

Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum
Notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Public Meeting
Shawforth Chapel, Whitworth
19th January 2012

Present: the following Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum members were in attendance plus 11 members of the public: Cllr Tom Aldred (Chair), Cllr Alan Neal, Cllr David Barnes, Julie Johnson (Lancashire Care NHS Trust), PC John Bailey (Lancashire Police), Mandy Whittaker (Greenvale Homes), Katie Miller (Rossendale Leisure Trust), Jack Dalton (Community Member), Steven Butterworth (Community Member), Ken Makin (Community Member), Colin Hubbard (Community Member), Marie Eccles (Community Member), Pay Myers (Community Member), Alison Wilkins (RBC).

Apologies: Cllr Linda Barnes, Cllr Sean Serridge, Pat Smith.

1. **Welcome and introductions**

Cllr Aldred welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it had been agreed that it would be useful to invite the public to a meeting of the Whitworth neighbourhood Forum to see what happens at the meeting and what the Forum is working on. He stressed that the Forum is not a closed shop and is keen to communicate what the Neighbourhood Forum is up to. New Community members are very welcome to join the neighbourhood Forum.

Cllr Aldred requested that people keep their questions to issues included on the agenda as he would encourage people to use the various other ways of reporting day to day issues and complaints.

2. **Notes and action from the last meeting**

The notes from the meeting held on 15 September were accepted as a correct record.

3. **Update on Local activities and services**

a) **Police update and Crime Figures**

PC John Bailey gave the crime statistics for the months October – December as follows.

| | Oct 2011 | Nov 2011 | Dec 2011 |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Burglary | 4 | 4 | 7 |
| Vehicle Crime | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Criminal Damage | 9 | 5 | 4 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Theft | 8 | 5 | 5 |
| Violent Crime | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| All Crimes | 34 | 29 | 26 |
| Anti-social behaviour incidents | 34 | 45 | 26 |

PC Bailey attributed the rise in anti-social behaviour in November to Bonfire Night. In January there have been 9 crimes so far which is positive as is the general downward trend. He also stressed that crime is low in Whitworth compared with the rest of the Rossendale.

PC Bailey updated on the 20mph zones which are to be introduced by LCC. He explained that they will be self enforced by members of the public. If there are a lot of complaints about a street the Police will look into it with a view to taking enforcement action but generally the speed limits will be self policed. In response to a question, he confirmed that 20mph zones do not negate the Police's opportunity to prosecute drivers who speed – i.e. motorists can still be fined for exceeding the 30mph speed limit.

Motorbikes accessing Healey Dell was raised as an issue. PC Bailey confirmed he would look into it with RBC.

Action: PC Bailey

PC Bailey commented on Cowm Park Way where speeding traffic and parked cars cause problems. He advised that there isn't an easy solution but he is still working with residents. All residents have been sent a letter and he confirmed that the Police will issue Fixed Penalty Notices where appropriate.

b) Cycling Forum update

Colin Hubbard updated on developments around the cycleway. He advised that the Whitworth cycleway includes Cowm Park Way and that he would be asking LCC if they can introduce the 20mph zone to the area sooner than planned to make it safer for cyclists.

He explained that there is a chunk missing from the Whitworth cycleway, from Barlow Bottoms to Cowm Park Way, which should be open within 12 months. This would enable all children who live and go to school in the Whitworth Valley to be able to walk or cycle to school.

There are now Cycle Forums for Rossendale, Rochdale and Lancashire as well as the Whitworth Cycle Group. It had been noted that those county districts that have their own Cycling Forum get the most, and therefore, the Rossendale Cycling Forum was set up in October.

Adult cycling training is now available in Rossendale aimed at enabling adults to get their confidence back for commuting. This will be advertised in the local press.

Lee and Cragg Quarries are a major venue for mountain biking but until now there have only been difficult red and black routes. A less difficult blue route is currently being built. Also 10, 20 and 30 mile routes across the area are to be developed. The intention is to get people to stay in Rossendale for longer. One of the routes includes part of Whitworth Cycleway which will bring people into Whitworth.

Colin informed the Forum that new businesses are starting up as a result of the mountain biking available at Lee and Cragg Quarries. Rossendale Pennine Adventure, a private business has set up in Waterfoot. They have refurbished The Old Boot and Shoe and are providing bed and breakfast accommodation and bunkhouses, cycle hire and storage.

Cycle leaders are to be funded to run taster sessions to introduce people to the trails and take them to where they are. Colin suggested that this could be incorporated into the Whitworth Sports Festival.

A specification for a fully tarmaced route for commuters from Rawtenstall train station to Rochdale railway station with a transport hub at each end is being put together through the Rossendale Cycle Forum. The aim would be to enable people to walk or cycle to work and school and therefore take cars off the road. The cost would be in the region of £2.5m and funding options would need to be explored.

c) Rossendale Leisure Trust

Katie Miller the Sports Development Officer from Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) explained that RLT has a borough wide remit and wants to be involved in each of the four neighbourhood Forums. Katie is on the Whitworth Sports Council and links into the Sports Festival. RLT works in schools with coaching programmes and helps sports clubs and forums. The Leisure Trust is hoping to link in with Whitworth Sports Council around activities linked to the Olympic Games. RLT also organises the annual Rossendale Sports Awards and has a youth engagement programme through Fusion and is happy to offer support to local sports clubs and groups. A sports directory is produced which includes Whitworth.

Katie's contact details are:

Katie Miller
Club Development Officer
Rossendale Leisure Trust Ltd
katie.miller@rltrust.co.uk
Tel No:01706 242313

d) Health Improvement Service

Julie Johnson from Lancashire Care NHS Trust gave an update on the work of the Health Improvement Service. The Rossendale team's role is to address health inequalities and the things that impact on it including alcohol, smoking etc. They also

support the Communities Against Cancer project which enables communities to raise awareness of the early symptoms of breast, lung and bowel cancers through local volunteers.

The team also supports the national Change 4 Life campaign, through which there are a wide variety of resources available – see the website www.nhs.uk/change4life

Julie's contact details are:

Julie Johnson

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Health Improvement Service
Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust

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E: julie.johnson2@lancashirecare.nhs.uk

W: www.lancashirecare.nhs.uk

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e) Healthy Futures Consultation

Attention was drawn to the deadline of 28 January for the responses to the Healthy Futures Consultation around local services for heart and stroke patients.

Local meetings had been held in Whitworth as part of the consultation process and further information is available from www.healthyfutures.nhs.uk / 0161 655 7422.

f) Whitworth Horticultural Society

Ken Makin gave an update of the progress with the Memorial Gardens. Work was completed on the main physical improvements in time for the Remembrance Day service in November. The works to date have included resurfacing all the paths, creation of a large reclaimed stone performance space and the installation of boundary railings around the gardens. Ken wished to put on record thanks to Tamzin Percival and her team for their support with the project. The next stage is the planting after which it will be a place where people can go and sit. The Horticultural Society have recently received a grant of £500 from the Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum for the planting scheme.

There will be a formal opening ceremony on 20 May when the gardens will be officially opened. Ken advised that the Horticultural Society are always happy to have new volunteers.

4. Updated Whitworth neighbourhood Action Plan

The updated plan had been sent out with the agenda. Alison Wilkins explained that as it is now over 12 months since the Plan was put together, some time had been spent at the last Forum meeting working in small groups to look at what had been achieved so

far and whether the priorities and actions were still relevant. Since then the Plan has been updated to include new actions and priorities identified and completed actions have been removed.

Alison explained that the themes in the plan have been focussed down to four main areas:

- Economy and Town Centre
- Transport and Traffic
- Tourism and Leisure
- Health and wellbeing, families and young people

Forum members and members of the public were asked to look at the Action Plan and let Alison know if they had any comments or additions to the Plan. It is particularly important to ensure that any projects that may need funding are included in the Action Plan as inclusion in the Plan is a criteria for Neighbourhood Forum funding and also helps to endorse other grant funding applications.

Action: All Forum members

Attention was drawn to a couple of specific actions: support the development of a new play area in the Forum area and support community based youth projects. Rossendale Council has made funding available for Groundwork to consult with local people to identify a suitable site for a new play area, and then to work with a local community group to draw up plans and apply for grant funding to develop the park. If anyone has any sites to suggest, or would like to get involved they should contact Alison Wilkins. Sites at Wallbank, Tonacliffe and Leavengreave were suggested.

Alison advised that there is also funding available for developing activities for young people, and if anyone is looking for funding to provide activities for young people they should contact her.

Action: All Forum members

A Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum Action Plan Update newsletter was distributed at the meeting to provide an update on the work of the Neighbourhood Forum and progress in implementing the Neighbourhood Action Plan. Alison advised that further copies were available if people wished to take copies to local community groups etc. Alison also said that she would welcome contributions for future newsletters and the deadline for the next one is Friday 2 March.

5. Determining of grant applications

One new grant application had been received, but the group concerned needs to open a bank account before the application can be approved. A reminder was given that the Neighbourhood Forum has funding of approximately £6000 available in the current financial year for grants for local community and voluntary groups. There is also project

funding available to support actions in the neighbourhood Action Plan. Application forms are available on the Council website or from Alison.

6. Any other business

Cllr Aldred asked for feedback on whether people had found the public forum meeting useful. The general consensus was that the meeting had been useful and informative and it was suggested that of the four Forum meetings each year, two could be public meetings and two business plan meetings. It was also noted that public meetings need to be publicised through the Rossendale Free Press as well as the Rochdale Observer.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on 15th March at 6.30pm at Whitworth Civic Hall. This will be a Business Plan meeting.

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