

WEST (INNER) AREA COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 9TH APRIL, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor J Harper in the Chair

Councillors T Hanley, A Lowe and
N Taggart

Co-optees Hazel Boutle - Armley Forum
Morgan Pugh - Armley Forum
Stephen McBarron – Bramley & Stanningley Forum

79 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor D Atkinson and Councillor J McKenna.

80 Declaration of Interests

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

Councillor J Harper declared a personal interest in her capacity as Chair of the West Leeds Gateway Stakeholders' Advisory Group (Agenda Item 14 – Area Manager's Report - Minute 89 refers).

Councillor Lowe declared a personal and prejudicial interest in her capacity as a Director of West North West Leeds Homes (Agenda Item 9 – Well-Being Budget (Appendix 1 – Application for funding Neighbourhood Wardens) – Minute 84 refers). The Councillor left the room and took no part in the discussion or vote thereon.

81 Open Forum / Community Forums

The Chair gave notice that in accordance with the Area Committee Procedure Rules, there was provision for an Open Form session of up to 10 minutes at each ordinary meeting of an Area Committee in order to allow members of the public an opportunity to ask questions or to make representations on any matter which fell within the remit of the Area Committee.

The Chair introduced John Barber from the New Wortley Tenants Association, together with two other local residents who addressed the meeting regarding their concerns over the continued funding of the Neighbourhood Wardens post for the area. Concern was also expressed that should this post be deleted there would be a distinct increase in anti-social behaviour in the New Wortley area. It was reported that the present Neighbourhood Warden was a dedicated officer who was doing an excellent job and had gained a great deal of respect in the area. It was also reported that the Neighbourhood Warden had recently been hospitalised after an incident which occurred while dealing with an issue in the area.

The Chair also read out a letter received from a constituent who had been helped in the past by the Neighbourhood Warden to overcome adversity as he had been homeless and a drug addiction. Through the dedicated help and guidance he had received from the Neighbourhood Warden he had now been clean from drug addiction for the last 14 months and was now working his way towards becoming an accountant.

The West North West Area Manager reminded the meeting that there was an application for funding this particular post on today's agenda. He reported that a restructuring of the wardens service was now underway and that there would still be 23 core funded posts citywide in addition to those funded by Area Committees and the ALMOs. The posts would in future be managed by the Environmental Action Teams and tackling issues of environmental crime but they would still be based in specific neighbourhoods. The Members expressed their concerns at the way these posts were now going to be administered and that funding had to be taken from their Well-Being Budget in order to fund such a vital post for the West Inner Leeds area.

The Chair requested that West Inner Area Management Team convey this Area Committee's best wishes for a speedy recovery to the Neighbourhood Warden and that flowers be sent on their behalf to the Warden.

A copy of the minutes of the Armley Community Forum meeting held on 17th February 2009 were also attached for Members' information.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the minutes of the Armley Community Forum meeting held on 17th February 2009 be noted.
- (b) That the West Inner Area Management Team convey the Area Committee's best wishes for a speedy recovery via a get well card and flowers to be sent to the Neighbourhood Warden.

82 Minutes - 12th February 2009 and Any Matters Arising

Minute 68 – Inner West Well-Being Fund Update

Referring to Resolution (b)(iv) regarding the Planting at Henconner Lane Roundabout application for funding, the West Inner Area Management Officer informed the meeting that they were now hoping to get this application through on capital funding.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

83 Community Safety Issues - Update for Inner West Leeds

Inspector Mark Bownass introduced the report and then introduced Detective Inspector Simon Atkinson who gave a DVD presentation on the use of capture houses and cars within the division.

The Detective Inspector informed the meeting that within West North West Leeds that the Pudsey, Rodley, Bramley and Armley areas had been identified as one of the hot spot areas on crime and that the majority of

Council houses and private dwelling had suffered from crime. Offenders were gaining access through unsecured windows and doors to steal electrical equipment such as laptops and play stations and on occasions were taking car keys and stealing the occupants cars. The Officer went on to explain how capture houses were being set up and the functions placed inside, some items which were stolen had tracking devices which meant the offenders could be tracked down within hours of committing a burglary on the capture houses. A similar device was also used on capture cars. It was also reported that 70 to 80% of burglars were tested for drugs as many of the burglaries committed were carried out to pay for their addiction. The Detective Inspector informed the meeting that the Police Authority do try to work with these people to get them off their drug habit.

The Detective Inspector informed the meeting that they would like to set up capture houses and capture cars within the West Inner and West Outer area at one time and they hoped that the Area Committee would support a future application for capital funding to buy this equipment for this area because at the moment the equipment was being passed from wedge to wedge.

In brief, the main issues raised were:

- Members noted that there were a considerable number of people with a drug habit and a clear need to ensure that these drug addicts get access to detox programme much quicker as at present it takes six to eight weeks to get on a detox programme.
- How much would the proposed equipment cost each Area Committee? It was reported that the equipment would cost approximately £4,000 for each area but that eventually the cost would pay for itself in the quick capture of stolen goods.
- The issue of racist intent had recently been raised at an ALMO Area Panel meeting as Black and Asian people were being targeted by local white youths and it was noted that the Police Authority were very supportive in curtailing racism in the area. The meeting were informed that they do have Multi Agency Hate Crime meetings to try and combat the issue of hate crime. At present they were trying to get an education awareness programme established and were trying to get a link with local schools in the area.

Inspector Bownass and Gill Hunter, Area Community Safety Officer (West Leeds) also gave an update on Operation Champion which took place on the 19th/20th March 2009 on the Aviaries in Armley; a Dispersal Order in the Cedars and an update on the Police and Community Together meetings in the Inner West area.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report and presentation be noted.

Note: Councillor N Taggart joined the meeting at 9.50 a.m. during consideration of the above item.

84 Inner West Area Committee Well-Being Fund Update

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a detailed report updating Members on the latest position with regard to the revenue and capital Well-Being Budget for Wards in the Inner West area for 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 municipal year.

Alison Pickering presented the report and, together with Steve Crocker, West North West Area Manager responded to various questions and comments.

Members expressed their concern that the Area Committee were now being expected to provide funds through the Well-Being Budget for skips on allotments due to the shortage of money. Members requested that this issue be monitored as the price for the supply of skips on allotments should be included in the amount of money the allotment owners pay for the rent of those allotments.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the financial status of the Well-Being Budget as detailed in paragraph 3.0 of the submitted report, be noted.
- (b) That the following decisions be taken in respect of the applications for funding from the:

Revenue Budget for 2009/2010

- (i) Neighbourhood Wardens – Approved £41,287.
- (ii) Police Off Road Motorcycle Scheme – Approved £1,497 and, subject to appropriate funds being available, approval be given for £1,497 (2010/2011 & 2011/2012).
- (iii) West Leeds Sports Development Programme – Approved £6,000
- (iv) Worklessness Project – Approved £40,000.
- (v) Town Centre Manager – Approved £20,000.
- (vi) I Love West Leeds – Approved £24,000.
- (vii) Summer 2009 Bands in Parks – Approved £1,200.
- (viii) Armley Helping Hands Community Development Scheme - £7,823.

Capital Budget for 2009/2010

- (i) Henconner Roundabout – Approved £1,500.
 - (ii) Operation Argus – Thermal Image Cameras – Approved £2,250 and that an update report be submitted in six months.
- (c) That the budget and the list of Small Grants since the last meeting as set out in Paragraph 5.2 be noted.
 - (d) That the allocation of monies towards small grants and skips be deferred to the next meeting in order that an update can be provided on the allocation of skips to allotments within the West Inner area.

Note: Councillor N Taggart declared a personal interest in Resolution (b)(i) above in his capacity as an Area Panel Member for West North West Leeds Homes.

85 Leeds Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy and Commissioning Section submitted a report to give Area Committee Members an overview of the emerging Leeds Housing Strategy and links to the Inner West Leeds area and to ask the Area Committee if there were any specific issues they might want to see in the Housing Strategy in relation to their particular area.

In brief, the main issues discussed were:

- The urgent need for quality decent rented housing to be provided by local authorities. Members expressed their concern that the waiting list for Council properties was unsatisfactory as people were unable to afford mortgages under the present financial climate.
- The need to replenish and update the Council's housing stock as it was getting older and there was a clear need for more decent social housing. Concern was expressed that young people and families were being forced into living with their relatives/parents due to the lack of affordability and the infrequency of vacancies for decent Council housing.
- The need to charge economic money for Council house rent especially for young mothers on their own with children.
- The need to employ efficient contractors to build top quality houses that will last for a number of years.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That any further feedback on the above item should be referred to the West North West Area Manager.

86 Residual Waste Treatment Project: Update and Communication and Community Engagement Strategy

The Board considered a report by the Executive Project Manager, Head of Performance and Communications (Environmental Services) describing the current status of the Residual Waste Project in order to update Members about the project and to consult with the Area Committees on the proposed communication and community engagement strategy for Residual Waste Treatment PFI project.

Tim Smith, Environmental Services presented the report and gave an overview of the bids received, the future timetable and communication and community engagement planning. Members were also informed that there would be further formal consultation process during the planning application stage.

In brief, specific reference was made on the following issues:

- In the specification does it allow for end to end service?

In response the officer informed the meeting that the specification does not include an end to end service.

- Clarification on why Leeds only recycles certain elements of waste. Members were concerned that some plastics do not get recycled in Leeds as the treatment seemed to be about the disposal of items that Leeds does not recycle.
- Members were informed that the bidders were flexible in terms of changes in recycling and in bringing in new technology to either reduce waste or recycle more.
- Concern was expressed that the Pontefract Lane site would be entered via a brand new road and would the new centre have an effect on the sight line. In response, the Officer informed the meeting that this matter would be taken into consideration during the planning process stage.
- Clarification was sought on what consultation process had taken place for the Council waste transfer station at Evanston Avenue, Kirkstall. In response, the Officer informed the meeting that all of the bidders had preferred the use of the Evanston Avenue site for use of the Council waste transfer station for the West of the city. The Committee were assured that the consultation process would take place before the pre-planning stage.

West Inner Members requested that they be included in the consultation process for the Evanston Avenue site.

The Chair thanked the officer for his attendance.

RESOLVED - That the current status of the Residual Waste PFI project and the bids recently received be noted.

87 Fuel Poverty Reduction Target Support

Consideration was given to a report and appendices submitted by the Fuelsavers Team – Health and Environmental Action Services seeking support for actions and targets to be established at a local level to eradicate Fuel Poverty in the City in line with Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy 2007 to 2016.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:

- Appendix 1 – Fuel Poverty (Calculated) by Area Management Team Wedges and Area Committee Areas in 2008.
- Appendix 2 – Calculated Fuel Poverty v Ethnicity 2008.
- Appendix 3 – Perceptual Fuel Poverty by Ward Base Year 2006.
- Appendix 4 – A copy of a letter sent to the Chief Executive regarding the Local Area Agreement and how vital this element of the new performance framework will be for tackling fuel poverty in the city.

Alan Jones, Hets – Fuelsavers gave an extensive overview of the report and responded to Members' questions and comments.

Members welcomed the report as this was about vulnerable people, especially the elderly as people were still dying due to being cold in the 21st century. The Area Committee also felt that they would consider a Well-Being fund submission for the sum of £3,000 towards a city wide aerial thermal survey at a future meeting but there was currently no revenue funding available.

In brief, specific reference was made on the following issues:

- The need to get voluntary sector organisations to sign up to the local guidance and code of practice.
- The need to get information out and one of the places suggested was to provide information through schools.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his attendance.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That this Area Committee would consider agreeing, setting and integrating local targets into plans when appropriate to do so.
- (c) That approval be given to financial resource allocation to support actions that lead to more people coming to grant support, such as aerial or ground based thermal imaging and or door-to-door contact mechanisms.
- (d) That this Area Committee would consider a proposal for Well-Being Fund submission for the sum of £3,000 towards a city wide aerial thermal survey but at present no funding was available for this.

Note: Councillor N Taggart left the meeting at 11.00 a.m. during consideration on the above item.

88 Town Centre Manager Update

Consideration was given to a report submitted by the West North West Area Manager providing an update on the Town Centre Manager's progress, priorities and work programme and proposals for revitalising Armley Town.

Nigel Conder, Town Centre Manager gave an extensive overview of the report and informed the meeting that it had been a challenging five months. One of the initiative wanted was the implementation of a Business Forum but it had proved difficult to get the businesses on Town Street to attend Business Forum meetings, although he had not given up as he was still trying to get a many businesses to attend.

The Chair informed the meeting that one of the issues raised at the Business Forum meeting was that the Council should supply litter bins for cigarette stubs, but it was suggested that shops should provide their staff with a portable ashtray as they must take responsibility for cleanliness outside of their premises.

Members felt there was a need for a flagship store on Town Street but it was also felt that there were still many shops to attract local shopping in the area. The only issue still outstanding was the lack of parking.

The Town Centre Manager informed the meeting that he would like to look at safety issues on Town Street and an initiative had been arranged for 15th April 2009 in conjunction with the Police, Wardens and the Environment Agency to carry out a clean up day.

The Chair congratulated Nigel Condor on the work he had already carried out.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

89 Area Manager's Report

The Area Committee received a detailed report by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to inform Members of progress on a number of projects in Inner West Leeds as determined by the Area Delivery Plan 2008/2011, which in turn, was governed by the Area Committee's functions and roles as agreed by the Executive Board at its meeting in July 2008.

Steve Crocker, West North West Area Manager gave an brief update on the report and responded to Members' questions and comments.

Members noted that a feedback report would be submitted to the next meeting in relation to the Integrated Money Advice Pilot scheme.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

90 Participatory Budgeting on the Broadlea Estate - 12 Month Review

The West North West Area Manager submitted a detailed report in order to brief Members on the progress, achievements and challenges currently facing the Broadleas estate and to provide an overview of the partnership working approach which was currently in operation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

91 Broadleas Neighbourhood Improvement Priority Area - 12 Month Review

The West North West Area Manager submitted a detailed report in order to brief Members on the progress, achievements and challenges currently facing the Broadleas estate and to provide an overview of the partnership working approach which was currently in operation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

92 Dates, Times and Venues of Area Committee Meeting 2009/2010

The Chief Democratic Services Officer submitted a report which requested Members to give consideration to agreeing the dates, times and venues of their Area Committee meetings for the 2009/2010 municipal year.

The report highlighted clashes between the North West Inner Area Committee which convenes on the same day and that this may cause a problem for officers presenting reports as they may be expected to attend both the West (Inner) and North West (Inner) Area Committee meetings.

It was established that the majority of West (Inner) Area Committee meetings should now convene on Wednesdays at 5.00 p.m. with the exception of the first meeting being convened on Tuesday, 23rd June 2009.

RESOLVED - That the following dates be approved for meetings of the West (Inner) Area Committee in the 2009/2010 municipal year to take place at various venues across the inner west area of Leeds at 5.00 p.m.

Tuesday, 23rd June 2009, Wednesday, 23rd September 2009, Wednesday, 21st October 2009, Wednesday, 9th December 2009, Wednesday, 17th February 2010, Wednesday, 14th April 2010.

(The meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.)