

Armley Forum

Minutes of meeting
Tuesday 18 February 2014, Armley Library

Chair: Cllr Janet Harper

Present: Cllr J McKenna, Cllr A Lowe, Karen Anderson, Brenda Mason, Lynda Chemey, Shirley Friend, DM Peck, Morgan Pugh, P Hannah, Shelia Richmond, F Smyth, Hazel and David Bootle, Eric Bowes, Mrs Shepherd, Margaret & David Stead, K Dawkins, S Dawkins, LS Bonallie

1 Welcome & Introductions

1.1 Cllr Harper welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from T Maynard, Keith Harrison, Nick Briggs, Mandy Kirby Briggs, Brook Nelson, Mrs Lemm and Margaret Quirke

2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes were agreed.

3 Police Update

3.1 PCSO Andy Grice provided an update to the meeting and reported that between 18 January 2014 and 18 February there had been 11 burglaries, 3 robberies, 23 thefts from a motor vehicle, 1 theft of a motor vehicle and 49 reports of criminal damage. Overall reported crime levels were down around 20% on the same period last year. These figures are from 18th Jan 14 to 18th Feb 14.

3.2 Residents were reminded to keep their windows and doors locked. There has been an increase in the number of thefts from motor vehicles so people were reminded to ensure that they don't leave things out on display in their cars.

3.3 Residents were informed that a van had been stopped in the area that was in the process of moving a cannabis farm. The drugs were seized and people arrested.

3.4 A neighbourhood action day had taken place on the Edinburghs on Wednesday 12 February. It was reported that the police had spoken with landlords and given advice on how to improve security at properties.

3.5 The Chair welcomed questions from the floor:
Cllr Lowe reported that a resident had complained to her about problems with anti-social behaviour on Third Avenue. The resident had reported that youths had been drinking outside her property and been generally intimidating; knocking on her door at night and hanging around outside her home.
PCSO Grice said that they will pay some extra attention around here and that he would report it to the other two police teams in the area.

3.6 Cllr McKenna raised an issue about the 24 hour alcohol shop in Armley and asked that the police specifically keep a record about any reported problems with this shop so that the matter can be reviewed when it's licence comes up for renewal again.
PCSO Grice reassured Cllr McKenna that all reported problems would be logged together.

3.7 PCSO Grice said that the service had seen a decrease in the number of reports of public drinking on Town St.

3.8 Q: What is the procedure for the police when using / accessing CCTV footage on the Clydes?

A: A request to access the footage is put through to Leeds Watch by the police if it is

within a reasonable timescale to access the footage. The CCTV on Town St is well used and the police have links into this system. There is a different procedure to access the footage on the Clydes, but it is still used by the police.

4 **Planning services – Sarah Hellewell**

4.1 Sarah sent her apologies for the meeting, but it is hoped that she will be able to attend the next forum in March.

5 **Housing – Neisha Martin, Neighbourhood Management Officer**

5.1 Neisha introduced herself to the Forum and said that her job role involved working for the out of hours team, patrolling the local tower blocks and dealing with any problems arising.

5.2 The Chair welcomed questions from the floor:

Q: What is the biggest problem that you have to deal with?

A: There are a lot of problems with anti-social behaviour from youths accessing the multi-storey flats. The problems aren't as bad as they were a year ago, the fob systems have been changed on the flats recently and each one is individually coded to each flat. This means that the team know who is letting people into the buildings. The out of hours team always carry out their patrols in twos and they work closely with the local policing teams to carry out tenancy sweeps of the blocks.

5.3 Q: How is the good neighbour policy progressing?

A: The lettings team deals with this, Neisha said she could feedback to them for a response.

NM

5.4 Q: Is the biggest problem with the tenants or with youths who don't reside in the blocks?

A: It tends to be a mixture of both, quite often it is tenants letting strangers into the building.

5.5 Q: How is the court action in the New Wortley tower blocks progressing?

A: The high rise management team are dealing with this, but Neisha said she could feedback to them to ask for a response.

NM

5.6 Q: The homes at Wesley Rd used to be for over 55s only, they are now open to everyone as the Housing Federation has changed its policy. Why is this?

A: Cllr Lowe stated that she understood that under the Equality Act 2010, classifying homes for a specific age range was challenged on the basis of age discrimination. Therefore all housing policies had to be reviewed where age restrictions were in place. Where restrictions were in place, the policies had to be able to demonstrate reasonableness, and in the case of Wesley Rd the Housing Federation was not able to demonstrate this so had to change its policy.

6 **Any other business**

6.1 Q: Cars have been parking along one side of Chapel Lane and this has made the junction with Town St more dangerous. Could a barrier be put in place or the road made one way to deal with the problem?

A: There needs to be a record of accidents at a site before changes would be made to the road layout. The site isn't known as being one that is prone to accidents, but the concerns raised have been listened to.

6.2 Q: There has been some consultation about the development of a new supermarket adjacent to the New Inn on Tong Road. The consultation was good and lasted a period of time, more facilities are needed in this area and this piece of land needs clearing up. Has there been any planning application submitted for this site yet?

A: Cllrs hadn't seen an application, and if there had been one then they would have been made aware of it.

- 6.3 Q: Are there any welfare projects running for the BME community in Armley? Last week a person who had come out as gay was beaten up for doing so, there were no LGB / BME services in Armley to offer support.

A: There aren't any specific BME / LGB groups in Armley, but there are groups based in the city centre such as MESMAC. This month is LGBT history month, so more promotion is being done at the moment. Cllr Lowe offered to discuss in more detail after the meeting.

- 6.4 Q: There isn't a lot for 18 – 30 year olds to do in the area. What services does the council provide for this age group?

A: It is the Council's responsibility to provide services for children up to 18 and up to 21 for looked after children. For those over this age the Council would usually be engaging with them to help them find work for example. The Council is facing cuts from central government, so needs to ensure that it is targeting its work appropriately. There is the Leeds Let's Get Active scheme currently running in the area which provides free swim and gym sessions at specified times every day. The LAZER centre and Saturday Night Project run for people up to 18 years of age and the Council is putting more money into developing apprenticeship opportunities and options for NEETs.

- 6.5 Q: Car parking on Armley Town St can sometimes be difficult, it used to be possible to park where the taxi business is based, but since they bought the land there is only a small section of it left available to park on. This piece of land is covered in potholes, is the council planning on leveling off the car park?

A: The council has no plans to level off this car park. If there are no spaces on Armley Town St then people can also park at Wilkinson's for free for up to 90 minutes.

- 6.6 Q: There are two or three properties on Armley Ridge Road where the fences have blown down in the high winds and have not been cleared up. Who should this be reported to?

A: Contact the council's enforcement officer, John Pearson. His number can be found on the agenda sheet.

- 6.7 The hoardings on the site next to The Hub on Town Street are in a bit of a mess. Cllr Lowe said that she would report this to planning and get someone to come and look at them.

- 6.8 There is a public meeting on Friday 21 Feb 7.30pm at Gotts Park. Everyone welcome for a free pie and peas supper.

- 6.9 8 March is International Women's Day. There is a dinner at Armley Mills from 4 – 10pm. There is a fee for tickets, the Mill will be able to provide further details.

7 **Date and time of next meeting**

- 7.1 Tuesday 18th March 7pm Armley One Stop Centre.

Please forward any suggestions for agenda items to nicole.darbyshire@leeds.gov.uk or call Nicole on 0113 3367871.