrink the market to half of its current size and change the containers for newer, more attractive ones that were available now that the work at Radcliffe Market had been completed. It was suggested that this option should be the recommended option.

Those present were asked for their opinion and the following points were raised:-

- It was suggested that the artisan market at the urn should be a weekly event.
- Union Street should be re-opened on a Saturday to allow for more parking.
- The mess created from empty packing boxes was unsightly - could anything be done about this.
- The parking spaces should be altered to be on an angle which would be more user friendly
- The toilets near to the Urn need to be open if a market is going to be operating from the site on a regular basis.

Those present agreed that the Market should be shrunk to half its current size and the issue with the containers be reviewed. The market needed to be as vibrant as possible to attract visitors. It was also agreed that options for a more regular artisan market at the Urn site be researched.

Councillor Fitzwalter explained that a survey of parking options had been carried out with the businesses in Ramsbottom. The majority of businesses felt that two hour parking restrictions on Bolton Street would be beneficial to them. It was also explained that there were a number of other issues across the town relating to parking and depending on where a business was located parking requirements changed.

Ian Lord explained that parking was always a difficult area to tackle and involved balancing competing demands. It was difficult to get the right balance of short stay and long stay spaces. Ian suggested that Bolton Street be looked at first and other options be considered across the town.

Ian stated that he would review the closure notice on Union Street and see whether this would be a viable option.

- Councillor Bevan asked whether it would be possible to apply a one way system around the Union Street area.

Ian explained that this had been reviewed in the past but he would be more than happy to have another look at it as a possible introduction.

- A member of the public stated that the pavements in Ramsbottom were in a very bad state of repair and the roads were full of potholes.

Ian explained that all problems should be reported to the Council and they would be recorded. Maintenance was being carried out right across the borough but it sometimes took a while to carry out due to the amount of work required and the people available to carry it out.

It was agreed:

1. That the suggested scheme to shrink and update the market be carried out.
2. That the level of demand for a regular weekly market at the Urn be gauged.
3. That the two hour parking restriction on Bolton street be considered and further options of parking across the town be explored.

RTNM.790 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME/OPEN FORUM

The Chair invited those present who had a question relating to Council services

- Mr Booth referred to Summerseat PLC being relocated to Radcliffe and asked what Summerseat House would be used for in the future.

It was explained that those present at the meeting were unaware of the ownership of Summerseat House but enquiries would be made.

- Mr Booth reported that he had received some unwanted phone calls from private companies and one from the Conservative Party. Both had stated, when asked that they had bought his telephone number from Bury Council.

It was explained that the Council was obliged to provide a copy of the open electoral register on request but would never sell details of a resident as Mr Booth was describing.

- Councillor Bevan reported that the Planning Inspectorate's Enquiry relating to the Application to build an anaerobic digester in Ramsbottom was due to start on Tuesday 10 March in the Elizabethan Suite of the Town Hall. Councillor Bevan asked that people attend if they were able to.

RTNM.791 NOTICE OF THANKS

Councillor Wright explained that this was the last meeting of the Forum for the 2014/2015 municipal year and thanked all those present for their attendance and input.

It was agreed:

That the Forum thanks Councillor Yvonne Wright for her excellent contribution and hard work as Chair for the past Municipal Year.

COUNCILLOR WRIGHT
Chair

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