
MEETING	HESLINGTON & FULFORD WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	6 MAY 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS ASPDEN AND JAMIESON-BALL, ZOE BURNS, OLIVER COLLINS AND RICHARD STRATFORD FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT UNIT, SGT ANDY HAIGH AND PC JO BROOKE FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS TEAM, FIONA WILLIAMS FROM YORK LIBRARIES AND PROFESSOR COLIN CAMPBELL. 11 RESIDENTS

1. SURGERY

There was a chance for residents to speak to the ward councillors; Zoe Burns, Oliver Collins and Richard Stratford from the Neighbourhood Management Unit; Sgt Andy Haigh and PC Jo Brooke from the ward's Safer Neighbourhoods Policing team; Street Environment Officer Clair Bailey-Lane; Rachel Buxton, Waste Strategy Officer; Annie Thompson from York LINK; and representatives from York Citizens' Advice Bureau, York Library Services, York Credit Union, and The Energy Savings Trust Advice Centre. Residents also had a chance to put forward their suggestions for the Sustainable Communities Act.

Before the meeting began, there was also a performance of Compost! The Mini-Musical, performed by Fishergate Brownies.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

3. WARD TEAM UPDATES

Sgt Andy Haigh from the Heslington/Fulford Safer Neighbourhoods Team gave an update on the policing issues in the ward.

Heslington Ward

- 167 crimes last year, down from 183 the year before
- Assault is down from 11 incidents last year to 5 this year. The degree of severity in this category can vary quite a lot.
- Auto-crime and burglary are both down.
- Incidents of criminal damage have gone up. Most occurring at the University.

Q. Is it students who are responsible for these incidents?

A. No, it is generally people going onto campus. Mainly bike theft.

Fulford Ward

- 145 Crimes this year, which is slightly up on last year.
- 87 Crimes in 'Other' category. This includes things like shoplifting. We have encouraged retailers at Macarthur Glen to report incidents which has put up the numbers here.
- Burglaries and assaults are down.
- Auto-crime has risen a little.
- Anti-social behaviour in Fulford is up 23 incidents from last year at 225. In Heslington, the figure is 83 incidents, down from 98 last year.

- What do these numbers mean? In Westfield, there are over 2,000 crimes, in Guildhall over 3,000. By comparison, Heslington and Fulford is a low crime area.

Police Priorities

- 1. Traffic problems are passed on to Traffic management. Don't believe that anywhere in Heslington or Fulford is currently considered high priority. But there are forms available at the meeting to report problem areas, and this may be reconsidered.
- 2. Anti-social behaviour. Trying to get involved with youth services as many cases involve young people. This problem does increase in summer, so you are encouraged to call us with any incidents.
- 3. Problem cyclists. We have been out three times since March educating the public and issuing tickets where necessary. We try to use common sense as much as possible.

Police Pledge.

- This lays out our promise to you. Copies are available at the meeting. The SNT will be in the neighbourhood 80% of the time. We will get back to you within 24 hours of receiving your enquiry.

Call for questions

Q. Is dog fouling classed as anti-social behaviour?

- No. Don't report this to the police. Contact Clair Bailey-Lane (Street Environment Officer).

Q. What are the police doing about the traffic lights at the Heslington Lane/Broadway junction?

- We have been dealing with cyclists so officers have been present, but have not really received any complaints.

Q. Is this a big issue? There are a number of cars abusing the red lights.

- We could spend some time down there. I think that perhaps the problem has eased. Its unlikely that we would ever be able to stop it completely.

Q. When is the CCTV on Main Street and Fulford Road going to be working?

- Have not been told yet.
- Keith Aspden: It will be to monitor traffic rather than security.

Q. Is it operational yet?

- KA: Have not been told. I have e-mailed the Council expressing concerns about the impact on Fulford Conservation area, but I do not know if it is currently operational."

Q. What is the policy on illegal parking?

- AH: If a vehicle is causing an obstruction, then we can deal with it, but if its parking on yellow lines, then that is something for the council to deal with.

4. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

An introduction to the Sustainable Communities Act was given by Zoe Burns and Professor Colin Campbell.

- ZB: By taking part in this process, you can gain more power for your local community. This is the only act I am aware of that is driven from the bottom-up. It recognises that the local community knows best how to manage its own area.
- The Act takes into account economic, social and environmental factors. We are asking you to come up with ideas. Parish Councils can't use this, only local authorities. There are several possible uses.
- We have tried to publicise this process as much as possible, tried to get as many people involved as possible.
- **The process:** we are not expecting you to be experts on this. Members have a better idea, officers will be able to give advice. We will be setting up a representative citizens' panel, including those who are not normally represented. We will be consulting also with the Local Strategic Partnership.
- We are required to reach agreement. Then proposals will go to the LGA. The LGA was chosen by Westminster as 'Selector.' It is expected that they will receive a large number of suggestions.
- The LGA will then produce a shortlist which will be submitted to the Secretary of State to decide whether or not to give new powers.
- There are two criteria for a valid proposal. 1. That the proposal must be something which only central government can currently do. 2. That it must promote the sustainability of the local area.
- I'm sorry that there is little time left for you to get your suggestions in. The deadline is very tight.
- Information is available online, and there is an online form to submit your applications. Forms and pamphlets are also available at this meeting.
- CC: I would like to endorse Zoe's points on the Act. It is not like most legislation which comes up through the Cabinet. This is driven through us, through local residents.
- This therefore reverses the process of centralisation that successive governments have pursued over the last 40 years. We live in an overly centralised state. This could begin the fight back.

- What are we trying to achieve? There are a number of different objectives, which you can see on the slide:
- We are endangering the world for ourselves and our grandchildren. If you go back decades, we were closer to this ideal. In our local community we had numerous local services and shops that we just don't have anymore. This process hasn't stopped. We could still lose pubs, school, etc. We have to use a car for most things now. Our community is threatened.
- 'Sustainable Communities' as a name has a great deal of ambiguity. It means environmental sustainability, but also means maintaining the community: We are a group of people with a shared experience. Fulfordians. If facilities are taken away, where does the community go? This act could rescue our community.
- We need to gain more power, or to regain it. We could change the planning laws for example. Everything is currently in favour of developers. We could change this. Or we could fight for more control over local money.
- We need your suggestions now. It is a chance to fight back against centralisation and restore our community.

Call for Questions

Q. Would it be possible for us to obtain funds to develop on private land?

ZB: A similar suggestion has been raised elsewhere.

Q. I am interested in preserving Fulford Ings. English Nature have no funds. Could this happen?

ZB: Potentially, yes. You are not alone in making this suggestion.

Q. Because of the short time span, can we see a list of already proposed suggestions?

ZB: All suggestions are logged, but not yet available to the public. Many things are coming up frequently though, like the power to reregulate buses.

Comment: There is so little time

OC: Examples are also on the board at the back of the room

CJB: Small ideas can be consulted on and make big changes. The louder people shout, the more likely it is that they will be heard.

CC: Will there be a report on the proposals?

ZB: Executive meetings are public and minuted, so there will be a record of the decision process.

Q. Number of Heslington residents is being reduced by the amount of students moving into the area. Could anything be done about this?

ZB: Proposals could be put forward to regulate the number of second homes.

KA: Need planning laws control so that the Council has a say. There is currently a concentration of students. It would be better if they were spread around the community.

Q. Any other chance to have a say in this?

KA: It will be going to the citizens panel before it reaches the exec.

ZB: The deadline we are working with isn't negotiable unfortunately. It was decided by the Secretary of State.

Q. How many suggestions have been received so far?

ZB: 93 currently.

KA: There are more coming from the Parish Council.

Q. Does it have to be in writing?

KA: Perhaps suggestions could be taken from the minutes?

OC: We need names and full details.

Q: Is there a role for York Without Walls?

ZB: There will be involvement at the citizens' panel stage. The idea is to consult them on this, as they are a key partner in the City Strategy.

Q: Any specific role? A 'sifting' role?

ZB: Not 'sifting' but they will certainly be asked to make suggestions/recommendations. WW may identify issues which will inform our ultimate decision. The Act says that we should do this.

CC: Groups in favour of 'Sustainable Development' often pursue an agenda which is the opposite of its real meaning. There is a tension here between the use of the concept of sustainable development.

KA: This is why some 3rd party groups are to be involved.

Q. Could we have more information on the Citizens' Panel?

ZB: Not yet organised. The Talkabout panel will not fulfil requirements. Need to capture underrepresented. We are trying to develop a process so that the voice of one is as strong as the many.

CC: Any idea on the size?

ZB: Not yet, hoping for marketing to take this on.

5. YORK LIBRARIES

Fiona William from York Libraries gave a presentation outlining developments at York Central Library.

- There are 14 libraries in York, as well as a mobile library and home library service. The Explore development at the Central Library will be the third Library Learning Centre in York, following Acomb and Earswick.
- The services offered by the libraries include: IT training sessions, research into family history and display facilities for community groups.
- York libraries are visited by 80,000 people every month; 2,500 people took part in the Big City Read; 1 in 5 children took part in the 2008 Summer Reading Challenge; 14,400 joined the library last year; they lend over 1 million books a year.
- Hope to entice big name authors by creating space for a large audience.
- The audience were shown an outline of what the central library development would look like.
- The work should be complete by Christmas.

Call for questions.

Q. Will books be available in electronic format?

Yes, audiobooks also. More formats will be provided. No late fees either. Electronic copies will simply disappear after allocated time.

Q. Do you deliver to old people's homes?

Yes, but the service needs more publicity.

Q. Will the library be open all the time?

We are looking at opening hours. Currently dreadful. Every library should be open at least 30 hours. We are hoping to increase hours by using electronic checkout.

Q. How does York compare with elsewhere?

Poorly funded, but it is improving. There is a real appetite in York. We can now compete better because of our excellent staff.

Q. Are libraries open on a Sunday across the country?

Yes, it is fairly common.

KA: We should promote this more.

6. HAVE YOUR SAY

No questions from residents.

Chair Cllr Aspden

[The meeting started at 7.40pm and finished at 9.00 pm].