

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM
TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 7.00 P.M.
AT PROSPECT VILLAGE HALL, WILLIAMSON AVENUE, PROSPECT VILLAGE

PRESENT: Councillors

Mawle, D. L. (Chairman)
Jillings, J. F. (Vice-Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A. F. Bullock, L.W.
Bernard, J. D. Todd, Mrs. D. M.

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mrs. C. Bowker, Committee Officer
Mr. D. Hoare, Director of Service Improvement
Philippa Carr, Domestic Violence Co-ordinator

Also Present:-

Mr. N. Miller, Staffordshire County Council
Mandy Rollins, Chair of Chase PAIRS Inter Personal
Violence and Abuse Forum
Staffordshire Police

Local Residents (approximately 15)

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. P. A. Ansell, J. Beddows, K. L. Bennett, I. R. Carr, M. J. Holder, County Councillors J. Toth and S. Woodward,).

9. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 2 June 2008 were approved as a correct record.

10. Civil Parking Enforcement

The Forum received a presentation from Mr. N. Miller, Staffordshire County Council Highways Authority on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE).

It was explained that Cannock Chase Council would have powers for parking enforcement, with further powers for moving traffic offences to be announced by Central

Government. This would allow the Police to concentrate on criminality. There would be a penalty charge notice system for offences with motorists having a right of appeal to a Traffic Penalty Tribunal Adjudication Service.

It was envisaged that the improved parking enforcement would increase the number of tickets issued from 7,000 per year by the Police to 80,000 across Staffordshire, with 9,000 being issued in Cannock Chase. This would lead to a better environment and prepare the way for growth in traffic and provide vital support to public transport. CPE would be self financing and required a partnership approach. It was considered that the number of tickets issued would reduce in time as motorists became more aware of where they could and could not park.

Councils and their partners would decide the enforcement required and new traffic schemes would be introduced including Residents Parking Zones (RPZ's). RPZ's would ensure available kerb space was available for use by permit holders only and allow the CPE Parking Attendants to take action against inappropriate parking. This would assist in overcoming residents parking problems. There would be a charge of approximately £50 per year for the permit to contribute to the scheme and enforcement costs. Doctors and nurses would still be allowed to park freely.

Staffordshire County Council was working in partnership with Cannock Chase Council, South Staffordshire District Council and Lichfield and Tamworth Borough Councils. A Staffordshire Parking Board (SPB) had been created with 1 member from each of these Councils and the Police to explore their roles and operational objectives. Local Parking Panels would be established made up of 4 District and County members, the District Council Service Manager, Staffordshire County Council Parking Manager and the local Police Commander.

The Local Parking Committee would:-

- Monitor performance and financial position and report to SPB
- Manage service provision
- Recommend areas for Residents Parking Zones and prioritise in accordance with policy
- Decide on schemes to be funded from PCN surplus.

11. Inter Personal Violence and Abuse: Making a Difference

The Forum received a presentation from Philippa Carr, Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Cannock Chase Council and Mandy Rollins, Chair of Chase PAIRS Inter Personal Violence and Abuse Forum.

It was explained that inter personal violence and abuse could be defined as violence and abuse that primarily took place in private, but not always, usually between individuals who have or have had a relationship with each other. This included both domestic and sexual violence and abuse and affected anyone regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth and gender.

Domestic abuse was any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between persons who are intimate partners or family members, including psychological, physical,

sexual, financial or emotional incidents. Domestic abuse formed 27% of violent crime within Cannock Chase between April-June 2008. It was estimated that this cost £44.908 million in Cannock Chase and £25.261 billion nationally. Sexual abuse involved any sexual incident where voluntary consent was not given, including rape, sexual assault, adult survivors of childhood abuse, incest, etc.

Domestic abuse affected 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men within their lifetime with 1 in 5 women experiencing sexual assault in adulthood and 21% of girls and 11% of boys experiencing sexual abuse in their childhood. It was intended to run a dance project at initially a small number of schools to inform children what was acceptable behaviour and what was not.

The aims of Chase PAIRS was to

- Increase awareness within the community that domestic and sexual violence and abuse should not be tolerated
- To ensure that services were developed to meet victims' needs and agencies were able to respond appropriately
- To promote healthy relationships to children and young people to empower them to make positive choices and opportunities to disclose any abuse that may be affecting them.

Information packs were available and the following Helpline numbers were available:-

Staffordshire Women's Aid	0870 2700 123
Victim Support	08455 212 300
Emerge (sexual abuse counselling)	01543 576 174
Stop it Now! (child sexual abuse)	0808 1000 900
Staffordshire Police	08453 302010
Chairs PAIRS Details	01543 500 050

(email: chasepairs@chase-cvs.org.uk)

If residents were aware of someone who had been affected they should listen and be understanding without being judgemental as leaving a home situation was often a difficult decision to take. It was important that they did not put themselves in any danger at this time as often this was a very volatile time. Medical assistance should be sought if required, and residents should be aware of the various agencies offering help.

It was reported that the next PAIRs Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Forum was to be held on 16 October 2008 at Chasewater Innovation Centre from 12.30 pm to 2.30 p.m, and the more support the Forum received the more its work would progress. The speakers being David Ankers, Clinical Psychologist, and Tony Wood from the Probation Service. A 'can do' approach was taken and it was considered that the problem was not so big that it could not be overcome. Clear signals were being given out that domestic violence and sexual abuse would not be tolerated. It was explained that Members of the PAIRs Forum were all volunteers.

It was requested that Parish and Town Councils should be added to the mailing list for any information distributed.

12. Hednesford Hills Raceway

- What is the latest position following the various negotiations for the renewal of the lease on Hednesford Hills Raceway?
- What are the findings of the independent company who are monitoring the noise level of the Raceway?

The Forum was informed that the lease discussions were coming to an end with Incarace. It was proposed to make changes to the programme of events and to the operating hours. A report would be presented to Cabinet in November 2008 on the proposals. If the lease was terminated, the matter could be taken to Court by Incarace and it was considered that the Council could be enforced to continue the lease as it currently stood.

The lease if approved would run from January 2009 for 10 years and the changes would be fully publicised. A monitoring company had been employed by Incarace and a national noise code of practice was being developed by them. It was requested that residents inform the Council of any issues when they arose.

13. Resurfacing of Littleworth Road

The Chairman read out the following statement provided by Mr. D. Botfield from the Highways Department, Staffordshire County Council:-

“It is appreciated that the structural condition of Littleworth Road is of concern to residents but at the moment it is not possible to give a firm date for any future major maintenance works to the road or footways. The funding for the 2008/09 financial year has been allocated and the following sites will be or have already been treated:

Principal Roads:	A460 Rugeley Road, Hednesford A34 Stafford Road Cannock
Non Principal Roads:	Lime Lane, Little Wyrley Brownhills Road, Norton Canes Laburnham Avenue, Cannock St Pauls Road, Rugeley Burnthill Lane, Rugeley East Street, Bridgtown

Additionally the following footway schemes will also be undertaken:

Hunter Road Cannock
Rothbury Green, Heath Hayes
Pye Green Road, Hednesford
Heath Street, Hednesford.

It is proposed to again include Littleworth Road within the assessment process for schemes that will be carried out in the 2009/10 financial year. This process will commence around December 2008 and a final decision on which scheme will be included in the programme will be made in early 2009.

Traffic Management Issues.

With regard to Traffic Management concerns, as reported at the last Forum meeting it is intended to implement a 'signing and lining' improvement scheme at the junction of Littleworth Road and Cannock Wood Street. This works will be completed before the end of the calendar year.

There is also some concern regarding the speed of traffic using Littleworth Road and with this in mind a review of the accident data on the section of the road between the Trafalgar public house and Rawnsley Road has been undertaken. The data shows that there have been 4 recorded incidents in the last 3 years.

These were:

- (i) an accident at the traffic lights (Jul 08) – it is thought that driver error was the cause of the accident.
- (ii) One incident in 2007 – slight injuries – the cause of this is recorded as driver error (failing to judge distance)
- (iii) Two incidents in 2006 – both slight injuries – cause: again driver error, failing to judge speed.

Considering that approximately 4500 vehicles per day use this road the accident data shows a low recorded level of incidents.

The 85% speed is recorded at 34.5 mph. This means that 85% of the vehicles using this road travel at 34.5 mph or less.

Considering the available information the road would not score highly for traffic calming measures.

However if the bid for maintenance funds is successful for the 2009/10 season then it would be possible to consider some measures which could be carried out as part of a maintenance project.

It is realised that this response will not address the residents concerns but it should be noted that there is considerable pressure on the County Councils budgets and highway maintenance, whilst remaining a high priority for the County Council, does have to compete for funding with other important services such as social care and education.

Should any member of the meeting wish to discuss any of the issues raised by this statement they are invited to contact the Divisional Highway Manager for the Cannock Division, Dave Botfield via Clarence on 0800 23 23 23 or email at Dave.botfield@staffordshire.gov.uk

Residents reported that they were asking for the Littleworth Road to be finished, not started. The Forum requested that the Highways Authority provide them with their assessment of roads and capital programme agreement at the relevant time. It was reported that funding which had formerly been available for patch and mending purposes had been used when a higher priority had arisen through major flooding problems.

14. Consultation – Changes to Elections

The Director of Service Improvement read out the following statement:-

Cannock Chase Council currently has 41 Councillors. A third of the Council seats are up for election every year. On the fourth year there are no elections.

The Council would like to know whether you would like this to change so that all 41 Council seats are up for re-election at the same time once every 4 years. A lot of councils already operate in this way. Some of the benefits and disadvantages of this change are mentioned below.

If the Council were to change from the current arrangements to elections for all Council seats every 4 years, this would mean that the next Cannock Chase Council election would be held in 2011 for all the seats. Those current councillors who would have been up for election in 2010 would have their term of office extended until 2011.

The advantages and disadvantages to having all council seat elections every 4 years are:-

Advantages:

- the Council has greater political stability as the turmoil of elections on a more frequent basis is reduced
- the cost of running elections is significantly less as it happens less often
- research has shown that more people vote when all 41 Council seats are up for elections rather than only some wards in the district

Disadvantages:

- the chances for a change of who is in control of the Council is reduced as elections are every 4 years
- there is less turnover in councillors and less regular opportunities for people to stand as councillors
- the cost of having to run elections more often

The Council is currently in the process of consulting local residents on the two options available and a questionnaire is available should you wish to respond. Please return your completed questionnaires to the Committee Officer at the end of the meeting or alternatively you can return them to the Council's PR & Marketing department at the address provided at the bottom of the questionnaire."

15. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman informed the Forum that forms were available to be completed for questions to be raised at the next meeting.

16. Dates of Future Meetings

The Chairman reported the dates of future meetings of the Heath Hayes, Norton Canes & Rawnsley Community Forum:-

Tuesday, 2 December 2008, Heath Hayes Library

Tuesday, 3 March 2009, The Theatre, Norton Canes High School.