

CENTRAL LUTON AREA BOARD

22nd October 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM

2.1

PRESENT: Councillors Riaz (Chair), M. Ayub, N. Ayub, Franks, Gurbuz, Hopkins, Malcolm and Rathore,

23. APOLOGIES (REF: 1)

Apologies for absence from the meeting was received on behalf of Dr. R. Saleem.

24 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 2nd July 2015 be taken as read, approved as correct records and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

25. FEEDBACK FROM WARD FORUMS (REF: 5)

Feedback on key issues discussed at each ward was provided as follows:

Barnfield Ward:

- Street Cleansing Issues;
- Speeding – on going issue

Biscot Ward:

- Zebra Crossing in Biscot Road – missing beacon;
- Speeding in Biscot Road;
- Fly Tipping in Curzon Road, Highbury Road and The Ridings
- Drug dealing & ASB in Abigail Court and The Ridings
- Restrictions on commercial properties to prevent them from being turned into take aways

High Town Ward:

- Parks issues;
- Parking issues;
- Begging on the streets (useful link to report rough sleeper <http://www.streetlink.org.uk/tell-us-about-a-rough-sleeper>)

Saints Ward:

- None noted.

Resolved: That feedback on the issues mentioned above be noted and passed to the relevant departments for action.

26. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (REF: 6)

In response to a question on the police providing crime statistics at Ward Forum meetings, the Police replied the information was complicated to translate but would try and provide some information for the next area board meeting. Crime statistics were published on the Bedfordshire Police website which can be broken down into areas and particular streets.

Councillor Franks commented that a summary of crime information use to be provided to ward councillors by the Police and enquired whether that could be still be provided. The Police officer replied that most of that information was found on the Bedfordshire Police website but would approach Mark Walters who is responsible for providing that information.

Councillor N. Ayub further added the information provided at ward forum meetings should be on robberies, drugs and ASB.

Resolved: (i) That crime information on robberies, drugs and anti-social behaviour be provided by the Police at the next Ward Forum meeting.

27. PETITION– RIGHT OF WAY FROM CRESCENT RISE TO HARTLEY ROAD VIA BARCLAY COURT (REF: 6.1)

Keith Dove, Service Manager Transportation and Regulation presented the report (Ref 6)

He advised a petition was received regarding access via Barclay Court Crescent Rise to Hartley Road. Council records show there was no 'public right of way' maintainable at public expense across the property. The land had recently been sold and the owner erected a fence set in concrete to secure the site. A planning application for change of use of 1 Hart Hill Path was approved after appeal which does not affect the use of existing paths. Investigations undertaken by the service found little evidence that a public right of way had previously existed. The area is a parking court for garages that serve Barclay Court and at present is overgrown and covered with rubbish.

It would not be desirable for general access as it has the potential to attract anti-social behaviour and there is evidence this is already taking place.

In response to a question on why fencing was erected which blocked off the path, the Officer replied the new owner wanted to prevent people from entering his land.

A member of the public commented that the Council did not taken in consideration the feelings of the people who had lived their most of their lives and used the pathway as a short cut to the shops which was convenient, and that blocking access affected the elderly and vulnerable residents who regularly used the pathway as a short cut.

In response the Officer replied that the concern was shared and the report outlined the council's position. But would re-check the records to see whether a public right of way had previously existed.

Councillor Hopkins declared a personal interest as a local resident and remained at the meeting whilst the item was being considered. She further advised that comments received from local residents who had lived there for a long time was that the land was used as a short cut and a wall was previously in place which had been kicked down many times but the land was always private land.

The Officer advised that the council is in the process of developing a rights of way strategy that would be shortly going out to consultation and would comments from members of the public.

Resolved: (i) That the receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That the Officer re-checks records kept by the council to ascertain whether a public right of way had previously existed.

28. WATER SAVING PROGRAMME – AFFINITY WATER (REF 7)

Adam Warner and Nigel Bevan from Affinity Water gave a joint power point presentation on the water saving programme soon to be implemented across Luton to reduce water usage in the next 25 years made the following points:

- The water saving programme is shortly to be implemented in the south east region.
- Affinity Water is the largest only water company employing around 1200 people and supplies to a population of 3.6 million people around 900 million litres of water a day through a network of 16,500km of water mains to around 8 communities.
- Customers are to be encouraged to work with Affinity Water to reduce their water consumption and be educated on how water savings can be achieved to become energy efficient
- The water saving programme is to be rolled out over the next 10 years to save 56 million litres of water per day
- Around 525,000 meters are to be installed in over 8 years in 100,000 properties and water efficiency checks will be conducted
- Metering will be carried out over the next 5 years and will start with properties near the River Lee which includes properties in Luton & Stevenage
- Smart meters are to be installed which can be automatically read from a moving vehicle with access to homes no longer required
- Customers will be provided with information on the switch three month in advance and one month before meters are installed.
- Six months after installation customers will receive a cost comparison bill compared with the rateable value and a similar bill at twelve months. After twenty four months the first bill will be issued. Throughout that period affinity water will provide advice on water savings devices to reduce bills and will help customers to understand their water usage and to take control of their bills
- High usage customers will receive further advice on consumption reductions and also be supported with identifying leakages in their properties

- Home water checks will be carried out with advice given on water savings and reducing energy consumptions
- All information regarding the water saving programme is available on the website.

In response to a question on whether the water savings devices were free, Adam Warner replied yes that all water savings devices were free of charge which can be found the website (<https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/wsp>)

In response to a question on whether the water saving devices affected the water pressure, Adam Warner replied the devices had no affect the water pressure.

In response to a question on whether meters would be installed in commercial and business properties, Adam Warner replied that most businesses were already metered and commercial and business properties were not excluded from the programme.

In response to a question on whether properties with meters would be replaced. Adam Warner replied that all meters would be replaced with smart meters. The managing director of affinity water further advised all customers will be metered and consideration would be given to those on low income who would be put on a low tariff which would apply to household pay under £16k per year and households with children under the age of 16.

In response to a question on whether the Luton based affinity water would be awarded the contract to install the meters. Adam Warner replied that a procurement process was applied and the contact was awarded to the lowest bidder which was not that company.

In response to a question on the household salary income limited to £16k being low and people who were going to be charged would probable be larger families households living in low value houses. The water company replied that they would be carrying out home efficiency checks and billing would be delayed for 2 years which should give households sufficient time to reduce water usage and will work with high usage households to support savings on energy bills.

In response to a question on water softener systems and whether the company would compensate for the removal. Affinity Water replied that they would need to check and requested the member of public provide their contact details for a response back. He further advised that if checks of the water softner system was found it was running properly then not action would be taken to remove it and they would look at its efficiency.

In response to a question on whether all properties that could not have a meter installed would they use more water. In response the representative from affinity water replied that they would try and be fair and help people to reduce their water consumption and these properties would be reassessed to ensure to see if a meter can be installed.

In response to a question on whether bill would increase once meters were installed due to energy costs going up, the Affinity water representative replied that the water company was regulated by OFWAT who were responsible for setting charges and over the next 5 years water bill have reduced and it was not about making money but was more to do with making sure everyone had sufficient water.

Resolved: That the Affinity Water representatives be thanked for their presentation and the item noted.

29. FLYING START – LUTON STRATEGY FROM PREGNANCY TO 5 YEARS OLD (REF: 8)

Joe Biskupski, Flying Start Community Participation & Volunteering Manager gave a powerpoint presentation and the following points were made:

- Flying start is Luton's prevention and early help strategy, supporting babies and young children from pregnancy to five years old. Its primary focus is prevention to make a real difference to young children;
- The project aims to make a real different to the life chances of young children to ensure some of the problems do not repeat themselves through generations
- Challenges faced in Luton include high levels of deprivation and child poverty, childhood obesity, poor childhood social and emotional development and low levels of exercise;
- Luton has the highest level of low birth weight babies in the UK outside of Tower Hamlets in east London
- Life expectancy varies and dependent on where people live in Luton for example; there is a 5.8 year difference in life expectancy between a boy born in Farley and a boy born in Bramingham and a 7.6 year difference between a girl born in Northwell and a girl born in Stopsley;
- It is recognised that whilst such problems may exist in Biscot, Dallow, Northwell, Farley and South Luton there are significant challenges across the whole of the town.
- Flying start is a partnership which brings together many major organisations working with babies and children in Luton including the Council, health services and pre-school learning alliance. The strategy was developed in partnership with parents, community representatives and local statutory services;
- It was originally built on the 'a better start' national lottery bid in 2014 which was unsuccessful but there was a willingness by partners to continue with the work that had taken place;
- The flying start strategy focuses on two key things:
 - Primary Prevention – making a difference before problems start developing
 - Integrated Service Delivery – partners working together to deliver a core offer of evidence and science based interventions and running a number of projects in Luton to achieve that.
- Through evidence based support flying start aims to improve outcomes in three key areas:
 - Communication & Language
 - Social and emotional
 - Nutrition and diet

In response to a question on whether anyone could volunteer the officer replied that all volunteers would be DBS checked first before an appointment was made. The council has a robust policy of DBS checks supported by the pre-school alliance, and all DBS checks are carried out free of charge.

In response to a question on skills to put in place and take into the workforce the officer replied that all three key areas mentioned earlier the volunteers would be expected to demonstrate and training would be provided which would be accredited to a level 2 qualification and safeguarding accreditation and active Luton were looking at accrediting the fatherhood training programme.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

30. NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNANCE – ‘YOU SAID WE’RE DOING’ (REF: 8)

Marek Lubelski, Neighbourhood Governance Project Manager gave the following updates:

- A number of festivals took place over the summer which included: Mela, Denbigh summer fair and High Town festival.
- High town burglary reduction programme – a local initiative to improve security and to let people know how they can deter burglars is running in the High Town ward and led by the community safety partnership. Issues tackled to date were: fly tipping, speeding, security, anti-social behaviour and problems with private landlords and students.

Resolved: That the points outlined above be noted.

31. LUTON CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP – UPDATE (REF: 9)

Dr. Nina Pearson, Luton Clinical Commissioning Group and Claire Saunders gave the following updates:

- The East London NHS Foundation Trust were now the new mental health services provider for adults and children taken over from South Essex Partnership NHS foundation. 90 new nurses have been appointed into post and be making links with the PCTs. LCCG is also looking at providing links in Luton for people with severe mental health problems for adults and children. Cambridge Community Trust will continue to be the provider for 2 years in Luton and in the autumn options will be considered for future service development beyond April 2017.
- GP Practices – NHS England and the CCG will be undertaking a public consultation on the future of four GP practices in the Autumn. The GP contracts are coming to an end and a number of options to improve the availability and quality of GP services. Options will be sent out for consultation on the practices: town centre; Moakes medical centre; Whipperley Medical Centre and Sundon Park health centre.
- Urgent Care Strategy – will soon be implementing elements of the strategy which will include: improving and simplifying the way people in Luton gain

access to urgent medical help. Will be seeking views on what elements worked well and what could be improved.

- Financial Challenges – Managing the financial deficit is the most significant challenge in the year for the CCG which currently stands in excess of £20 million. Work is being undertaken to address the shortfall caused by a number of factors such as: the high demand on services at the L & D hospital, historical underfunding of health for people in Luton and overspending in area such as mental health. Action plans are in place to bring Luton CCG finances back on track which means spend within our means in 2016/17 and over the following two years will pay back the deficit which had built up and hoping to report a financial surplus by the end of 2018-19.
- Practice groups are working together in clusters and leading on different elements. Spreading integrated work to provide for the elderly and frail.

In response to a question on whether it was a requirement to have the flu jab every year the Luton CCG representative replied that it was advisable as strain changes every year and therefore would need to ensure you are vaccinated.

In response to a question on whether it was necessary for students starting university to have the meningitis jab before they go, the Luton CCG representative replied yes that it was a new requirement introduced for different ages and meningitis was high among university population.

In response to a question on whether the shingles vaccination was offered to everyone, the Luton CCG representative replied no, it was age specific and was usually offered to people over the age of 70 and was supply and demand and a one of vaccination.

Resolved: That the Report (Ref: 9) be noted and the Luton CCG be thanked for their update.

[Note: Councillor N. Ayub declared a personal interest as Chair of the Health and Well Being Board and a Governor at the L & D Hospital she remained in the meeting during the items deliberation and participated in the discussion.]

32. CLEANSING SCHEDULES FOR ALL OF CENTRAL LUTON AREA (REF: 10)

William Green, Street Cleansing and Refuse Collection Supervisor gave an oral report and advised that the streets within the central ward were cleaned once a fortnight and swept one a month. Resources within the street cleansing service had been reduced from 106 staff to 68 who were responsible for cleaning the all four wards.

In response to a question regarding wards such as Biscot, Dallow and Saints where ward councillors received complaints about rubbish in the area and be helpful if quality information on street cleaning could be provided at Ward forum meetings and in the Lutonline.

In response to a question from a member of the public on whether there was a policy on the clearing up of leaves and whether the council could do more to

encourage residents to clear up leaves. The Officer replied that there was a leaf clearing vehicle which does one week cleansing and on week leave clearing.

In response to a question from a member of the public on the increase of fly tipping since the council introduced the charge and that reports to the council on fly tipping where no information was received back. The Officer replies that since the charge for the removal of bulky waste was introduced there had not been a massive increase in fly tipping but in some areas there had been a slight increase. There is an on-line email form for the public to use to report fly tipping which goes directly to the cleansing admin team who should send a reply back and would check it was continuing to be done.

The Central Area Board requested the following resolution to be referred back to the next Executive meeting:

“That the Central Luton Area Board acknowledges that in response to government cuts in local government funding the annual budget for street cleansing in Luton had reduced over the last few years by more than £950,000.

That the Executive should thank the staff and management of Luton’s street cleansing team for the standards they are able to achieve with the massively reduced resources available to them.

That the Executive note the increasing numbers of complaints to Councillors about fly tipping and street littering.

That the Executive give serious consideration to investing in enforcement with a view to:

- Reducing the number of offences of fly tipping and dropping litter by obtaining extensive publicity in local media of strong action taken against named offenders;
- Making savings in the future by reducing the need for expensive clearing up of litter and fly tipping.”

Resolved: That the oral update be noted and the Boards thanks to the Officer be recorded.

33. ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING (REF: 11)

Resolved: That the Area Support officer be delegated the responsibility to determine appropriate items for the Board work programme, after consultation with the Chair.

34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (REF: 12)

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Board be held 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 15th March 2016, following the Ward Forums to be held at 6.30 p.m. at a venue to be confirmed.

(Notes: The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.)