

Edgbaston Ward Forum Meeting: 27.03.2024

19:00h at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Present: Councillors Alden and Bennett
10 x residents (including JW)
Council Officer (did not note name)

Agenda

1. Standard notice of recording
2. Road Closures: The Great Birmingham Run: an information sheet was handed out with details of the route for the half marathon and 10k routes. The start is to be in Broad Street.
3. Local updates and information from Ward Councillors
 - 3.1. Birmingham City Council (BCC) Finances. Cllr Bennett (MB) said that two Section 114 notices were issued by BCC in 2023, that Commissioners had been appointed and that a new budget had been approved by the Council two weeks ago. Some consequences include:
 - 10% increase in Council Tax, service reductions including reduction of libraries from 36 to 11, adult and other social care reductions, possible general refuse collections every other week.
 - JW asked if a second general waste bin would be supplied to those requesting one. Cllr Alden (DA) said no. The idea was to improve recycling.
 - JW asked what would be done to combat fly tipping. DA said that there would still be a mobile waste centre and a street cleaning team available to the ward.
 - JW asked if there was a time limit for paying back the Government loan of £1.5 x10⁹ (1.5 billion) and what was the interest rate. MB said that the Government loan was available to be drawn on when required rather like a credit card, not as a lump sum transfer. MB did not know the interest rate.
 - 3.2. Our Future City. [Our Future City: Draft Central Birmingham Framework 2040 sets an ambitious and strategic vision for Central Birmingham to 2040 to create a fair, inclusive, and green place that benefits all Birmingham's communities] MB said that the plan would be voted on by the Cabinet, that Edgbaston is a sector of Central Birmingham covered by the plan and that the June Forum would include a presentation about the plan.
 - DA commented that a lot of high rise build to rent flats were included. An early example of this is Corkfield (375 build to rent flats) by the County Ground.
 - 3.3. Planning: DA reported:
 - 3.3.1. Five Ways Tower, Frederick Road along with the former DWP offices on Islington Road. The old DWP office is to be converted into student accommodation. Five Ways Tower is to be demolished and replaced with 3 or 4 blocks of build to rent flats
 - 3.3.2. Former HSBC building, Calthorpe Road. To be converted to student accommodation and a Hotel.
 - 3.3.3. Former Chamber of Commerce building, Highfield Road. To be converted to flats.
 - 3.3.4. Former 'Trees' site, Bristol Road. To be student flats.
 - 3.3.5. Newman House, Harrisons Road. Existing building to be replaced with a block of flats. A row of 'town houses to the scale of others in Harrisons Road' is to be added to the Harrisons Road frontage. DA said that Newman House would not be a polling station and that Chad Vale Primary School would be used.
 - 3.3.6. MB said that the following had been funded from the money available to the ward: Safety railings at the Norfolk Road/Westfield Road junction (an accident hotspot) and additional double yellow lines in the public highway section of Hawthorne Road (adjacent to Chad Square).

4. A.O.B.

- 4.1. JW asked about leaf clearing from pavements, gutter and drain gulley cleaning. DA said that the street cleaning team should have removed all leaves from pavements by now. Please report areas not cleaned to DA for her to arrange for the street cleaning team. DA said that the gutters and gulleys came under a different part of the Council and were no longer cleaned routinely. Please report gutters and gulleys to DA for her to request action.
- 4.2. A resident of a private road estate off Augustus Road reported having seen leaves being moved from private land onto the public footpath of Augustus Road by the grounds maintenance contractor. MB said that contact with the managing agent was needed. DA said that she had seen other similar incidents. JW said that during CRS litter picks, there was evidence of leaves having been moved to the public footpath. JW reminded the attendees that the occupier has the responsibility for dealing with all the leaves on the property.
- 4.3. The accident hotspot of the junction of St James's Road with Wheelleys Road was raised by a resident. DA reported that a thorough review of the junction had been made following a fatal accident a while ago and as a result, the road signs were improved. The resident asked why there were no traffic lights. DA said that it was likely that as the result of traffic modelling, it had been found that traffic could back up to the Middle Ring Road. DA said that speed bumps were not used on 'Blue Light' routes.
- 4.4. Hedge incursion over public footpaths was raised by a resident. DA said that procedure was to inform her and/or the District Engineer, Marie Brown so that a Formal letter from BCC can be sent requiring the hedge to be cut back. If action is not taken, BCC could do the work and charge the resident/landowner.
- 4.5. A resident asked about 'To Let' boards which were being displayed for long periods.
- 4.6. JW raised the topic of brsk telegraph poles and aerial wires covering the ward rather than using the existing underground network of ducts that were installed across the ward.

The meeting concluded with MB saying that the next Forum was proposed to be in June.

Notes prepared by J Worwood.

Official minutes were taken by the Council Officer present.

Go to https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50273/our_future_city_plan_ofcp/2303/our_future_city_-_draft_central_birmingham_2040 for the Our Future City page.