

Report of the Director of Environment and Sport to the meeting of Bradford South Area Committee to be held on Thursday, 24 January 2013.

AS

Subject:

Tong Ward Forum

Summary statement:

This report informs Bradford South Area Committee about the pilot Ward Forum held in the Tong Ward on Monday, 10 September 2012 and requests views and comments.

Ian Bairstow
Director of Environment & Sport
Report Contact: John Breen
Bradford South Area Co-ordinator
Phone: (01274) 431155
E-mail: john.breen@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio: Corporate

Overview & Scrutiny Area: Corporate



Suzan Hemingway, City Solicitor

1. SUMMARY

This report informs Bradford South Area Committee about the pilot Ward Forum held in the Tong Ward on Monday, 10 September 2012 and requests views and comments.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Neighbourhood Forums have been held in communities across the Bradford District since 1991. They provide an opportunity for local residents to express ideas and views about local issues. They also enable people to contribute towards improving the area by identifying local priorities and be consulted by the Council about issues affecting the area.

2.2 Neighbourhood Wardens introduced in April 2010 have, as intended, become a key first point of contact for local people. They ensure that day to day issues are reported quickly and dealt with promptly. The Council Warden Service, introduced in January 2012, incorporating the duties of Neighbourhood Wardens, Civil Enforcement Officers and Park Rangers, has further developed the role and has therefore had an impact on the number and type of issue raised at Neighbourhood Forums.

2.3 In addition, the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14 has been developed using Wards as the key constituent underpinned by Ward Leadership Teams and Ward Officer Teams.

2.4 The development of this more Ward focused approach linked to the introduction and development of the Council Warden Service has provided an opportunity to reassess the role of Neighbourhood Forums. They could therefore be developed to enable people from across a Ward to come together to:

Find out about Council and Police priorities for the Ward and provide the local community view and perspective.

Help plan for the future of the neighbourhood, Ward and District.

Provide input into the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan process providing clear messages about priorities to district-level decision-makers as they plan for improved services at a very local level.

Meet their local Ward Councillors, talk to your local officers from Bradford Council, West Yorkshire Police and other partners.

Be involved in creative discussion about ways to address some of the current key concerns across the Ward.

2.5 In May 2012 a decision was made to pilot this approach in the Tong Ward, replacing the existing scheduled Neighbourhood Forums held in Holme Wood, Bierley, Tong Street and Tong Village with a Ward Forum to be held on Monday, 10th September 2012.

2.6 A programme (Appendix 1) was developed and information circulated across the Ward using existing mailing lists to inform and invite local people to the Tong Ward Forum.

2.7 The three discussion workshops were at the centre of the Tong Ward Forum and facilitators' guidance notes (Appendix 2) were prepared. These 20 minute workshops each ran 3 times to enable participants to attend them all. They focused on:

Cleaner Greener (Environment)
Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic)
Inequalities (Education/Health)

2.8 To enable a focused discussion, a revised Ward Assessment with existing Tong Ward Priorities from the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14 were circulated.

2.9 Each workshop was supported by an advisor which, for the pilot, was the Neighbourhood Police Inspector or Bradford Council Assistant Director and a Ward Councillor.

2.10 The Tong Ward Forum was well supported with most communities across the Tong Ward being represented.

2.11 The workshop format worked well and disruption between sessions was kept to a minimum by Officers and Councillors moving from group to group rather than asking residents to move. The more interactive discussion ensured that all attendees were able and encouraged to participate which led to a broader range of opinions being heard. The attendance by Senior Officers with a strategic overview of service provision had a number of significant benefits. The Senior Officers were able to see how local issues and priorities were identified, and how they inform the wider Area and Service planning process. Appendices 3, 4 and 5 outline the workshop discussions.

2.12 The evaluation undertaken has indicated that of attendees, 91.6 % were either satisfied or very satisfied with the organisation and 58.3% were either satisfied or very satisfied that they were able to influence decisions affecting the Ward.

2.13 The evaluation also requested specific comments and suggestions regarding improvements. The comments and suggestions included:

Increasing the time allocated for workshops as 20 minutes was not long enough for 8/10 people.

An earlier start time and a longer event.

More time to read the Ward Assessment before discussion.

Interesting to discuss issues affecting the Ward as a whole, but would like time for "Any Other Business".

Have workshops in separate rooms as noise could be an issue.

Stronger chairing

More time on each topic and less topics.

Overall idea very good, but needs refining.

- 2.14 The workshop discussions on priorities within the Tong Ward will be used to inform the Tong Ward Plan and Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. The resources to plan and implement the Tong Ward Forum were those which would otherwise have been used to hold Neighbourhood Forums in the Tong Ward.

4. OPTIONS

- 4.1 That Bradford South Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report.
- 4.2 That Bradford South Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report, with amendments.
- 4.3 That Bradford South Area Committee decides not to accept the recommendations outlined in this report.

5. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

5.1 Financial

The pilot Tong Ward Forum was developed and undertaken from within existing resources.

5.2 Staffing

Support was provided from within the existing resources of the Neighbourhood Service, other Council Services and partners.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no significant risks arising out of the proposed recommendations in this report.

7. LEGAL APPRAISAL

This work relates directly to the Local Government Act 2000 and to the Duty of Well-being placed upon the Council to promote and improve the well-being of the District.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

In developing the pilot Tong Ward Forum consideration was given to particular disadvantaged groups including the elderly, people with disabilities, youth, ethnic minorities and people who are unemployed.

8.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The development of the pilot Tong Ward Forum will assist in enabling community issues and solutions to inform the Ward, Area and Service planning process. This will enable activities and service improvements to support the social, economic and environmental well being of communities.

8.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Greenhouse gas emissions and wider environmental impacts will be a consideration in assessing community issues and solutions which inform the Ward, Area and Service planning process.

8.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 Community safety issues are acknowledged as a key contributor to the quality of life in neighbourhoods. It is anticipated that improvements to the Ward, Area and Service planning process will have a positive impact on community safety issues across Bradford South.

8.4.2 A key aspect of this work relates to supporting the Safer Communities Strategy, the Council's obligations under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Act 1998 and the work of the Safer Communities Partnership.

8.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

8.5.1 No direct implications arising from the Human Rights Act.

8.6 TRADE UNION

8.6.1 No direct Trade Union implications arise from this report.

8.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

8.7.1 The pilot Tong Ward Forum will help inform the Ward, Area and Service planning process.

8.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

8.8.1 The Tong Ward Forum will assist in the development of priorities for the Tong Ward Plan and Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14.

9. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The views and comments Bradford South Area Committee are requested.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Tong Ward Forum Programme.

Appendix 2 - Facilitators' Guidance Notes.

Appendix 3 - Cleaner Greener (Environment) Workshop Discussions.

Appendix 4 - Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic) Workshop Discussions.

Appendix 5 - Inequalities (Education/Health) Workshop Discussions.

TONG WARD FORUM 2012

Monday 10th September 2012, 7: 00pm
The Gateway Centre Vulcan Street BD4 9QU

Identifying the top priorities across the Tong Ward

18.45	Registration
19.00	Housekeeping ~ Rada Mijailovic
19.05	Welcome & Introduction The Aims and Purpose of the Tong Ward Forum Rada Mijailovic
19.10	First Session Cleaner Greener (Environment) Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic) Inequalities (Education/Health)
19.30	Second Session Cleaner Greener (Environment) Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic) Inequalities (Education/Health)
19.50	Third Session Cleaner Greener (Environment) Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic) Inequalities (Education/Health)
20.15	Summary and Close John Breen
20.30	Finish
	Evaluation Forms ~ Please leave completed evaluation forms in the box provided by the main exit door. Note: Facilitator/Ward Councillor/Advisor will move from your allocated group to provide you all the opportunity to participate in each theme.

**TONG WARD FORUM SEPTEMBER 10th 2012
FACILITATORS' GUIDANCE NOTES**

PURPOSE: TO IDENTIFY PRIORITIES FOR THE WARD ACTION PLAN

1. Cleaner Greener (Environment)

Facilitator: Marie Copley

Ward Councillor: Alan Wainwright

Advisors: Phil Barker (Assistant Director, Sport & Leisure Service)

Note Taker: Rachel Broadhead

2. Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic)

Facilitator: Mohammed Taj

Ward Councillor: John Ruding

Advisors: Inspector Andrew Addy /Darren Badrock (Principal Traffic Engineer)

Note Taker; Matthew Bibby

3. Inequalities (Education/Health)

Facilitator: John Breen

Ward Councillor: Michael Johnson

Advisors: Julie Jenkins, (Assistant Director-Children's Specialist Services)

Note Taker: Sarah Butterworth

Attendees will be allocated number 1 2 or 3 as they arrive at registration.
Facilitators/Ward Councillors/Advisors/Note Takers will move to each group after the allotted time i.e. 20 minutes for each group.

Format of the forum will be explained at the outset by Rada Mijailovic

Remember:

To invite the group to identify local priorities and key concerns across local neighbourhoods that will inform the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan for the Tong Ward

Why it is important for you?

What needs to be done to achieve it?

What could be the obstacles?

How might they be overcome?

Rada Mijailovic/Arshad Mahmood will collect your priorities as you finish each session for the feedback at the close of the forum.

Cleaner Greener (Environment) Workshop Discussions

7 residents from Holme Wood, Shetcliffe Lane, Bierley and Westgate Hill.

Phil Barker explained the 3 issues on the action plan.

- Reduce litter across the Ward
- Reduce fly tipping in hot spot areas including derelict land
- Increase recycling across the Ward

Phil asked the residents to expand on the action plan as to what they thought were the main concerns for the Ward.

- Fawcett Place snicket is overgrown with trees and footpath full of dog fouling.

Phil asked whether snickets in the Ward were generally in this state and would residents like to put this down as a priority for the Ward.

- Vegetation obscuring road signs
- Grass verges not cut near Tong Cemetery and Westgate Hill
- Grass cut and not collected, getting blown on to path which is causing a slipping hazard
- When the grass is cut, then all the litter in it is not collected – Holme Lane
- Horses on recreational ground, horse manure on footpaths

The 3 priorities for Group 1:

1. Horses on recreational grounds
2. Grass cutting
3. Litter

Group 2

10 residents from Holme Wood, Shetcliffe Lane, and New Toftshaw.

Phil Barker explained the 3 issues on the action plan and the 3 priorities that Group 1 had come up with. Phil described other areas which may be of concern to the Ward such as play areas, fly tipping, graffiti and anti social behaviour.

Items discussed:

- Snicket leading from Shetcliffe Lane to Bierley, the path is uneven due to tree roots
- Footpath leading to Knowleswood School is overgrown
- Grassed areas need cutting
- A lot of litter created by the shops on Holme Wood
- General lack of respect from residents for the area
- Lack of environmental education
- More litter bins required
- Bin men not returning bins to the relevant properties
- Bin men coming before 7am
- Clothes and mattress have been dumped on the footpath on Vulcan Street

- Fly tipping on Shetcliffe Lane and Tong Lane
- Resident suggested a recycle centre in the neighbourhood (i.e. a large communal bin)

The 3 priorities for Group 2:

1. Litter
2. Fly tipping
3. Recycling

Group 3

8 residents from Tennis Avenue, Holme Wood and Tong Village.

Phil Barker explained the 3 issues on the action plan and the 3 priorities that Group 1 and Group 2 had come up with. Phil described other areas which may be of concern to the Ward such as play areas, fly tipping, graffiti, wheelie bins and anti social behaviour.

Items discussed:

- There is no play area for children in Tong Village
- Field on St. Margaret's and Vulcan Street has had clothes and mattress dumped on it
- Not enough residents recycle
- Bins get stolen and residents have to pay for a replacement
- Fly tipping would be reduced if vans were allowed to enter tips
- Resident rang council to get some items removed and the council could not find their address on the system, so this could not be done – Tennis Avenue
- Horses in play areas
- Some public rights of way aren't accessible
- Tong Street very congested leading to pollution

The 3 priorities for Group 3:

1. Use of tips for vans
2. Lack of play areas
3. Pollution

Safer Communities (Crime/Traffic) Workshop Discussions

First Session:

The 4 key priorities identified for Safer Communities are:

- 1) To reduce incidents of criminal damage
- 2) To reduce incidents of Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)
- 3) To reduce incidents of domestic burglary
- 4) To increase percentage of people who are satisfied in the public services dealing with crime and ASB.

Items discussed:

- local residents stated that there have been some improvements within the area in the last 12 months
- like the concept of the forum
- fears that ASB is growing in the area
- shopping areas within Holme Wood problem after 6pm - youths are gathering (nuisance/using foul language/litter)
- a good team of litter pickers who work in the area
- extra signs in place stating that police patrol the area may help
- more visible police presence would also help
- travellers in Knowles Park

Second Session

The 4 key priorities identified for Safer Communities are:

- 1) To reduce incidents of criminal damage
- 2) To reduce incidents of Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)
- 3) To reduce incidents of domestic burglary
- 4) To increase percentage of people who are satisfied in the public services dealing with crime and ASB.

Items discussed

- Domestic violence issues on the estate
- Break-ins to properties
- Spending cuts for the Police
- More uniformed presence on the streets
- Role of Council Wardens

Third Session

The 4 key priorities identified for Safer Communities are:

- 1) To reduce incidents of criminal damage
- 2) To reduce incidents of Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)
- 3) To reduce incidents of domestic burglary
- 4) To increase percentage of people who are satisfied in the public services dealing with crime and ASB.

- Police need more powers re underage offences
- Police doing more Education work with youths

- More visible police presence needed
- Some residents said that PCSOs have been very visible in Holme Wood, less so at Ferrand Avenue and Denbrook Ave.
- issues with noise pollution, people partying until 3am or later
- Snickets at Fawcett Avenue need cleaning
- a big issue with quad bikes this summer on Bierley House Avenue.
- Police need intelligence from the public

Inequalities (Education/Health) Workshop Discussions

Julie Jenkins gave a brief overview of the aims of tonight's discussion and explained the statistics featured in the Tong Ward Assessment in relation to Inequalities in Education and Health. Cllr Johnson confirmed stats for GCSE results were for children living in the Ward not necessarily schooled within Tong.

Group 1

What issues are important to you?

- The difference between primary and secondary attainment figures
- Improvements needed across the ward
- Pupils progress behind national median
- Discipline

What can be done to achieve it?

- Keeping schools focussed from Primary to Secondary
- Homework levels
- Variety – Apprenticeships (qualifications are key)
- Discipline in schools and home
- Parental Involvement
- Mentoring for children moving from Primary to secondary

What could be the obstacles?

- Motivation (current economy and jobs market)
- Attendance levels
- School days too short – children too much time on their hands

How might they be overcome?

- Reward systems for good behaviour
- Change school days (e.g. France)

Group 2

What issues are important to you?

- Respect – for themselves, parents and system
- Children's ability to read and write
- Discipline

What can be done to achieve it?

- Mentoring – extra help
- Ways to support weaker children
- Look at transition from primary to secondary
- Trained reading volunteers

What could be the obstacles?

- Schools too big
- Too many rights for pupils within schools
- Schools (especially secondary) as more business orientated
- Struggling children are let down

- Parents unaware of syllabus

How might they be overcome?

- Breakdown of schools within schools
- Too much attention paid to gifted and talented
- Longer term apprenticeships

Group 3

What issues are important to you?

- 11-15 age group out of school activities
- Respect both ways

What can be done to achieve it?

- Look at schemes available
- Ensure the work is interesting
- Good social environment
- Good parenting – family showing an interest
- Motivation
- Encourage parental involvement

What could be the obstacles?

- Presumptions on children from estates
- Lack of jobs
- Facilities for 15-18 year olds
- Expense
- Length of apprenticeships
-

How might they be overcome?

- Opportunities to bring people together
- Engage 11-15 year olds