

Combined Armley Community Forum and PACT meeting minutes

Date: 17th July 2012

Chair: Cllr Janet Harper

Present: H&D Boutle, E Bowes, K Anderson, B Davies, B Mason, E Hey, J Pratt, E Mosley, R Bruce, K Duce, D&W Armitage, E Holdsworth, A Iqbal, B Holmes, E Meadowcroft, D Parsons, M Quirke, J Gill, P Hannah, S Richmond, F Smyth, Y Lynky, O Peck, Fr I Wright, A Haigh, Z Chevillard, L Cheney, S Friend, J&U Newsome, S Broadbent, M&M Hogg, M&T Collins, M Pugh, S Myers, E Handley

1 Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Cllr Harper welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from D&M Stead, B Draper, D Newsome, Cllr Lowe, Cllr McKenna and Mrs Lemm

2 Matters arising

2.1 Cllr Harper asked that the format of the minutes return to noting apologies and attendance.

2.2 The library has offered the use of the IT room for future forums, but they would have to begin at 7.15 so as not to disrupt library customers.

2.3 At a previous meeting, a forum member had complained about weeds growing around and from the top of the cenotaph in Armley Park. Despite being reported in the YEP, no action has been taken. KS to follow up.

KS

3 Police Update

3.1 Inspector Mark Wheeler circulated neighbourhood policing team and force newsletters detailing crime and new initiatives in the area.

3.2 Burglary rates continue to fall, but residents are asked to remain vigilant and keep windows and doors locked as now is a peak time of year for 'sneak in' burglaries. Additional resources continue to be deployed in the Armley area.

3.3 Rates remain static of other priority crimes including theft of motor vehicles, theft from motor vehicles and robberies.

3.4 A number of burglars operating in Armley have recently been given custodial sentences, and 11 warrants were executed on people who failed to attend court.

3.5 Anti-social behaviour and street drinking around Town Street is being tackled through a multi-agency partnership. A member of the forum complained that people were gathering around the Gelder Road shops and throwing cans and urinating over the side towards the flats car park. MW to deploy officers to patrol.

MW

3.6 Insp Wheeler welcomed questions:
A motorbike continually speeds along ? Road (noted incorrectly), could parents living on the street be warned to keep their children safe?

3.7 Do burglary statistics include those on empty properties? Yes.

3.8 What was the incident on Wyther Park Hill this week? There was a report of a racially aggravated assault, resulting in two arrests. The family are being supported and there were extensive door to door enquiries.

- 3.9 Fr I Wright expressed concern that members of the church at Lyric House are being blamed for anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance from parties on Tong Road. They are not involved but are concerned about anti-social drinking and drug use.
- 3.10 A member of the forum reported drug dealing between 5pm and 12am on Hill End Road by the Travellers Rest. The police have been called but there is not much visible presence. Residents would like a 'No Through Road' sign, Cllr Harper to ask Highways. JH
- 3.11 Cllr Harper thanked Inspector Wheeler for attending.

4 **St Bartholomew's Church Extension**

- 4.1 Imelda Havers from Bluefish Regeneration updated the forum on the proposal to build an extension to St Bartholomew's Church to be used as a community and conference centre. The new centre will replace the existing parish centre and provide a base for the uniform groups, meeting space, and activities for the whole community. IH is involved to ensure that residents and organisations are consulted on the development and that the new centre doesn't simply duplicate but significantly improves on what is already available at St. Bartholomew's.
- 4.2 Cllr Harper advised the forum she is chair of Plans Panel West and could not contribute to the discussion due to a pending planning application for the scheme.
- 4.3 The project still needs planning permission. A public event is planned for Thursday 26th July from 6-7.30pm to introduce the project and seek residents' views on the future use of the space. Please RSVP to the church if you would like to attend as refreshments will be served.
- 4.4 IH and Fr I Wright welcomed questions:
Are the bells still working? Yes, they are played every Sunday at 9.55.
- 4.5 Is there increased parking provision at the centre? Yes, the school has given permission for their car park to be used for events.
- 4.6 How will it be paid for? It's not certain yet, as most funders will not consider applications before planning permission is awarded. Funding is likely to come from a variety of sources. The development of land around the existing parish centre is linked to the project, but it is hoped that the centre can be built first.
- 4.7 Cllr Harper thanked IH for the update.

5 **Armley Christmas Lights**

- 5.1 K Sibson explained that the end of the Town Centre Manager post means that arrangements need to be put in place to organise the Christmas light switch on this year, as the Area Support Team does not have the expertise or capacity to provide this service.
- 5.2 If residents want a switch on event, an organiser must be found. This could be the Council's Events Team or a private freelancer. A community development worker has been approached to see if he could use the event as a way to engage with local residents to become more involved in their community.
- 5.3 It was agreed that volunteers from the forum would help form a steering group to look at the options. Margaret Quirke, Eric Bowes and Morgan Pugh kindly offered to help. Cllr McKenna will also be asked to join the meeting. KS

6 **Any other business**

- 6.1 A member of the forum asked what the Councillors' response was to the announcement that the Children's Heart Surgery Unit in Leeds was to close. Cllr Harper said all Ward Members are strongly opposed, and the Leader of the Council, Keith Wakefield was

working with the local health service to oppose the decision. Cllr Harper will write to the Health Secretary on behalf of the Armley Forum. A query was raised as to whether Rachel Reeves MP was supporting the campaign, and her website reports that she is.

- 6.2 A request was made for the sign on the former joke shop at 100 Town Street be removed. K Sibson to find out who owns the building. KS
- 6.3 Fr I Wright told the forum about Parks & Countryside erecting dog control signs in the church graveyard without permission from the church council. Cllr Harper apologised on behalf of the council and will ask the service to investigate. JH
- 6.4 A complaint was raised about the lack of a school crossing patrol at Christ Church Upper Armley. It has been reported that the school is too small, but the road is very dangerous. K Sibson to ask for the decision to be reviewed. KS
- 6.5 An update on the plans for new housing on the former Theaker Lane medical centre was requested. Post meeting – This site is on the council's list of priority derelict / nuisance sites, and meetings are held regularly to move forward development and improvement schemes. On this site, no plans have been submitted yet, but a development scheme is being considered dependent on further survey work.
- 6.6 Cars for sale parked around the garage on Tong Road are causing a nuisance. K Sibson to ask enforcement officers to visit. KS
- 6.7 H Boutle reminded the forum that the Armley Fun Day will be held on Wednesday July 25th, 1pm – 4pm on Armley Moor.
- 7 **Date of next meeting**
- 7.1 Tuesday 18th September, IT Room Armley Library – **new time 7.15pm**