

MEETING STRENSALL WARD COMMITTEE

DATE 25 JANUARY 2010

PRESENT COUNCILLORS MADELEINE KIRK AND WISEMAN  
IAIN DUNN, STREET ENVIRONMENT  
VIRGINIA SHAW, NEIGHBOURHOOD  
MANAGEMENT  
PC ALEX DOBSON AND PCSO 'JIMMY' HANNON  
FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING  
TEAM  
MALCOLM SMITH, YORK MAGISTRATES' COURT  
ROISHEEN CHILDS, YORK OLDER CITIZENS  
ADVOCACY  
THIRTY ONE RESIDENTS

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#### APOLOGIES

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### 1. SURGERY

1.1 Local residents had the opportunity to speak with: Cllrs Madeleine Kirk and Siân Wiseman, Iain Dunn (Street Environment Officer), the Safer Neighbourhoods Policing Team, Virginia Shaw (Neighbourhood Management Unit) and Roisheen Childs (Older Citizens Advocacy York).

### 2. MAIN MEETING: WELCOME AND MINUTES

- 2.1 Residents were welcomed to the meeting, given the housekeeping arrangements, requested to turn off their mobile phones, complete the evaluation forms and to use the public address system when addressing the meeting.
- 2.2 Cllr. Wiseman informed the meeting that, under the elected members Code of Conduct, it is necessary for ward councillors to declare a prejudicial interest if they are members of any public body that could be in receipt of ward committee funding. Consequently, she had applied to the Standards Board and been given dispensation and was now declaring a prejudicial interest as a member of Earswick Parish Council.
- 2.3 Cllr. Wiseman asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes. There were none. She referred to the article on Playbuilder in the Your Ward newsletter and that the ward has an allocation in the 2010-11 financial year.
- 2.4 The minutes of the meeting previous meeting held in October 2009 were approved and signed.

### 3. POLICE REPORT

- 3.1 PC Alex Dobson gave a report on Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team activities. In the last three months, there had been a focus on anti-social behaviour and burglary. Reported incidents of both are very low in the ward. Crime was down 65% in January.
- 3.2 Light up, Lock Up is still running and residents who have not done so already can claim their energy saving light bulbs and timer switches.
- 3.3 The Team have been running Operation Caboose with the support of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Police. Operation Spoke is a new campaign to mark pedal cycles with a unique reference number, using an ultra-violet marker pen. Details of the cycle frame and owner are then entered on a national database.
- 3.4 PC Dobson is now trained to use the laser device to detect speeding vehicles. In January a number of verbal warnings had been given, mostly to local residents. The plan is to carry out one speed enforcement campaign per month.
- 3.5 PC Dobson reminded residents about the priority cards available to give the Team feedback about the most important issues in the ward for the police to deal with.
- 3.6 The following questions were asked and answers given:  
 Q: How do you identify areas for speed enforcement?  
 A: Residents complete a 95 Alive form available from the police and other partners. Following receipt of a number of forms, these are fed into a matrix box and a risk assessment is carried out to check the location is safe.  
 Comment: Cllr. Wiseman referred to a message received from MOD PC Andy Simpson, giving his apologies and reminding residents that the current terrorism threat level is Severe and to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to the police.

#### **4. YORK MAGISTRATES' COURT**

- 4.1 Malcolm Smith, Deputy Chair of the Bench, gave a talk about York Magistrates' Court and the role of Magistrates in the Community.
- 4.2 He made the following points:  
 There are four magistrates courts in York, sitting 5 days per week and Saturday morning (to deal with Friday evening arrests).  
 All Justices of the Peace (JPs) are trained volunteers and members of the local community and anyone over 18 years can apply and serve until 70 years old. They wish to be representative of the local community in every way (there is currently a 50:50 ratio men to women). They have to sit a

minimum number of days but most sit longer, especially if they chair, for example, the Youth Court.

Magistrates have powers: to give a prison sentence (limited to 6 months for one offence and 12 months for two or more offences); fines; curfews and electronic tagging; discharges and community service (through the Probation Service). They operate according to Ministry of Justice sentencing guidelines to achieve consistency across benches and across the country.

Courts are an open process so the public are encouraged to sit in and observe. "Inside Justice Week" is in October and this year they hope to be open on Saturday to increase attendance. Call York 615200 to arrange a visit.

4.3 The following questions were asked and answers given:

Q: Do you have sufficient volunteers to run the Magistrates' Court?

A: Yes. Every year, there are always more applicants than vacancies. Court space is more of an issue, meaning there is a waiting list of cases.

Q: Are there plans to expand? Any plans to improve the acoustics? are

A: The present building is problematic. Funding for new premises has been applied for to achieve more space and a more accessible building for disabled people, though if groups come can get round these difficulties.

Q: Appears that usually law abiding citizen gets treated more harshly than regular offender.

A: Can give assurance that offenders breaching community orders will go to prison. Fining can be difficult as have to fine within offenders' means.

Q: In the case of longer sentencing, it can appear that offenders are released when have only served half their sentence.

A: The position is that they spend half their sentence in custody and half out of prison on post release licence. If they breach the terms of the licence, they will be returned to prison. Cllr. Wiseman thanked Malcolm Smith for his talk.

## **5. WARD BUDGET 2010/11 DECISIONS**

5.1 Cllr. Wiseman reported that support from the parish council had been received for the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on Ox Carr Lane, which would shortly go ahead.

5.2 Regarding salt bins supported by ward committee funding, councillors reported that three additions had been made to the

three existing bins. The six locations are: Southfields Road outside Health Centre; Church Lane at junction with St Mary's Close; at the junction near Moor Lane /Flaxton Road; Langton Court, at corner of Balfour Way and Heath Ride.

5.3 Cllr. Wiseman went through the provisional list of Local Improvement Schemes, as listed in Your Ward and appearing on the screen; and invited comments. The following points were raised:

ST-09-10: the proposed works are needed so groups so far prevented from using its facilities can do so.

ST-09-07: this scheme will have to be discussed by the parish council due to its maintenance implications.

ST-09-03: this will pay for continuation of installation and re-fill in winter 2010-11.

ST-09-08: Why is this being funded through the ward committee? The answer given was that it is normal to fund a feasibility study through ward committee funds, it is a good use of funding and it can lever in a much larger sum if the work goes ahead. It will help push this cycle lane up the priority list.

ST-09-19: Sessions are well attended and the scheme was well supported by residents.

ST-09-01: Street lighting. There will be discussions with parish councils and residents to decide locations.

ST-09-02: Will have to be examined to check feasibility.

ST-09-03: Older Citizens' Advocacy York had attended the surgery and their service was valued by residents.

ST-09-21: The club is well attended and an oasis in Strensall. It has a membership of over 40, mainly older residents. The club has many visitors and the benches will provide much needed seating for members and visitors alike.

ST-09-16: Again, this scheme was well supported and the sessions are well used.

The following are reserve schemes that will go ahead if there is a shortfall on the approved schemes because, for example, they do not cost as much as anticipated or for some reason cannot go ahead:

ST-09-15 and ST-09-14

5.4 The following questions were asked and responses given

Q: These schemes seem relatively trivial in these straitened economic times.

A: The ward budget for 2010-11 is £25,110, based on the 2009-10 baseline figure, though the council budget will not be set until late February so the ward budget will not be known until after then. The public are asked to put forward their suggestions and all views are taken into account and the needs of the different parts of the ward balanced to be as fair as possible. Ward councillors work together to make decisions.

Q: What if the money is not spent?

A: It is lost, that's why it's necessary to have reserve schemes.

Q: Does it really cost £1,320 to install an additional litter bin?

A: Yes, because this figure includes the cost of emptying the bin for three years.

5.5 Having concluded questions and discussion of the provisional list, the ward committee confirmed its approval of the list as presented.

## **6. HAVE YOUR SAY!**

- 6.1 Is it possible to have a weighting in the voting system for schemes to allow for the likelihood that people will only vote for schemes in their area?
- 6.2 In response, the councillors stated they take into account what people have asked for, who the suggestion has come from and where previous years' schemes have been located. They look at all the suggestions and they know their wards so that they can take a balanced and informed view when making putting together the provisional list.

, Chair

[The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.45 pm].