

MEETING	GUILDHALL WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	26 MAY 2016
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS CRAGHILL AND FLINDERS
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS LOOKER

1. **DROP IN SURGERY**

Ward Councillors and a representative of North Yorkshire Police spoke with residents during the drop-in surgery.

2. **INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS**

Councillor Craghill introduced the meeting and explained the housekeeping arrangements. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Janet Looker, who was unwell.

In attendance: Joe Ashton (Community Involvement Officer, City of York Council) and 13 members of the public.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3. **WARD BUDGET 2015/16**

Councillors invited Joe Ashton (Community Involvement Officer) to explain the allocation of the Ward Budget in 2015/16.

Grants were awarded to the following organisations:

- All Saints' (Pavement) - £840 for a public seat in the churchyard
- Door 84 Youth Space* - £950 for youth football activities
- Greenfields School* & Community Garden - £1500 for creation of a secure storage compound
- The Arts Barge Project - £730 for an intergenerational dance event and £1260 for the Riverside Festival
- The Groves Association* - £2,500 for community notice boards
- York International Women's Festival - £250 for self-defence course

- York Irish Association - £500 for St Patrick's Day Festival

In addition, £200 was allocated for hire of the National centre for Early Music to host a Ward Committee meeting.

Joe Ashton read a report by James Finlay, who was unable to attend the meeting, about the of All Saints' churchyard restoration project to which the Ward Committee had contributed £840. Photographs of "before" and "after" were circulated.

Councillors invited any applicants who were present to speak about how the grants were or would be used. Brendan Tannam (York Irish Association), Mark Gladwin (Greenfields) and Joanna Ingerson (The Groves Association) spoke about their respective organisations' projects.

The remainder of the 2015/16 Ward Budget was un-spent at year-end and carried across to 2016/17 (£71,130 in total, including the £17,370 highways budget). It was noted that £4,950 is allocated to the 2015/16 applicants awaiting payment.

Joe Ashton explained that the Ward Budget also included money for grounds maintenance works. The Ward Team had been asked to consider how the cost of grounds maintenance could be reduced and following agreement at the January 2015 Ward Committee meeting, had decided to recommend the removal (or reduction) of hanging baskets and free-standing planters in the city centre as well as the transfer of bowling green maintenance at Clarence Gardens to the bowls clubs. The transfer of bowling green maintenance would take place in January 2017 as part of a city-wide process; the removal of baskets and planters would take place when the existing planting contract expires.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that the recommended grounds maintenance reductions exceeded the target for budget savings, leaving some flexibility.

Residents suggested three possible schemes for the unspent highways budget. These were: a zebra crossing at Townend Street (Haxby Road end), an enhanced crossing at the junction of Lowther Street with Huntington Road and an enhance crossing of Lowther Street outside Park Grove Primary School.

Councillors noted that The Groves Association is already working with the Highways department to undertake feasibility into a crossing by the school but it is unlikely that the budget will provide for three crossings, unless there are no other worthy and viable proposals in the ward up to 2019.

4. WARD BUDGET, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2016/17

Joe Ashton explained that there is £84,283 available to spend in the general 2016/17 Ward Budget, plus £34,740 specifically for highways projects. These budgets include money carried across from the previous year.

Councillor Flinders explained that the Ward Team had agreed to adopt priorities to target resources at a small number of key issues, to be reviewed annually. He explained that the previous Annual Ward Committee meeting in October 2015 had produced the shortlist of priorities from a long list of options, grouped within three overarching aims which would be used for the period up to the 2019 local elections. The over-arching aims were agreed by the Ward Team following the May 2015 elections and are: “a clean and green ward”; “a safe and secure ward” and a “caring and inclusive ward”.

Councillors invited those present to advocate for any of the shortlisted objectives they felt should be prioritised during 2016/17.

Clean and Green

A resident asserted that the Council had acted against environmental sustainability by allowing shops to heat their premises whilst having the doors open. The resident felt that the over-door heaters and the proliferation of air conditioning units exacerbated concerns about energy usage.

It was reported that the Guildhall Planning Panel was concerned about the air conditioning units as they were also visually unattractive. It was further reported that a survey of businesses had been undertaken which established that over-door heating and air conditioning are used to counteract the heat from lighting in shops and that customers were more likely to shop in stores with open doors.

It was suggested that a speaker be commissioned to brief businesses about energy usage with the economic incentive of lower energy bills.

Councillors agreed with much of the sentiment expressed but Cllr Flinders said that most of the planning rules for air conditioning units and similar were set nationally. Councillor Craghill highlighted that the One Planet York initiative should have a positive impact.

A resident felt that education about recycling could be improved and that this would help save the Council money in the longer term.

In response to a query, councillors clarified that although sometimes waste collections are “co-mingled”, they are then sorted in Scarborough.

A resident spoke in favour of measures to improve public transport.

Another resident said that measures to improve provision for walking and cycling would be a better use of ward money, as it would be better for the environment and bus provision in the ward is already good.

Safe and secure

There was a discussion about the Public Space Protector Order in The Groves, poor driving practices and enforcement of traffic management on the foot-streets. Frustration was expressed with the policing of some vehicles using the foot-streets.

Councillors agreed to call a meeting of the Police, senior Council officers and the Business Improvement District, in order to establish who is responsible for enforcing regulations on the foot-streets and what can be done to improve this.

A resident spoke in favour of investing in preventative youth work such as that provided at Door 84 Youth Space.

Residents advocated for investment in a review of traffic calming measures in The Groves and road safety generally.

Caring and inclusive

A resident explained that part so Guildhall Ward are relatively diverse and this should be celebrated.

A resident advocated for more work on energy switching as a way of ensuring that people can live comfortably in their homes.

Councillors asked those present to vote for their top two objectives within each aim, from those which had been advocated for at the meeting. This would give six specific objectives to work with in 2016/17.

The result of the vote was the adoption of the following priorities:

- Parks and green spaces are better maintained
- More waste is recycled
- There is less antisocial behaviour
- Children can play safely out on the street
- There are more activities for children and young people
- Diversity in local communities is embraced

5. GUILDHALL WARD PLANNING PANEL

Chris Edghill (Clerk to Guildhall Ward Planning Panel) explained the purpose of the Planning Panel as to comment on all planning applications submitted within the ward for consideration by City of York Council. The Panel's membership is diverse but is now running short of people. A level of commitment is required, as the meetings last a couple of hours once every three weeks and require a quorum for decisions to be made. Applications are viewed electronically unless they are very large, therefore some computing skills are beneficial.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Panel's comments are recorded in the planning officers' reports.

There were no applicants wishing to serve on the Panel except for the existing members, who were all re-appointed. They are: Sarah Daniel, Chris Edghill, Linda Elliot, Alan Filby, Ed Freedman, Vivien Irish, David Medio, Ann Petherick, Stephen Scott and June Tranmer.

6. HAVE YOUR SAY

Councillors updated on the proposed new residents' association for the Walmgate area, which had met for the first time on 18th May.

A resident expressed concern about the degradation of the historic fabric of the city, including substandard infilling of the paving on Stonegate and damage to buildings on Goodramgate. These views were echoed by others who suggested a strategy for conservation was needed, including better regulation of larger vehicles, such as delivery vans, which can cause problems on the narrower streets and where buildings overhang.

A resident expressed unhappiness at the number of retrospective planning applications and Listed Building Consents being submitted when damage may already have been done.

The Friends of Clarence Gardens was publicised as a relatively new group seeking members.

A resident raised concerns about access within the City Walls for people using wheelchairs and suggested, as a start, that simple portable ramps could be helpful.

A resident stated that he was sad to see the closure of the former Groves Chapel which is being converted to retail and residential uses. He also highlighted the potential loss of Bootham Park hospital and its grounds as public assets. He stated that a central facility for the provision of mental health services is important. Cllr Flinders said that the ward councillors and the York Central MP, Rachel Maskell, were in agreement on this. Cllr Craghill said that the Health and Social Care Scrutiny and Policy Committee is undertaking a review into the closure of Bootham Park.

Cllr Craghill drew the meeting's attention to a consultation event by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust, which now provides mental health services in York, to be held on 31st May at the Folk Hall in New Earswick.

Cllr Flinders thanked everyone present for their attendance and for the quality of the debate. He asked if the venue was

adequate. Whilst it was agreed that the sound amplification was very good, it was considered that the building was insufficiently accessible for anyone who could not easily use the stairs.

Councillors noted that it was Joe Ashton's last Ward Committee meeting before leaving City of York Council and presented him with a vote of thanks and a card signed by members of the Ward Committee.

Cllr Craghill, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 9.00 pm].