



WOLVERHAMPTON OVER 50s FORUM

Secretary: Mr. Roy Girdler

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SPEAK AND BE HEARD

Minutes of Over 50s Forum Held on Wednesday
20th September 2006 Committee Room 3 Civic Centre

Apologies: Mr J Speakman, Mr & Mrs Russell, Mrs S Carnie, Mrs O Reid, Mr E Grizzle, Mr K Pearce, Barbara Nelson

Present: 30 Members, Rose Powell

Item		Actions
1	<p>Diane Cook brought two copies of the new A-Z of services and asked that the forum members used one to write on and feedback to them any problems, anything they particularly like about the new format, to help with the next re print.</p>	
	<p>Jeanette Mason - Sector Manager gave a talk on the proposed changes to domiciliary care. The proposal being that the In house service picks up all initial assessments and takes on a 'Gatekeeping' role, for a maximum of six weeks, during that time all service users will be assessed, have an intensive service and then be moved onto the private sector. Questions followed.</p> <p>Q. Is there provision for inspections of the private sector services? We know there are times when the private sector don't stay for their allotted time, this is very concerning. There are two methods of inspection both in house and independent now carried out; by CSCI and our contracts monitoring team. This is a team of officers who carry out surveillance.</p> <p>Q. Provision by in house service for up to six weeks then passed to the private sector, do they have to pay for that service? Yes following a community care assessment but they have to pay now.</p> <p>Q. What is the time scale for achieving these changes? The next stage following the consultation is that it goes back to cabinet probably in November and should be in place by the first of April, but there is the chance of the timescales slipping.</p> <p>Age Concern – There are currently difficulties in providing domiciliary care, are you confident that the independent sector will be able to meet the needs?</p>	

Service specifications are agreed and they have to meet them, every week we get confirmation of hours provided and capacity they have. This shows that they have the ability to meet the needs.

Q. How much will you be saving?

A significant amount

Q. Are these cuts the result of the failure of Councillors in the past? I am sure that despite cutting services they will give themselves a nice rise. There are cut backs across all departments.

Q. If employee and transport costs need to be cut, how then, will you manage to increase face to face contact?

By getting staff to work differently possibly from home, having smaller programmes and by asking staff how we can improve.

- ◆ We feel that the decision on this has already been made and that the consultation process will not change anything. We all need to write to Rose individually and as a group. This is just a cost cutting exercise and an unfair comparison is being made with local authorities and private sector, private sector is only in this business for the money.

Steve Ottewell from PMP Consultancy - are carrying out an audit for the City Council and asking people what they want from open spaces, sport and recreation. Local planners can then look at plans for the next 10 – 15 years. They have already carried out an on street survey with 800 people. The key messages are that the quantity of open space is ok but the quality needs working on.

Q. Are school playing fields a part of the audit? We have major problems with these being sold off and built on.

There has been a u turn by the City Council, they have previously built on open spaces but now recognise the need to keep and maintain them.

- ◆ One of the problems with our open spaces are that they are used by drug users, drunks and people exhibiting anti social behaviour. Unfortunately instead of tackling these problems, the council close the facilities.

Part of the audit is to find out what open spaces are used for.

- ◆ East Park is known as the secondary park in the City, but it has been starved of money. Older people won't use green spaces due to the fear of crime, Park Watch was started by this council and was a brilliant success. It has been adopted nationally, but Wolverhampton has put the brakes on even though it was developed here.

Q. Do you visit every site, count trees etc? Tettenhall Pool area has also been neglected. Is this audit just a covert way to find green spaces to build on?

	<p>We have 1000 open spaces mapped and available, we will make recommendations to the planners. The outcome of the study will be to find out what areas are actually valued and that people want to protect them.</p> <p>Q. Outside consultants have been used in both of today's presentations, why hasn't the City Council already got that information? Unless money is available nothing will change, people will continue to worry about crime and safety. We are worried about the trend of using consultants. The audit was provided by the Council, we are just checking if any of it has changed. It is purely an audit exercise looking at existing sites or lack of provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Along with open spaces and recreation sites, it is important to remember that all such areas need good toilet facilities, especially on park facilities. West Park has no toilets open except in the café which at times you are not allowed to use. ◆ Can we also remember the effect that losing open spaces has on wildlife. 	
2	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 20th September were amended to read item 7 that David Plant said that bus stands with incorrect information on had not been sorted. They were then agreed, proposed by Pat O'Dowd and seconded by David Plant.</p>	
3	<p>Matters Arising There were no matters arising.</p>	
4	<p>Chairman's Remarks Brad informed the forum of a programme of events at the Arena Theatre. Information distributed.</p>	
6	<p>Correspondence Information distributed about electric blanket checks being carried out by trading standards. A question was asked about whether there was a facility for housebound people to have blankets checked.</p>	Rose to check
7	<p>Health Sub Committee Marjorie has attended a meeting at Penn Hospital the independent review group to assess the new outreach service. Marjorie said that she was not convinced about the service but would be attending a further two meetings on this subject, she will keep forum informed.</p> <p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 18th October 2006, 10 am in Committee Room 3, Civic Centre.</p> <p>Speaker – Natalie Frazer – N Power Mervyn Davies – Skills into jobs</p>	