
Meeting	Heworth Without Ward Committee
Date	14 October 2015
Present	Councillors Ayre
Apologies	Councillors

1. 6:30-7:00pm Drop in

2. Introduction by your local Councillor Nigel Ayre

Councillor Nigel Ayre welcomes the group and the schedule for the meeting is outlined.

3. Police Update

PC Toni Wadsworth provides some ward statistics to the group:

- Burglaries in houses are down 50% on last year (5 less)
- Burglaries of sheds and garages are down 37.5% on last year (3 less)
- Theft of bicycles are down 50% on last year (1 less)

Q: A recent article reported that cyber crime is being included in police statistics for the first time – what will this mean for statistics?

A: Cyber crimes can be a problematic statistic as the location of the offender is reported in the crime and while the victim may be in the ward, the offender reported could be far away. Cyber crimes are naturally rising in line with the dramatic rise of internet usage – 15 years ago cyber crimes would be far less common. There is a specific team of experts nationwide that deals with cyber crime, rather than pulling police off the streets as this is obviously not a visible crime and technical expertise is necessary in these cases.

Q: Where would cyber bullying fit?

A: Cyber bullying is generally seen as an issue of education and work being done in schools, particularly primary schools, to tackle this. This work aims to educate children and young people about how to use the Internet in safe way, considering issues of cyber bullying and safeguarding against exploitation. Work is also being done to help police understand new trends in online usage of young people, such as social media.

Q: Is Laura Harper still the lead PCSO for the ward?

A: Yes Laura Harper is still lead, although there have been a few other changes to the team.

4. Public Health in Heworth Without

Amanda Gaines from the City of York Council (CYC) is working on a pilot project in Heworth, Heworth Without and Strensall wards to improve public health and wellbeing. The group has been asked to fill out a questionnaire to help them better understand data that has been collected in these wards. Data has been looked at from a range of sources and shows a number of key points about the ward including; people in this ward consume more takeaways than in other wards, while binge drinking and smoking rates are lower than in other wards.

Amanda Wood has a background in youth and community work and notes that a huge range of issues link to health and wellbeing. This project aims to understand the unique issues each ward is facing, working with residents to effectively manage these. This ward-based response links to the new budget initiatives that the council has established and will be covered later in this meeting.

Q: Where has this data come from? I don't understand the claims that people in this ward consume a lot of takeaways

A: This data set incorporates top level national data census data, Big York Survey, Public Health surveys and smaller localised questionnaires completed by the council. This accounts for some of this data not making sense to people in the wards. Part of the reason lines of communication are being opened with communities is so that we can gain a better understanding of the specific needs of wards.

Q: I recently read an article about GP's running tea parties in their surgeries, which I initially thought was a great waste of NHS time, but I now feel that this would be a greatly beneficial programme for elderly and vulnerable people in the ward. Would this be something that your programme would work on as I would be happy to help?

A: This is exactly why we are running this programme – to welcome ideas from local residents about what would work in the ward. This example would cover issues of loneliness and isolation, which are important parts of the pilot, and link to the community care fund which we will be discussing in the budget later.

Amanda Wood is keen to receive more ideas from residents and will be handing her contact details out to the group at the end of the meeting.

5. Heworth Without ward budgets for 2015-2016

Over the last four years, there have been significant reductions to the ward budgets, which meant the infrastructure for consulting residents about spending was lost. The council has now established a new finance model for the allocation of funds in each ward, with devolved power allowing for more detailed community involvement in the budgets and spending of their local area. The plan aims to empower local residents and tailor budgets to the needs of local residents. However, Nigel Ayre notes that there are significant cuts and budget pressures that the ward will need to work on. It is noted that the ward priorities were first set by Nigel Ayre around 8 years ago and it is time to refresh these. With the new funding process, there is scope for the ward to take on more funding control if the ward can demonstrate to CYC that work can be done in a more cost-effective way. There will be funding available for four committee meetings across the year:

- One formal meeting towards the start of the financial year where budgets will be outlined (although it is now late in the financial year, this meeting is that first formal meeting).
- The other three meetings can be in other formats, depending on the needs of the community and what the meeting is aiming to achieve.

This process will involve work from the ward committee and a ward team. The ward team will be lead by councillors and other ward based partners who will work to set priorities. There is discussion of members of the committee working to advise the ward team and Nigel Ayre notes that there is scope for this as there is flexibility in the new process.

Nigel Ayre then outlines the different budgets that the ward will be working with for this financial year:

General ward budget - **£3,048** (annual)

“Pride in York” budget - **£4,064** (annual - it is noted that this figure has been halved as we are already half way through this financial year. We are working on the figure for 16/17 being **£2,032**).

Alongside the annual budget, there will be a one-off “Pride in York” fund - **£2,832** which is a one-off allocation based on the current grounds maintenance spending.

- The budget aims to get local people involved and reduce the ward’s reliance on council services. It may be spent on providing grants to partners and investment in projects which will facilitate community groups taking on more work. It is noted that this figure is relatively small in this ward as grounds spending is lower here than in other areas.

Community care fund - **£1,124** (annual)

Highways programme - **£5,081** (annual)

- CYC will conduct their annual city-wide assessment of highways and outline the priority levels of their funding and this money will be available to the ward to complete work which is not to be carried out by the council programme.

6. 2016-2017 budget discussion

7. Have Your Say

Q: How will we get any highway work done with £5,000?

A: Nigel Ayre is aware that this funding is very small but notes that the figure can be carried over and saved up to complete larger projects. There are also ways to get maintenance work done in a cheaper way if effective planning is done – such as coordinating work when CYC have deployed teams.

Q: One resident brings attention to a surfacing problem on Woodlands Grove suggesting that this should be a priority as it is causing a great deal of noise in their home from 6am to midnight.

A: CYC highways work is prioritised to specific assessment criteria and timescales, with each road graded 1-5. The point of the new ward highways funding is to allow the ward to address specific issues such as this. However, there is a suggestion that the funding might be too minimal to address this issue in particular.

Q: One resident suggests that the ward develop a process which allows people in the community to provide their time, supporting people to do work in their community and take pride in their area. Allowing the ward to utilise the assets available in the community could also make necessary savings in the budget. For instance, the hedges around Monk Stray would not take long if the council would provide support in removing the clippings and insurances checks.

A: This is precisely the idea behind this new budget process and there is scope to fund someone to coordinate volunteers and put them through relevant training etc. It is positive that people are willing to get involved in projects such as this as the budget challenges are reliant upon it.

- One resident has concerns that volunteers would be able to effectively cut the hedges on Monk Stray without heavy machinery. However, it is said that the key point here is focusing on the principle, rather than this specific example. The Pride in York fund is intended

to allow investments which support volunteering groups and community projects.

- A member of the Parish council notes that volunteering is difficult as it regularly falls onto the same people to do all the work. There are also concerns about the quality of work done in this way.

Looking at the grounds maintenance budgets that have been outlined by the CYC, the current spending in the ward is £7,000 and this is set to be cut to £5,600 next year and £4,200 the following year. It is noted that the greatest expenditure is on grass cutting, mainly Monk Stray. One resident suggests that Monk Stray will be the crunch point for the ward as clumps of grass are already being left and with further cuts to the budget this will only get worse, which will make the area look scruffy. Nigel Ayre notes that nobody is pretending that this is an easy task and work needs to be done to establish the priorities.

Nigel Ayre suggests that the main problem the committee now needs to address is articulating these budget changes to the wider community and engaging as many people as possible in the process. There is an awareness that a number of different lines of communication will suit different people and exclude others; e.g. web pages, 'Our City' newspaper, social media and community notice boards. Any ideas from residents on this will be greatly received. Going forward, people are asked to make notes of priorities and suggestions, asking the opinions of other members of the community.

There are questions about how the budget priorities set out by the ward team will be communicated to residents. It is suggested that by the time this work could be done and another meeting arranged it would, at least be January and we would be coming close to the end of the financial year.

Q: Would it be legitimate for residents to give the ward team the power to spend as they see fit for this financial year as there is no time to consult residents effectively?

A: Nigel Ayre agrees that this would be a logical solution and some funding could be carried forward to be spent next year.

- There is general agreement on this approach. However, one resident raises concerns about spending cross over in regards to the grounds maintenance budget and it is assured that this will be used to inform spending. Others also expresses a wish to develop an advisory group of residents to work with the ward team and there is scope for this if the ward agrees it is a priority.
- It is noted that the process will more ad hoc this year, due to the time constraints, but a more formalised process is set to be developed for next year's budget.

Q: When will the additional green bin collection take place?

A: Leaflets with a programme for council waste collections is currently being distributed and some have already received this today.

Residents are welcomed to add any further suggestions they have now to the board at the back of the room, in addition to contacting Amanda Wood for ideas surrounding the public health pilot.

The next meeting date is yet to be confirmed.

, Chair

[The meeting started at Time Not Specified and finished at Time Not Specified].