

MILKSTONE AND DEEPLISH AREA FORUM

MINUTES OF MEETING

Monday, 18 June 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Zaheer, Peter Crompton, Lili Rushton, A. Nawaz, GR Shahzad, Manzoor Hussain, Zohra Ahmed, Sabhia Shakeel, MS Saleem, Fauzia Aslam, Iftikhar Jalil, Abdullah Khan and Shahid Mohammed (Chair).

OFFICERS: Carlo Schroder (Community Co-ordinator), PCSO Nasir, PCSO 65125, PCSO 70665, PCSO 69362 and Gary Finch (Township & Engagement Officer)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Brett and Councillor Zaman, Mark Reynolds (Public Realm Inspector), Bob Bevan, Anne Beasley and Sgt Shirazi.

INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES/CODE OF CONDUCT

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The Chair welcomed all and asked that everyone respect the Code of Conduct for the duration of the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Brett and Zaman, M. Reynolds (Public Realm Inspector), B. Bevan. A. Beasley and Inspector D. Shirazi.

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE INCLUDING PACT MEETING

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PCSO's 65125, 70665, 64362 and Nasir attended the meeting for this item.

The Forum was informed of the following:

1. The Ward still had no dedicated Police Officer although attempts are being made to recruit.
2. Operation Ramadan

A lengthy discussion took place concerning the above. This discussion focussed on the problems encountered and the lessons learned for future events.

It was explained that general anti-social behaviour problems had been encountered with a number of fires also requiring fire service attention.

Officers present explained that this year's operation was fronted by four PCSO's who have limited powers. It was stressed that it is important that lessons are learned from the experiences of this year's event. It is crucial that a multi-agency approach is taken in future years, the community generally have a responsibility, Rochdale Council of Mosques should be engaged with and parents of young people have a role to play.

It was explained that a review of this year operation is taking place; hopefully safeguards will be put in place for forthcoming events.

Forum members generally understood the difficulties experienced by GMP, and supported the need for a range of partners to work together to help manage future events. It was also commented that it might be beneficial to

engage with the Youth Service to provide diversionary activities during Ramadan. The Mahdlo project in Oldham was cited as an example.

3. Recruitment

The Forum was informed that GMP is currently undertaking a recruitment drive. A publicity campaign regarding this will be taking place on the car park, opposite Medina Cash and Carry on the 20 and 21 June between 12noon – 8pm.

The following issues were raised by residents:

- Concerns were raised about the ineffectiveness of the 101 number.

GMP are aware of the problems being encountered with the 101 number, however it was stressed that residents should, if possible report incidents via this number.

- A resident raised concerns about the way in which GMP dealt with a reported knife incident in the Ward.
- Drug dealing is still a problem in the Ward

It was reported that two significant arrests have been made in the Ward recently in connection with drug dealing. Having said this it was agreed that more needed to be done. Residents were encouraged to report incidents with as much information as possible.

- It was reported that Pioneer Street is being visited by large numbers of young people who visit the area in their cars.

GMP are aware of this and have visited the site. They reassured the Forum that no criminal activity was being undertaken.

- Concerns were raised about speeding on Milkstone Road.

This is a concern throughout the borough and there are many problem areas in the Milkstone and Deeplish Ward. It was suggested that the police should undertake a traffic operation in the Ward.

- Complaints were received about prostitutes near to Half Penny Bridge.

It was acknowledged that this was a problem in certain parts of the Ward. GMP are very much aware of the issue and provide regular updates to the Forum.

- Concerns were raised about the number of beggars in the Ward. Milkstone Road and outside of Mosques on Friday's were identified as problematical areas.

It was hoped that the Public Space Protection Order that comes into effect in the near future will help to address this issue.

It was agreed that the PACT priorities going forward would be drug dealing and off-road mini motors.

UPDATE BY COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATOR

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Carlo Schroder, Community Co-ordinator attended the meeting for this item.

It was explained to the Forum that the Community Co-ordinator's role was concerned with supporting and developing networks to counter extremism.

It was explained that there are people within communities who are trying to divide and influence young people and it must be understood that these extremists do pose a threat within our communities. Terrorist events over the last twelve months – Manchester Arena, London Bridge, Finsbury Park and the murder of Jo Cox MP were all given as examples as to why this work is necessary and ongoing. It was also explained that Castlemere Community Centre had recently been designated a Hate Crime Reporting Centre.

It was further explained that financial resources will be available via the Community Co-ordinator to support appropriate and relevant community projects which support community cohesion. Further details regarding how these funds can be accessed will be made available soon.

Forum members supported the work being undertaken.

OPEN FORUM

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The Forum was informed that two feedback sessions in relation to the traffic exercise that has recently been held in the Ward have been organised. Details are as follows:

- Deeplish Community Centre – 23 July 2018, commencing 6pm
- Castlemere Community Centre – 26 July 2018, commencing 6pm.

Forum members were also informed that paperwork in relation to both sessions will be distributed via the Milkstone and Deeplish Area Forum database prior to the meetings.

Residents raised the following issues / questions.

1. Residents Parking Permit – Maclure Road

Two residents raised the same concern about the need for a parking permit for their residence on Maclure Road highlighting the problems the lack of a permit causes them.

The Township and Engagement Officer acknowledged he was aware of the frustration this caused the resident and the amount of time the residents had been waiting for a response. Highways would be asked to respond to this request as soon as possible.

2. Drinking, Trespassing and Illegal Tipping – 7-31 Oldham Road

A resident raised concerns about the above issues to the rear of properties – 7-31 Oldham Road. He was informed that this would be reported.

3. Introduction of a Right Turn off Drake Street into Oldham Road

A resident asked if it would be possible to introduce the above. He was informed that this would be referred to Highways..

4. Young People attending the Forum

It was suggested that a more should be done to encourage young people to attend the Forum and that a young person should attend the Forum as a young person's representative. The Forum agreed with this proposal.

The Township and Engagement Officer agreed to speak to the Youth Service to see how this could be progressed.

5. Potholes

In response to a question about the action being taken by Rochdale Council to repair potholes in the Milkstone and Deeplish Area it was stated that an active pothole repair service was in operation. In addition an extensive carriageway and footway programme had recently been agreed at a Rochdale Township Committee meeting which will see significant improvements being made in the Ward.

6. Parking Restrictions - Milkstone Road

It was asked if parking restrictions could be introduced on Milkstone Road to deter cars being parked in the area for long periods which causes problems for businesses in the area. In response the Forum was informed that this particular issue will be dealt with as part of the recent traffic exercise that has been undertaken in the Ward recently. Feedback on this will be provided soon.

7. Since Councillor Brett became our Councillor what has he done to rejuvenate Milkstone & Deeplish?

Councillor Brett was not at the meeting therefore this question would be forwarded to him.

8. I would like to know where Section 106 funding for Boundary Street development has been spent? Can we use this to improve local park facilities?

The Township and Engagement Officer agreed to investigate this further

9. According to the Council Bridlington Square is part of the adopted highway. Can a 'keep clear' sign be installed as cars are blocking the access.

This will be forwarded to Highways.

10. The road surface in Bridlington Square has cracks – needs repairing

This will be reported to Highways.

11. The gullies in Bridlington Square need cleaning.

This will be reported to Highways

12. How can we make Deeplish a cleaner environment?

A discussion took place about illegal tipping and littering in the Ward. A representative from Rochdale Environmental Action Group provided an overview of the work the Group undertakes in the Ward and how the Group can be contacted should work need to be carried out.

In addition it was explained that any problems of this nature can be raised with the Ward Councillors, the Township and Engagement Officer or reported via the Council's website.

It was generally agreed that keeping the Ward cleaner is everyone's responsibility not the sole responsibility of the Council.

13. It was stated that the Public Realm Inspector had commented that the Council cannot do anything about car traders if the cars are taxed and have a current MOT. Other Councils have acted using the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which states;

"it is an offence to offer two or more vehicles for sale within 500 metres of each other for business purposes. An individual person selling multiple vehicles will not be convicted if they can prove they were not acting for the purposes of a business"

Why is Rochdale Council not willing to do anything about car traders that are causing problems for residents.

This question will be forwarded to the Public Realm Inspector.

14. If the suggestion to open up the Ann Street / Drake Street Junction is not taken up what alternative proposals does the Council have for taking the pressure of the 's' bend?

In response the Forum was informed that this particular issue will be dealt with as part of the recent traffic exercise that has been undertaken in the Ward recently. Feedback on this will be provided soon.

15. Under-representation of women

A Ward Councillor raised concerns about the under representation of women on Rochdale Council of Mosques Committees / Sub-Committees / Leadership Team.

The Community Co-ordinator agreed to investigate this further.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING/UPDATES

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The minutes of the Milkstone and Deeplish Area Forum held on Monday 18th June 2018 were approved as a correct record.

The Forum was informed that the planning application to re-site the cash machine at Medina Cash and Carry had been approved.

COUNCILLOR UPDATES

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Councillor Zaheer provided the following updates:

1. A number of carriageways and footways within the Ward will benefit from the recently agreed Highways improvement Scheme.
2. Lottery Funding has recently been secured to develop the area at the front of the Town Hall.
3. Improvements have recently been agreed to regenerate Drake Street.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

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The next Milkstone & Deeplish Area Forum will be Monday 13th August 2018, commencing 6.30pm. This meeting will also be the Annual General Meeting which will elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum.