

CENTRAL ROCHDALE AREA FORUM

Thursday, 10 March 2016

Wardleworth Community Centre

MINUTES

Present: F. Hunt, E. Bannister, B. Lloyd (Chair), J. Murphy, S. Perween, R. Hanif, I. Yasin, S. Quershi, Mrs. McDurnell, G. Bahar, R. Alam, R. Begum, K B Khar, A. Aziz, L. Hey, V. Wilura & A. Taylor.

Officers: S. Parkington (Community Flood Resilience Officer), G. Finch (Township & Engagement Officer), Sergeant P. Canavan, PC S. Firth & PCSO N. Bond.

Councillors: Councillors I. Ahmed, A. Ahmed and S. Ali

54 INTRODUCTIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The meeting was chaired by Beryl Lloyd. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and reminded Forum members to observe and respect the code of conduct.

55 PACT MEETING - GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

Sergeant P. Canavan, PC S. Firth and PCSO N. Bond attended the meeting for this item.

The Forum was informed that from May 2016 the Ward would be served by a Neighbourhood Policing Team. This would represent a complete restructure to present arrangements and would result in the Ward having one Sergeant, two Constables and four PCSO's which represented an increase of one Officer.

It was hoped that by operating a Neighbourhood Policing model, officers would develop a good working knowledge of the Ward and would be in a better position to respond to problems.

During the previous three months the following incidents had occurred:

Theft of Motor Vehicle 8

Burglary (domestic) 21 – Four offenders had been detained.

Burglary (other) 31 – Takeaways, businesses and garages had been targeted.

Theft from motor vehicle 30

Drug Offences 11

The Forum was also informed that a drug warrant had been action today resulting in 200 wraps of Class A and Class B drugs being seized in addition to an amount of cash.

The Forum was reminded to use the following contact numbers to report incidents:

You should always call 999 in an emergency

Call 101 to report a non-emergency incident or make a general enquiry

You can contact your local neighbourhood team by telephone or email – 0161 856 9961 – rochdalenorth@gmp.police.uk

The following questions were asked:

- Is GMP looking to reduce the numbers of PCSO's?

Response: It was accepted that some Forces had reduced PCSO's numbers because of austerity measures. However at this moment in time GMP had no plans to do this although it was not possible to say what would happen in the future. It was acknowledged that PCSO's play a vital role in community engagement / community relations.

- Where there any plans to deploy additional Officers into the Ward given that incidents of crime had risen?

Response: This issue is something that is continually monitored. There are plans to increase Officers in the Ward this coming weekend. The Forum was also informed that the Home Office had recently altered the way in which crime statistics are recorded which has resulted in some incidents now being recorded as a crime which were previously not.

- Can an update be provided on the recent major incident in the Ward which resulted in the death of Jalal Uddin?

Response: It is difficult to comment any further on this issue as it is an ongoing investigation. However an individual has been arrested.

- Is it true that a specialist unit of GMP has been involved in investigating this incident?

Response: The North West Counter Terrorism Unit has been involved in investigating the incident. The reason for this is that members of this particular team have the right skills to undertake the work that is necessary for this investigation.

The GMP representatives present commented that they were mindful of the 'chatter' that is prevalent on social media and in the press in relation to this incident. As a result of this it was acknowledged and accepted that certain sectors of the community will feel vulnerable. However those present at the Forum were reassured that GMP is attempting to manage this investigation as sensitively as possible and will release further information about the investigation when possible.

- Concerns were raised about the way in which arrests had been made.

Response: GMP is an intelligence / evidence based organisation with arrests being made on this basis. A 'rank structure' within the organisation is tasked with determining the direction that should be taken when arrests are made. Arrests are not made without reasonable cause.

The Forum was reassured that GMP is committed to identifying those guilty and asked that the community carry on as normal.

The Community was also thanked for its help and assistance in this matter.

A local Ward Councillor informed the Forum that Mr Uddin's funeral would take place tomorrow (11th March 2016) and that specific traffic management measures had been put in place to assist with funeral arrangements.

GMP representatives commented that no intelligence had been received to infer that right wing groups would be present in the area. The police approach at the funeral would be low key and engaging.

56 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING, MATTERS ARISING AND UPDATES

The minutes of the Central Rochdale Area Forum held at St Patrick's RC Primary School on Monday 5th October 2015 were noted. These minutes had been previously agreed.

The minutes of the Central Rochdale Area Forum held at Wardleworth Community Centre on Thursday 10th December 2015 were approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Apologies of absence received from J. Murphy and F. Hunt for the Central Area Forum on the 10th December.

The minutes of the Central Rochdale Area Forum held at St Patrick's RC Primary School on Monday 25th January 2016 were provided for the Forum as information.

57 FLOOD RECOVERY AND AWARENESS UPDATE

Sarah Parkington, Community Flood Resilience Officer attended the meeting for this item.

The Forum was informed on the range of works being undertaken to improve flood resilience along with the measures that continue to be available to help those residents effected by the floods. Examples given included:

- More robust flood investigation work being undertaken by United Utilities / Environment Agency.
- More effective working relationships being developed between the Council and 'flood' partners.
- Flood risks assessments being carried out when properties are being built / developed
- Setting up of Flood Groups / Flood Forums
- £500 available via Council Hardship Fund
- £5000 available via Government Resilience Fund
- Council Tax relief for 3 months
- Insurance companies are looking at ways in which premiums for flood risk properties could be minimised.
- Flood alert facility available via Environment Agency

It was also acknowledged that better planning is needed to deal with events of this nature in the future. However many lessons have been learned from the recent experiences and hopefully all partners will be better prepared for similar disasters going forward

The Officer also thanked the Forum and residents in the Ward for the community spirit that was demonstrated during the floods with specific thanks going to Gower Street Youth Base and Mohammed Sheraz for their efforts in deploying volunteers in the area.

At a previous meeting of the Area Forum – 25th January 2016 – residents asked if Ward Funds could be used to purchase sandbags in preparation for any future flooding problems. The Officer advised that rather than purchasing a single item (sandbags) it may be more beneficial to purchase a variety of ‘flood materials / equipment’. The Forum agreed to this.

58 OPEN FORUM

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum:

- Concerns were raised about the delays being experienced in relation to street lighting on Edward Street, Kitchen Street and Nile Street.

Response: The Township Officer was aware that the above problems had been reported previously, however these would be reported again. A representative of the contractors dealing with the street lighting project will be invited to the next Area Forum meeting at Wardleworth Community Centre.

- Concerns were raised about blocked gullies in the Ward. Specific areas identified being:

Near to 147 Yorkshire Street / Lomax Street
Near to 106 Greenbank Road
Near to 198 Greenbank Road
Entwistle Road
Whitworth Road
Selby Street
South Street
Oswald Street
Ramsay Street

Response: The Township Officer was aware that a number of these problems had been reported previously however they will be reported again.

The Forum was informed that the gully cleaning policy was currently being reviewed in light of the recent flooding problems within the Ward.

- A resident raised concerns about the Pelican Crossing at the junction of Entwistle Road, Molesworth Street and John Street. Problems reported included no activation button was in place on one side of the road and the lighting sequence for crossing the road was not timed correctly.

Response: This will be reported.

- A number of concerns were raised about littering / fly tipping in the Ward. Specific grot spots identified included:

Ramsay Street
Entwistle Road
Whitehall Street
Hey Street
Kellet Street
Streets close to the Infirmary

Response: All the above will be reported to the Clean & Green Team. It was also suggested that consideration could be given to having specific 'clean up' days in the Ward using Ward Funds to support these initiatives.

- Residents also informed the Forum of the following:

Drake Street Motors are using the footway (Howard Street) to advertise cars for sale;

Public land was being used by a private contractor to advertise (Pembroke Court / Clementina Street)

A grass verge at the south end of Grasmere Street Car Park has been damaged and is in need of repairing.

A damaged road sign at the junction of Greenbank Road / Whitworth Road

A damaged manhole cover at the junction of George Street / Yorkshire Street.

Speeding on Entwistle Road

Response: All the above will be reported. However new traffic calming measures are to be introduced on Entwistle Road.

- Some residents also expressed the opinion that more information about bin collections was required.
- Some residents raised concerns about alley gates being left open and white goods being stored in alleyways / back yards. Problems were being experienced in the Kellet Street, Hey Street and Entwistle Road areas.

Response: Residents are responsible for alleygated areas and the locking of alleygates. The Officer agreed to see if a leaflet drop in the area was possible.

The Forum thanked the Council for agreeing to improve Townhead Junction with the introduction of a filter lane.

59 **WARD NEWS**

There was no Ward news.

60 **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 2nd June 2016

Wardleworth Community Centre

6.30pm – 8.30pm

