

**Action Notes of the Castle and Priory, St James's and St Thomas's
Community Forum**

Thursday 10th September, 2015 at 6.30 pm
at Wrens Nest Community Centre, Summerhill Road, Dudley

Present:

Councillor A Ahmed (Chair)
Councillor K Finch (Vice-Chair)
Councillors M Aston, A Finch, G Simms and S Waltho

Officers:

S Griffiths (Lead Officer to the Forum) (Democratic Services Manager) and
M Johal (Democratic Services Officer)

Together with 26 members of the public.

9 **Welcome and Introductions**

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

10 **Apologies for Absence**

Councillors S Ali, K Ahmed and M Roberts

11 **Listening to you – Questions and Comments from Local Residents**

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Action</u>
A resident referred to the draft West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, "Movement for Growth", which was the subject of public consultation for twelve weeks commencing 27 th July, 2015. Ward Councillors and members of the public were encouraged to participate in this consultation exercise with a view to reopening the Black Country Rail Line	Noted.

and reinvesting in diesel trains, giving Dudley access to a direct passenger service to destinations across the country.

The Chair reported that there were ongoing discussions in relation to a rail line for Dudley and it was stated that Members of the Council fully supported positive action in this regard.

A resident referred to the previous commitment given to review the closure of Blackacre Road following King Street reverting to two-way traffic. Although King Street had opened to two-way traffic, residents were still experiencing problems with traffic and cars speeding through surrounding roads which was extremely dangerous.

In responding the Chair stated that although an assurance had been given by the former Cabinet Member for Transportation to review the matter, the issue was now under the jurisdiction of another Cabinet Member.

Planning permission had been granted for a housing development near to the Spar on the Russells Hall Estate. It was queried whether consideration had been given to the additional traffic this would generate, the pressure on additional school places, General Practitioners, local Chemists and play provision for children. It was also queried how the families would be vetted as the estate currently suffered from anti social behaviour and there was a lack of police presence.

The Chair stated that when granting a planning application full consideration was given to the impact on the surrounding area.

The Chair and Councillor Waltho undertook to discuss the matter with the relevant Cabinet Member with a view to ascertaining the current position. The organisation of a petition had been suggested to strengthen the case.

Referred for a written response.

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The need for repairs on Middlepark Road and Corbyn Road as there were dips in the road caused by road humps.	Referred for a written response.
Reference was made to the football pitch on the Russells Hall estate and it was queried whether there would be any changing rooms and fencing surrounding the pitch.	Referred for a written response.
There was rubbish and glass on Bushey Fields and Overfield Roads that needed clearing.	Referred for a written response.
Dog fouling was getting worse and a warden was requested to monitor the situation particularly in the park and Railway Walk, Russells Hall.	Referred for a written response.
Request for signage on the Russells Hall estate particularly speeding signs on Overfield Road.	The Chair stated that the matter was being pursued as it had been raised at a recent Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting.
The traffic lights at the junction of Parkes Hall Road and Sedgley Road had been altered but were not working properly and traffic was still queuing during peak periods.	Referred for a written response.
An update was requested on a petition that had been submitted relating to speeding and inconsiderate parking in the vicinity surrounding Foxyard School.	Councillor A Finch stated that he had received the petition and forwarded it to the relevant Officer for action.
Reference was made to Castlegate Island and the need to tidy and clear the footpath on the left hand side to enable wheelchairs to pass through.	Referred for a written response.
Complaints made about collection of rubbish in that refuse collectors did not completely empty the bins. Also when emptying bins rubbish was being strewn on to the pavements as bags were breaking open and refuse staff were not sweeping after them.	Referred for a written response.

An issue was raised in relation to the Marketplace in Dudley near the fountain in that there were gaps where the cobbles had been placed which was dangerous for pedestrians.	Referred for a written response.
Safety concerns highlighted due to inconsiderate parking on pavements and corners of roads surrounding Milking Bank and Russells Hall Primary Schools.	Referred for a written response.
Heavy Goods Vehicles using roads, particularly Prospect Row, as a short cut from Himley Road to Pensnett Road and also issues with speeding.	Referred for a written response.
A resident queried about progress with the Hippodrome.	The Lead Officer to the Forum reported that a deadline for expressions of interest had been set and further information would be available towards the end of the year.

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Working with you – Topics Raised by Local Councillors

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Action</u>
Councillor K Finch referred to the lack of progress made on the proposed Community Centre at Donkey Pool and stated that he would raise the matter at the next Council meeting.	Noted.
Councillor A Finch referred to the King Arthur Pub and suggested the planning section contact Aldi Supermarket to ascertain the position on when works would commence and timescales for building and opening the supermarket.	Noted.

13 **Update on Consultation on Dudley's Draft Dudley Town Centre and Castle Hill**

Mr T Brown (Senior Planning Officer) and Ms J Pilkington (Senior Conservation Officer) gave a brief presentation on the consultation exercise that had been undertaken on the two draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals relating to Dudley Town Centre and Castle Hill which would be submitted to the Development Control Committee in October, 2015.

Arising from the presentation residents stated that there were currently no large stores in Dudley Town Centre and plans to regenerate Brierley Hill would have a further detrimental impact on Dudley. Efforts needed to be made to attract large organisations, particularly large retail companies to the Town Centre to increase footfall. It was further suggested that consideration be given to holding themed markets such as "Farmers" and "Christmas" markets to attract people.

In responding the Senior Planning Officer and the Senior Conservation Officer stated that there was a draft regeneration plan for Dudley to consider provision of shops, car parking and leisure facilities for Dudley. The Chair also informed the meeting that discussions had been held with a view to holding themed markets and progress was being made on the issue.

Consultation forms were circulated to residents for completion and return.

14 **Community Forum – Love Your Local Community Funding**

The Forum considered a report of the Lead Officer.

The Lead Officer verbally reported on the following urgent late applications that had been received:-

- (1) The Brierley Hill and Dudley Schools Football Association – Requesting funding of up to £2,500 split across six Community Forums to purchase football kit for each of the Association's sides. (Urgent as kits to be purchased for new season commencing September 2016)
- (2) Royal Air Force Association (Dudley Branch) – Requesting funding of up to £1,800 to produce an enlarged replica of the Armed Forces plaque and flagpole. (Urgent as scheme needs to be complete for Remembrance Sunday).
- (3) St John's Church Preservation Group – Funding of up to £2,500 requested for developing unused land at Kates Hill on two sides of the graveyard to be a nature conservation area.

<u>Application</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Dudley Al-Karim Foundation	Noted – Sum of £1,500 approved under delegated powers. (St Thomas's Ward)
African Caribbean Community Network	Noted – Sum of £2,000 approved under delegated powers. (St Thomas's Ward)
Meadow Road Youth Centre	Approve £3,000 (Castle & Priory Ward)
Dudley Citizens Advice Bureau	Refuse as it was considered that Community Forum funding was not appropriate for this project and the organisation is requested to pursue alternative sources of funding.
Dudley MBC – ICT Services	Defer to the November meeting pending discussions with Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and Ward Councillors in the context of wider regeneration issues in the Town Centre.
Dudley MBC – Environmental Services Division	Approve £1,400.30 (St James's Ward)
Lunch on the Run	Approve £1,623.70 (St James's Ward)
The following grant applications were considered as a matter of urgency:-	
Brierley Hill and Dudley Schools Football Association	Refuse as priority given to other local schemes/projects
Royal Air Force Association (Dudley Branch)	Approve £1,800 (£600 from each Ward)
St John's Church Preservation Group	Approve £1,500 subject to receipt of appropriate quotes and invoices (St Thomas's Ward)

Next Meeting

It was reported that meetings of the Community Forum would be held on the following dates:-

Wednesday 4th November, 2015 – St Barnabus' C of E Church

Wednesday 27th January, 2016 – To be confirmed

Wednesday 16th March, 2016 – St Barnabus' C of E Church

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

