

Armley Forum

Minutes of meeting
Tuesday 21st January 2014, Armley Library

Chair: Cllr Janet Harper

Present: Cllr J Mckenna, S Shephers, N&M Briggs, K Dawkins, S Dawkins, T Gibbons, J Newsome, P Hannah, S Friend, L Cheney, B Mason, B Davies, E Bowes, D&H Boutle, B Draper, M Stead, X Chevillard, K Harrison, S Richmond, F Smyth, D Gregory, M Pugh, L Firth

1 Welcome & Introductions

- 1.1 Cllr Harper welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from M Quirke, D Peck, Cllr Lowe, D Newsome, D Stead and T Maynard.

2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed.
The times provided for the free sessions at Armley leisure centre were incorrect and the correct times are listed in these minutes.

3 Gotts Park Golf Course

- 3.1 Joanne Clough, Trading & Operational Manger, Parks & Countryside attended to update the forum on the future of the golf course. It was earmarked for closure last year before local councillors successfully negotiated a year's reprieve to see if the facility could become more sustainable.
- 3.2 The Council have been working with the golf club to try and look at ways of increasing revenue at the course. During the summer there were several special offers and a billboard advertising campaign. Membership of the club and use of the course has increased, but not by enough to make a sustainable business case.
- 3.3 It is now clear that an alternative model is needed for the course and facilities, and the time is right to involve the wider community to explore other ideas that perhaps we have not considered. As such, it is the council's intension to undertake a wider public consultation process, whilst at the same time continue to work closely with the golf club.
- 3.4 The council has committed to keeping the course open for the summer and the service will report to the Executive Board later in the Autumn for a final decision to be made about the future of the course.
- 3.5 The Chair welcomed questions from the floor:
Q: Not many people know there is a cafe, it's not well advertised from the street or within the park. The mansion is a lovely building and would make an ideal wedding venue.
A: We can certainly look at better signage for the café, Weddings were looked at, but the layout of the building is not suitable for entertaining big parties. That said, a marquee could perhaps be pitched alongside the building therefore we haven't ruled this possibility out at this stage. Regarding the cafe, in Middleton, Friends of Middleton Park help to run the café with a local organisation and it's going very well. It would require a lot of commitment and it's not for everyone, but the service is open to ideas of how the community can become more actively involved.
- 3.6 Q: Armley is lucky to have a golf course, but for new users it's very difficult to navigate, there should be direction signs by the tee boxes.
A: The representative from Gotts Park Golf Club reported that they have had trouble with vandals but it's something they will look at.

3.7 Q: How is the course promoted?
A: We promote to schools and via social media and networking as well as emailing our friends of groups and advertising on the billboard to promote the various golfing offers. We are keen to work with colleagues in Sport Development to see what more we can do.

3.8 Cllr Harper thanked Joanne for attending and re-iterated Ward Members' support to retain the golf course, and urged the local community to make better use of it and share ideas to help it become more sustainable.

4 **Police Update**

4.1 PC Chris Davey, beat manager for New Wortley attended to update the forum on current crime issues. Christmas was quieter than usual, which is good news. In the last month, there were seven burglaries and four have been detected and persons charged.

4.2 Police have carried out targeted work on Ley Lane and one person was arrested with 100 wraps of class A drugs. Complaints of drug dealing in the area have reduced dramatically. Over the next few weeks, the police across the West North West Division will be targeting drugs with a warrant a day on suspected dealers.

4.3 Questions were welcomed from the floor:

Q: Complaint regarding mini bikes and mini quad bikes around the Edinburghs.

A: The police are aware of it and are keen to catch the perpetrator.

4.4 Q: Since the police focus on Ley Lane, life is much better for residents, you no longer see 15-20 people hanging around the substation. Residents want to thank the police for all their efforts.

4.5 Q: Concern raised about two muggings on Town Street last week.

A: They were late at night towards Canal Road, and officers are checking CCTV.

4.6 Q: There are a lot of people loitering on Town Street blocking the pavement, makes us feel unsafe.

A: The police can't take action against people who are not breaking the law. We will speak to them and ask them not to block the pavement, and we always enforce the DPPO no alcohol zone on Town Street if we see someone with an open alcohol container. The police currently have two Polish volunteers which is helping to break down cultural and language barriers.

5 **Leeds Let's Get Active**

5.1 Louise Walker from the Active Lifestyles service provided more information on the free sports and leisure activities funded through the Leeds Let's Get Active programme.

5.2 As reported at November's forum, Armley Leisure Centre is offering an hour a day free access for gym and swim in a bid to encourage more people to exercise. It's open to all, but first you need to complete an online registration at www.leedsletsgetactive.co.uk or pick up a form at the Leisure Centre. Library staff will help people sign up on their computers if you don't have one at home.

5.3 The programme is also currently funding free Zumba classes for 10 weeks at New Wortley Community Centre. The community activities are run in ten week blocks and will move around the whole of the West North West Leeds area, so there may be more outdoor or family activities coming to Armley in the future.

5.4 The free gym session is 2-3pm Monday to Friday and 1-2 Saturday and Sunday.
Free swim is 12.30-1.30 Monday & Tuesday, 12-1 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday and 2-3 on a Saturday.

5.5 Cllr Harper thanked Louise for attending and asked forum members to spread the word about the free sessions.

6 **Leeds Neighbourhood Approach**

- 6.1 Mark Ireland and Paul Broadhurst from the Private Rented Sector Team attended to introduce a new project called the 'Neighbourhood Approach' to help reduce the number of empty properties and improve the state of private rented housing. The project is focusing on the Edinburghs in Armley which has high numbers of empty properties and lots of private rented housing. The team will visit all properties and write to landlords to remind them of the legal standards a property must maintain. If landlords don't make any necessary improvements, then enforcement action will be taken.
- 6.2 During the project, the team and partners from other services and agencies will engage with residents to offer advice on debt and finances, job clubs and training opportunities and fire safety. The wider environment will be looked at including bin yard clearance which is a major issue around this area.
- 6.3 Questions from the floor:
Q: Will it go further than the Edinburghs?
A: It's targeted at the Edinburghs and St Ives as this is an area with poor housing conditions. If we get complaints about other properties, colleagues in the private rented sector team will investigate.
- 6.4 Cllr Harper thanked the officers for attending and welcomed this initiative.

7 **Any other business**

- 7.1 A forum member asked why bins in the apartment block at 49 Raynville Way were not being collected weekly as the bins don't have sufficient capacity. They also reported dog fouling on the grassed area by the block. K Sibson to refer to the dog wardens. KS
- 7.2 Complaint raised about potholes on the access road to the Mansion on Gotts Park. Cllr Harper responded that the Council has had to take very difficult budget decisions in light of the cuts and some maintenance has had to be delayed.
- 7.3 A representative from Gotts Park Golf Club expressed concern about the Council's approach to the future of the course. The golf club has increased membership by 20% and some meetings with council officers have been cancelled and not rescheduled. He asked members of the forum to support the club and café.
- 7.4 Cllr Harper was congratulated on her new role as Lady Mayoress for the coming municipal year, accompanying the Lord Mayor on official duties.

8 **Date and time of next meeting**

- 8.1 Tuesday 18th February 7pm Armley One Stop Centre.
Please forward any suggestions for agenda items to Nicole.darbyshire@leeds.gov.uk or call Nicole on 0113 3367871.