

DARLASTON TOGETHER

SUMMARY FROM THE MEETING ON 09.09.2023

Attended:

The Mayor of Walsall
The Mayoress of Walsall
Councillor Rose Burley
AM- member of the community
DA- member of the community
JT- member of the community
Natalie Harding- NHS Black Country ICB
Shazia Akram- Walsall Council
Neil Chambers- Chairman of Darlaston Town
1874 FC
Joe Clarke- The Church Junction 10
Tracey Simbi- Crucial Recycling
Kit Showande- Aspire4U C.I.C.
Sylwia Juranek- Reach For A Star C.I.C.

Apologies:

Councillor Angela Underhill
Councillor Chris Bott
Councillor Paul Bott
Simon Archer- Darlaston & Wednesbury Life
magazine
Diane- Asda Community Champion
Benjamin Williams- Kids In Communication
C.I.C.
Natalie Osborne- Lottery Heritage Fund
Daniel Turner- Walsall Council Business Growth
MB- member of the community
WC- member of the community
DA- member of the community
LG- member of the community & volunteer
BA- local sports organisation

We would like to Thank:

- ★ *Darlaston Town 1874 FC for providing the venue for the meeting free of charge*
- ★ *Asda for providing refreshments free of charge*



The Mayor of Walsall opened the meeting by saying:

*"I would like to thank you for inviting the Mayoress and I to be with you today.
I know it may be an obvious thing to say, but Businesses are so important to this Borough – as it is
Businesses that create the wealth and jobs for our residents.
So it is important that we help and support you as much as possible.
Years ago the Council was not recognised as a friend of Business, today it is a different story.
We have a Department that is there to support Businesses.
It is the Business Growth Team, and is lead by Daniel Turner.
You can contact him either on his mobile 07584 443838 or email: business@walsall.gov.uk*

*Incredibly, during the Pandemic that Team supported Local Businesses with £77 million pounds of
Grants - and to ensure we continue to show that support, the Council have introduced a Policy of
Local Business First. That means that when a Council Contract becomes available, a Local Company
will be considered first. To register to be considered, you need to go on to the Walsall Council
website and enter your details on Intend.
It is important that Businesses work together too. A lot of the issues that are there on a daily basis
are the same whatever the products or services you supply.
So Networking is important.
I personally run a Business Network Group called Gone Fishing 4 Business.
It has been operating in Walsall for 18 years, and meets on alternate Fridays at the Manor Farm
Centre in Rushall. Just to let you know I am holding a Joint Network event with The Best of Walsall
next Friday morning - we are expecting about 60 people. If you would like to join us please let me
know."*

Discussion:

During the meeting we discussed several topics and concerns:

- ★ Lack of opportunities for young people
- ★ Lack of employment opportunities
- ★ People have nothing to aspire to
- ★ Majority of volunteers in Darlaston are older people; young people don't think volunteering is "cool"
- ★ The slow pace of authorities, like NHS, in which they approve funding for programmes
- ★ How people feel about "Darlo"
- ★ Lack of good schools around
- ★ Litter
- ★ Crime rates
- ★ Impact of social media on young people and their mindset

- ★ Local residents are not aware of many things that are being organised for them, which are often free of charge
- ★ Marketing difficulties

What can the businesses do?

- ★ Implement social values policies & procedures
 - ★ Become community champions to raise awareness of opportunities and offer support to their employees and community
 - ★ Volunteer their time i.e. 1 hr a month to pick litter in the surrounding area
 - ★ Recruit locally
 - ★ Offer work placements & volunteering opportunities for young people
 - ★ Raise awareness of Darlaston to attract more attention
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- ★ Refresh/ paint their buildings

What can professionals do?

- ★ Agree to work faster to provide funding for local voluntary sector
- ★ Provide preventative measures before problems escalate
- ★ Focus on parents, children and young people

What can the schools do?

- ★ Work with the community
- ★ Organise litter picking events
- ★ Get involved in Heritage Projects (funding available)

What can the community do?

- ★ Support each other
- ★ Become volunteers and help local businesses
- ★ Get involved and provide ideas what we can do together
- ★ Litter pick

Together we can:

- ★ Get through to young people through social media (positive messages and marketing)
- ★ Plant more flowers in the area
- ★ Make the town look nicer
- ★ Celebrate what we already have i.e local artists
- ★ Celebrate famous people who come from Darlaston
- ★ Have more empathy for each other
- ★ Work towards changing mindset how everyone feels about Darlaston
- ★ Consider entering Darlaston in Bloom competition

Becoming Community Champions:

Community Champions can take advantage of

- ★ Mental Health First Aid Training- Free
- ★ Suicide Prevention Training- Free
- ★ Suicide Prevention Train the Trainer - Free
- ★ Cancer Champions Training - Free
- ★ Bus passes available
- ★ FreeLaptops, mobile phones and internet connection for families- free (eligibility criteria)Recovery College- Free
- ★ Community Interest Companies Projects - free- or very low fees
- ★ Walsall Works

“Research suggests that the presence of plants and greenery in urban environments can have positive effects on people's mood, well-being, and may contribute to a reduction in criminal activity. Studies have shown that access to green spaces can lead to improved mental health, reduced stress, and increased feelings of relaxation. Additionally, the visual appeal of plants and greenery can create a more pleasant and inviting atmosphere, which could potentially discourage criminal behaviour. However, while these effects are generally supported by various studies, the exact impact can vary based on factors like the type and arrangement of plants, the local community, and other environmental factors.”

Funding Opportunities:

Community Interest Companies are able to apply for grants to support the community with various activities. Community members need to come together to suggest what projects we can work on together:

- ★ Lottery Heritage Fund – application by 1st Nov’23 up to 100 k
- ★ IM Properties Community Fund - up to 2,5 k
- ★ Birmingham and Black Country Fund- up to 3k
- ★ and more

We agreed:

- ★ To promote free opportunities to make the community aware of them
- ★ Reach out to more businesses
- ★ Look into our marketing strategies
- ★ To continue Darlaston Together meetings
- ★ Kit Showande committed his support with marketing
- ★ Tracey Simbi committed to help with leaflets when needed
- ★ Sylwia Juranek committed to manage the project and organise future meetings
- ★ Junction 10 Church committed to organise litter picking events and get involved in planting flowers when ready



NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2023 at 10 am
VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED

Contact Details:

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