

Area Forum West

Thursday 21 September 2017

The Area Forum West will meet at Kingsbury Methodist Church Hall, Barlow Court, Kingsbury at 6.30 pm.

6.00 – 6.30 pm – Surgery Sessions

Meet your local Police, Borough and County Council representatives.

Call in if you have specific concerns that you would like to discuss with your local Safer Neighbourhoods Policing Team.

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome from the Chairman** – Borough and County Councillor Andy Jenns.
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Notes of the meetings held on 2 March 2017** – copy herewith.

4. **Safer Neighbourhoods** – Warwickshire Police. To give an update on the work of the Safer Neighbourhoods team and agree priorities.
5. **Representation of Outside Bodies** – To consider the appointment of representatives to outside bodies for the local area covered by Area Forum West.
6. **Review of Area Forum Working** – Report attached. The Forum are invited to comment.
7. **“Have Your Say” – Questions and Issues**
An opportunity for issues of local concern to be raised. To ensure that an answer to a question can be given at the meeting, details of it should be submitted to Jenny Price or via email to jennyprice@northwarks.gov.uk.

For general enquiries please contact Jenny Price, North Warwickshire Borough Council on 01827 719450 or <mailto:jennyprice@northwarks.gov.uk>

**Notes of the meeting of Area Forum West
held at Piccadilly Community Centre, Piccadilly on
Thursday 2 March 2017**

Present: Borough Councillor Jenns in the Chair.
Borough Councillors Lewis, Payne, Phillips and Reilly.

In attendance: J Price - North Warwickshire Borough Council. Sgt Oakley, PC Ramsdell and PCSO's Beale and Owen - Warwickshire Police. A Vaughton – Curdworth Parish Council. J McNally – Kingsbury Parish Council. D Starkey and B Woolaston – Nether Whitacre Parish Council. I and J Thomas – Piccadilly Community Association. T Hardman – Neighbourhood Watch. S Mansell and P Turner – Bodymoor Heath residents.

Apologies: Borough and County Councillors Lea and Moss. Borough Councillor Waters. P Simkin – Curdworth Parish Council. C Ayassamy – Kingsbury Parish Council.

1 Notes of the meeting held 29 September 2016

The notes of the meeting held on 29 September 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2 Safer Neighbourhoods

The following Safer Neighbourhood priorities were agreed.

- Parking issues - Curdworth Primary School and Sandpits Close.
- ASB Wood End and Piccadilly
- Parking issues – Barlow Court, Kingsbury

An appeal was made for volunteers to come forward to engage in Community Speed Watch and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Highway safety concerns were raised about the existing speed limit of 60 mph on Bodymoor Heath Lane, Marston. It was agreed that a request should be made to the County Council to engage in speed monitoring with a view to getting the speed limit reduced.

Concerns were raised about the relevance of email alerts being received from the Police Community Messaging service since the system had been upgraded. It was felt that the messages were no longer targeted to local areas. The Chairman of the Forum was requested to write to the Police

and Crime Commissioner expressing the Forums disappointment that the system was no longer as effective as it had once been.

3 Next meeting

Thursday 8 June 2017 at the Water Orton Primary School.

Representation on Outside Bodies

Recommendation:

That the Forum make recommendations for appointments to the outside bodies listed in the report.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Borough Council has requested that Area Forums be consulted for recommendations for appointments to the outside bodies 'local' to the area covered by this Area Forum.

1.2 The Area Forum is invited to recommend to the Borough Council the appointment of representatives to the following outside bodies:-

Kingsbury Liaison Group
Middleton Hall Trust
Piccadilly Community Association
Stanyer's Charity

1.3 The memberships previously comprised:-

Kingsbury Liaison Group – Councillors Jenns and Moss
Middleton Hall Trust – Councillor Reilly
Piccadilly Community Association – Councillor Lewis
Stanyer's Charity – Councillors Jenns and Moss

1.4 The appointments are made for a period of one year expiring in May 2018.

The Contact Officer for this report is Amanda Tonks (719221).

Review of Area Forum Working

Summary

The attached report by Steve Maxey, Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council, is to be considered by the Council's Executive Board.

Members of the Forum are invited to offer comments on how engagement with local communities might take place in the future.

Comments may be emailed to democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk

Agenda Item No 12

Executive Board

18 September 2017

**Report of the
Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to
the Council**

Review of Area Forum Working

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report makes recommendations to the Board regarding Area Forums, following the recent debate at full Council and subsequent meeting of the Area Forum Task and Finish Group.

Recommendation to the Council

- a That the Council consults with the Police, Warwickshire County Council and other interested parties on the current round of Area Forums being the last such meetings; and**
- b That subsequent reports are brought to this Board as part of the Council's review of Communications, including a revised Consultation Strategy in order to ensure that the positive elements of Forums meetings are continued.**

2 Report

- 2.1 Members have debated the effectiveness of Area Forum meetings for some time, most recently at the Council meeting on 28 June. Following that debate, a Task and Finish Group was created and this met on 25 July.
- 2.2 Area Forums were first introduced in the late 90s in North Warwickshire, in partnership with the Police and Warwickshire County Council. Since then they have had a mixed history and it is fair to say that attendance has declined over the years.
- 2.3 Analysis in 2012 indicated that only 19% of those attending Area Forums were not formally attached to the Borough, County or Parish Councils or other agencies. This equated to just short of 6 members of the public per meeting against a population of over 62,000 (0.01%). An exercise in 2010 concluded that about 0.2% of Warwickshire's population attended area forums at that time.
- 2.4 Figures for the September 2015 round of meeting were as follows. For Area Forums North and West, of the 37 attending the two meetings, only 7 were

unaffiliated residents. However for Area Forums East and South, 34 of the 62 attendees were minuted as residents. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) attended the Area Forum East meeting which may account for the 14 (out of 32) residents at that meeting, however in June 15 residents also attended (out of 29). Jeff Brown had been to discuss the Daw Mill application at the June and September 2015 South meetings which may have accounted for 20 residents out of 30 at the September meeting and 30 out of 43 in June.

- 2.5 The County Council however do not appear to record Parish Council representatives separately for Area Forum South so these figures do not show how many of the “residents” were affiliated to Town or Parish Councils. It does suggest however that greater attendance happens when issues of great local concern are being discussed, with the PCC and Daw Mill issues. Communications, and people’s willingness to attend formal meetings, have changed enormously since the 90s. A recent review by this Council of the public’s views on communication confirms the unpopularity of general public meetings. As the above figures show, attendance, by and large, at Area Forums consists largely of ‘known’ people.
- 2.6 The Council has looked at Area Forums on a number of occasions over the years. There was a flush of enthusiasm when the County Council worked to introduce them into the rest of Warwickshire as part of its localities work. A number of initiatives have been tried, including having a very short ‘summary’ agenda, where presenters had five minutes or so to set out their main points and then the rest of the meeting was a ‘workshop’ style event when those particularly interested in a topic could speak at more length with that agency. However, that pilot did not have a noticeable impact on attendance.
- 2.7 Leaders’ Liaison reviewed these initiatives last year and it was agreed to recommend to our partners that they be discontinued. However, the County Council then launched its own review in 2016, which reported just before the County elections earlier this year and it was decided to await the outcome of that review. The report has not been published at the date of writing this report but an Officer representative of the County Council was at the Task and Finish Group meeting in July and helpfully outlined County Officer thinking on the subject. In summary, that thinking is very similar to the suggestions made to the Task and Finish Group and in this report.
- 2.8 The Task and Finish Group discussed the matter extensively, reviewing the Forums history, recent experiences and how to better communicate with residents and those active in the community.
- 2.9 In short, and as was suggested at the full Council discussion, it was generally agreed the Area Forums have ‘had their day’. It recognises that there is still a need for planned meetings with those active in communities. In addition, the involvement of residents is not being abandoned, as the general view is that Area Forums do not perform that task and better solutions will be developed, including consultation and engagement, using public meetings as required, on topics of general interest/importance to residents.

- 2.10 However, the overwhelming case is that communications have moved on significantly and continue to change at pace. The Communications Review currently underway acknowledges this and is likely to significantly change the way the Council communicates and consults with communities.
 - 2.11 It is recommended therefore that the Council advises the Police and the County Council that we would like the current round of Area Forums to be the last, use this round to let attendees know and discuss with them how engagement with them might take place in the future
- 3 Report Implications
- 3.1 Safer Communities
- 3.1.1 The current way of working allows dialogue with local people and priorities to be agreed and coordinated through the Area Forums. Whilst attendance levels are fairly low new arrangements would need to be considered to address this issue.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).