
MEETING	GUILDHALL WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	7 OCTOBER 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS B WATSON
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS J LOOKER
IN ATTENDANCE	34 LOCAL RESIDENTS COUNCIL OFFICER AND OTHERS (SEE LIST BELOW)

1. EXTENDED WARD SURGERY

The Surgery was attended by; Cllr. Brian Watson, The Safer Neighbourhoods Team including Insp. Mark Khan and Sgt. Helen Williams, Dave Meigh – Head of Parks and Open Spaces, Andy Vose – Cycle City York, Students Union of York St. John’s University, Jo Pullar – Space 109, Elizabeth Wray – Waste Strategy Unit, Andrew Calverly – Head Teacher of Park Grove School, Marjorie Stephenson – Navigation and Walmgate Residents’ Association, Paul Ramskill – Street Sports York, Colin Hunter – Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Michael Hawtin – Neighbourhood Management Unit. Jeremy Jones from ARC Light was unable to attend but he did have information available.

2. WELCOME AND MINUTES

The meeting was opened and apologies noted from Cllr Looker. The minutes were approved. The meeting voted in appreciation of the work that John Wood has done in the area.

3. YORK - CYCLE CITY

Andy Vose explained that Cycle City England had an aim to double the levels of cycling and they have selected 11 towns and cities. York is one of the cities chosen from 74 bids. This means that the city has an additional £20 per head to spend on cycling, the council will have to at least match fund that amount. This means an investment of £7.5m over 2 years. They have a work plan to support the 7 key objectives;

- An increase in the total number of cyclists
- An increase in the number of women cycling
- An increase in the number of people with disabilities using cycles
- A 25% growth in cycling
- To reach an achievable level of cycling
- Double participation in cycling groups
- Fill the gaps in the cycling network.

He told the meeting that they are particularly targeting safety and security. They are aiming for a 53% reduction in bike theft. They are hoping to

increase the availability of bikes by working in partnership with bike shops and the police and supporting the bike rescue scheme which reconditions bicycles. Other ideas include free bikes for people on low incomes and an improvement of the marketing and awareness of cycling in York.

A questionnaire will go out to every household in the city. There is also a questionnaire available on the council web site.

4. NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE - SERVICE PROVISION REVIEW

Colin Hunter, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service informed the meeting about their Service Provision Review.

He told the meeting about the service provision review and how to get involved by going to their web site or calling the fire station.

There will be several options all of which will be explained in the consultation. The options will mean rebuilding or refurbishing the current city centre Fire Station, building a new station possibly along the Hull Road/University corridor or making the fire crew at Huntington full-time.

All of the options have been considered and explanations of the pros and cons given on the web site. The service have looked through statistics about incidents, population, risk and new building developments to come up with the options.

At the Clifford Street Fire Station currently there are two fire engines, the aerial platform and the river rescue equipment and boat. Due to the limited space, to bring the site up to standard it would mean that the aerial platform and one fire engine would have to move to another location.

The preferred option would go to the Combined Fire Panel in February to determine which of the options is chosen.

Q. I've read figures that suggest that some of the equipment in York is inadequate.

A. Since we built the additional fire station at Heslington that's not the case. We run campaigns to reduce accidental fire deaths and in reducing road accidents which seem to be working well.

Q. Has the increase in traffic and congestion affected how quickly fire engines can get to incidents?

A. When a phone call comes in things like traffic are taken into account, with the different stations and the computerised system appliances can approach from two sides.

Q. What statistics do you have about getting to incidents?

A. Our statistics show that we are getting to incidents within the government's guideline times.

Q. Will the water rescue be kept on?

A. The mooring site for the water rescue is behind the existing fire station. Even if the site becomes reduced the water rescue service will remain. One proposal is that The Technical Fire Safety team and Community Fire Safety team are relocated.

5. WARD TEAM UPDATE

Inspector Khan introduced the team Sgt Helen Williams and himself to the meeting. Because of the extended surgery, and to continue their duties they didn't have anything further to add.

6. RECYCLING TRIALS IN THE GROVES

Elizabeth Wray talked about the recycling trials in the Groves. There will be a trial of new collection systems and improved recycling. They are trying out different vehicles and what effect the new systems will have. All collections will be from the front of properties not the back. The trial started on 14th October and the Waste Strategy Team are hoping to get feedback from residents over problems, what works and any concerns. The trial in flats will start in November. They will go on for three months and, once all the feedback has been taken into account the service will be rolled out across the city. The team is aware that flats are a real challenge but they are hoping that residents give them feedback so that they have all the information they need.

Q. How long will the trial be on for before you decide on the system you'll use?

A. The trial will be for 3 months. During the trial we'll consult with residents to find out what works and what doesn't.

Q. What will be used to store the recycling?

A. It will be wheelie bins not bags. They will have to be stored at the back of the property and wheeled to the front for collection. There won't be collections from the end of alleys. The purpose of the trial is to see if this works or what changes need to be made.

Q. I'm not quite clear. Can you give me a categorical assurance that wheelie bins won't be forced on us?

A. We will have to talk to everyone and continue consulting with residents.

Q. How often will it be collected?

A. Recycling will be collected fortnightly, alternate weeks to rubbish collection which will also be collected fortnightly. The process is to encourage recycling.

Q. A lot of councils have tried fortnightly collections and are moving back to weekly collections. There proved to be increased numbers of rats and the bins were too full.

A. Three quarters of the city which is on weekly collections haven't experienced any problems, it has proved to work there and the bins aren't over-full. When we are starting the trial the team will be on-hand with a Street Environment Officer to monitor how it happens and to be available for residents.

Q. For 26 years I've had my bin in the back alley I'm worried that it will be too heavy to take through the house.

A. Leaflets will be delivered and there will be contact details on the leaflet which you can contact to talk over any issues or concerns that you have.

7. DISCUSSION OF LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME SUGGESTIONS

(Ambition 7) The grant for St Thomas's Scout Group will benefit the ward because many children from our ward go to scouts there. It will help improve their facilities and go towards the refurbishment of the kitchen.

(Ambition 14) A resident said that she was a founder member at 109 and wanted to support it. Another said that the Navigation and Walmgate Residents' Association was based there and that the organisation was going to take over 107 Walmgate as well. This would give them more space to teach young people how to cook, paint etc. It is an extremely useful and beneficial resource in the ward.

(Ambition 13) This is a scheme for young people it will happen in the basement of York City Screen. It will show them how to make a film. It will help 3 groups for 14 weeks. Each group will be 8-10 young people. It will help disadvantaged and disaffected young people and give them a place to learn skills and not be out on the streets.

Q. What is the Minster Quarter (Ambition 2)?

A. The Minster Quarter involves businesses, the Museums Trust and the Minster. The idea is to improve an area from the footbridge to the Museum Gardens into the Art Gallery and to the Minster and the surrounding streets.

(Ambition 1) Can we replace all shrubs with plants that the geese won't like?

(Ambition 9) York and District Citizens Advice Bureau is trying to provide better access to facilities and advice in the ward. We want to educate and inform people about how to manage money and work with financial inclusion.

We are particularly keen to encourage young people to understand more about money. We have 3 paid employees and feel that this is well worth supporting.

(Ambition 8) Simon Haddock from Street Sports York explained that they are funded and hold sessions in many wards. They want to continue to run sessions for young people between 5 and 18 years old. They have been extremely busy recently finding activities and sessions for the children displaced by the fire at York High.

8. HAVE YOUR SAY

Q. The bowling park on Haxby Road there are several people complaining because of people drinking openly in the park and abusing people.

A. We can try to get a drinking exclusion zone in the Clarence Street Gardens. As a ward we have funded things in the gardens even though it is outside the ward. If you let the PCSOs know they're very good and will add it to their patrol.

Q. I'm confused as to why its not in the ward.

A. The ward boundary is half way across the road in front of the gardens. They are in Clifton Ward.

Q. Can the hedges be put back around the children's play area at Clarence Gardens off Haxby Road? A lot of residents are complaining. There have been some residents saying that they've seen people urinating in the bushes there.

Q. Lord mayor's Walk is a disgrace at the moment. There are leaves everyone and they haven't been cleared. The moat area needs attention too.

Q. There's no one here from the new ARC Light Centre what's happening there?

A. They are holding several open days where residents are invited to look around. It's a good facility. They monitor when their residents come and go from the building.

Cllr B Watson, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.45 pm and finished at 9.30 pm].