

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM
MONDAY, 2 JUNE 2008 AT 7.00 P.M.
AT HAYES GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE, HAYES WAY, HEATH HAYES
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

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

Ansell, Mrs. P.A.	Bullock, L.W.
Beddows, J.	Carr, I.R.
Bernard, Mrs. A. F.	Todd, Mrs. D. M.

Other Cannock Chase Councillors

Ball, G. D.

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mrs. C. Bowker, Committee Officer
Mr. D. Hoare, Director of Service Improvement
Mr. M. Fletcher, Partnership Officer

Also Present:-

Mr. D. Botfield, Staffordshire County Council
County Councillor S. Woodward
P.C. Warren Saunders, Cannock Police, Norton NPT
Representative from the Press
Local Residents (approximately 15)

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. D. Bernard, M. J. Holder and County Councillor J. O'Leary).

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Councillor D. L. Mawle was appointed as Chairman and Councillor J. F. Jillings was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Community Forum for the forthcoming Municipal Year

2. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 10 March 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Item requested at last meeting

- What is the current position with respect to the resurfacing of the Littleworth Road?

Mr. D. Botfield from the Highways Department, Staffordshire County Council explained that the Littleworth Road was not included in the current year's Highways Management Programme, but that it would be considered, together with other sites, for inclusion when the following year's programme was being formulated.

The Forum expressed concern regarding the number of years they had been asking for the remainder of the road to be completed and asked how it could be bought forward on the programme.

Mr. Botfield reported that it would be considered on its merits and that there was only a certain amount of funding available. He hoped it would be included on the list for the following year, but it could not be guaranteed. The County budget for road repair works was in the order of £23 million with additional funding being available for capital programme improvement schemes. The total funding being in the region of approximately £50/£60 million.

4. Norton Lane – Who is Responsible for its Upkeep?

- Norton Lane between Washbrook Lane and Newlands Lane, who is responsible for its upkeep? The Lane was reinstated by the NCB Opencast Executive after the Kingswood opencast coal site finished and is believed to be unadopted by public authorities.

Mr. D. Botfield informed the Forum that Norton Lane had been adopted by the Highway Authority. Residents expressed concern regarding the narrowness of the lane and that it was difficult for cars to pass each other. Mr. Botfield explained that there were many similar lanes across the County and it would not warrant road widening measures. No complaints regarding this lane had been received by the County Council. The Forum considered that notices should be erected informing drivers that it was a narrow lane. Concern was also expressed regarding employees using the access for emergency only vehicles to gain entry to their places of work and that lorries had also parked overnight for sleeping purposes. It was reported that this would have been a condition when planning permission was granted and Mr. Botfield undertook to investigate this matter further.

5. Junction at Littleworth Road – Cannock Wood Street

- Concern with respect to the dangerous junction at Littleworth Road and Cannock Wood Street. How many accidents have happened at this junction over the last two years and how severe were they? Would traffic lights resolve the problem, if so when can they be installed?

Mr. D. Botfield reported that there had been six incidents reported, five of which were slight and one of a serious nature in October 2005. The serious incident was related to speeding and the remaining occurring through poor driving skills. He did not consider that traffic lights were appropriate at the junction. The Forum expressed the opinion that improvements to road markings and signs would assist the matter.

Mr. Botfield explained that there was already a substantial list for new road markings etc., and he would add the junction to this. He reported that it may be approximately six months before the work would be carried out.

Concern was raised with respect to the use of mobile phones whilst driving and the police's policy on this matter. P C Warren Saunders reported that motorists identified when using them would be prosecuted. He informed the Forum that the police had recently carried out a traffic exercise using hand held speed guns in Hednesford, Heath Hayes, Norton Canes etc., resulting in 120 people being prosecuted for speeding.

6. Update on the Consultation Process in Respect of the Sustainable Community Strategy

The Forum received an update from Mr. M. Fletcher, Partnership Officer, on the consultation process in respect of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It was explained that the Strategy –

- Was a long term plan to improve the environmental, social and economic well being of the District as a whole.
- Was aspirational and visionary but based on evidence as to the needs of the area and the wishes of local communities
- Provided the framework for public, private and voluntary sectors to work together to deal with the complex challenges facing the District.

Community Forums, elected Members, disability groups, the Citizens Panel and in excess of 150 partners had all been consulted, together with information being available on the website.

The Forum was informed that the draft Strategy had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee today and would be considered by Cabinet on 19 June and Council on 25 June 2008. A final draft would then be prepared and the Strategy would be launched at the end of June 2008. It was explained that once the Strategy had gone through this process an action plan would be formulated.

It was reported that Norton Canes Community Partnership had provided facilities in Norton Canes for use by both children and adults. Children from Heath Hayes also attended Unit 13 and Councillor Beddows invited people to visit to see what was provided. He considered that more people should be encouraged to use the facilities to generate further income and help sustain the Unit.

It was explained that although Junior KONCAS was well supported, more volunteers were needed for senior KONCAS as this was currently being run by four people.

The Forum considered that Norton Canes Community Partnership should be congratulated on what they had achieved and hoped that similar facilities could be provided in other areas of Cannock Chase.

7. 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.

8. Dates of Future Meetings

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

Tuesday, 2 September 2008, Prospect Village Hall

Tuesday, 2 December 2008

Tuesday, 3 March 2009