

WEST (INNER) AREA COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor Taggart in the Chair

Councillors T Hanley, J Harper, A Lowe
and J McKenna

Co-optees: Hazel Bouttle – Armley Forum
Stephen Longley – Bramley & Stanningley Forum
Morgan Pugh – Armley Forum

32 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the September meeting of the West (Inner) Area Committee held at the Armley One Stop Centre, 2 Stocks Hill, Armley, Leeds 12.

33 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Denise Atkinson.

34 Declaration of Interests

The following personal interests were declared:

- Councillor T Hanley in his capacity as a Board Member of Bramley Elderly Action (Agenda Item 9 – Minute 39 refers).
- Councillor J Harper in her capacity as a Deputy Chair of West Leeds Gateway Board and Chair of Townscape Heritage Initiative (Agenda Items 7, 9 and 12 – Minutes 37, 39 & 42 refer).
- Councillor A Lowe in her capacity as a Director of West North West ALMO (Agenda Items 9, 11 and 12 – Minutes 39, 41 & 42 refer). Also as a member of Leeds Credit Union and Leeds Citizens Advice Bureau Board (Agenda Item 9 – Minute 39 refers).
- Councillor J McKenna in his capacity as an employee of Armley Helping Hands (Agenda Item 10 – Minute 40 refers).
- Morgan Pugh – Co-optee in his capacity as a member of the Armley Helping Hands Management Committee (Agenda Item 10 – Minute 40 refers).
- Hazel Bouttle – Co-optee in her capacity as a member of Townscape Heritage Initiative (Agenda Items 7 & 9 – Minutes 37 & 39 refer).

35 Open Forum / Community Forums

The Chair gave notice that in accordance with the Area Committee Procedure Rules, there was provision for an Open Forum 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. On this occasion, no issues were raised.

A copy of the minutes of the following Community Forum meetings were also attached for Members' information:

- Armley Community Forum meeting held on 15th September 2009.
- Bramley & Stanningley Community Forum meeting held on 24th September 2009.

The following concerns were raised on the Bramley & Stanningley Community Forum minutes:

- That Councillor Hanley had attended part of the Community Forum meeting and therefore, should not have been included in the apologies.
- That paragraph 6.1 had been changed by the Chair to read 'It was felt that more people would attend Community Forum meetings if the date and time of the meetings were displayed in the two notice boards in Rodley and Bramley

RESOLVED – That, subject to the amendments suggested above, the minutes of the Armley Community forum and Bramley & Stanningley Community Forum be received and noted.

36 Minutes - 9th September 2009

RESOLVED - That, subject to the following amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record:

'Note: Members indicated their strong objections to the lateness of the above report which they felt prevented proper consultation on this very important issue (Minute 19 above also refers).'

37 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- (a) Minute 26 – Area Manager's Report – Acquisition of 2 Branch Road
Michelle Anderson, Senior Project Manager, Regeneration gave a brief update on the building at 2 Branch Road (formerly Mike's Carpets) and confirmed that Townscape Heritage Initiative money was not being used for the acquisition of this property (this money was solely for external improvements to 2 Branch Road).

It was reported that the Council had been successful in obtaining funding through the Town and District Centre (TDC), together with some top up funding from Local Enterprise Grant Initiative (LEGI) to support the acquisition.

Councillor Janet Harper, Chair of Armley Heritage Advisory Group, informed the meeting that she had not been consulted on this matter. It was felt that should 2 Branch Road be sold for a profit at a later date, some of that money should be reclaimed for use in Armley Town Centre.

Michelle Anderson informed the meeting that she was unclear of the terms and conditions of use for THI money but did highlight that 2 Branch Road was a 'critical' property for the THI scheme.

(b) Minute 24 – (a) Open Forum/Community Forum relating to the poor state of the footways in Rodley

Russell Martin, Highways – Middleton attended the meeting to respond to Members' questions and comments as requested at the last meeting.

The Chair informed the meeting that original complainants Mr & Mrs Houseman of Horton Rise, Rodley were away on holiday.

The Chair stated that the footways in Rodley, particularly on Town Street, were in a poor state of repair and there seemed to be many potholes that people in wheelchairs, the elderly and infirm have difficulty negotiating. He referred to a recent incident where an 80 years old woman had been tipped out of her wheelchair due to the poor state of the footways and would not go out independently anymore for fear of this happening again.

In response, Russell Martin informed the meeting that he had walked along Rodley Town Street, which is classed as a distributor road, with residents and informed the meeting that the scheme would cost several hundred thousand pounds to complete but that kind of money was not in this years budget. The Officer had promised residents that at the moment the Council would only be able to afford to spend £25,000 this financial year on the worst part of the road and footway.

The Chair requested that a meeting be set up between local Ward Members and Highways Officers to discuss the proposals for next years' budget for the repair of roads and footways in the Bramley & Stanningley Ward.

The Chair thanked Russell Martin for his attendance.

- (c) Minute 28 – CCTV (2009/2009) Annual Report
Steve Crocker, West North West Area Manager informed the meeting that an update report would be submitted to the next Area Committee meeting in relation to the CCTV at Bramley Shopping Centre.

38 Inner West Area Committee Well-Being Budget

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report updating Members on the current amount of capital and revenue funding available via the Area Committee Well-being budget for wards in the Inner West area. The report also sought approval for new projects commissioned by the Area Management Team.

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

- Breakdown of Revenue Spend by Theme 2009/10 (Appendix 1 refers)
- Breakdown of Capital Spend by Theme 2009/10 (Appendix 2 refers)
- Area Committee Well-being Fund – Application for Alert Boxes (Appendix 3 refers)
- West Yorkshire Evaluation 2009 – Alert Boxes – Electronic Neighbourhood Watch
- A copy of the plans for the Sikh Temple Improvements were tabled at the meeting (Paragraph 5.3 refers).

Alison Pickering, West Inner Area Management Officer presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

The Officer informed the meeting that following approval of the application for Bramley festive lights at the last meeting, it had now been established that it would cost an additional £1,000 to strengthen the proposed lamp standard which would accommodate the festive lights. Members suggested using the lamp standard in the Shopping Centre. The Officer informed the meeting that the lamp standard in the Shopping Centre was not strong enough either. Members suggested that Area Management contact the Manager at Bramley Shopping Centre to try to come to some agreement.

Detailed discussions ensued on the content of the report

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the financial status of the Well-Being Budget, both capital and revenue, as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 of the submitted report be noted.
- (b) That the following decisions be taken in respect of the application for funding from the:

Capital Budget

- (i) Alert Boxes – Approved £6,000 and that the Town Centre Manager be invited to bring an application for alert boxes in the Bramley shopping area.

- (c) That this Area Committee notes and approves the updates in relation to the Youth Service Mobile Provision and Sikh Temple Improvements as outlined in paragraph 5.0 to 5.03 of the submitted report.
- (d) That the budget and list of Small Grants and Skips since the last meeting as set out in paragraphs 4.0 to 4.3 of the submitted report be noted.
- (e) That, subject to further negotiations with Bramley Shopping Centre regarding the cost of strengthening the lamp standard to accommodate festive lights, that £4,000 (Capital) be approved in principle.

39 Area Manager's Report

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report informing Members of the progress against the Leeds Strategic Plan and the Inner West Area Delivery Plan.

Steve Crocker, West North West Area Manager presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

Detailed discussions ensued on the content of the report.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification was sought on the bid to support the delivery of much needed services in four community centres New Wortley, Fairfield, Little London and Wyther Community House.
(In response, Alison Pickering informed the meeting that there was a hardship fund available at the moment for support for community centres to help them through this economic crisis. The Area Management Team are putting a bid in for £164,000 to secure the posts of four Community Development Workers and funding for activities from each of the venues, and to help with the running costs).
- clarification on whether BARCA-Leeds would be liaising with Ward Councillors.
(In response, Alison Pickering informed the meeting that if BARCA were successful with the bid Ward Members would not be consulted about the implementation).

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be received and noted.

40 Community Centres

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a detailed report outlining the role of Area Committees in relation to the delegated function of community centres and gave focus on key areas such as budgets, property management and maintenance, rental support and pricing and lettings policy,

issues associated with the local portfolio of the Area Committee and the development of local plans.

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

- Area Functions Information 2009/2010 – Community Centres (Appendix 1 refers)
- Environment and Neighbourhoods (Area Management Schedules 2009/2010) – Controllable Costs (Appendix 2 refers)
- Corporate Property Management – Community Centre Building Maintenance Expenditure/Status Briefing (Appendix 3 refers)
- Backlog Maintenance: Category A centres transferred to Environment & Neighbourhoods Department (November 2007) Phase 2 (Appendix 4 refers)

Steve Crocker, West North West Area Manager introduced the report and reminded Members of an earlier report they had previously approved on the pricing and lettings policy for community centres in the West North West area.

Liz Jarmin, Acting Neighbourhood Services Manager and Trudie Canavan, Community Issues Officer presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In brief, the main issues raised were:

- the need to ensure market rental assessment needs do take into account that some of the independent users/community groups of the community centres were extremely poor and were not in it for the money but to give something to the community. Members feared that they would end up with a very complicated unflexible policy.
(In response, Liz Jarmin informed the meeting that they had been in discussions on this issue for some months now. She reported that during consultation other Area Committee were also concerned about what that policy would look like especially for independent users of the community centres).

Members requested that they be consulted on this policy and to submit a draft at a future meeting for consultation.

- Would the Area Committee be responsible for any deficits?
(In response, Trudie Canavan informed the meeting that this issue needs clarifying with finance and reporting back).
- Would the Area Committee have less to spend should there be a deficit?
(In response, Liz Jarmin informed the meeting that this needs clarifying but that Trudie Canavan and herself would act as agents for the committee, in monitoring spend. Officers would also report any issues back to this Area Committee).

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and appendices be received and noted.

Note: Councillor J McKenna and Mr Morgan Pugh stated that although individual budgets were not discussed, they wish it to be recorded that due to their involvement with Armley Helping Hands they took no part in the discussions on the above item.

41 Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Future Procurement Strategy - Procurement Strategy Update

The Chief Environmental Services Officer submitted a report to update Members on actions and progress on the Procurement process for the provision of Grounds Maintenance from 1st March 2011 and to seek Area Committee views and input on the development of the specification and consultation process.

Roger Foyle, Area Development Manager presented the report and together with Richard Britten, West North West Homes, responded to Members' queries and comments.

In brief, the main issues raised were:

- concern was expressed at the reduction of cuts to grassed areas around sheltered housing.
- concern that the grass cuttings were not being taken away when the grass was cut but instead it was left to be blown about the area causing problems for pedestrians.
- concern was also expressed that the present contractor recently came to Grassmere Street Sheltered Housing complex and cut the grass. The tractor did not have any roll bars for safety nor did the workmen wear any protective clothing/head-gear.

Roger Foyle assured the Area Committee that he would investigate this issue and report back his findings to Members of the Area Committee.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and the comments now made be noted.

42 Round 6 PFI Update

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update the Area Committee on the principles of the Round 6 Lifetime Neighbourhoods for Leeds (LNL) project.

Appendix 2 relating to the community consultation plan was tabled at the meeting for Members' information and comments. In relation to Appendix 1 it

was reported that the list of the sites for consideration had still not been confirmed and would be submitted to Members at a later date.

Michelle Anderson, Senior Project Manager, Regeneration presented the report and, together with David Reid, Regeneration Services responded to Members' queries and comments.

Officers provided Members with the opportunity to notify them of any sites in the area which may be deemed suitable for consideration. Members were also asked to supply officers with details of any other stakeholders they wish to be included as part of the consultation process.

In brief, the main issue raised was in respect of who would manage the sites, would it be a management board or the ALMOs.

In response, Michelle Anderson informed the meeting that this would be a 20 year scheme managed by a PFI privately and will be responsible for the design and operation. The provision of care and support, looking after the people would fall outside of that and the Regeneration Unit were now working closing with Adult Social Care and the NHS on this matter. At the end of the 20 years the assets would revert back to the Council.

Members noted that the Outline Business Case would be submitted to the Executive Board probably in January or February 2009.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the principles of the Round 6 Lifetime Neighbourhoods for Leeds (LNL) project, be noted.
- (b) To note that all proposals would also be subject to consultation with other stakeholders including ALMO Boards and affected tenants and residents and, approval of the Outline Business Case (OBC) by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
- (c) That the principles of the project and the consultation plan outlined in Appendix 2 tabled at the meeting, be noted.

43 Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 9th December 2009 at 5.00 p.m. at Stanningley Amateur Rugby Football Club, Coal Hill Drive, Leeds 13.