

NEW DEAL : NEW HORIZONS

Charity Number 4582937
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Housing & Environment Theme Group Meeting
Blakenall Village Centre
Jean Beeley Conference Room
Thursday 5th January 2006
6.30 – 9.30pm

In Attendance:

Alan Venables	- (Chair)
Bill Smith	- Patch Representative 15
Mick Taylor	- Patch 4 Representative
Debbie Marshall	- Patch 12 Representative
Stan Lyons	- Patch 16 Representative
Cliff Webb	- Patch 18 Representative
Mervyn Stonnard	- Patch 7 Representative
Margaret Rowley	- Patch 20 Representative
Roy Jones	- Patch 13 Representative
Charlie Robertson	- Patch 14 Representative

Partners:

Tom Brown	- WMBC
Maxine Pitt	- WMBC
Tim Wakelin	- WMBC
Steve Lewis	- WMBC
Phil Hodgkinson	- WMBC
Ian Robertson	- Local Councillor
Darshan Chatha	- WHG

Officers:

Steve Pooni	- Housing & Environment Theme Leader
Mike Brice	- Neighbourhood Manager
Joseph Cheminais	- Minute Taker

Apologies: Jean Jeavons, Doug Gill, Albert Hodgkins

Agenda Item		ACTION
1.	Introductions and apologies	
	AV welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Minutes of last meeting	
	<u>Theme Group Meeting - 27th October 2005</u> Item 6.2 – AW to send copies of designs for proposed market square signs to SP.	

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	<p>Item 8 – SP informed the Theme that he had to date not written to Vic Bates of Christ Church informing him of the Theme’s decision not to pay for any works to Christ Church.</p> <p>SP advised that this was because of the proposed phase 2 design brief for Blakenall Heath that may potentially include some public realm works that may include some works to the church’s boundary wall.</p> <p>SP will send letter once design brief has been clarified.</p> <p>Funding for church refurbishments was discussed. There is a clear Theme position that there will be no funding for the church in the future.</p> <p><u>Extra-ordinary Meeting - 29th November 2005</u> Agreed as accurate.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Matters arising</p>	
	<p>None</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Road Sweeper</p>	
	<p>SP summarised decisions of the Extra-ordinary Meeting held on 29th November 2005. The group agreed that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The existing road sweeper should be replaced. ii) The old sweeper should be kept and used for the local centres. <p>There was discussion as to whether the replacement road sweeper should be purchased or leased.</p> <p><u>Costs to lease (4yrs):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £1572 per month. - Council would pay the £588 per month maintenance element. - Cost to New Deal would be £984 per month. <p><u>Costs to lease (3yrs):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £1440 per month. - Council would pay the £495 per month maintenance element. - Cost to New Deal would be £984 per month. <p>Tim Wakelin expressed the view that a 4 year lease would be the best option. He highlighted the fact that the lease agreement provided a 72 hour replacement service if the sweeper was off the road; and this was a key factor in the 1st vote after a lengthy discussion.</p>	

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Vote was taken as to whether to purchase or lease road sweeper.
The group agreed that the road sweeper should be leased.

Lease: 8
Buy: 2
Abstentions: 1

Vote was taken in relation to the duration of the lease agreement.
The group agreed that the road sweeper should be leased for 4 years.

4 years: 8
3 years: 0
Abstentions: 3

TW had left the room and managed to negotiate with the manufacturers a 72 hour replacement service for New Deal if the new road sweeper was purchased.

In view of this, the vote was re-taken as to whether to purchase or lease the road sweeper:

There were three options:

- i) Purchase.
- ii) Lease (4 years).
- iii) Lease (3 years).

Option 1:

For: 10
Against: 0
Abstentions: 1

Option 2:

For: 0
Against: 11
Abstentions: 0

Option 3:

For: 0
Against: 11
Abstentions: 0

The group agreed that the road sweeper should be purchased and a 4 year service level agreement be negotiated.

SP/ MB to investigate further the NDC procedure to purchase the road

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	sweeper.	
5.	Update on Projects	
	<p>5.1 Blakenall Village</p> <p>MP working though final evaluation and will discuss any issues which are identified with SP.</p> <p>Toilet doors to be installed on the 14th January. Service Level Agreement signed and the toilets will be ready to open once the contractor installs the doors.</p> <p>The Play Area has been inspected by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) and their report identified the need for remedial work. This work has however not yet been undertaken by Barhale.</p> <p>The Council's Play Area Officer has inspected the park and concluded that it is still not safe, due to fence bolts protruding more then the 8mm allowed. Barhale have confirmed that they will be on site 6th January to saw bolts down and the Park should be open Monday.</p> <p>It was reported to the group that children have gained access to the park since it has been closed. MP said she would look into increasing security whilst the park remains closed.</p> <p>CR raised concerns in relation to the safety of the park due to rocks positioned in what he suggested was a 'fall zone' for play equipment. MP to raise these concerns with Keith Rimmer before park opening. MP confirmed that an independent ROSPA inspector had undertaken the safety report for the play area. The area which CR referred to had been deemed as low risk by both the Inspector and the authorities Play Area Officer and as such not a restriction to opening the play area to the public.</p> <p>Vote taken as to whether park should be opened once the protruding bolts are deemed to be safe.</p> <p>Group agreed that the park should be opened.</p> <p>For – 8 Against – 0 Abstentions – 3</p> <p>MP will look to resolve concerns raised in relation to the rocks.</p> <p>MP to go through the Phase Three Safety Audit with the Council's</p>	

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	<p>Highways Officer – initially assessment is favourable.</p> <p>Concerns were raised in relation to parking in the centre of Blakenall Village. MP outlined that planters had been moved to limit these problems. It was suggested that additional planters be to stop cars from parking on the pavement. MP to report back on this issue.</p> <p>5.2 Bloxwich Centre SL reported to the group that an application to be submitted at the end of January for the Local Government New Street Awards. It was felt that a New Deal element will be needed in this application.</p> <p>Sub-group meeting to take place on Thursday 19th January.</p> <p>5.3 BLEAP TB reported that things are going well with a few schemes successfully completed.</p> <p>Urban Designer vacancy has been advertised – SP to be part of interview panel.</p> <p><u>Church Street Open Space</u> - Concerns raised in relation to position of bollards as cars are parking on footpath. TB stated that he had looked into placing additional bollards but this would cost up to £30,000.</p> <p>A trip rail is to be placed between the footpath and open space but there is no other way to stop people from parking on the path. This is an enforcement issue – under the ‘Cleaner Neighbourhoods Act’ the council has powers to stop traders from selling, repairing and breaking vehicles on the highway and pavement.</p> <p><u>Walker Road Bungalows</u> – Steel fence to be erected in front of bungalows.</p> <p>TB sought permission to take forward schemes for implementation next year.</p> <p>Proposed: Cliff Webb Seconded: Stan Lyons</p>	
6.	<p>Neighbourhood Management/ Local Centres</p>	
	<p>MP referred group to the draft briefs they had received as part of the Theme Group papers and also tabled Plans for discussion – which were a summary of the written briefs.</p>	

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	<p>SP – Explained to the group that at this point in the process nothing is set in stone.</p> <p>Extension of canopy – text in brief alludes to consultant working to resolve issue surrounding the implementation of this proposed improvement.</p> <p>The theme agreed that traffic issue need to be addressed in Leamore.</p> <p>TB – Explained that the Purpose of brief is to ensure that all issues are identified.</p> <p>SL - Suggested that board members should go through the draft brief and plans and forward there comments to MP during the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>Proposed: Cliff Webb Seconded: Charlie Robertson</p> <p>Vote taken on whether to take plans to consultants, to move project forward. The group unanimously decided to take plans to consultants. For: 11 Against: 0 Abstain: 0</p>	
7.	<p>Delivery Plan</p>	
	<p>Delivery Plan for forthcoming year to be produced by March.</p> <p>SP re-affirmed that there is work still to do around the definition of ‘derelict land’ as per the theme agreement at last meeting when undertaking the PMF process.</p> <p>SP informed the group that a workshop is to be set up for all board members to look at the plan for the next 5 years.</p> <p>MB – Looking into planting in Valley. Environment report raised with Julian Andrews – will pursue report on possible uses for land.</p>	
8.	<p>Housing Development</p>	
	<p>8.1 Sites ABC - NDC</p> <p>SP stated that the indications from Bellway were that they will be on</p>	

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	<p>sites A and B January/February and site C later in the Spring.</p> <p>8.2 Site D – BHT</p> <p>DC outlined to the Theme that site work is ongoing. WHG to submit detailed planning applications for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Thames Road/ Saville Road Bungalows</u> - Plans to be made available within the next two weeks. The group agreed that these plans should be displayed in the reception area at the Blakenall Village Centre for public viewing. - <u>Well Place</u> - A planning application is to be submitted for a development consisting of flats and 2 bedroom houses, which are to be social housing. <p><u>Heath House</u> – DC outlined that WHG are currently considering future plans.</p> <p><u>Somerfield Road Flats</u> – DC stated that an Option Appraisal is to be undertaken before the flats are demolished.</p> <p>SP suggested that Theme needs to work more closely with WHG and Walsall Council to have maximum impact on the area.</p> <p>Councillor Robertson brought to the group’s attention the organisation ‘Walsall Helping Generations’ which has been established in partnership with the Council. He commented that the organisation has funding available which is open to suggestions, and could be available to New Deal.</p>	
9.	Any other business	
	SLY pointed out that the hearing loop system needs to be in operation for all meetings.	
10.	Date of next meeting	
	Thursday 23 rd February 2006	