

**Combined Armley Community Forum and PACT meeting minutes**  
**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

**Chair:** Hazel Boutle

Action

**1.0 Welcome**

1.1 Hazel Boutle chaired the meeting and welcomed 22 residents to the meeting. A list of apologies was read out.

**2.0 Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising**

2.1 Bin yard issue mentioned in 2.1 of the last minutes relates to Hereford Street on Aviary Estate.

**3.0 Police**

3.1 Inspector Mark Wheeler attended the meeting and provided following priority crime figures for the Armley ward area from 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012 to June 2012.

- House burglary down to 28 compared to last years figure of 35
- Theft from vehicle is down to 5 from 6 for the same period
- Robbery figures has gone up to 3 from 2
- Theft from vehicle is also up to 17 from 12.
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3.2 MW reported that an offender been arrested and put in prison for the crime of theft from vehicle and since he has been in prison theft from cars went down giving police a clear indication of this individual's involvement in this particular crime. The individual in question is due to be released some time next week and he will well and truly be under police radar.

3.3 MW reiterated the crime prevention measures and residents were asked to always ensure to remove valuables from their cars at all times. To mark their valuables with security marks and to make sure that doors and windows are not left open and unattended during the good weather.

3.4 An e-mail crime update system setup at the last meeting by the police been reported to be a success as everyone taking part in the scheme confirmed receiving the update.

3.5 In response to a number of reports of quad bike nuisance, Marks advice was that these should be reported at the time of the incidents calling the nuisance motorbike hotline number listed at the back to the agenda.

**3.6 West Yorkshire Police Station Help Desk Consultation**

Inspector Wheeler highlighted to those present that West Yorkshire Police were required to save over £96 million pounds up to 2015 as part of a reduction in their budget. Initial research suggested that making amendments West Yorkshire Police Helpdesks could save £2 million towards the necessary savings and sought the public's thoughts and comments on the functions that Helpdesks provide as well as the future service that these could provide.

Inspector Wheeler highlighted that the Chief Constable has given his personal pledge to maintaining Neighbourhood Policing and as far as the Inspector was concerned it had never been easier to reach the police in a non-emergency situation, through the 101 number, email, Facebook, visible patrols and contact points.  
Comments from members of the public were forwarded to the Command Team.

Cllr Lowe addressed the meeting and encouraged everyone to make their suggestions known so some informed decisions can be made.

One suggestion was to increase the visibility of the officer being on the beat, so the incidents can be prevented from taking place and needing reporting.

One resident complained about a number of traffic police cars turning up at a small accident and suggested that proportionate attendance should be maintained to prevent overkill.

MW's response was that a majority of accidents do require a number of officers dealing with a variety of aspects of that accident i.e. dealing with the persons involved, managing and controlling traffic, co-ordinating rescue services. In other cases the reason could be that a number of cars in the area responding to the same incident in the first instance.

Cllr Lowe stated that she is member of a panel which looks at maximising the use of police resources and any complaints or suggestions in this regard should be passed on to her so she can take them to this meeting to discuss and to try and find better ways of working in maximising the limited resources.

#### **4.0 Townscape Heritage Initiative**

- 4.1 The Armley THI scheme is a five year programme which started in April 2009 and concludes in March 2014. The objective of the scheme is to provide grant funding for eligible property owners to carry out building fabric works and to restore traditional architectural features such as shop fronts, windows and doors. This will help to raise the profile and image of Armley town centre
- 4.2 The 80% THI grant funding is jointly funded by Leeds City Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. With additional grant funding from the Leeds Local Economic Growth Initiative property owners are entitled to a 90% grant rate.
- 4.3 The key project is at 2 Branch Road known as 'Mike's Carpets'. In December 2011 the property owner appointed Arctic Associates a conservation accredited architect's practice who has specialist knowledge about the restoration of historic buildings. A building survey has been carried out and scheme plans have been prepared. Whilst there is a long term vision to bring the full building back into use it is likely that the grant scheme will be based on repairing the building fabric, such as the roof, and restoring the windows including the impressive Venetian window over the main entrance. Should a scheme not develop for 2 Branch Road the intention is to retain the grant funding investment for other reserve properties.
- 4.4 There are groups of historic properties at Branch Road and Town Street adjacent to Armley Moor. These form the Target properties that are eligible for grant. Whilst there is a lot of interest for doing a grant scheme amongst property owners the progression of schemes has been slow. This is mainly due to the difficult economic conditions and the inability of property owners to raise the full amount of building costs even with a potential grant offer. In order to address this issue the council has approved an initiative for the council to make direct grant payments to a contractor. This means that a property owner will only need to identify their 10% project costs contribution. The result of this is that the demand for doing grant schemes is now greater than the amount of available grant
- 4.5 The first grant scheme on site is Skelton's Butchers at 89 Town Street. A lot of credit goes to David Skelton for progressing a grant scheme. This scheme should act as an encouragement for other property owners to develop schemes. David has received favourable comments from customers about the impressive scheme to his shop front. The adjacent properties at 91-93 Town Street have just started works on site and 73-81 Town Street is another potential block scheme that has submitted a planning application. At the Branch Road end numbers 8 and 10 are interested in doing a scheme. There is also a potential block scheme at 14-22 Branch Road which includes the former post office building. Numbers 1-3 Branch Road is an important building at the entry point to Branch Road and interest has been expressed for doing a grant scheme.

- 4.6 The natural York stone footpath and public art features, keystones of local celebrities and historic events and a compass feature, received grant funding support. The scheme was carried out about two years ago and has made a positive visual impact along Town Street. Unfortunately this has been undermined by chewing gum deposits which typically occur along all high streets. The council is looking at machines for cleaning footpaths and a high pressure hot water based system was used as a demonstration on a section of Town Street. The objective is for the council to use an effective cleaning system for the natural York stone footpath in Armley.
- 4.7 The Armley Heritage Advisory group is preparing a keystones leaflet based on the keystones in the Town Street footpath scheme. The graphics design team has prepared a draft copy of the leaflet and this will be circulated for consultation on proof reading in the near future. The use of a professional photographer will provide pictures for the final version of the booklet prior to printing.
- 4.8 The final raising heritage awareness event by Alan Gardner Associates will take place at the Armley Fun Day on 25 July. This will involve demonstrations on the use of lime products (pointing between brick joints and renders), traditional roofing techniques and stone masonry.

## **5.0 Ground Maintenance**

- 5.1 Stephen Smith attended the meeting provided an update of ground maintenance services, stating that ground maintenance was outsourced six years ago and last year it was awarded to Continental Land Scape, the contract started on 1<sup>st</sup> January and learning from the flaws of the last contract the new contract is more flexible in managing the cutting the grass when it is required.
- 5.2 Big positive with this contract is that the contractor operates in three localised depots in line with three ALMO areas which very beneficial for the localised service.
- 5.3 This week is the sixth cut of the year and while there have been some difficulties due to wet and warm conditions, we are working with contractors and the contractor is offering overtime to their staff to keep up with the service.
- 5.4 The contractor has raised the issue of some steep banking due to health and safety, so some of these areas may not be well maintained, however this is being looked into to find a reasonable solution.
- 5.5 Good working relationship has been established with the new contractor, they are very good with community engagement and would be willing to attend a future forum meeting provide an update and or answer any queries.

## **6.0 A O B**

- 6.1 The meeting was informed that an open day to consult on the future of the Gotts Park will be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July from 4:00.p.m. to 7:00.p.m.  
For further information / clarification please contact John Preston on 0113 274 2335
- 6.2 Flyers advertising dates and venues for the 2012 Summer Bands were also distributed.
- 6.3 Charlie's cake event, urban picnic, to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

## **7 Date of next meeting**

- 7.1 17<sup>th</sup> July 2012, 7pm Armley One Stop Centre.