

SPOTLAND AND FALINGE AREA FORUM

Thursday, 31 May 2018

MINUTES

Present: P. Massey (Chair), L. Midgley, M. Oliver, S. Powers, V. Kilburn, A. Thomas, J. Brierley, E. Wild, R. Heap, A. Foster, C. Dodgson, M. Coats, K. Lawrence, R. Morrow, V. Somerville, R. Yasmeen, R. Le Monnier, J. Sherlock, J. Naves, B. Holden, J. Moss, T. Powers, S. Ashworth, D. Holden, J. Ingham, N. Morrell, A. Meek, V. Kane, S. Kane and C. Faulkner

Officers: PC P. Jones, PCSO D. Smout, G. Finch (Township & Engagement Officer) and N. Barton (Principal Project Manager – Planning)

Councillors: Councillors Biant, Cocks and Rana.

Apologies: F. Healey, John and Jaqueline Ashworth, A. Rawsterne, P. Forden, C. Forden, J. Addy and Mr and Mrs Le Monnier.

110 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested that the Forum respect the Code of Conduct for the duration of the meeting.

Apologies had been received from F. Healey, John and Jaqueline Ashworth, A. Rawsterne, P. Forden, C. Forden, J. Addy and Mr and Mrs Le Monnier.

The Chair of the Forum also announced that an additional item had been placed on the agenda – Changes to the Section 106 Process – and this would be covered following the PACT session.

111 GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE INCLUDING PACT MEETING

PC Phil Jones and PCSO Dan Smout attended the meeting for this item.

The Forum was informed of the following issues:

1. Off Road Bikes – The Forum was informed that GMP are in discussion with partners regarding the next date for Operation Dragster.
2. Patrols have continued around Meanwood School following complaints about indiscriminate parking near to the school at start and finish times.
3. It was acknowledged that speeding and anti-social behaviour related to motor vehicles was a problem in certain parts of the Ward. However it was explained that Traffic Officer resources were very limited. In addition PCSO's who conduct enforcement will only attend sites that have been identified as a designated problem / hot spot usually as a result of a Council organised traffic survey. GMP also informed the Forum that training was being considered for other GMP Officers as was the purchase of a radar gun to aid enforcement.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding this issue. A number of residents raised serious concerns about the irresponsible and dangerous use of motor bikes and the lack of action by police although incidents had been regularly reported via 101. Holmes Street and Primrose Street were identified as troublesome spots. GMP acknowledged they were aware of the problem and attempts were being made to identify the rider of the motor bike. It was also explained that although Officers had witnessed incidents of this nature, GMP had a no pursuit policy.

Residents were encouraged to keep reporting incidents via the 101 number with as much detail of the offender and motorcycle as possible.

4. Forum members were encouraged to continue reporting drug dealing. It was explained that although residents may not see an immediate response or change in activity a small team of Officers are actively working on the information received – drug enforcement is a complex and time consuming activity.
5. It was explained that GMP are still recruiting new officers.
6. The next Police Surgery will be at Spotland Library on Monday 25th June 2018, commencing 6pm.
7. GMP are looking to trial an online surgery for the Ward to capture the audience that cannot make other surgeries. Dates when this facility goes live will be announced on GMP's social media account.
8. In addition to the above the GMP website now has a live chat function open from 0800hours – 0200hours daily. It was advised that this is for the reporting of non-emergencies only and it was suggested that this is a better alternative to 101 for those who can access the internet.

112 SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS

Nick Barton, Principal Project Manager, Planning attended the meeting for this item.

The Forum was informed that Section 106 refers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation allows local authorities to enter into legal agreements with developers to provide planning obligations as part of their planning permission. Planning obligations are actions that developers must do for their planning application to be valid. This could include providing a children's play area to an agreed standard, providing affordable housing on the site or carrying out specific highway improvements as part of the works.

Often the obligation required by the local authority cannot be provided on site and in these cases the developer is required to make a payment to the local authority for them to meet the obligation elsewhere. Section 106 contributions must be spent within five years of receipt and on a project to create or improve public open space within 20 minutes' walk of the development.

The Forum was also informed that recent changes to the above process required Section 106 obligations to be identified at the pre-planning stage. Therefore, from a Ward perspective it would be beneficial if a 'wish list' of obligations was compiled in anticipation of planning applications being received. Residents were also asked to note that no Section 106 contributions were currently available within the Ward, as the play area development on Ings Lane is likely to use all current resources.

Residents asked the following questions:

1. Are Section 106 Agreements legally binding?

In response to this question residents were informed they are, however developers can apply to modify the terms of a planning obligation contained within the Section 106 Agreement. In considering an application to change paragraphs 173 and 205 apply.

Paragraph 173 – To ensure viability, the costs of any requirement to be applied to a development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other contributions, should, when taking into account the normal costs of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

Paragraph 205 – Where obligations are being sought or revised, local planning authorities should take account of changes in market conditions over time and, wherever appropriate, be sufficiently flexible to prevent planned development being stalled.

2. What would happen if the Council turned down an application to modify?

It would more than likely be referred to the Secretary of State.

3. What triggers Section 106 Contributions?

Developments of ten residential units or 1000 square metres.

4. Does the '20 minute' walk criteria mean within the Ward?

Not necessarily.

5. Will the New Homes Bonus compensate the Ward as a result of reducing Section 106 contributions from the Mellor Street development?

Difficult to say as the New Homes Bonus is allocated to a corporate budget and Ward Councillors have to lobby to receive funding.

6. Could the development of allotments be considered from Section 106 contributions?

Yes

113 **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING/MATTERS ARISING/UPDATES**

The minutes of the Spotland & Falinge Area Forum held on Thursday 8th February 2018 were approved as a correct record subject to the following request being included:

'What is the process for registering land with Fields inTrust'?

The following updates were provided:

1. Proposal to Scrap Meanwood School Fencing

It was explained that the Conservation Officer has provided details of an organisation that deals with the scrapping of old wrought iron fencing. However although contact had been made with the organisation no response had been received.

Following a discussion, where a range of options were put forward for the future use of the fencing, it was agreed that the Township and Engagement Officer should progress the scrapping of the fencing. It was also agreed that any monies received from the scrapping should be given to Meanwood School to support school funds.

However, the Chair concluded that although this item had been discussed many times and agreement had been reached about the way forward with the fencing, it was stressed that should anyone have a worthy cause for the fencing please inform the Township and Engagement Officer as soon as possible.

2. Footpath opposite Preston Street

It was reported that the footpath in question is not the Council's responsibility as the land is privately owned. However the Township and Engagement Officer agreed to visit the site to understand the problem that had been reported.

3. Footpath on Ings Lane – area around the bins near to the play area is in need of attention

The Township and Engagement Officer had visited the site and in his opinion did not think the footway was in that bad of a condition. However he had sent the request for improvement to Highways.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Ward Councillors would request that this repair be included on the footway maintenance schedule that is currently being compiled.

4. Footpath adjacent to Passmonds Garage

It was reported that this is not a public right of way and is therefore not the responsibility of the Council.

5. Future of open spaces in the Ward – Falinge Park, Ings Lane and Denehurst Park

It was reported that Denehurst Park and Falinge Park are protected with restrictive covenants.

A deed of understanding and release to transfer land at Ings Lane to Lenny Barn was made by the Council in 2012. A copy was sent to the Charity Commission for their attention and title to the land is available from the Land Registry.

The following matters were raised:

1. A representative from Vintage Worx attended the meeting to raise concerns regarding a recent article on Rochdale Online concerning Vintage Worx's application to manage Falinge Park via the Community Asset Transfer Facility. In practical terms if this application was agreed it would mean that Falinge Park would be transferred to Vintage Worx's on a long lease with safeguards to protect the park going forward.

The representative present was concerned that the article was inaccurate, in that Vintage Worx was not a private organisation; it was a charitable not for profit organisation. It was explained that all Vintage Worx wanted to do was to safeguard the future of the park, as funding for parks was becoming less and less. Because of Vintage Worx's charitable position they would be able to apply to funding streams that the local authority could not. Vintage Worx had been present in the park since 2006 and had provided many community projects.

In response the resident who had initiated the press release stated that it was not his intentions to criticise Vintage Worx's Community Asset Transfer application or the work the group undertook in the park. However the main focus of his article was the concerns he had about the lack of openness and transparency on behalf of the Council and local Councillors regarding future plans for the park.

2. A resident asked what safeguards are in place to protect the Ings Lane play area open space.

The Township and Engagement Officer agreed to investigate this further.

114 **COUNCILLOR UPDATES/NEWS**

Councillor Faisal Rana thanked residents for voting for him in the recent local election. He commented that he had only been in the role for one month and was trying to understand the workings of the Council. He encouraged residents to contact him regarding any issues they have.

Councillor Wendy Cocks informed the Forum that she was now the Assistant Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Health and has recently looked at children's mental health provision and maternity services.

In Bloom projects are also requiring a lot of attention and casework has included issues relating to:

- Housing
- Private Sector Landlords
- Older People and Housing

In response to a question concerning the proposed demolition of College Bank flats the Forum was informed that the future of the flats is for residents to comment upon, although it was acknowledged that residents would not have the final say. It was also reported that the Howard Street development is progressing.

Councillor Cecile Biant congratulated Councillor Rana on his recent election victory and wished him well in his role as Assistant Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance.

Councillor Biant then provided the following update:

- Cutgate Road Area Traffic Calming and 20mph zone – this scheme has now been passed to Balfour Beatty to schedule into their work programme.
- Longfield Road Area Traffic Calming and 20mph zone – waiting for work to commence.
- Marne Crescent waiting restrictions –The double yellow lines have been introduced - a positive reaction has been received from residents. It is hoped that this will deter indiscriminate parking and improve the flow of traffic.
- Edenfield Road sign improvements – waiting for work to commence.
- Denehurst Park – The park is looking good. A £100k grant has been awarded to the park to develop a younger children's play area. It was reported that the park is suffering from off road bike use, however the police are aware of the problem.
- Town Centre development is progressing
- A £3m grant has recently been awarded to develop the area in front of the Town Hall.
- Plans are in place to upgrade the frontages of buildings on Drake Street.

In response to a question the Forum was informed that the paved area near to the Butts would be the site of the new market.

115 OPEN FORUM - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS TO COMMENT ON ISSUES IN THE WARD

The Forum was informed of the following events:

- Spotland & Falinge In Bloom Meeting – Monday 11 June – 17.30 at Spotland Library
- Wonderwall Summer Planting Session – Thursday 14 June – 18.30 at Rochdale AFC, Sandy Lane.
- Bloom-Ing Spotland Urban Walking Trail Opening Day – Sunday 24 June – 13.00 – Next to Spotland Library.
- Rochdale in Bloom Regional Judging – Tuesday 3 July / Wednesday 4 July – Boroughwide.
- Rochdale in Bloom National Judging – Thursday 9 August – Boroughwide.

- Spotland & Falinge Area Forum – Thursday 23 August – Spotland Methodist Church.
- Denehurst Park Gardening Volunteer Session – every Wednesday 10.00 – Noon – Denehurst Park.
- Falinge Park – It's a Knockout Community Challenge 2018 – Sunday 17 June – 10.00 – 17.00 – contact 07760 354 698 for details
- Falinge Park – Around the World Family Fun Day – Sunday 22 July – 11.00 – 16.00 – contact 07760 354 698 for details.
- Falinge Park – 5k Obstacle Run / Family Fun Run – Sunday 5 August – 10.00 – 16.00 - contact 07760 354 698 for details.
- Falinge Park – Paws in the Park – Sunday 19 August – 11.00 – 16.00 - contact 07760 354 698 for details.

Residents raised the following issues:

- Rooley Moor Road Route Study

A lengthy debate took place concerning the above which would involve a study along the full length of Rooley Moor Road to identify potential locations for new waiting restrictions.

Several residents were unhappy with this proposal and argued further restrictions were not necessary as very few problems exist. It was also put forward that the introduction of more restrictions would prove detrimental to businesses and by reducing the number of cars who can park on the road would more than likely result in speeds increasing.

The Ward Councillor who initiated this request (Councillor C. Biant) argued that she had asked for this study in response to concerns raised by local residents which centred on the current parking behaviour of some residents which can hinder sight lines on the road.

Residents also raised concerns that any proposals for future restrictions would be discussed with Ward Members before a scheme was formally drafted. Residents argued that they should have input into any scheme being proposed.

Although it was commented that the Council's Policy for schemes of this nature is as outlined above, the Township and Engagement Officer agreed to clarify the process.

- Parking on Pavements

A resident raised concerns about the number of cars that are parked on pavements and that residents should be encouraged to use their drives.

The resident was informed that parking cars on the pavement is not an offence unless they are causing an obstruction or are parked dangerously. If this is this case it is a Police issue and should be reported via 101.

A resident commented that she was a member of a disability group who are trying to get the law changed in relation to this problem. The group can be contacted via Facebook – Disability DDA Group.

- Spotland & Falinge response to In Bloom

The Chair of the Norden Area Forum thanked the Chair of Spotland & Falinge Area Forum and residents from the Ward for their enthusiasm and involvement in, In Bloom.

- Council Policy on Noise / Nuisance

A resident raised concerns about the noise and nuisance she is experiencing because of chickens and a rooster.

She was advised that the Public Protection Team would deal with an issue of this nature.

- TBA Site

Several residents raised concerns about the lack of progress being made with the above site and expressed that the Council should be doing more in relation to site security and pressing the site owners to publish the site survey report.

Residents again stated that children access the site, noises have been heard and lorries have been on site. A resident also commented that she has raised her concerns with the Council, without reply at this stage.

It was commented that any concerns should be directed to the Council and the Council had limited powers due to the land being privately owned.

Residents asked that the following questions should be put to the Council:

1. Who are the owners of the TBA site? – contact details.
2. Who their representative is? – his / her contact details.
3. Who is ultimately responsible for safety on the TBA site, ie if someone was to be injured?
4. Who employs the employees in the site office?
5. Do Public Health have any concerns about the site (particular concerns raised about child safety)?

116 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 23rd August 2018 at 7pm – Spotland Methodist Church.