

Walmgate Community Association

Minutes of meeting held 27 September 2023 1800-1930

Location: St Denys's Church Hall

Proceedings

- Sarah Friar opened the meeting as Chair.

Apologies for Absence

- Apologies for absence from James Flinders, Chris Donegani, and Councillor Rachel Melly.

Election of committee members

- Adam Parfitt elected to the Committee, proposed by Sarah Friar and seconded by Maureen O'Hare.
- Jennie Howells elected to the Committee, proposed by Sarah Friar and seconded by Jose Knowles.

Meetings

- Discussion on the amenity of current monthly meeting arrangements from various perspectives.

Treasury

- Charlette Sheil-Small reported on Treasury business.
- Still no access to on-line banking.
- Possibility of switching banks.

Agenda

Priorities for WCA in 2022/2023

Crime and antisocial behaviour

Report from Councillor Merrett

A note from Councillor Merrett was circulated before the meeting. This report informed the discussion at the meeting, and is replicated in full below.

- Unacceptable anti-social behaviour and street drinking - unfortunately the only way to curb this behaviour is to report any incidents - which we know is tedious and time consuming, but it is the only way the police can identify the hot spots.

Walmgate shopping area

Further update for you on some of the street issues near the parade of shops in Walmgate past Margaret street:

- The city centre police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) have added the Walmgate area on as a hotspot/daily tasking for our early shifts between 8am-9pm in addition to the efforts in Stonebow, Hungate, St Saviourgate, etc.
- So across the 3 shifts of staff at North St this will get more attention now along with enforcing any conditions of the City Centre PSPO you mention.
- The sergeant did a walkabout with the PCSOs and saw the area we reported on behalf of local residents in Albert street which was littered with smashed bottles, empty cans of super strength Lager from one of the Walmgate shops.
- They went to the shop to speak to them but received a negative response. They're going to take this up further with their Licencing team and CYC to see if they can tidy the area up.
- They also identified the area where the street drinkers sit between 8am-9am which was the particular time we have had complaint about. Equally the Sergeant said if they go into Bretgate courtyard or anywhere else nearby, if your sources are not reporting on 101, it would be helpful if they could do so. It's just with competing priorities the SNT may not be there when it is happening, but react to what is reported on 101 so they are more likely to grip the issue quicker if people report problems.
- If any of your sources would like to email us about ongoing issues not requiring a call to 101 or 999, they can email snayorkcity@northyorkshire.police.uk and we will treat anything they tell us confidentially and respond to them directly. They just need to make sure if it is a crime or incident personally affecting them, as opposed to a general ongoing issue, that they call 101 or 999 as this email is only to reach the Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- Finally I'd say the three of us are conscious that this is not just a policing issue, and are considering what other steps can be done to help the individuals who've been causing some of the problems too.

PCSO Julian Ward Police Community Support Officer, North Yorkshire Police.

- PCSO Julian Ward Police Community Support Officer, North Yorkshire Police, provided the meeting with an update on recent police activities.
- He repeated previous advice that calls to the police to report crime and anti-social behaviour at the time of need.
- The police website is the better alternative to 101 calls.
- He commented on Robinson Court and Changing Lives oversight of resident's conduct.

Discussion

- There was lengthy discussion at the meeting revolving around issues raised by Councillor Merrett's and PCSO Ward's briefings in regard to the Walmgate shopping area and Robinson Court
- There was also a discussion about the Speculation Street area.

Action

- **Extension of Walmgate shopping area designation as a Hot Spot beyond the current 0800-0900 time period would improve police reaction capability.**

- **Changing Lives supervisors are to be contacted by PCSO Ward with a view to improving oversight of resident's conduct at Robinson Court.**
- **Robinson Court supervisors to be invited to next WCA open meeting.**

Commenting on developments and planning

Update on planning:

- A note from Chris Donegani was circulated before the meeting.
- This report informed the discussion at the meeting, and is replicated in full below

23/01647/FULM

- Enterprise Rent-a-car site , Foss Island Road
- Refused plans resubmitted again with little changes. One room on each floor designated a common room - no real gain, badly located. Car parking at front re-arranged - but achieves very little improvement.
- No changes in building size or massing - still too large for site, particularly at the rear.

23/01012/FUL

- Penny's 72 Walmgate.
- Extension of time agreed for further noisier assessment of noise from proposed flue.

Other matters:

Castle Mills Site

- There was a discussion about the Catle Mills Site development.
- Problem still with contractor noise, generator and hours of use.
- Still no planning permission or CEMP provided.
- Again it is in the Piccadilly AQMA.
- CYC has taken no action for the protection of residents from unseen particularly emissions.
- Unacceptable early morning work on The Castle Mills Site.

Action:

- **Councillor Merrett to investigate.**

Tramways Club, Mill Street 21/01045/FULM

- **Councillor Merrett provided an update on Tramways development.**

- Still ongoing.
- Many objections (two petitions with several hundred name), quite a few details still to be resolved. Note this in in the Piccadilly AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) but not provision for protection of residents from pollution proposed.

Action:

- **Should WCA asked for it to be "called in"?**

Swinson House

- Discussion about Swinson House demolition and redevelopment.
- New plan for the demolition of Swinson House with proposed road closures.
- Agate Hotels are now the current owners and no longer North Star.
- Demolition expected by Christmas, followed by 2-year construction programme.
- Concern about extremely restricted access and the negative impact this will have on residents plus other users of the area.
- The two storey welfare unit is also another area of concern.
- It is understood that CYC have not yet approved these plans.
- Cllr Merrett has been previously contacted with a request that he look into this.

The 'last mile delivery' hub

- Discussion of last mile delivery' hub on 107 -109 Walmgate.
- City of York Council is to set up a trial for a 'last mile delivery' hub on 107 -109 Walmgate,
- WCA has not received any information and there has been no consultation with local residents, businesses etc.

Background

- Companies delivering to York businesses will be encouraged to get their parcels sent to a delivery hub near the city walls in a bid to cut air pollution and congestion.
- City of York Council is to set up a trial for a 'last mile delivery' hub which will see parcels then delivered into the city centre and surrounding areas on foot and cargo bikes.
- The city has been given £285,000 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for the project.
- The council has identified one of its own buildings, 107-109 Walmgate, as a suitable delivery hub for the nine month pilot, which is set to begin in September.
- Delivery operators such as Amazon, Royal Mail, Hermes and DPD were surveyed as part of a feasibility study and the council will now look to sign operators and city centre businesses up to the trial.

- Cllr Andy D’Agorne, executive member for transport, said: “It sounds very exciting and encouraging. We regularly discuss the constraints of a tight city centre.
- “Increased last mile delivery is certainly something I think the city is going to welcome and benefit from.”
- Labour’s transport spokesperson, Cllr Rachel Melly, said: “Freight accounts for one third of all transport carbon emissions and van traffic has doubled in the 25 years leading up to 2019, so the council looking at alternatives is long overdue.
- “Other cities are ahead of York on this, so I’ll hope you’ll learn from other places that have operated these sorts of distribution hubs.
- “I support this trial in principle but I feel it will be a missed opportunity unless more work is done on realising the potential benefits.”
- Cllr Melly also said the scheme should look to include pick-ups as well as drop-offs, which the council’s head of highways and transport, Dave Atkinson, said would be possible if companies agreed.
- “We will seek to monitor other benefits where we can as we undertake the trial,” he added.

Action:

- **Councillor Merrett to investigate.**

SPARK

- Discussion of SPARK developments.
- Planning permission ends in September 2024.
- There have been no bids for social housing to date.
- Council eliciting bids for future applications of the site.
- Outcomes may include social housing, as matters stand.

Air quality control

- Discussion of Air Quality control developments both locally (specifically Castle Mills Site) and city-wide.

Action:

- **Councillor Merrett to investigate both air quality and noise pollution issues.**

Working with the City of York Council on improving the area

- Shiona Marsh York City Council briefed the meeting on CYC Ward Priorities.
- Funding details for city-wide and ward allocations under this scheme were provided.

CYC Ward Priorities

- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Tackling the Cost-of-Living crisis**
- **Environmental and Climate Emergency**
- **Equality of Opportunity**

CCTV

- There was discussion of traffic- and non-traffic CCTV city-wide and in the ward area.

Outdoor storage for bikes in Hope Street

- Further discussion of outdoor storage facilities for bikes in local Hope Street and adjacent properties.
- Lack of secure storage for cycles in some of the smaller / older blocks of flats
- Funding possibilities discussed.

Calder House

- Further discussion of abuse of alley thoroughfares in local Hope Street and adjacent properties.
- Alleyway between Calder House and Hope Street - antisocial behavior, lack of gardening and maintenance to the fences.
- Neglect of hedges, litter etc across the area.

Recycling

- Lack of progress with RECYCLING in York - the packaging / containers, many more products have the recycling symbol but CYC will only take plastic bottles.

Action

- **Walkabout with the Local Councillors, PCSO, HMO and WCA to be investigated.**
- **Councillors to be apprised of Hope Street and Calder House neighbourhood amenity issues relating to abuse of alley thoroughfares.**
- **Councillor Merrett to follow-up.**

Urban gardening

- New raised bed for plants at St Denys's Hall,
- Neglect of hedges, litter etc across the area.

Better links with local businesses and other organisations

- Jose Knowles reported on recent activities at St Denys's Church Hall.
- The weekly Wednesday and Thursday gatherings are well supported.

- New Friday afternoon weekly initiative planned with focus on IT, arts and crafts training.
- Monthly movie show planned for Saturdays.

Date of next meeting

- Fourth Wednesday of month.
- October 25 2023, at 6pm, St Denys Church Hall.
- November 22 2023, at 6pm, St Denys Church Hall,

Attendance

Committee members

Sarah Friar (Chair)

Charlette Sheil-Small

Jose Knowles

Digby Waller

Residents

Maureen O'Hare

Paul Ellison

Adam Parfitt

Jennie Howells

Councillors and Officials

Councillor Dave Merrett Guildhall Ward

Councillor Tony Clarke Guildhall Ward

Siobhan Moore York City Council

Shiona Marsh York City Council

PCSO Julian Ward Police Community Support Officer, North Yorkshire Police