

WENTWORTH CENTRAL AREA ASSEMBLY
held at Kilnhurst Community Resource Centre
on Wednesday, 31st July, 2002

Present:-

Councillor K. Goulty	Ward 17 (Rawmarsh West)(in the Chair)
Mrs. H. Anderson	Resident
Mrs. M. Ball	Area Assembly Support Officer, RMBC
Mr. A. Barnfield	Manor Farm Tenants and Residents Association
Mr. P. Beech	Wardens Unit, RMBC
Councillor J. Carr	Ward 17 (Rawmarsh West)
Mrs. J. Cromack	Democratic Services Officer, RMBC
Ms. J. Curran	Community Planning Officer, RMBC
Mr. M. Durham	Rawmarsh and Parkgate Partnership
R. D. Evans	Resident
Mr. W. Farrier	Manor Farm Tenants and Residents Association
Mrs. P. Frith	Resident
Mr. E. Frost	Resident and Rawmarsh Hall Sub-Group
Mr. M. Gazur	Resident
Mr. D. Greenway	Wentworth Central Community Fund
Mr. P. Padfield	Wardens Unit, RMBC
Mr. J. Parks	Neighbourhood Wardens, RMBC
Mr. J. Robinson	Manor Farm Tenants and Residents Association
Mr. A. Shaw	Area Assembly Officer, RMBC
Mr. G. Smith	Wardens Unit, RMBC
Mrs. P. Wilson	Resident
Councillor S. Wright	Ward 16 (Rawmarsh East)

Apologies:-

The A Team	
Mr. S. Abson	IDP Programme Manager, RMBC
Ms. R. Barley	Rawmarsh Against Tipping
Mrs. E. Booth	Chair, Rawmarsh and Parkgate Community Action
Group Mrs. A. Brown	Rawmarsh Youth Centre
Mr. M. Brown	Chair, Rawmarsh Hall Sub-Group
Mrs. H. Cahill	Rawmarsh and Parkgate Partnership
Mr. G. Canby	Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estates
Mrs. M. Frith	Resident
Mrs. J. Greenwood	Neighbourhood Warden Manager
Rev. J. Marsh	Rawmarsh Methodist Church
Mrs. S. Mason	Rawmarsh and Parkgate Partnership
Mr. D. Matthews	Resident
Mr. T. Powell	Youth Service, RMBC
Councillor G. A. Russell	Ward 16 (Rawmarsh East)
C. Searby	Primary Care Trust, Wentworth Locality
Councillor R. Stone	Ward 16 (Rawmarsh East)
Mrs. G. Stones	Resident
Miss L. Stones	Resident

M. Turton Primary Care Trust, Wentworth Locality
Mr. V. Ward Resident
Councillor G. Whelbourn Ward 17 (Rawmarsh West)

20. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

21. MINUTES OF THE AREA ASSEMBLY

Agreed: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June, 2002 be approved as a correct record.

22. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Telecommunications Mast/Rawmarsh Baths Site

The Chairman reported that this Area Assembly's representations regarding the telecommunications mast and the lease renewal had again been sent to the new Executive Director, Economic and Development Services.

Mr. Frost referred to the deeds for Rawmarsh Baths Site, of which he had a copy, and he stated that there appeared to be differences in it to the copy held by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. He added according to his copy there were several covenants on that land, including that the land should be a permanent memorial for the officers and men who served in the First World War.

The Chairman said, that those differences apart, the Area Assembly needed to concentrate and focus on what it wanted to see done with the land. He said that once the Community Trust was formed it could seek funding. Also he had suggested that the area should be developed along similar lines to the gardens at Kilnhurst and Swinton.

Alan Shaw added that a letter had been sent to the Comprehensive School to engage the school children in the consultation regarding the Peace/Memorial Garden. However, there would be no further progress until the Trust was formed and until the new school term.

Agreed: That the Executive Director, Economic and Development Services, be requested to provide up to date information about the telecommunications mast on the former Rawmarsh Baths site for the next meeting.

(ii) Anti Social Behaviour

A request was made to see the minutes of the meeting of the Anti-Social Behaviour Sub-Group.

The Chairman replied that those minutes were not intended for publication, but to inform the response to the Government's consultation paper. No response from the DTLR had yet been received.

He added that this was the only Area Assembly to take up this issue, and efforts were being made to make it high profile. The making of Anti Social Behaviour Orders would be reported in the press to give the message that the Council would clamp down on anti social behaviour.

It was explained that the timescale for the response had been critical. Alan Shaw read the following response which was sent to the DTLR based on the comments from the confidential meeting held with the members of Manor Farm Community and the Police:-

"There is a keen desire to tackle anti social behaviour in Rotherham by the majority of the respectable law abiding citizens in the Wentworth Constituency, which covers my part of Rotherham and indeed across the other two Parliamentary Constituencies.

The active citizens who support the Wentworth Central Area Assembly have become very proactive in gathering evidence and proposing solutions, to tackle the anti social problems and are currently working with the Chairman of this assembly, (Councillor Keith Goulty) key officers from Housing Services, Environmental Health Services, Social Services and the Police. The main objective is to encourage the Council to re align its services to have more impact in resolving anti social activities.

Our response to the paper, focuses on section one, SPEEDING UP EVICTIONS. The general consensus is that enough legislation is already in place to take positive action by Social Landlords in the existing legislation, but we welcome improvements and simplifications proposed in the other sections of the document.

1:2.1 We support the starter tenancy scheme and would welcome the re introduction of the concept at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

We support the Government's three alternative proposals generally and in proposal No 1, we strongly agree with the advantages outlined. In alternative proposal No 2, we agree that Social Landlords should be able to demote a tenant to an introductory tenancy without recourse to the courts. We agree with alternative proposal No 3 that Local Authorities should be able to seek an immediate possession warrant where there has been a breach of an injunction. Finally we agree with the Option-Break clauses that concludes this section."

Those present discussed the Council's allocation of tenancies, both temporary and secure, and referred to the allocation policies of Housing Associations. The process of evictions, the legalities involved and court proceedings were also mentioned.

The Chairman stated that it was his intention to meet with the new Executive Director, Housing and Environmental Services, hopefully prior to him taking up the post, and he and Alan Shaw would discuss the interest shown by this Area Assembly in the issue of anti social behaviour.

He reassured those present that the issue continued to be actively pursued and that it was hoped that there may soon be legislation in place.

Agreed: That the Area Assembly send a message to the Cabinet and Council to support the pursuance of a zero approach to Anti Social Behaviour.

23. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed John Parks, Neighbourhood Warden, following his return to work after illness.

Mr. Parks asked each of the three newly appointed Neighbourhood Wardens to introduce themselves and explain the areas in which they would be working.

He added that the new Wardens were currently undergoing training, and that the Service would be at operational complement as from 12th August, 2002.

He explained that the services would cover Rawmarsh East and West, Kilnhurst, Parkgate, Thrybergh and Dalton, and that the hours to be worked were Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m, and 8 a.m to 12 o'clock on Saturday.

He reported that, since commencing operation, the total number of complaints received to date was 340, 40 of which were complaints about graffiti and 94 were anti-social behaviour reports. 33 complaints were about discarded syringes and a total of 100 syringes had been removed. The remaining 173 reports were a mixture of environmental issues e.g. fly tipping, furniture dumping, street lighting failures, drug related issues, found property and general nuisance. He added that the Service was expecting an increase in complaints once all the staff were on patrol.

In terms of the time involved to solve the complaints it usually took up to two weeks to deal with abandoned vehicles. Graffiti was dealt with quickly once the Graffiti Removal Team was in the area.

Discussion focussed on evidence, police presence, prosecutions, sentencing and deterrents, and the need to change the law to make it more difficult for youngsters to buy aerosol paints.

Incidents of air rifles at Haugh Road were reported and requests for removal of graffiti from the buildings in the Park prior to the Fun Day on 11th August and at sites on Haugh Road and Napton Avenue were made.

Agreed:- That the Area Assembly send a letter to the M.P.'s urging the Government to alter the legislation regarding the sale of aerosols.

24. RAWMARSH AND PARKGATE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

(i) Graffiti Removing Machine

Mel Durham reported that funding had been obtained to buy a graffiti-removing machine. It was proposed to employ people from the Intermediate Labour Market, through Phoenix Enterprises Ltd, and train them to use the machine to tackle graffiti. This team could also be made available for hire to other areas and organisations in the Borough for a charge, which would help to make it sustainable. Money could therefore be drawn from Objective 1.

There were still issues of where the machine would be stored, insurance and health and safety aspects to be resolved. The Neighbourhood Warden Manager had been asked to look for areas where the machine could be tested out using a variety of surfaces.

(ii) Partnership Office, Bellows Road

The office was not yet open due to a delay with the decorating. The Development Planning Manager, Steve Abson, was to meet representatives from Objective 1 to discuss the three year delivery plan and the projects which had been put forward.

(iii) Rosehill Victoria Park**- Fun Day**

Organisation for this event on 11th August, 2002 was well on its way.

- “Friends of” Victoria/Rosehill Park

This group had now adopted a Constitution and was looking for new members. The formation of the group would help to attract funding, and the group was working closely with the Council to take over the hall on a long-term lease, and using and developing the facilities for the community. A feasibility study and action plan had yet to be produced.

25. RAWMARSH AGAINST TIPPING: HOTSPOT MONEY AND SKIPS**- Hotspots**

Alan Shaw, Area Assembly Officer, reported that in the previous two years RAT had been very pro-active in how the Hotspot money had been spent. The fund for 2002/2003 was £5,000. Ideas included protecting green spaces through the installation of stiles to prevent motorcycle access; the provision of litter and dog-waste bins etc.

RAT had begun to spend this year's allocation and a litterbin had been placed at the junction of Kilnhurst Road opposite St. Nicholas Road, thus £400 had already been spent.

Those present were reminded of the need to put forward further ideas for using this money as soon as possible.

A request was made for a quarterly statement of what money had been spent on what items.

Reference was made to the cleansing frequency of emptying litter and dog bins, particularly in the area of Manor Farm and Thorogate.

Agreed: (a) That a quarterly statement of account be provided.

(b) That the Area Assembly Officer visit the areas identified with local residents.

- Community Skips

Alan Shaw reported that the Area Assembly had a total of thirty skips available (15 per Ward). Only 4 had so far been allocated, leaving a total of 26 to be allocated.

Those present were reminded of the need for supervision for the skips and were asked to look for areas to target which did not have an active community group.

26. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Refuse Collection and Recycling Services

Alan Shaw referred those present to the information about the above services which was contained in the information pack now tabled.

(ii) Traffic Calming, Haugh Road

Alan Shaw referred to information from Nigel Davey, Engineering Service, relating to the results of the consultation process regarding the above scheme.

A copy was also included in the information pack.

(iii) Community Planning

Alan Shaw reported that, as part of the Government's strategy, Local Authorities were required to prepare Community Plans. This Area Assembly needed to produce a draft by the Autumn 2002 and it was proposed that he and Janice Curran, Community Planning Officer, give a presentation to the next meeting.

(iv) Fun Day

Reference was made to the Fun Day that had been arranged to take place on Saturday, 11th August, 2002 in Rosehill Victoria Park.

Further details were available in the information pack.

It was also reported that Janice Curran, Community Planning Officer, would be carrying out a tabletop exercise on Community Planning at this event.

(v) Yellow Lines on Bellows Road

Mr. Frost referred to on-going problems with the yellow lines on Bellows Road.

Agreed: That a site visit by the Chairman, Alan Shaw, and Mr. Frost, together with officers from the Engineering Services be arranged.

(vi) Rawmarsh Shopping Centre

It was reported that the supermarket was using advertising boards to block several of the car parking spaces in order that deliveries could be made via the front of the store due to the frequent breakdown of the lift at the rear of the premises.

Regarding the future development of the Shopping Centre, it was reported that the centre was now in new ownership and the Chairman and Area Assembly Officer were trying to arrange a meeting to discuss their future proposals for the centre.

Agreed: (a) That the Chairman check the details of the planning permission.

(b) That a meeting be arranged with the Manager of the store.

(vii) Bailey Suite – Disposal of Furniture

Mrs. Anderson asked that if the furniture at the Bailey Suite was to be disposed of could consideration be given to some of it being made available for the British Legion.

Agreed: That the Town Hall Manager be asked to note this Area Assembly's request that if there is any disposal of furniture from the Bailey Suite then the Rawmarsh and Parkgate British Legion be looked upon favourably.

(viii) Wentworth Central Community Fund

Mr. Greenway reported that £2,000 had been allocated to the above fund and a meeting was planned for 23rd September, 2002.

(ix) The Old Rectory, Rawmarsh Hill

Mr. Farrier asked about the timescales involved in the Council taking action regarding the above premises.

Alan Shaw replied that the problem was that this building was not in Council ownership. However, the Council did have some powers regarding Listed Buildings and contact had been made with Chris Drage, the Council's Conservation Officer. Also contact had been made by South Yorkshire Buildings Preservation Trust which had expressed initial interest in acquiring the building.

It was therefore proposed to have a meeting on site with all parties concerned, together with any interested local people, to be followed by a further discussion to be held at the Dale Road Centre.

(x) Heavy Lorries using Westfield Road

The increasing amount of traffic using Westfield Road, and the number of refuse vehicles and lorries using this road was reported.

Residents were suggesting making the road one-way, and a letter was being compiled about the problems which they intended to send to the Council.

Agreed: That the Engineering Service be requested to investigate this issue and report back to this Area Assembly.

(xi) Rawmarsh Housing Office – Staffing Difficulties

It was reported that due, to holidays and sickness, there appeared to be a shortage of staff at the Rawmarsh Housing Office.

Agreed: That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services be made aware of this Area Assembly's concern about the staffing level at the District Office.

(xii) Bus Services

Those present were encouraged to obtain, complete and return the comments/complaints form, which was available from the Travel Centres, about the bus services in the area.

Reference was made to waiting times, unreliable services and vehicles, subsidised bus passes, passenger numbers, provision for families and disabled.

(xiii) Dale Road/Blyth Avenue – traffic flow

It was suggested that a left-hand filter lane was needed from Dale Road onto Blyth Avenue in order to improve traffic flow at this junction. Kerb mounting at this location was causing concern and it was thought that widening the junction would help to improve pedestrian safety.

Agreed:- That the Engineering Service be requested to investigate this issue and provide a report back to this Area Assembly.

(xiv) Rawmarsh Leisure Centre/Rawmarsh Baths Site

Concern was expressed that people might lose interest if these issues were not progressed shortly.

The Chairman reported that it was intended that once the Community Development Trust was established then that body could look at both of these sites. The timescale for its formation was imminent, following which a further meeting would be arranged with Groundwork Dearne Valley,

Phoenix Enterprises Ltd and Morthyng and members of the Trust to discuss funding and the way forward.

27. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed: That the next scheduled meeting be held at the Manor Farm Community Centre on Wednesday, 25th September, 2002 at 4.30 p.m.