

Fenham Ward Committee

21 May 2009

(7.00 - 9.00 pm)

Meeting held in the West End United Reformed Church, Lanercost Drive

Present:

Councillor: Daglish (In the Chair)

Councillors: Morrissey and Emery

IN ATTENDANCE

P McKinnell	- Ward Co-ordinator
L Couch	- Democratic Services
D Orr	- Environment and Regeneration
G Grant	- Transportation Officer
M Newman	- Play Service
PC2208 Graham	- Northumbria Police
G Robson	- Local Residents
D M Gair	
J Wanless	
J W Scott	
M Stuart	
K M Dixon	
P E Florentine	
G Ure	
J Ure	
M Dredbury	
J Drew	
R Jakk	
G McIntyre	

89 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced those officers in attendance.

90 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from P Atkinson and Mr Holier.

91 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

92 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2009 were approved as a correct record, subject to the third bullet point of minute 81 being amended to read 'The number 15A bus is **not** a low liner'.

93 **WEST ROAD PUBLIC TRANSPORT CORRIDOR PROPOSALS**

Unfortunately, plans had not been available giving details of the proposals during the drop in before the start of the meeting however, an officer from the Transportation Section had attended for part of the drop in and was available to respond to residents questions and concerns. The Chair indicated that the arrangement of the agenda would be adjusted to enable concerns to be raised by residents.

The following issues were raised and responded to as indicated:-

- The negative impact of proposals for a bus route on property values and access issues were highlighted. Another resident further commented that issues were of greater concern for disabled householders.

G Grant indicated that following the consultation the proposals would be considered by the Councils Executive in July 2009. Comments made during the earlier session had been noted and would be fed into the process. Should the scheme go forward, then more detailed consultation would be undertaken on detailed design issues. The aim was to improve the overall position for all users.

- Redirection of traffic to Scotswood Road. G Grant responded indicating that current traffic surveys showed high proportions of traffic leave the West Road to access the central motorway rather than using the West Road. The scheme would aim to make the West Road a more reliable route.
- Reductions in speed limit – observing bus lanes.
- In response to comments G Grant indicated that reducing traffic speeds would increase the capacity of the road. Proposals to reduce speed from 40mph to 30mph were included but there were no proposals to reduce speed to 20mph on any part of the West Road route. In relation to bus lanes, he responded referring to capacities of the A1/A69 junction impact on bus services and junction signalisation improvements. Enforcement of bus lanes would be incorporated in detailed proposals when these were brought forward. He further commented in relation to traffic signalisation and management of traffic

flow. There were no proposals for additional bus lanes in the area of the shops and management of pinch points, i.e. Condercum Road/Wingrove Road would impact on reducing congestion. Currently, there were 23 changes between two lane to one lane which added to congestion. Revised proposals would improve the position and make traffic flow more reliable.

- In relation to funding, G Grant explained the competitive bid structure for the North East region. Funding was purely allocated for public transport infrastructure projects and as this scheme was nearly ready, the bid would be very competitive on a regional basis. The investment was between £10m to £13m and part of the allocation would be used to protect residents for example parking problems, Denhill Park.
- Concerns regarding large vehicles climbing the hill at lower speeds would have an impact on local residents. G Grant indicated that air quality monitoring would be undertaken for comparative purposes. Generally constant speeds produced lower emissions.
- He further responded to a comment highlighting the West Road as the most congested route, although within the three areas (i) A1, A69 to Silver Lonnen to (ii) Two Ball Lonnen to Wingrove Road and (iii) West Road to the City. The most congested area was between Two Ball Lonnen and Wingrove Road. The proposals were aimed at improving the position in that section by management.

The Chair drew the discussion to a close and made reference to consultation forms available for any further points or more detailed responses to be made. He thanked G Grant for his attendance at short notice and his responses.

G Grant indicated that the next consultation when plans would be available was to be held on Tuesday 26 May 2009 in a Committee Room at the Civic Centre.

(Subsequently an additional consultation at Fenham Library was arranged and residents whose details had been supplied at the Ward Committee meeting were informed of these arrangements).

94 **MATTERS OF LOCAL CONCERN**

(a) **Middlewood Park - Footpath Re-Surface**

The Neighbourhood Response Manager indicated that he would ask for an inspection to be undertaken and obtain costings for the work.

(b) **Damage to Statue in the Grounds of the former Convent**

It was suggested that removal of the statue to a more appropriate place in the former Convent Cemetery should be considered to avoid further damage to the statue. Another resident supported the proposal and the Chair indicated that enquiries would be made and a report back made to a further meeting.

(c) Fenham Hall Library

A resident suggested that following the refurbishment, the light provided was inappropriate and should be removed.

95 CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

- PC Graham made reference to a recent increase in burglaries in the area since February 2009 in the region of five to six per day. Following action to apprehend the culprits, there had been a great reduction to only three since 27 April 2009. He further highlighted the issue of shed burglaries, making reference to security and reporting of any suspicious persons.
- A resident made reference to her property having been subjected to three burglaries recently and the inadequacy of the fence provided by the Council. PC Graham undertook to get further details from the resident, but could not promise any improvement on the current position.
- Mill Lane Youth Centre – a resident made reference to the in door skate park and aimed to involve young people in repairing and cleaning of pedal cycles. Links with the New Deal for Communities Police Team were referred to and the resident wondered whether any bikes in poor condition could be made available from the police for use by the young people. PC Graham undertook to take contact details and make further enquiries on the possibility.

96 NEIGHBOURHOOD RESPONSE MANAGER UPDATE

D Orr, Neighbourhood Response Manager, gave an update on his duties and responsibilities in the Ward in relation to managing the street teams and responding to issues raised by local residents. He also made reference to the purchase of a hand barrow, funded by the Ward, which would hopefully improve the cleanliness. He asked for any reports on areas of concern and would welcome any feedback. He also indicated that he was identifying schemes with Councillors with a view to deciding priorities, but would welcome any suggestions.

- In response to a concern regarding overhanging trees at St Cuthbert's School, he undertook to contact the school regarding the matter.
- Holy Cross Church – graffiti and youths gathering and drinking alcohol. The Chair indicated that there had been a major episode a few months ago and that the issue would be raised at the SNAPS meeting to consider further options to tackle the problem.

97 ACTION LIST DATABASE

The Chair indicated that this was available for information and the Ward Co-ordinator and Neighbourhood Response Manager indicated that they would be following up on outstanding issues.

98 **NEW HEALTH CENTRE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (CAROLINE/MARIA STREET)**

Submitted: Report by the Director of Neighbourhood Services incorporating details about the proposed development of a new health centre for Benwell (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Representatives of the Trust were in attendance to explain the background to the item. The proposal was subject to planning approvals and the business case being approved by the Strategic Planning Authority. Any feedback on the consultation details provided would be taken into consideration. Copies of the proposed plans which were an initial outline planning application indicative of the proposals were available and a copy was to be left with the Chair. In response to questions and comments, it was indicated that:-

- The details of which GP practices might be involved was still the subject of discussion.
- In response to a comment that there was a need for GP practices to remain local and within the community whilst providing Primary Care Services, it was indicated that often current GP practices were not fit for purpose and there was a need for them to be brought up to date and be more accessible whilst providing additional services in the local community.
- Concerns were expressed that existing surgeries may close as a result when some had already undertaken major improvements. The impact of changes at Newcastle General Hospital were also raised. In response, it was indicated that this process was to improve health provision, it was not related to proposals for the Newcastle General Hospital nor was there an intention to close existing GP surgeries. The impact may be for some surgeries to transfer into the health centre, but no arrangements had been finalised with GPs as yet.
- It was confirmed that preventative services would be part of the community services provided. Health improvement advice in relation to provision of gym days and tackling obesity in young people via talks at school and encouragement of active sports and exercise based activities and schemes involving the whole family.
- Loss of individual contact and relationships with doctors was seen as a problem in bigger surgeries. It was not the intention to depersonalise GPs, but to improved access to more services.
- In relation to childhood obesity this was recognised as an issue for parents and a matter of education. There was a role for many people, including the whole family, in regard to changing behaviour etc.

The Chair thanked the representatives for their presentation and responses and received the plans of the proposed development.

99 **SLATYFORD YOUTH CENTRE UPDATE REPORT**

Submitted: Report by the Head of Children and Young People in the Community (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

M Newman of the Play Service was able to confirm that the repairs needed to the Slatyford Play and Youth Centre gym were to be undertaken from the existing repairs and maintenance budget.

Concerns were expressed by members that the premises were underused and a resident expressed the view for a need to advertise the centre more fully in the local area. The Ward Co-ordinator suggested that additional work within the existing communication network could be undertaken. The possibility of sharing costs for summer play provision publicity to involve the local and the wider area was also suggested. The Chair suggested the use of local notice boards to advertise the building which had excellent facilities, but needed to be used more widely.

In relation to current repairs, it was expected that work would be completed in two weeks.

In relation to opening times of the centre, it was reported that play sessions were advertised and a number of outside hires were made on a regular basis.

The Chair confirmed that officers and members were actively trying to increase the use made of the facility.

Councillors responded to comments regarding proposals for youth service development and 'My Place' funding which he understood involved the closure of the small pool at the City Baths. The Ward Co-ordinator would make enquiries and provide further information to the next Ward Committee meeting.

100 **ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE - OLDER PERSON FRIENDLY CITY - PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS**

Submitted: Report by the Director of Neighbourhood Services enclosing a report prepared by the Elders Council of Newcastle following an assessment of the City's parks and recreation areas.

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

101 **CITY LIFE CONSULTATION WITH RESIDENTS**

Submitted: Report by the Director of Communication and Marketing, Chief Executive's Office (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Ward Co-ordinator introduced the item indicating that feedback sheets were available at the meeting and questionnaires were included in the April 2009 edition

of the magazine. Any responses could be collected at the end of the meeting. He undertook to follow up details of residents who had not received copies of Citylife.

102 **NEW EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

Submitted: Report by the Director of Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes) which attached a report to Constitutional Committee setting out proposals for consultation on proposed new Executive arrangements.

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

103 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Submitted: The financial statement as at 20 April 2009 (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Ward Co-ordinator indicated that this related to the previous years funding and a report would be brought to the next meeting on the future years funding and allocations.

RESOLVED – That the report be received for information.

104 **GRANT AID APPLICATIONS**

The following applications were considered and the decisions made as indicated (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

(a) **EMTEP - Football Training and Coaching Sessions, healthy Eating and Gym Sessions - (£941.16)**

No representative of the organisation was present. The Ward Co-ordinator understood that there had been questions raised at other Ward Committee meetings and it was possible that the application was to be revised and resubmitted. If necessary the application could be brought back to the next meeting.

(b) **Fenham Falcons Football Club - Coaching and Equipment (£500.00)**

No representative of the organisation was present however, the Chair was familiar with the group and Councillors supported the application.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to a contribution of £500 as start up costs for the group.

(c) North East Pensioners Association - Running Costs and trips (£171.50)

Concerns were expressed at the high cost of benefits to residents from the Ward. The Ward Co-ordinator undertook to seek additional information and it was:-

RESOLVED – That the application be deferred.

The Ward Co-ordinator responded to a comment by making reference to the revised application and monitoring process in place which provided for monies not used for the purposes allocated to be recovered.

In response to a question from a resident regarding a potential application, the Ward Co-ordinator indicated that he would provide details of how to submit an application.

105 **WARD SUPPORT FUND APPLICATIONS****(a) Stocksfield Avenue Primary School - Preservation of Crest (£410.45)**

Submitted: Report by Alan French, Stocksfield Avenue Primary School.

The application was to provide funds to salvage one of the historic City Crests from the former school building and preserve it by placing it in the grounds of the new school. Apologies had been received from the school representative who had had to attend a meeting at the school. The Chair indicated that this would be funds well spent and supported the application.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to an allocation of £401.45.

(b) Play Service - Summer Activities (£3970.38)

Submitted: Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The report was introduced by Michael Newman, Newcastle Play Service. The Chair and Councillors expressed concerns that there should be greater links and communication within the Ward to co-ordinate provision at Denton Burn Community Centre, Slatyford Youth and Play Centre and The Fenham Association of Residents. In response he indicated that work was ongoing between the Groups and the long term strategy was to bring all groups into the process. The Chair stressed the need to avoid duplicating costs and stressed the need for co-ordination and increasing in the numbers of children participating. Whilst supportive of the application members stressed the need for greater emphasis between the groups to be pursued and the publicity involved for all provision to be linked. The Ward Co-ordinator indicated that further discussion could take place and a decision be made by delegated decision. Members were in agreement that provided these concerns were satisfied then the application would be supported.

RESOLVED – That funding of £3,970.38 be approved subject to councillors being satisfied that the links between the groups providing play provision in the Ward were pursued as indicated.

106 INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Information items were received as indicated.

(a) West Road public Transport Corridor Consultation Leaflet

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

(b) Parking in Newcastle - a useful guide

It was indicated that hot spot areas had been identified on Stocksfield Avenue and St. Cuthberts Green. In response to a question from a resident the issue of parking on pavements was still a police issue as a matter of obstruction any areas of particular concern could be raised at the SNAPs meeting. Residents identified Dissington Place as having parking issue and Robseugh Place in regard to a rat run because of the restriction in place on Lanercost Drive. A further point raised related to the issue of wheelie bins being left in the streets. This was being monitored. In relation to parking concerns the Chair indicated awareness of the problems raised and referred to the possible introduction of restrictions on Hesleyside Place.

(c) Carers Conference Information**(d) Single Equality Scheme Action Plan Consultation (further details available from the Ward Co-ordinator)****107 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 23 July 2009 at 7pm at St Roberts Church, Bolbec Road.

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