

EAST LUTON AREA BOARD**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 31st October 2016
AT 7.30PM**

Present: Councillors Skepelhorn (Chair) Baker, Chapman, Chowdhury, M. Dolling, M. J. Dolling, Keens, Moles, Rivers and J. Taylor

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None noted.

14. MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 14th July 2016 be taken as read, agreed as a correct record and Chair be authorised to signed them.

15. FEEDBACK FROM WARD FORUMS (REF 4)**CRAWLEY – COUNCILLOR J TAYLOR**

- Parking
- Highways e.g. signage particularly 20 mile per hour zones to be clearer

ROUND GREEN – COUNCILLOR RIVERS

- Parking on junctions

STOPSLEY – COUNCILLOR M. J. DOLLING

- Travellers on Stopsley Common
- Anti-social behaviour

WIGMORE – COUNCILLOR SKEPELHORN

- The trees and shrubs outside Asda
- Wheelchair access on junction at the entrance to Crawley Green Road
- Parking in Raynham Way

Resolved: (i) That the above issues be noted and passed to the relevant Council Departments to follow up.

(ii) That the Wigmore Forum requested the following resolutions be submitted to the Executive:

“That East Luton Area Board requests the Executive to oppose the current applications to build to the East of Luton by North Herts until:

1. Sufficient infrastructure has been included to support the needs of the additional residents
2. There are proposals to deal with the added congestion on Crawley Green Road and Eaton Green Road.

(iii) That the Area Board Support Officer invites Bedfordshire PCC to the next meeting to discuss the travellers issues.

16. POLICE AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS (REF: 5)

In response to action taken by the Police to address motor cyclist riding without helmets on unregistered bikes. Such issues are dealt with by Operation Meteor a Bedfordshire wide scheme recently expanded to cover the Leighton Buzzard area. Current legislation allows the Police to pursue individuals not wearing helmets which can be problematic and puts members of the public at risk if an accident occurs which the Police are held accountable.

In response to the reduction of children centres across the town and whether any in the East were affected. The town is divided into North and South constituency areas which the East forms part of and therefore children centres located within those constituency areas would be affected.

In response to the condition of the underpass (dirty and blocked drain) near Someries Infant and Junior School. The Area Project and Involvement Officer to report the issue to the relevant Council department for action.

In response to the removal of area board meetings. This will be covered at item 7 on the agenda. The Community Development Manager further advised no firm proposals had been made and ongoing discussions were taking place with Elected Members.

In response to the council stopping the sale of fireworks throughout the year to make them available for displays use only to prevent misuse. Regulations regarding the sale of fireworks and their availability is a matter for the Government to determine and not the Council. The Council however can intervene with regards to misuse of fireworks under Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 legislation.

In response to parking at Wigmore Valley Park and proposals for time limited parking. Discussions with TUI had led to their staff no longer parking in that area. The other company involved has yet to comply and failure to comply the council will pursue the prosecution route which is time consuming and can be a long process.

In response to owns the carpark near the Tidy Tip. Spaces in that car park is rented by TUI for their staff.

Resolved: That the above issues be noted and passed to the relevant department/section within the council for further action.

17. PETITIONS (REF: 6)

Resolved: That the petition in relation to building on Wandon Park handed-in at the meeting be passed to the relevant council department to respond back to the next meeting.

18. ENGAGING WITH LUTON COUNCIL MEMBERS IN THE FUTURE

The Neighbourhood Governance Manager delivered a power point presentation on the new proposals that would enable local residents to engage better with Elected Members in the future.

The proposed changes would offer local people better opportunity to engage with their elected members through various methods of engagement and communication avenues to ensure involvement in shaping local decisions and matters that affected local people. The Council's Investment Framework is the interaction and links with the local community and there is a need to continue to keep the conversation going and to reach out to local people through a variety of communications channels.

Consultation undertaken during the summer, where members of the public voiced their ideas on how they wanted to connect with their councillors in the future which are outlined below:

- Email
- Face to face/door to door
- Social media

In terms of how elected members can influence decisions that affect neighbourhoods, the following top three were:

- Ask people their views
- Keep people informed of decisions on key issues
- Engage with all residents

The top three points regarding engaging with residents were:

- More meetings and events
- Councillors to go out in the community to meet local people and groups
- More engagement/information needed

.The new form of engagement would be a Member led process where councillors and partners would listen more and be able to respond to local issues more effectively. There would be an opportunity for local people to be involved and to shape local decisions in their own communities which would ensure full participation in the Participatory Budgeting Programme and decision making days.

The following comments made by Board Members and members of the public:

- The Council facebook page needs to can provide information on current developments and improvement made by the council. The council should also have live broadcasts of council meetings with live feeds
- Seek advice from Luton Sixth College on ways of making the council website more appealing and engaging to the general public
- Emails communications could be difficult for planning queries and most older people do not use social media and prefer to face to face contact with their elected members
- The role of councillors and officer is muddled. Councillors want the continuation of Ward and Board meetings and not faceless on-line communications where people cannot come along.

East of Luton residents want to maintain face to face contact which they believe is the best line of communication and totally oppose to area forums and board meetings discontinuing.

- The public view of councillors is that they are there to listen but can become frustrated with departments when nothing happens
- Online communication is fine but would need more evidence as proof that this is the way forward but it is not a solution.

The Neighbourhood Governance Manager further advised it is a member led process and discussions were taking place on alternative ways to encourage people in the community to engage. The on-line communication was a suggestion and should not be viewed as a replacement for the current form of engagement.

In response to the lack of response from departments/officers when issues are raised by councillors on behalf of the public. The Neighbourhood Governance Manager reiterated on the importance of officers responding to queries raised by councillors which sometime could be delayed due to constraints on resources and should acknowledge that not everything that is requested can be achieved.

19. LUTON CCG – UPDATE (REF 8)

A representative from Luton CCG presented the report and the following updates were made:

- GP Surgeries – contracts due to expiry early next year for the following surgeries: The Moakes, Whipperley Ring, Sundon Park and the Town Centre which are all due to expiry at the end of March 2017.
- A needs analyst carried out by the CCG will result in changes made to the Moakes and Whipperley contracts which won't be renewed. Sundon Park and the Town Centre surgeries – bids invited for the new contracts and result in investment in the Sundon Park Centre. The Walk-in Centre to be turned into an Urgent Care Centre.
- Financial Update – There still remains a £21m deficit to meet

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (REF 10)

Resolved: That the date of the next meeting is 13th March 2017.

(Note: The Meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.)