

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM

WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE, 2010 AT 7.00 P.M.

AT NORTON CANES HIGH SCHOOL, BURNTWOOD ROAD, NORTON CANES

PRESENT: Councillors

Beddows, J. (Chairman)
Bernard, J. D. (Vice-Chairman)

Ansell, Mrs. P. A.	Rowley, J.
Bernard, Mrs. A. F.	Sutherland, M.
Collis, C.	Whitehouse, Mrs. L.
Gilbert, P.	

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mr. D. Hoare, Director of Service Improvement
Mrs. C. Bowker, Senior Committee Officer
Mrs. S. Richards, P. R. & Marketing Officer
Mr. J. Morgan, Principal Planner – Planning Policy

Also Present:-

Inspector Pat Shannaghan, Cannock Police
P. C. Dean Cooper, Cannock Police
Mr. W. Mortiboys, Highways Department, Staffordshire County Council

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor J. Beddows was appointed as Chairman and Councillor J. D. Bernard was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Community Forum for the forthcoming Municipal Year

2. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from the Police at Rugeley Station.

3. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contacts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

There were no interests declared.

4. Notes

The Notes of the meeting held on 16 March 2010 were agreed as a correct record

5. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Concern was raised with respect to parking near to schools in Norton Canes. The Forum was advised that when the Police had been present matters had improved, but then deteriorated when they were not there. Inspector Shannaghan explained that letters with respect to this issue were sent out to the parents of pupils and it was not just a local problem, but was countrywide. Beat Officers and PCSOs were aware of the problems and a scheme was being introduced across the district where children were also policing parents parking.

6. Issues Arising from the Notes

Safety Issues – Cannock and Hednesford Roads, Heath Hayes and the Wimblebury Road – position with respect to Zebra Crossings being erected on John Street and the Cannock Road

Mr. W. Mortiboys updated the Forum on the position with respect to the above. He explained that the County did not intend to proceed with the Zebra Crossing on the Cannock Road, Heath Hayes. A survey had been carried out and it was considered that the pedestrian flow was too low. The count had been significantly lower than that carried out at John Street where pedestrians, including children, had been 3/4 times more and accidents had also been recorded. A petition had been handed in to Councillor J. Rowley at full Council at Staffordshire County Council and this would be responded to.

The crossing at John Street would be installed in 2011, subject to budgetary constraints. It would be designed this year and a consultation process undertaken. With regard to Hednesford Road, Heath Hayes, residents were in favour of a traffic calming scheme and this was being developed.

Concern was raised that the survey on the Cannock Road had been carried out during the month of November when children may have been driven to school due to inclement weather. The Forum considered that a further survey should be undertaken before the end of the summer term.

Mr. W. Mortiboys reported that a further count would be undertaken, but the Highways Department would not go beyond a second count. He explained that another way of providing a crossing would be by a school crossing patrol which if it met the criteria would be funded. Information on how to proceed with this would be forwarded by the Senior Committee Officer to all Members.

The Forum was advised that the Highways Department had a budget of £4m for the whole of Staffordshire and could not afford to spend money on schemes that may then prove not to be needed. It was also considered that Central Government would be making cuts to Local Government budgets.

Councillor Collis reported that Members frequently received complaints from residents who stated that it was easier to drive the short distance to the schools rather than cross the road and he would continue to press for a crossing on the Cannock Road. He welcomed the John Street crossing and Hednesford Road initiative, but hoped that it did not impact on other roads to compound problems and that a full consultation process had been undertaken.

Concern was raised that it had been requested that Members be provided with the results of the crossing surveys and that these had not been received. Mr. W. Mortiboys agreed to look into this matter.

Councillor C. Collis explained that he had received an email from a resident expressing despair over the state of a footpath in Highfields Road, Heath Hayes. The resident had reported the problem on 9 March 2010 which was on the Safer Routes to School and her child was regularly tripping up and the walking bus was walking in the gutter. The resident had been informed that the problem had been assessed on 11 March and work would be completed within 4/6 weeks. The resident telephoned on 19 April and informed that the 6 weeks was not up until 22 April, and that the timescale should not have been given out by the member of staff. The resident had been informed that the work had been raised from a category 4 to a category 3 and would be carried out within 28 days. The resident was then informed that the Highways Department could not free up enough staff to complete the job due to the size of the work needed. Councillor Collis considered that this did not reflect well on the County Council Highways Department. Mr. W. Mortiboys undertook to investigate the issue.

Councillor Collis commended the Highways Department on the work that had been carried out on Stafford Street.

The position with respect to Bye Laws being introduced to prevent parking on grass verges

The Director of Service Improvement updated Members on the position with respect to the introduction of Bye Laws to prevent parking on grass verges. He advised that the matter would be considered at the Joint Parking Committee. Legal Advice would be sought and Members would be informed how this matter would proceed with the assistance of the County Council.

Traffic Calming on Norton Hall Lane and Church Road, Norton Canes

Concern was also raised with regard to the speed of traffic along Norton East Road and other roads in Norton Canes. Inspector Shannaghan informed the Forum that the Police responded to all complaints. A speed lazer device would be issued to Beat Officers, however, resources were limited. With regard to a Community Speed Watch being set up in the area, Inspector Shannaghan explained that this was more a community role with the Police assisting and providing the necessary training. He undertook to look into how this was progressing and report back to the next meeting.

Mr. W. Mortiboys reported that he had with him a leaflet on how to go about setting up a Community Speed Watch scheme. The Senior Committee Officer informed the Forum that a copy would be emailed to all Members.

7. Cannock Chase Local Development – Core Strategy – Pre Publication Consultation

Mr. J. Morgan, Principal Planner – Planning Policy informed the Forum that the Core Strategy was the key planning policy document in the Local Development Framework which would replace the existing Cannock Chase Local Plan. It would shape the way the District accommodated new development and determine how the existing natural and built heritage could be preserved and enhanced between now and 2026.

There were 14 policy topics which covered:-

- the overall strategy
- design of new development
- social inclusion and health living
- housing land provision
- housing choice
- employment land provision
- a balanced economy
- sustainable transport
- town centres
- biodiversity and geodiversity
- Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation
- landscape character and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- historic environment
- climate change and sustainable resource use

The consultation period commenced on 1 June 2010 for a period of 6 weeks and responses should be received by 13 July 2010. Exhibitions would be held at 13 venues throughout the District from 3 June until 28 June 2010. The Core Strategy Pre Publication Draft and supporting documents would be available for inspection at the Civic Centre during normal office hours. They could also be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website, www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy and comments could be submitted online via this address as well as by post or email.

Mr. J. Morgan advised that so far over 1,000 people had been consulted and a letter would be sent out to all consultees at each stage of the process.

Concern was raised with respect to the infrastructure when new developments occurred. Mr. Morgan explained that one of the key tests of soundness of the Plan by the Inspector at the Examination stage, was that it was founded on a robust and credible evidence base, which included the provision of infrastructure. P. C. Dean Cooper informed the Forum that when new developments arose there was not always a pro rata increase in the number of Police. Mr. Morgan reported that developers could be requested to fund an additional Police post or Health Centre, etc., however, Central Government guidance on developer funding was that unlike capital investment, securing funding for ongoing revenue support costs could only be at a fixed sum and for a set time period in the region of 3/5 years.

8. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman informed the Forum that forms were available to be completed for

questions to be raised for the next meeting. He expressed concern that there were no members of the public present.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

The Chairman reported that future meetings of the Forum would be held on -

Thursday, 9 September 2010 – Heath Hayes Library

Tuesday, 23 November 2010 – Hayes Green Community Centre

Tuesday, 8 March 2011 – venue to be confirmed