

**ACTION NOTES OF THE MEETING OF NETHERTON, WOODSIDE AND  
ST ANDREWS/QUARRY BANK AND DUDLEY WOOD  
COMMUNITY FORUM**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 at 6.30 pm at  
Woodside Community Centre, Highgate Road, Dudley

**PRESENT:-**

Councillor Zada (Chair)  
Councillor Cotterill (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors Cowell, Duckworth, Sparks and Wood

**Officers**

Mr M Williams (current Lead Officer to the Forum) (Assistant Director, Environmental Management – Directorate of the Urban Environment), Mr A Tromans (Prospective Lead Officer to the Forum) and Mrs M Johal (both Directorate of Corporate Resources) and Ms Nichola Dakin – Dudley Council Plus

Together with eighteen members of the public.

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**INTRODUCTIONS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews/Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Community Forum and following the making of other general announcements the local Councillors and Officers introduced themselves.

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**LISTENING TO YOU – QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

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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**

- (a) Reference was made to the need for a new Wardens base at the Saltwells Nature Reserve and it was commented that the matter seemed to have stagnated and that no information was forthcoming on its progress.

- (b) Complaints were being made by residents residing in flats in Knighton Road that the new wheelie bins were too big and problems were being experienced in storing them due to the limited space available for them. It was queried whether consideration could be given to offering them smaller bins.
- (c) Queried whether the choice based lettings system was fair as some tenants were able to get bigger houses than was required for their household. It was also queried whether tenants were being appropriately vetted as some families were coming into the area and causing disruption and trashing Council houses and subsequently the Council were having to repair those properties, which was a complete waste of Council resources. It was commented that bordering Councils were not giving an accurate and true report of tenants moving to the Dudley area and that Dudley were then experiencing the problems.

The Chair requested that individuals speak to the current Lead Officer to the Committee after the meeting with a view to providing further details and examples of issues that were occurring and that the Lead Officer be requested to submit a full report to the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair indicated that he would provide an update to the next meeting of the Community Forum and requested that an agenda item for the next meeting be included in this regard.

- (d) Although reported at the last meeting the blocked drains in Bradford Road had still not been cleared.
- (e) Several complaints were made about the service received from Dudley Council Plus in that service users had to wait for long periods on the telephone before their call was answered, messages were not being passed, staff would not put customers through direct to Directorates or Officers that they wished to speak to and that inappropriate questions were being asked of residents. However, some members of the public reported good service experiences from Dudley Council Plus.

The Leader of the Council stated that he would be requesting that a complete and thorough investigation of the service and complaints procedure be undertaken. There were varying responses and experiences in how matters were dealt with and he indicated that there should be a consistent approach and that everyone should receive the same service and response whether you are a member of the public or a Councillor. He urged that members of the public experiencing difficulties should contact him direct and he would ensure that the matter was passed to the relevant Officer with a view to action being taken.

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

- In response to a query an update on air pollution in Netherton was given in that a meeting had been held and that there were various plans to be implemented such as making Crossley Street into a one-way street and other traffic management schemes. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture undertook to provide a copy of the plan to the questioner.
- Request whether consideration could be given to extending the green bin collection to finish in November rather than October as leaves continued to fall. The Lead Officer stated that the action to cease collection in October had been taken to save money owing to budget constraints.
- Comments made that communication given regarding the consolidation of collection days was not clear and led to confusion. It was also requested whether consideration could be given to collecting additional black bags to compensate for the longer period that some households would have to wait to get their rubbish collected owing to the movement in collection days.

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### WORKING WITH YOU – TOPICS RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Councillor Cotterill

- (a) Referred to Paint Cup Row, off Dudley Wood Road and requested that further information be made available relating to its unadopted status.
- (b) Commented that Westfield should take responsibility and maintain land owned by them without having to be reminded and in particular reference was made for the need to cut bushes at the top of High Street, Quarry Bank.
- (c) Referred to the clothing bin on Saltwells Road and indicated that he was trying to contact relevant people with a view to removing it as it was an eyesore.

Councillor Wood updated the Forum regarding problems that had been experienced in getting appointments at the Netherton Health Centre and she indicated that the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) were investigating the complaint and that a survey would be undertaken to ascertain the problem. She undertook to provide an update to the next meeting.

Councillor Sparks referred to the parking of cars on the grass verge on Park Road, Quarry Bank and again requested that consideration be given to the installation of bollards to prevent further damage.

Councillor Duckworth referred to leaflets that had been circulated regarding “Dudley’s Big Switch” and urged people to register.

Councillor Cowell referred to the future of the Walk in Centre at Holly Hall and indicated that a consultation exercise was being undertaken and she urged members of the public to attend a drop-in session to express their views.

Councillor Zada

- (a) Informed the meeting that he had requested that Officers identify a suitable location for the placing of a Christmas Tree at Woodside.
  - (b) Indicated that he had spoken to the Head of Traffic and Transportation with a view to consideration being given to the removal of waiting restrictions on the top part of Cradley Road.
  - (c) Referred to disabled parking at Netherton Health Centre and indicated that a draft scheme had been drawn up.
  - (d) Reported that there were uncertain rumours about Netherton Police Station and it was requested that investigative work be undertaken to ascertain its future.
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#### AREA GRANTS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted on applications for funding. The Lead Officer also verbally reported on two further applications that had been received from Bowling Green Tenants and Residents Association and Unit3sixty since submission of the report.

#### AGREED TO RECOMMEND

That the Director of Corporate Resources approve the following:-

- (a) A grant in the sum of £750.64 to the Girl Guides – 5<sup>th</sup> Cradley Heath to help fund the purchase of Information Technology, storage and health and safety equipment.
- (b) A grant in the sum of £4000 to Brownies – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarry Bank to help fund activities and events to celebrate their centenary celebrations at local, district, divisional and national level.
- (c) A grant in the sum of £2162.20 to Dudley MBC – Directorate of the Urban Environment (Environmental Management Division) for the provision of Christmas Trees at Castleton Street, Netherton and High Street/Park Road, Quarry Bank.
- (d) Subject to a suitable location being identified a grant in the sum of £1081.10 to Dudley MBC – Directorate of the Urban Environment (Environmental Management Division) for the provision of a Christmas Tree at Woodside.

- (e) A grant in the sum of £5000 to Bowling Green Tenants and Residents Association for the erection of fencing around the land for security reasons.
- (f) A grant in the sum of £1000 be allocated from Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Ward's allocation to Fast+Aid Charity No 1147703 to fund the purchase of a second vehicle to be used in the Dudley area so that they can respond quickly to 999 calls.

That the Director of Corporate Resources refuse the following:-

- (g) A grant in the sum of £5000 to Unit3sixty towards capital set up costs for an indoor recreation centre for the reasons that funding from the Community Forum should be allocated to local initiatives to directly benefit the people of Netherton.

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#### DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted that the next meeting of the Community Forum would be held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 at Dudley wood Neighbourhood Learning and Community Centre, Pavillion Gardens, Dudley Wood Road, DY2 0DB.

The meeting ended at 8.15 p.m.