

## Hednesford Community Forum

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### Time and Date

Tuesday 1 July, 2014, 7:00pm

### Venue

Pisces Suite, The Aquarius, Victoria Shopping Park, Hednesford

You are invited to attend this meeting to consider the matters listed below.



**S.G. Brown**  
Chief Executive

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### AGENDA

- 1. Election of Chairman**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

To declare any personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- 3. Notes of Previous Meeting**

To receive the Notes of the meeting held on 3 March, 2014 (enclosed).

**4. Questions for Staffordshire Police**

No questions have been submitted.

**5. Questions for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services**

No questions have been submitted.

**6. Questions for Staffordshire County Council Highways Department**

No questions have been submitted.

**7. Questions for Cannock Chase District Council**

**7a. Mr G. Burnett, Local Resident**

*“Are the current Council Community Forums format the most effect means of communicating with the residents of the district on matters than concern them?*

*What do they cost the Council to host and are they an effective use of Police and Council officer’s time, and other resources, in answering questions that appear often to be raised on by Councillors for their own benefit when they have access to information from Council Officers through their normal duties.*

*Could the expense and resource spent on Community Forums be used more effectively elsewhere for better value to the local community.*

*Can the Council prove forums are effective given that only Councillors and other officials are recorded as attending in the minutes. How can the all-important levels of local resident participation and attendance be monitored effectively a there is no apparent means of recording these beyond a vague head count.*

*Has this Council done any work in assessing the Forums effectiveness and considering other any other means of engaging with a wider audience of residents on the issues discussed at Forums.*

*The election of Forum Chair and Vice-Chair is restricted only to Councillors from the local wards and voting is restricted to themselves. How can this process be justified as a democratic one when the Forums claim to represent the local residents and yet they allow no permanent representation on them?*

*Can we be assured that these forums are an effective means of influencing Council policy by residents and not simply a box tick exercise to fulfil a criteria set simply to impress external auditors or verifiers of the Councils own processes.”*

Steve Partridge, Democratic Services Manager, has provided the following response:

“The Council would like to thank Mr. Burnett for raising concerns about the effectiveness of its four Community Forums as a means of communicating and engaging with local residents. The Council itself has identified the need to review the Community Forums, and has included it in the Transformation Priority Delivery Plan for 2014-15, and will be undertaking a consultation / review exercise later in the year. The issues raised will be included as part of this consultation.

The forums, which were initially set up a number of years ago, meet on a quarterly basis in each of the four main population areas within the district, i.e. Cannock; Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawsley; Hednesford; and Rugeley and Brereton, and form part of the Council’s annual Calendar of Meetings. They are intended as a means of discussion on any matters of local concern, i.e. relating to the relevant Wards therein, which may be raised by members of the public or the relevant Ward Members; they are also intended as a means of consultation on, for example, planning or budgetary matters.

In order to ensure that appropriate Officers can be in attendance, if required, i.e. as opposed to having a number of representatives present ‘just in case’, we ask that questions be submitted in advance. This is particularly the case if questions are of a technical nature or relate to an area that is not the Council’s responsibility, such as highways or Police matters; or any other potential invitees, such as the Fire and Rescue Service or local Health Trust.

The Police; relevant County Councillors; and local Parish / Town Councillors, plus representatives from local Health Authority / Trust; local Voluntary Organisations; local Residents’ Associations; and local business organisations, where known, are all invited to attend, as is the local MP, and members all are given advance notice of the meetings and asked to publicise them on notice boards etc to encourage public attendance. However, it is recognised that public attendance / participation is limited. This could be for a number of reasons, including those referred to.

Finally, the Council would like to give an assurance that the forums are not simply a tick box exercise; however, as previously mentioned, it shares the concerns about their ongoing effectiveness and plans to undertake a consultation / review exercise later in the year.

If members of the public would like to participate in the proposed review, any ideas or suggestions on how they could be improved should be emailed to [membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk) using the title ‘Review of Community Forums’. Any ideas or suggestions made will be considered as part of the proposed review.”

7b. Mr A. Riley, Hednesford Bingo Club

1. "Problems with rubbish bins and grit bin at the Chase Gateway Centre.
2. Road Safety – measures need to be taken regarding the speeding of cars across the main entrance of the Chase Gateway Centre."

Tony McGovern, Corporate Director, will provide a response at the meeting.

7c. Update on Hednesford Town Centre Regeneration – Item requested by Councillor G. Ball

Tony McGovern, Corporate Director, will provide an update at the meeting.

7d. Update on Hednesford Park – Item requested by Councillor G. Ball

Tony McGovern, Corporate Director, will provide an update at the meeting.

**8. Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust – Update**

Mandi Dunbar, Personal Assistant to Jeff Crawshaw, Deputy Chief Executive, Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust has provided the following update:-

"Our Directors have concluded that, as the Trust continues to be going through the Trust Special Administration (TSA) process, it would not be appropriate for them to attend the Community Forums at this time. The Directors would like to assure local people that services at both Cannock Chase and Stafford Hospitals continue as usual and would encourage people to continue to use them as appropriate.

If there are any specific questions on the day-to-day business of the hospitals, we would be very pleased to email you answers/updates from the Directors.

If you have any questions around the TSA process and future of services, these would need to be addressed to the TSA. Please let me know if you'd like me to put you in touch with them.

The TSA can be contacted at: [www.tsa-msft.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.tsa-msft.org.uk/contact-us) or for confidential matters at: [TSApublic@MidStaffs.nhs.uk](mailto:TSApublic@MidStaffs.nhs.uk)"

**9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Questions are invited from members of the public for inclusion on the Agenda of the next Forum which is scheduled as follows:

- Wednesday 17 September, 2014, 7pm, Museum of Cannock Chase.

Any questions should be submitted on the form supplied with this Agenda, or emailed to [membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk).

To: Councillors

Adamson, G.	Grice, Mrs. D.
Ball, G.D.	Pearson, A.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Todd, R.
Gamble, B.	

Other Invitees/Representatives:

- County Councillor Mrs C. Mitchell (Hednesford Division).
- Mr A. Burley, Member of Parliament (Cannock Chase Constituency)
  
- Mrs T. Williams, Clerk to Brindley Heath Parish Council
- Miss N. Somani, Clerk to Cannock Wood Parish Council
- Mr P. Harrison, Clerk to Hednesford Town Council
  
- Mr N. Bell, Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council
- Mr M. Keeling, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager, Staffordshire County Council
  
- Chief Inspector S. Morrey, Staffordshire Police
- Inspector P. Cooke, Staffordshire Police
- Mr N. Pedersen, Response Manager, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust
  
- Ms G. Asbury, Cannock CAB
- Mr K. Parson, Chief Officer, Support Staffordshire – Cannock Chase
- Mrs T. Gould, Blake Community Worker, Support Staffordshire – Cannock Chase
- Friends of Hednesford Park
- Mrs B. Yates, Chairman, Hednesford Traders' Association
  
- Cornish Houses Residents' Association
- Circle of Residents Association
- Pine View Residents Association

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NB: The person to contact regarding the agenda and documents for this meeting is Matt Berry, Senior Committee Officer:

Tel: (01543) 464 589

E-mail: [mattberry@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:mattberry@cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

Date of despatch: Friday 20 June, 2014.