

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities) held at 2.00
pm on Thursday, 3 July 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor P Townshend (Chair)

Other Member Present: Councillor Akhtar

Employees (by Directorate):

S Brake, People Directorate
C Edwards, People Directorate
C Fitzsimons, People Directorate
M Fothergill, Place Directorate
C Hickin, People Directorate
H Lynch, Resources Directorate
B Massey, People Directorate
U Patel, Resources Directorate

Apologies: Councillor A Andrews (Shadow Cabinet Member)
Councillor C Fletcher (Deputy Cabinet Member)

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the former Cabinet Member (Community Safety and Equalities) held on 1st May 2014 were confirmed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Response to petition calling for the installation of security fencing to open land at the rear of numbers 2-66 Brookside Avenue

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director, People which provided a response to a petition calling for the installation of security fencing to open land at the rear of numbers 2-66 Brookside Avenue, Whoberley Ward.

The petition bearing 11 signatures from 6 households, was submitted on 25th March 2014 by Councillor Singh.

The land is an open stretch of green space measuring approximately 900 metres and is owned by the City Council and managed by the Parks Service in the Place Directorate. The petitioners would like this land to be secured in order to prevent crime and nuisance behaviour impacting on their properties.

Councillor Singh and the petition organiser were unable to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities):

- 1. Considered the information provided by Officers in determining whether fencing is appropriate in this location.**
- 2. Endorsed actions taken to date by Officers and requested that the area continues to be monitored.**
- 3. Respectfully requested the Police to continue to patrol the area responding to any issues raised or identified and to exercise their powers to obtain identities and disperse groups of individuals that are likely to cause nuisance or offending behaviour.**
- 4. Requested Community Development Officers to work with the community in tackling local issues including litter and environmental issues, and to assist residents in seeking funding that would contribute to security improvements.**
- 5. Requested Officers to provide a report back on progress against recommendations 1-4 inclusive in October 2014.**

4. Report in response to a petition asking the Council to improve the environment and subsequent security of the Hearsall area of Earlsdon in Coventry

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director, People which responded to a petition which requested the Council to improve the environment and security of the Hearsall area of Earlsdon, Coventry.

The petition bearing 184 signatures was submitted on 25th March 2014 by Councillor Singh and Councillor Howells, Whoberley Ward Councillors.

The petition requested the Council to implement measures to address environmental issues which was likely to improve the security of the Hearsall area of Earlsdon, Whoberley Ward.

Furthermore, the petition outlined issues including local roads and pavements in need of repair, fly-tipping and obstruction caused by wheelie bins. Additionally, the petitioners requested that estate/letting agency signs should be removed and that all alleyways and entryways should be gated and any existing gates to be repaired to a good working order. Signatories felt that such measures would significantly improve the environment and therefore deter and/or reduce crime and nuisance behaviour also.

Councillor Singh, a Whoberley Ward Councillor was unable to attend the meeting, however, he has been liaising with Council Officers across the Council to tackle the issues highlighted by the petition.

Mr Bruce, a local resident attended the meeting and spoke in support of the petition. He commented that many of the houses in the area were student lets and general apathy meant that matters such as bins, gardens etc. were not dealt with.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities):

- 1. Acknowledged and endorsed the work of the City Council Officers to date as detailed in the report.**
- 2. Acknowledged and thanked the work of the Police who have also targeted additional patrols to the area responding swiftly to any issues raised or identified.**
- 3. Requested officers of the City Council and West Midlands Police to continue to work with local residents to explore opportunities to secure community funding with which to make local environmental and safety improvements to their area.**
- 4. Requested the Community Safety Team to carry out a review as to the effectiveness of existing gating schemes in the area.**
- 5. Directed that the Care 4 Your Area campaign be applied at the earliest date and during the summer as a further pilot project to the roads identified below.**
- 6. Directed that Planning Enforcement Officers to carry out a review and report on matters of concern and abuse of deemed consent on the roads identified below:**

Broomfield Road, Kensington Road, Melbourne Road, Kingston Road, Bristol Road, Kirby Road, Farman Road, Latham Road and Sovereign Road.

- 7. Requested Officers to provide a further progress report to Cabinet Member meeting scheduled for 2nd October 2014.**

5. Report in response to petition calling on the Council to request Whitefriars Housing Group to take action to address incidents of flytipping and anti-social behaviour taking place on an area of Whitefriars land on the corner of Keppel Street/Wright Street

The Cabinet Member considered a report a report of the Executive Director, People which responded to a petition calling on the Council to request Whitefriars Housing Group to take action to address incidents of fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour taking place on an area of Whitefriars' land on the corner of Keppel Street/Wright Street.

The petition bearing 22 signatures was submitted on 29th April, 2014 by Councillor Akhtar.

The petition relates to environmental issues and anti-social behaviour on a stretch of wasteland situated on the corner of Keppel Street and Wright Street. Local residents were requesting for the land to be secured to prevent unauthorised access and inappropriate use, or for it to be redeveloped.

Councillor Akhtar, a St. Michael's Ward Councillor attended the meeting and spoke in support of the petition. He stated that residents did not report incidents as they did not want to get caught up with the problems this would entail. The Police who were present at the meeting commented that they were only able to deal with issues that were brought to their attention and relied on residents to do so and once they were aware of the petitioners' concerns, they increased police presence in the area.

The petition spokesperson also attended the meeting and spoke in support of the petition and stated that most residents did not say anything as they not want to be identified as the ones who had contacted the police.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities);

- 1. Noted and thanked City Council Officers and partner agencies including West Midlands Police for the results of enquiries into the matter.**
- 2. Endorsed the action taken to date to address the issues outlined by local residents.**
- 3. Respectfully requested the Police to continue to patrol the area responding swiftly to any issues raised or identified and to exercise their powers to obtain identities and disperse groups of individuals that are likely to cause nuisance or offending behaviour.**
- 4. Requested Officers of the City Council to continue to monitor the issues associated with this land as part of the Hillfields Action Plan and requested the Head of Community Safety to draft a letter to be sent on behalf of the Cabinet Member to the Chief Executive of Whitefriars requesting that they give consideration to securing this piece of land to deter any further incidents of fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour taking place. The letter to be drafted and sent within the next 14 days.**
- 5. Directed City Council Officers, in liaison with West Midlands Police to use appropriate CCTV equipment to gather evidence and take appropriate action there from.**
- 6. Requested Officers to explore opportunities to undertake targeted monitoring and surveillance in tis location in order to deter and detect perpetrators of crime and nuisance, particularly fly-tipping.**
- 7. Requested an update report in respect of the above matters to be submitted to the Cabinet Member meeting scheduled for 2nd October 2014.**

6. Outstanding Issues Report

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director, Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding, so that progress could be monitored.

RESOLVED that consideration of item 8 headed “Magistrates Court Building” be deferred to the meeting scheduled for 6th November 2014 and that the Outstanding Issues report be amended accordingly.

7. Any Other Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.10 pm)