

CENTRAL LUTON AREA BOARD**20th March 2014 at 7.45 p.m.**

PRESENT: Councillor Saleem (Chair), Councillor M. Ayub, N. Ayub, Hopkins, Malcolm, Mead, Rathore, Riaz and Whittaker.

1. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

An apology for absence from the meeting was received on behalf of Councillor T. Khan.

2. MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 24th October 2013 be taken as read, approved as correct records and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

3. FEEDBACK FROM WARD FORUMS (REF: 4)

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

Barnfield Ward:

- Issues around parking enforcement, in particular at Luton 6th Form College and Bushmead School;
- Concern in the increase in robberies, although incidents of burglary had declined in the area.

Biscot Ward:

- Parking problems in Biscot Road and Alexandra Avenue, including parking on pavements and on double yellow lines;
- Drugs issues in the area, in particular at the alley on Abigail Close;
- No litter bins in Alexandra Avenue, Bath Road and Argyll Avenue.

High Town Ward:

- Litter in the River Lea by New Bedford Road;
- Cycling on pavements – enforcement required;
- Concern at licensing applications to sell alcohol in New Bedford Road late at night.

Saints Ward:

- No issues to report.

Resolved: That feedback on the top key issues from the Ward Forums be noted.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (REF: 5)

A member of the public raised concern at the increase in burglaries in Luton and enquired what long term plan the Police would implement to tackle the issue.

A Police Officer replied that tackling burglary was a top priority and had conducted several operations across the Borough including Operation Peak which targeted crime hot spots. An action plan had also been created which involved the police visiting 1600 households in Kingsway and the Dallow area. She added that the Police had also advertised what it intended to reduce burglary. However, she added that the Police relied heavily on intelligence from the public.

Another member of the public commented that the public had experienced problems and delays when reporting crime to the central control room.

The Police Officer replied that the control room had experienced problems due to the recent change in shift patterns. She added that performance was constantly monitored.

A member of the public enquired if the police published crime figures in the area i.e. incidents of drugs and burglary.

The Police Officer replied that a lot of crime figures were sensitive and that the police did not wish to highlight problem areas as criminals could use them as easy targets. The Area Board Support Officer added that area information on postcodes was available on the police website, which showed crime trends in that area.

A member of public commented on recent events that had strained relationships between the police and the community. He added that there used to be regular meetings with the police and BME communities which helped build community cohesion. He went on to suggest that the police should reinstate them.

The Police Officer replied that the force had recently established a new cohesion team and she would take back the suggestion of reinstating the community meetings between the police and BME communities as they would help strengthen relationships and trust.

Resolved: That the Board's thanks to members of the public for their comments and questions be recorded;

5. 'YOU SAID, WE'RE DOING' - NEWSLETTER: CENTRAL LUTON AREA (REF: 8)

The Neighbourhood Governance Manager presented his report (Ref: 8), providing an overview of priorities for the area.

He drew the audience's attention to the recent Participatory Budgeting Decision Days in Central Area which had involved over 300 local residents in deciding which projects should be funded in their neighbourhoods, and allocated funding to 30 community led projects in the Area. He also highlighted in particular three issues of note: the Drug Action Day held at the Bury Park Resource Centre

which had been very successful in raising awareness of the importance of reporting on an issue of particular concern in the community, improvements being planned to High Town Road through the work of the High Town Town team, and the response of the Luton Clinical Commissioning Group (LCCG) to issues raised by local people around accessing services.

Jeannie Szumski from the LCCG, informed the Board of the 'End of Life Care' Service in Luton, which provided care and support to patients and their families nearing the end of their life and was run by the Care Co-ordination Team. She added that a positive services for the residents of Luton and provided expert advice and assistance from arranging evening sitters, sorting out appointments. She went on to say that the service had visited all the G.P Surgeries in Luton informing them of the service as it was important to let the community know what services were available to them.

A member of the public enquired if the services was multilingual.

Jeannie Szumskiski replied that the End of Life Care service had an internal interpreting service on hand to help.

Resolved: (i) That the report of the Neighbourhood Governance Project Manager (Ref: 8) providing an overview of priorities for the area be noted.

(ii) That the Board's thanks to Jeannie Shutski for taking the time to address the meeting be recorded.

6. CYCLE LANES – (REF: 9)

The Head of Business Support & Consumer Services submitted a report (Ref: 9), in relation to the extent of illegal parking on cycle lanes in the Central Luton Area and the feasibility of enforcement.

The Committee were informed that the Council's Highways Services had placed an item on its programme of works for 2014/15 to undertake a review of existing lanes in Luton. It was noted that the Traffic Signs Manual states that yellow 'no waiting lines' were not necessary within mandatory cycle lanes, but could be provided to aid better compliance. The review would look at areas where the level of compliance could be improved with the marking of yellow lines.

During the last four years a total of 819 enforcement notices had been issued for cycle lane specific parking contraventions.

Councillor Malcolm commented that the real issue was people cycling on pavements in the area rather than people parking on cycle lanes and requested that a further report be submitted highlighting how the police could prevent this.

The Area Board Support Officer mentioned that the issue had also been raised at the West Luton Board and suggested that the issue of cycling on pavements would be a good article for Luton line and would also make the public aware of the dangers and legality of doing so.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 9) be noted.

(ii) That the Head of Business Support & Consumer Services submit a further report regarding people cycling on the pavement.

(iii) That an article be placed in Lutonline highlighting the dangers and issues around cycling on the pavement.

7. AREA REPORT (REF: 10)

The Area Board Support Officer presented his report (Ref: 10), updating the Board on budgetary issues since its last meeting, for noting, recommendations and decisions on further actions, as required.

Resolved: That the Area Report of the Area Board Support Officer (Ref: 10) updating the Board on budgetary issues be noted;

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

The Area Board Support Officer said as well as regular standing items, matters identified by the Board at the meeting would be also added to the work programme for the next and subsequent meetings.

Resolved: That as well as regular standing items, the work programme be updated to include the following items for the next and subsequent meetings (tbc) of the Board:

- Cycling on Pavements.
- Progress on the Wardown Park Suspension Bridge

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (REF: 12)

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Board be held 7.45 p.m. on 12th June 2014, following the Ward Forums to be held at 6.30 p.m. Venue to be confirmed.

(Notes: The meeting ended at 9.25 pm.)