

WEST (INNER) AREA COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor T Hanley in the Chair

Councillors J Harper, A Lowe, J McKenna
and N Taggart

Co-optees H Boutle - Armley Forum
 P Green - Bramley & Stanningley Forum
 M Pugh - Armley Forum

52 Election of Temporary Chair

In the absence of Councillor D Atkinson, the Elected Members present elected Councillor T Hanley to Chair the meeting of the West (Inner) Area Committee held at the Armley One Stop Centre, Stocks Hill, Leeds 12.

(Councillor Hanley took the Chair).

53 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Atkinson and Jean Bedford, Co-optee for Bramley Forum.

54 Declaration of Interests

The following personal interests were declared at the meeting:

- Councillor A Lowe in her capacity as a Member of the Leeds Credit Union, a Board Member of the Citizens Advice Bureau and a Director of West North West Homes (Agenda Item Nos 9, 14 and 15 – Minutes 60, 65 and 66 refers).
- Councillor J Harper in her capacity as Chair of Surestart (Agenda Item 11 – Minute 62 refers).
- Councillor N Taggart in his capacity as a Panel Member on West North West Homes (Agenda Items 14 and 15 – Minutes 65 and 66 refers).

The following personal and prejudicial interests were declared at the meeting:

- Councillor J Harper declared in her capacity as a Governor of West Leeds High School (Agenda Item 13 – Minute 64 refers).

55 Open Forum / Community Forums

The agenda made reference to the provision contained in the Area Committee Procedure Rules for an Open Forum Session at each ordinary meeting of an Area Committee, for members of the public to ask questions or to make representations on matters within the terms of reference of the Area Committee. On this occasion, no matters were raised under this item by those members of the public who were in attendance.

The minutes of the **Armley Community Forum** meetings held on the 16th October and 20th November 2007 were submitted for information and noted.

Councillor Lowe informed the meeting that she had received numerous complaints from local resident about the **noise nuisance** coming from the **Steam Sauna** at the former Armley Squash Club.

Councillor Harper responded and informed the meeting that she raised this issue at the poorly attended meeting arranged by the Police for all West Inner Members to attend. Members felt that they needed more notice of these meetings with Inspector Mohammed in order to ensure frequent attendance. It was suggested that a schedule of meetings be issued for the remainder of the municipal year.

56 Chair's Opening Remarks

Councillor Hanley gave an update on Councillor Atkinson's health after having a second operation last Monday. The Area Committee conveyed their best wishes for a speedy recovery and requested the Area Manager to send flowers on behalf of the Area Committee with their best wishes.

The Chair also welcomed Councillor McKenna back from his recent honeymoon in Ireland. Councillor McKenna thanked everyone for their kind wishes and informed the meeting that they had enjoyed their stay in Galway Bay.

57 Minutes of Previous Meeting - 25th October 2007

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

58 Matters Arising

West Inner Well-Being Budget – Armley Helping Hands Application for Funding (Minute 44 - Resolution (ii) refers)

Rebecca Boon, West Leeds Area Management informed the meeting that the information requested by the Area Committee on the application arrived too late for this meeting. Therefore, the application for funding would now be

scheduled for consideration at the next meeting to be held on 7th February 2007.

59 Community Safety Issues - Inner West Leeds

The West Leeds Area Manager submitted a report and Inspector Anwar Mohammed, together with Gill Hunter, Community Safety Officer gave a **brief update on community safety issues** in the West Leeds area.

Inspector Mohammed reported on the following areas over the last three months:

- No increase in **general crime** for the last eight weeks.
- Considering that there had been Mischievous Night, Bonfire Night and the onset of early dark nights during this period, there had been no increase in the amount of **criminal damage**.
- A reduction in reported **anti-social behaviour**, compared with the same period last year.
- A number of **buses** had been **attacked on Broad Lane causing criminal damage** and it was reported that two people had been arrested. The Police are working in partnership with the bus companies in the area on this issue.
- A reduction in **violent crime** over the past eight weeks. It was also reported there was a slight decrease from the same period last year, especially in the run up to Christmas period.
- A decrease in **theft from motor vehicles**.
- **Burglaries** had increased across the City and nationally due to the early release of offenders. The Inspector felt that in order to combat this problem, it was a matter of using Police resources in the right places.

Inspector Mohammed reported that **Operation Christmas Cracker** had started in the North West Leeds Division this week and that a number of warrants had already been issued for properties on the Little London estate where a number of people had been arrested and five or six others charged with offences.

Gill Hunter, Area Community Safety Officer also informed the meeting that a great deal of **environmental work** had been carried out in the West Leeds area.

- The **Probation Service** had been working along side offenders who helped out with the **children at Hollybush** and they also worked as **litter pickers**.
- Youths were invited to the **Lazer Centre** where they were taught how to ride motorbikes safely.
- Environmental Health did a great deal around private landlords and found that a number of **houses in multi-occupation not registered** and some of the properties were in disrepair which had not previously been picked up on.

- The lower end of the Wyther estate had been encouraged to set up a **Neighbourhood Watch** due to various **acts of criminal damage** in this area.

In summary the main issues raised were:-

- Members suggested that **regular briefings with Inspector Mohammed** take place directly after Area Committee meetings.
- Consideration should be given by the Police Authority to **regularly update victims of crime** who are often forgotten after they have been allocated a crime number for the incident.
- Concern was expressed about the early release of offenders and requested an update on the proposed partnership scheme on the **rehabilitation of offenders**.

Members congratulated the Inspector on the **regular attendance of Police Officers and PCSOs** at community meetings and commended them for patrolling the Inner West Leeds area. Concern was expressed that just as the community build a bond with the PCSO for their area they seem to move on. In response, the Inspector informed the meeting that since the appointment of PCSOs many of them are now being trained as Police Officers. The Police Authority are now trying to allocate the new recruits to the areas where they have already gained valuable experience during their time as a PCSO.

The Chair thanked Inspector Mohammed for his attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report and Inspector Anwar Mohammed's comments be received and noted.
- (b) To note that an update on Operation Champion carried out on the 21st, 22nd and 23rd November 2007 on the Wythers and Raynviles will be circulated to Members of the West Inner Area Committee in due course.
- (c) That the West Area Manager circulate a recent report to Members regarding the early release of offenders and the proposed partnership scheme on rehabilitation of offenders.

60 Promoting Financial Inclusion in Leeds

The Director of City Development submitted a report on the **strategy to develop a comprehensive set of initiatives** aimed at bringing about financial inclusion, particularly in some of the more deprived neighbourhoods in the city. In March 2007, the City Council received **Beacon Status** from the Government's Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) for this work.

A brief summary of the background and of the initiatives undertaken was attached as an appendix to the report.

Dave Roberts, City Development Department presented the report and responded to Member's questions and comments.

A lengthy discussion ensued and Members expressed their concerns regarding the extortionate interest rates loan sharks charged people who were either vulnerable or lived in deprived areas.

The Area Committee noted that a community based Credit Union Office already existed in the Bramley area but Members felt that a larger scale operation was now needed.

The Chair thanked Dave Roberts for his most informative report.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above comments, the contents of the report be noted.

(Note:

- (a) Councillor N Taggart arrived at the meeting at approximately 9.50 a.m. during consideration of the above item.
- (b) During consideration of the above item Councillor Lowe declared a personal interest as a Member of Leeds Credit Union and as a Board Member of the Citizens Advice Bureau).

61 Inner West Well-Being Budget

The West Leeds Area Manager submitted a detailed report providing details of the amount of **Well-Being capital and revenue funding available** for the 2007/08 financial year and the commitments already approved.

Rebecca Boon, West Leeds Area Management presented the report and, together with Steve Crocker, West Leeds Area Manager responded to Members' questions and comments.

Detailed discussions on the report and appendices followed.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report and information appended to the report, which includes the available balance of the Area Committee's revenue and capital Well-being Budgets, be noted.
- (b) That the following decisions be made in relation to revenue and capital Projects as detailed in the appendices attached to the submitted report:

Revenue

- (i) **Summer Bands in the Park - £1,200 – Approved.** Should the applicants apply for any further funding in the future, the department will have to supply evaluation on the success of this year's project.
- (ii) **Summer Sports Programme - £5,000 – Approved.** That the Department be requested to advertise the scheme much earlier and to include sports such as cricket that might encourage more children from the ethnic community to take part in the scheme.

- (iii) **Community Development Worker/Centre Manager New Wortley - £2,597 – Approved.**
- (iv) **Local Futures Access 2 Employment - £30,000 – Approved,** subject to match funding by the North West Inner Area Committee.
- (v) **Conservation Area for Bramley and Stanningley - £12,000 – Approved.**

Capital

- (i) **Gates at Wellington Terrace - £2,000 - Approved.**
- (c) That the **Small Grants and Skips proposals** outlined in paragraph 4.1 which have been approved since the last meeting be noted.

62 Update on Projects Funded from Well-being Budget - April to November 2007

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update Members on progress with **revenue and capital projects** commissioned from April to November 2007. The report also described how funding had been **allocated across key priorities** for Community Safety, Streetscene, Young People and Community Engagement and consultation across both Inner West Wards.

Rebecca Boon, West Leeds Area Management presented the report and the Area Committee also viewed a video made during the **'I Love West Leeds'** festival.

The Chair thanked officers for their presentation and congratulated all those involved in the festival and for producing an excellent video of the event.

RESOLVED - That the contents of the report and the 'I Love West Leeds' video be received and noted.

63 Participatory Budget Pilot in West Leeds

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report informing Members of potential Participatory Budget Pilot Projects that might take place in the City and to seek approval/support for selection of **Broadleas estate** as a pilot operating within the overall guidelines.

Paul Dishman, West Leeds Area Management presented the report and responded to Members' questions and comments.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Inner West Area Committee supports the proposal to carry out a pilot Scheme on the Broadleas estate as outlined in the submitted report.
- (b) That this Area Committee agrees with the proposal that the Broadleas Improvement Group be the partnership body through which to develop this scheme.

- (c) That Councillor N Taggart be nominated to play a key role in leading this pilot working in conjunction with Area Management staff and other partner agencies.

(Note: Councillor Taggart declared a personal interest as a Panel Member of West North West Leeds Homes).

64 Building Schools for the Future - Phase 2: Reserved Matters Planning Application for New School at West Leeds

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report and presentation (including Planning Application No. 07/07338/LA), to notify and inform the Inner West Area Committee of the latest update on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme and, in particular, how this relates to the **creation of a new school on the current site of West Leeds High School.**

The key points raised were as follows:

- That the site and facilities at the school be made **available for community use.**
- Concern that the current proposals do not include **floodlights for the playing fields.**
- That the caretaking facilities are still to remain on the site.
- That the small footpath to the left of the property be kept in the plans.
- That the proposals do not include appropriate **lighting** for the proposed **footpath** which leads to the side of the railway embankment at the rear of the school. Members expressed their **concerns for the safety of those pupils** using this footpath.
- That **Wortley High School** should remain as a **learning centre** after its proposed closure in 2009.
- Concerns with the regard to the **staggered transfer proposals of pupils** from Wortley High School to the new West Leeds School.

The Chair thanked Officers for their informative presentation.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above comments, the report and presentation be received and noted.

(Note: Councillor Harper and Councillor Taggart both indicated that in their capacity as a Member of Plans Panel (West) which would be considering this matter at a later date, stated that in order to avoid any perception of predetermination until such time as this matter may be considered by Plans Panel (West), they intended to remain in the meeting to listen to the discussion, but would not be taking part in the discussion or voting thereon. That they would not be bound by any discussions or decisions taken at today's meeting when the matter came before the Plans Panel for determination, but would consider all representations and viewpoints presented at the planning meeting before reaching a conclusion based on the merits of the case).

65 Area Manager's Report

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a detailed report on the progress of a number of projects in Inner West Leeds in relation to the following:

- Area Delivery Plan 2008-11 consultation events
- The future of West Leeds District Partnership
- Community Centres update
- West Leeds Gateway update
- Funding proposals for LEGI and Access to Employment
- Leeds Bradford Corridor

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

Members expressed their concern that so much **vandalism** had occurred at Wyther Park Community Centre and welcomed proposals to **demolish the building**. It was also requested that this matter be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an inquiry.

Steve Crocker informed the meeting that he hoped to give an update at the next meeting with regard to the issues in relation to the Moorside Community Centre.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report be received and noted.
- (b) That following the completion of the disposal of the Wyther Park Community Centre, Members requested the matter be referred to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an Inquiry.

66 Area Management Review

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report outlining changes to Area Committee responsibilities and working arrangements agreed at the Council's Executive Board in November and seeking Area Committee's comments on the proposed changes.

The West Leeds Area Manager summarised the report, drawing attention to the new Area Committee responsibilities and timetable for the changes to take place, the new structure of Area Management Teams which would be implemented in the new year, the proposals for Environmental Action Teams and that the Area Committees would now carry out the work of the District Partnerships.

In summary, the main issues raised were:

- whether the amount of consultation had been sufficient with all political groups.
- whether there would be sufficient resources to support the new functions.

- whether the Ward boundaries fit in with the Police Authority boundaries.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the reports and proposed changes be noted.
- (b) That the comments on the proposed changes as outlined above be noted.

67 Date Time and Venue of Next Meeting

Thursday, 7th February 2008 at 5.00 p.m. at Stanningley Amateur Rugby League Football Club, Coal Hill Drive, Leeds, LS13 1PA

The Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting concluded at approximately 12.15 p.m.