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Meeting	Guildhall Ward Committee
Date	27 April 2009
Present	Councillors J. Looker and B Watson 56 residents Insp. Mark Khan, Safer Neighbourhoods Team Sgt. John Asvadi, Safer Neighbourhoods Team PC Matt Smith, Safer Neighbourhoods Team PCSO Kim Copestake, Safer Neighbourhoods Team PCSO Nicola Smith, Safer Neighbourhoods Team Sharron Hutchinson, Young People's Service Clair Bailey-Lane, Street Environment Officer Mike Proctor, York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Penny Goff, York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Martin Watt, York Museums Trust Geoff Derham, Head of Waste and Cleaning Services, CYC Elizabeth Wray, Waste Strategy, CYC Adam Bailey, Waste Strategy, CYC

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## **1. WARD COMMITTEE SURGERY**

- 1.1 During the surgery residents had the opportunity to talk to councillors, council officers, members of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team, representatives of the NHS Foundation Trust, and Martin Watt, York Museums Trust.
- 1.2 There were presentations from Waste Strategy, NHS Foundation Trust, and Sustainable Communities Act.
- 1.3 Residents were also offered a tour of the Mansion House by Lord Mayor, Cllr Brian Watson.

## **2. WELCOME AND MINUTES**

## **3. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS POLICING TEAM**

- 3.1 As this is Insp. Mark Khan's final ward committee meeting in Guildhall, Cllr Looker thanked him for his input and commitment to policing in Guildhall and wished him well at his new appointment in Selby.
- 3.2 Sgt. John Asvadi updated the meeting on the activities of the police team in Guildhall.
- 3.3 There has been a reduction in total crimes of 15% since March 1.
- 3.4 Anti-social behaviour is a continuing priority and the police have identified particular hotspots for anti-social behaviour in the ward.
- 3.5 There are ongoing campaigns to raise awareness about handbag theft, autocrime and burglary.

3.6 Future projects include targeting violence, retail theft and anti-social behaviour; working with the Museum Gardens to implement Operation Alternate; and working with other agencies to tackle the problem of begging.

Among the issues raised in questions from residents were: the problem of begging on Station Road; progress on the policing pledge; zero tolerance as a way to tackle crime; and improvements in policing in the Groves. Responding to questions, Sgt Asvadi pointed out that begging is not just an enforcement issue which is why they are adopting a multi-agency approach to tackle the problem; the policing pledge is a national initiative which is based around improved customer service; police favour tackling crime through partnership-working rather than zero tolerance, which they see as a blunt instrument; and if incidents are reported in the Groves, patrols will be concentrated there.

#### **4. YORK HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

Mike Proctor, Deputy Chief Executive of York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, spoke about the Trust and what it means to be a member.

4.1 York Hospital became a Foundation Trust two years ago, allowing greater financial freedom, giving more freedom from the Department of Health and, as it is based on having a membership, introducing an element of local democracy into the NHS.

4.2 So far, they have around 18,000 members, who play a variety of roles.

4.3 To improve services at the hospital, they are working to involve the local community, focus on patient safety and improve performance. They aim to be in the top 25% of hospitals in the country. This involves striving to meet demand for hospital services in York; exploring ways to develop the hospital site; attract and retain the best staff; improve public consultation; and continue reductions in hospital waiting times.

4.4 Overall, the Foundation Trust will allow the hospital to listen more to the needs of the community, get more people involved in the Trust as members, governors or electing governors, and help to ease the boundary between different services.

Residents had questions about plans for the nurses residences at Bootham Park; car-parking and other facilities at the hospital.

The response was given that the nurses residence has been declared surplus to requirements and they are currently deciding what to do with it; plans are underway to begin the new carpark at the front of the hospital.

#### **5. GROVES RECYCLING TRIAL**

Geoff Derham, Head of Waste and Cleaning Services, CYC, spoke about the recycling trial at the Groves.

5.1 There are currently 12,000 properties in York without recycling facilities. It is government policy to provide recycling facilities for everyone by the end of 2010.

5.2 It is hoped that delivering recycling facilities to the mix of properties at the Groves will help with rolling out the programme across the city.

5.3 As part of the trial they are trying out different methods of collection, storage, communication and engagement.

Residents affected by the trial, particularly in the St John's Street area, voiced their concerns about waste storage and collection. Among the issues raised by residents were: why wheelie bins are preferred over refuse sacks; health and safety risks associated with wheelie bins; the negative impact of wheelie bins on the appearance of the street; the weight of rubbish that can be presented for collection. There were also questions relating to the possibility of introducing household waste collection; the size of recycling containers; and the separation of recyclable materials.

In response it was pointed out that guidance from health and safety is that wheelie bins are quicker, safer and more hygienic. They are therefore the first choice for waste storage and collection, but it is accepted they may not be the appropriate solution for all streets. While there is anecdotal evidence of safety problems with wheelie bins, there is no evidence from the police to this effect.

In response to questions about recycling, it was noted that the council aims to recycle 50% of rubbish. Because of their limited capacity, wheelie bins provide an incentive to recycle. Households will be provided with 3 x 55l boxes for recyclable materials. The materials that can be recycled are limited by the facilities available; it is not cost effective to transport some materials for recycling and, while the council would like to introduce household waste collection, there is currently no facility to dispose of it safely.

It was agreed that councillors would meet with officers and residents in the area affected later in May.

## **6. MUSEUM GARDENS - A VISUAL DELIGHT**

Martin Watt spoke to the meeting about planned improvements at the Museum Gardens.

6.1 York Museums Trust assumed responsibility for the Museum Gardens 5 years ago. They have recently made a number of key appointments with the aim of raising the profile of the Gardens.

6.2 Their aims include: promoting the Gardens as an attraction in their own right; improving the botanical interest of the Gardens and information available to the public; taking steps to ensure the Gardens are for everyone; and promoting sustainability by succession planting and composting.

6.4 They want to remove some growth to allow more light and moisture through and to this end they have taken the decision to remove a 60 year old yew tree.

Among the issues raised by residents during questions were: anti-social behaviour; litter; toilet facilities; and security patrols. Among the improvements suggested by residents were: the possibility of planting Russell Lupins; the possibility of constructing a glasshouse; restoring the

peacocks; and taking steps to restore the range of wild birds and insects in the Gardens.

In response to questions about anti-social behaviour and security, it was noted that the York Museums Trust is working with the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and other partners to address the problem of anti-social behaviour in the Gardens. There are still security patrols in the Gardens and this will be complemented by the recently recruited garden guides who will engage with the public and address anti-social behaviour where necessary.

Regarding litter, the response was given that the volume of litter has decreased dramatically since the litter bins were removed and that systems are in place for picking up litter that is dropped in the Gardens. York Museums Trust will give consideration to the suggestions made by residents at the meeting.

## **7. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

Mora Scaife, Neighbourhood Management Unit, introduced the Sustainable Communities Act.

7.1 The Sustainable Communities Act is a lobbying Act that seeks ideas from residents to potentially devolve more powers from central government to local authorities. The Act is informed by the idea that local people are best informed to know what is required in their local communities.

7.2 Proposals should relate to powers that are currently held by central government and that, if changed, would bring environmental, economic or social benefit. Some issues that might be addressed by the Act include: business rates, reregulation of bus services, post office closures, and planning regulations.

7.3 City of York Council has a tradition of consulting with residents, and there are mechanisms in place to deal with ideas that come forward, whether they are relevant to the Act or not.

7.4 In order to develop ideas to pass onto the LGA (Local Government Association), the deadline for initial suggestions is May 8, 2009. Suggestions can be made by filling in a form that is available from the Neighbourhood Management Unit, completing the online survey at the council website, or by emailing [shapingneighbourhoods@york.gov.uk](mailto:shapingneighbourhoods@york.gov.uk).

## **8. HAVE YOUR SAY**

8.1 A raffle was held in aid of the Lord Mayor's Charities.

8.2 Some residents made a presentation to Cllr Watson in acknowledgement of his work as Lord Mayor and councillor, and expressed particular gratitude for his work in the Walmgate area.

Residents spoke about problems with anti-social behaviour in Clarence Gardens. There are people drinking in the area during the day, using abusive language and trampling the bowling green. Residents would like a ban on alcohol use in the park and regular policing by PCSOs.

The response was given that residents should pass their petition to councillors; it could be used in a request for an alcohol exclusion zone. Councillors will pass residents' concerns to the police, Clifton councillors, and Arclight.

Cllr Looker and Cllr Watson, Chairs

[The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 9.15 pm].