

**Combined Armley Community Forum and PACT meeting minutes**

**Date: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Chair:** Cllr Janet Harper

Action

**1.0 Welcome**

1.1 Cllr Harper welcomed 40 residents to the meeting. A list of apologies was read out.

**2.0 Previous minutes / matters arising**

2.1 Previous minutes were agreed as an accurate record, with the addition of one apology.  
Armley Moor: Improvement works have started and the area will be cleared on completion.  
Parking: Barnet Road vehicles for sale parked on pavement, WNWH to refer to Highways enforcement.

CS

**3.0 Police**

3.1 PC Daniel Tomlinson and PCSO Stuart Knowles attended.

Crime figures:

Burglary down, but still fairly high. New Operation Optimal in place - uses intelligence and statistics to predict where burglaries are likely to happen and at what time. Increased patrols, and households are given extra advice on home security. Since the operation started, there has been a drastic reduction in burglaries.

Theft from motor vehicles down by 6 per week - using capture cars in hotspot areas.

Criminal damage down by 7 per week.

3.2 NPT priorities:

- The ginnel on Conference Road has been cleared and sealed.
- An individual from Armley has been jailed for six and a half years for armed robbery.
- Two cannabis farms closed down.
- Street drinking continues to be an issue, PCSOs are patrolling known areas, and carry information in various languages.

3.3 PC Tomlinson welcomed questions from the floor:

Burnsall Gardens - The front door of the flats was open and the hall was being used as a rest stop. A member of the forum explained this was a one-off as they had nowhere to go.

Report of a man known to police attacking an elderly woman - police to investigate.

Carlton Road - Speeding problems. Police to send an officer with speed camera.

Armley Grange Drive - Speeding cars, often travelling to the hospital. Asked for it to be a PACT priority, has been reported as a problem since 2004.

Street Drinking - Children walking from Armley Primary School to the swimming baths are being intimidated by street drinkers. Police agreed to send an officer to accompany them for a couple of weeks, and deal with the drinkers.

**4 Welfare Reform**

4.1 Shaun Kelly attended to outline some of the changes to Welfare Benefits coming over the next few years. Most of those discussed affect working age people.

4.2 Tax credits – requirement to work more hours, shorter time allowed for backdated claims, increased threshold for support for sudden drop in income.

4.3 Housing benefit will be capped, and single people aged between 25 and 35 will be classed differently.

- 4.4 Council Tax benefit will be administered by Leeds City Council, working age claimants could be impacted, but pensioners should not be affected.
- 4.5 Discretionary social fund, community care grant and crisis grants will all be abolished next year, and the local authority will be given funding to support vulnerable people.
- 4.6 Universal Credit will replace a variety of benefits for working age claimants. It will be paid directly to the claimant, and will include housing cost payments which are can be currently paid direct to landlord. There will be a cap on what can be claimed by one household, and the payment will be made to only one person. People classed as vulnerable could have a different method of payment. Further information is not available as the regulations have not been drafted yet.
- 4.7 Disability Living Allowance will be replaced with Personal Independence Payments. Medical assessments will be carried out on all claimants. Payment bands in the care component will be reduced from three to two.
- 4.8 People living in under-occupied houses will face a penalty. A forum member explained this could affect single parents whose children visit overnight.
- 4.9 Some changes will affect people over the next few years, but anyone who is concerned should seek advice from welfare rights advisors, at the One Stop Centre or at West North West Homes. Leaflets on where to get help were circulated.

## 5 **West North West Homes**

- 5.1 Claire Smith (CS) attended on behalf of Paul Lilley and welcomed any questions. CS  
An issue was reported about repairs, CS took details after the forum.  
Complaint about CCTV cameras not working. Some of the CCTV systems are very old and replacement parts can't be found. A bid is in for central funding to replace the cameras in the multi-storey blocks.

## 6 **BTCV Kitchen Garden Project**

- 6.1 John Preston from BTCV presented information on a proposal to turn the rose garden at Gotts Park into a working kitchen garden. The rose garden has suffered disease for some years which has been difficult to treat. Leeds City Council would like to carry out a full refurbishment of the garden, but funding is not available.
- 6.2 The proposal is to create a kitchen garden in the walled area which would be open to the public during the day and hopefully also at weekends. Fruit, vegetables and flowers would be grown in the garden, and although there are no longer any greenhouses, it is hoped that buildings could be erected subject to planning permission.
- 6.3 BTCV work with people with mental health needs and learning disabilities. Local volunteers will also be encouraged to support the scheme.
- 6.4 It is hoped that the produce grown in the garden will be sold, and there is scope to work with other local producers too. It is proposed that there will be refreshments for sale on site to encourage more visitors.
- 6.5 The scheme is in the planning stage, and John will put together a business case to seek funding and permission to progress. If this is forthcoming, work could start as early as the autumn. Consultation with residents is key, and questions were welcomed from the floor

## 7 **Date of next meeting**

- 7.1 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012, 7pm Armley One Stop Centre.  
First bus to be invited about the number 16 service.