

Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum

Notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Public Meeting

Shawforth Chapel, Whitworth

8th January 2013

Present: Cllr Tom Aldred (Chair), Cllr Alan Neal, Cllr Madeline De Souza, Julie Johnson (Lancashire Care NHS Trust), Sgt Mark Taylor (Lancashire Police), PC Vinnie Hopkins (Lancashire Police), Mandy Whittaker (Greenvale Homes), Steven Butterworth (Community Member), Pat Myers (Community Member), Tony Phillips (Community Member), Colin Hubbard (Community Member), Ken Makin (Community member), Pat Smith (REAL), Kathy Fishwick (Civic Trust), Eric Bond (Groundwork), Bob Elliott (Veterans in Communities), Suzanne Preston (Veterans in Communities), David Hill, Alison Wilkins (RBC).

Apologies: Cllr David Barnes, Brian Furness, Karen Douglas.

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Aldred welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that it is a business plan meeting, but open to the public. He advised that people were requested to keep their questions to issues included on the agenda.

2. Notes and action from the last meeting

Colin Hubbard suggested a couple of amendments to the notes from the meeting held on 10th October. These were read out and accepted. In addition, it was requested that apologies from Tony Philips and Pat Myers be added. This was agreed.

3. Update on Local activities and services

a) Eric Bond, Groundwork Pennine Lancashire – Flood Advice for the Community

Eric explained that GWPL had received funding from the Environment Agency to work with communities on flood resilience measures. He explained that increasingly it is surface water that causes the problems as the water table is so high, rather than just river flooding. He outlined some of the actions that can be taken and products available to householders to mitigate the effects of flooding and explained that Groundwork are available to help and advise communities and individuals to prepare themselves for possible flooding. The National Flood Forum website has 'blue pages' which have details of all flood products available such as sand bags, air brick covers etc. He also

advised anyone living in a flood risk area to register with the Environment Agency so that they automatically receive flood warnings.

b) Bob Elliott, Veterans in Community

Bob explained that Veterans in Communities (VIC) have been around for about 12 months and they provide support for veterans and their families in the community. They also support other uniformed organisations such as the Fire Service. He estimated that out of a population of 7000 in Whitworth about 1200 people would have a connection with the armed forces in some way. Many veterans leave the forces with no problems, but some do have problems settling in to civilian life. Problems can be psychological, mental health, or associated with alcohol and drugs. VIC aims to complement statutory services.

The Armed Forces Community Covenant was signed last year by the Council and other local organisations which aims to provide a 'leg up' for veterans when they need it. Rosendale is trailblazing in this field.

Bob explained that VIC is about veterans helping veterans and that they are keen to put something back into the community through working on community projects. VIC are currently working out of REAL in Bacup and are shortly to start a Wives and Girlfriends (WAGS) group.

It was suggested that VIC contribute an article to the next Whitworth Valley News.

VIC can be contacted on 01706 871730 / bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org

c) Police Update

PC Vinnie Hopkins introduced himself as the new Community Beat Manager (CBM) for Whitworth. He went through the crime figures and explained that generally they are down from the previous year, including anti-social behaviour, although there is a current hot spot around the Civic centre. Forthcoming initiatives include speed awareness on Market Street and an operation around scrap metal.

Cllr Alan Neal raised the issue of quarry wagons from Rochdale speeding. Tony Phillips requested that the Police ask young people not to ride scooters on the bowling Green at the Civic Centre when they are patrolling the area.

d) Update on Local List – Cathy Fishwick, Civic Trust.

Cathy Fishwick from Civic Trust gave a further update on the local list that English Heritage are supporting in each area of non listed buildings etc. that local people value. She is working with the new RBC Conservation Officer, Ruth Garrett on this and advised that the two areas for communities to focus on are non listed buildings in conservation areas and war memorials. Being on the local list will provide some

protection, even if not fully listed. Cathy advised that a local list was produced in the 1990s and this will be used as a basis.

4. Progress on implementing the Whitworth Neighbourhood Action Plan

An update newsletter on the Neighbourhood Plan was circulated, detailing progress in implementing the Plan and other local initiatives. The following projects were highlighted:

Cycleway update: Colin Hubbard reported that more formal plans for the 20km cycle way from Rochdale to Rawtenstall have been produced. John Grimshaw the founder of Sustrans, a civil engineering charity that has built thousands of miles of cycleway, is now the supporting engineer for the Rossendale route.

Colin reported that Whitworth High School is still opposed to a cycle link into the school from the cycle way. It was agreed that Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum supports the view that the provision of a safe access to the High School for cyclists and walkers would be beneficial to the whole community.

Alison Wilkins agreed to write to the head teacher on behalf of the Forum requesting a site meeting to discuss a cycleway link into the school.

Wallbank: the new Friends of Wallbank group is very active and has organised a number of events and activities over the past 6 months. Further events are planned for residents of the area.

It was noted that a free travel pass scheme has been introduced for some young people – those that are carers, young parents or not in education, employment or training. It was suggested that this should be widened to cover young people getting to 6th Form.

Health Improvement Service - Julie Johnson updated the Forum on the activities of the Health Improvement Service in Rossendale. Initiatives supported include Alcohol Awareness Week, Communities Against Cancer and Non Smoking Day. They are also working with employers to promote workplace health and wellbeing.

Footwear Industry Community project – Paul Dunne from social enterprise The It Zone is in the process of putting together a funding bid for a project on Rossendale's footwear industry. For more information he can be contacted on 01282 450259.

Priorities and Budget Consultation - Rossendale Council is currently consulting on Priorities and Budget Consultation 2013 / 14, including suggestions on how the Council could bridge the identified funding gap of approximately £600,000 - £800,000 per annum. More details are on the Council website.

5. Determining of grant and project funding applications

No applications for funding had been received. Steve Butterworth advised that he would like to apply for Project Funding for a communication system for the First Responders throughout Rossendale. The cost is £1400 per year for 3 years, and the funding bid would be just for one year. The Forum agreed that they would welcome submission of the application, which would have to be put to all four Forums.

6. Any other business

It was noted that RBC's One Stop Shop will be moving to Futures Park in Bacup, from Rawtenstall. The service provided from STAN (Services to a Neighbourhood) would also be improved.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on 4th March at 6.30pm at Whitworth Civic Hall. This will be a Business Plan meeting.