

**ACTION NOTES OF THE MEETING OF CASTLE AND PRIORY, ST
JAMES'S AND ST THOMAS'S COMMUNITY FORUM**

Monday 17th June, 2013 at 6.30 p.m.
at St Barnabas Church, Middlepark Road, Russell's Hall, Dudley

PRESENT: -

Councillors A Ahmed, Ali, M Aston, A Finch, K Finch and Roberts

OFFICERS:

M Bowsher (Lead Officer to the Forum) – Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and S Griffiths – Directorate of Corporate Resources

together with 25 Members of the public

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor K Finch was elected Chair of the Forum for the 2013/14 municipal year.

2. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Councillor A Ahmed was elected Vice-Chair of the Forum for the 2013/14 municipal year.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors K Ahmed, Arshad and Waltho.

4. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Following general announcements the Councillors and Council officers introduced themselves.

5. **LISTENING TO YOU: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Local residents raised questions and made comments as set out below. These issues would be referred to the relevant Directorate or appropriate body for a response:-

Nature of question/comment

- (1) Requesting the start date for implementing traffic calming measures in Oakham Road, Dudley.
- (2) Request for the repair of a Sewage Pipe at a property in Ashenhurst Road, Dudley.
- (3) Asking that various issues on Russells Hall Estate be attended to, including:
 - lighting in Pearce Close.
 - anti-social behaviour caused by off-road bikes on the park at Barrow Hill.
 - problems with litter starting at the top of Bushey Fields Road, in the park and the need for bushes to be maintained.
 - various car parking issues affecting Overfield Road, Pearce Close, Ashenhurst Road and Bushey Fields Road.
- (4) Comments that the change in the running times of the 222 Bus had led to a worsening of the service.
- (5) Clarification of the ownership of the 'old seed shop' on the corner of King Street/Hall Street, Dudley; asking if the Council is aware of anyone trading from this shop or anyone living above the premises in view of a perceived fire risk.
- (6) Reasons as to why Cider Bank Island was changed to a two-lane approach from Netherton. This has led to traffic congestion at certain times and caused traffic to divert to New Road.
- (7) The Council is requested to reconsider the opening of Dudley Town Centre public toilets on Sundays (ie: 7 days per week). Reference was also made to the availability and maintenance of the toilets in Dudley bus station.
- (8) Requesting the Council to monitor the 'No Entry' Gap on King Street, Dudley as drivers ignored the no entry restriction and the new road markings.
- (9) Requesting the protection of Court Passage in view of its historical importance in Dudley Town Centre.
- (10) Questioning why the Council cannot turn the Dudley Hippodrome building over to the Friends Group to develop it and return the building to a Grade A theatre and for associated community use.

- (11) Ongoing concerns regarding the implications for surrounding roads (particularly Douglass Road) following the blocking-off of Blackacre Road, Dudley to through traffic.
- (12) Query as to whether a retraction had been sought from a magazine relating to figures previously published in connection with fly tipping in Dudley Borough.

Other Issues raised and/or answered on the evening:-

- Wider regeneration aspirations for Dudley Town Centre with a focus on restoration to preserve and promote Dudley's history as a market town, restore civic pride and attract further tourism and business opportunities to the Borough.
- Ongoing issues concerning the regeneration of Dudley Market Place and Castle Hill development.
- Questioning the validity of car parking charges in the Town Centre as these are felt to be contradictory to wider regeneration aspirations.
- Inadequate seating/benches in the Churchill Precinct.
- Concerns about items of furniture and office equipment stored on squash courts at Dudley Leisure Centre preventing the use of the facility for sporting purposes.
- Request for possible assistance with the purchase of a Chain Saw to help with the maintenance the graveyard at St John's Church, Dudley.
- Problems with potholes in Standhills Road, Kingswinford (near former MEB premises).

6. WORKING WITH YOU – TOPICS RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILLORS

- Councillor Roberts referred to ongoing issue with the non-collection of rubbish and the lopping of trees on Russell's Hall Estate.
 - Councillor Roberts raised further concerns at the number of speeding vehicles using the Himley Road following a request for a 30mph speed limit. She suggested that the traffic survey should be undertaken at times when these problems were most evident.
-

7. AREA GRANTS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted on applications for funding.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND:-

- (1) That, subject to the outcome of the funding application to Brierley Hill/Brockmoor and Pensnett Community Forum, the application from the Association of Retired Employees of Simon Dudley Ltd for funding of up to £5,000 be approved on the basis of equal contributions from the 3 wards comprising this Community Forum.
- (2) That in the event of the funding application to Brierley Hill/Brockmoor and Pensnett Community Forum being successful, the financial contributions from the wards comprising this Community Forum, as referred to in (1) above, be reduced accordingly.
- (3) That the application from the Time Step Community Hub, for funding of up to £5,000, be approved on the basis of equal contributions from the 3 wards comprising this Community Forum and that the Community Hub be requested to provide monitoring information on the use of the facilities by local residents.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Forum would be on Monday, 2nd September, 2013, starting at 6.30pm at Wren's Nest Community Centre, Summer Road, Dudley.

The Chair thanked all participants for their attendance and contributions and indicated that any ideas for improving the Forum meetings would be welcomed. Residents thanked the Chair for the way he had conducted the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm