

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CANNOCK COMMUNITY FORUM

MONDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2009 AT 7.00 P.M.

AT CIVIC CENTRE, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Bennett, Mrs. D. J. (Vice-Chairman – in the Chair)

Alcott, G.	Mitchell, C.
Davis, Mrs. M. A.	Morgan, C. W. J.
Green, M. R.	Sutton, Mrs. H. M.
Kraujalis, J. T.	Thomas, D.

Staffordshire County Councillors:

County Councillor P. Corfield, Cannock Town Centre Division
County Councillor J. Rowley, Cannock Villages Division

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. L. Trigg, Deputy Chief Executive
Mrs. C. Bowker, Senior Committee Officer
Street Wardens

Also Present

Sergeant Gordon Price, Staffordshire Police (Chase Division)
Representatives from the Press
Local Residents (approximately 15)

16. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M. P. Freeman (Chairman), and F. W. C. Allen.

17. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

No declarations of interests were submitted.

18. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 15 September, 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

19. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Sergeant Gordon Price was asked what action could be taken with respect to cars being parked near to road junctions thus creating a hazard to other motorists. It was explained that cars could be parked 10 metres away from a road junction. The Police would take action against vehicles that they saw parked illegally and that anyone could telephone them to report such incidents. It was reported that the junction with Station Road, Hednesford and McGhee Street was a particular problem area. Sergeant Price informed the Forum that he would report the concerns to the appropriate Neighbourhood Police Team.

Sergeant Price was asked if action could be taken with regard to cars being parked on pavements on Council estates as a local disabled resident, who used a mobility scooter, was constantly having to go on the road due to him having insufficient access to get past on the path. The Forum was advised that the Police would take action against the owner of any vehicle parked on the pavement where they considered a double buggy could not get through. Sergeant Price reported that he would speak to the Ward Member that had raised the matter following the meeting to gain additional information.

20. Cannock Cemetery

The following questions had been submitted by Mr. G. Adamson:-

'What is the position with reference to Cannock Cemetery:

- **Is it closed to new burials and what is being done to find a site for a replacement cemetery?**
- **Are cremated remains still being interred at Cannock Cemetery and, if so, when is it anticipated that the cemetery will be closed for this purpose?**

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that Mr. Adamson was not present and enquired whether the Forum still wanted to consider the matter. Members of the Forum intimated that, due to the importance of the matter, they wanted the issue still to be discussed.

The Deputy Chief Executive read out the following in relation to the first part of the question:-

"Cannock cemetery closed for new burials in April 2006. The Council's Cabinet in July 2009 agreed that:

the identification of burial space at Cannock be an infrastructure requirement within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy; and that investigation be undertaken into potential sites for cemeteries or crematoria as part of the Site Specific Allocations development plan document of the Local Development Framework"

The Core Strategy is the new planning policy document which will establish the planning principles for the District over the next 15 years to 2026. The fact that there is a shortage of burial space in the District south of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, has been identified in the draft Core Strategy as an issue to be addressed. A preliminary estimate suggests a need for a minimum area of 8 hectares but this could be greater if there was to be a combined cemetery & crematorium. Following an Examination in Public by a Planning Inspector, the Core Strategy could be endorsed by Government in December 2010. If the need for a cemetery is confirmed as a key infrastructure requirement, a specific site would need to be identified in a later Site Specific Allocations Document. Assuming that the Council's Core Strategy is endorsed in December 2010, the subsequent Site Allocations document could be approved during 2012."

Concern was raised relating to the length of time that the identification of a burial site had been ongoing and that Stile Cop, which was being used at the present time, had capacity issues. It was considered that not all Cannock residents wanted to be buried in Rugeley and vice versa and that not all residents had transport to enable them to visit graves of relatives in Rugeley.

The Forum requested that the Parks and Open Spaces Manager should attend the next meeting to provide more in depth answers to concerns raised.

A Ward Member enquired as to whether grants for burial land could be obtained from Central Government due to it being a statutory requirement. The Deputy Chief Executive reported that he was not aware of any grants being available for this.

A Member reported that although it was stated that Cannock cemetery was closed for new burials in April 2006 he had seen burials taking place. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that these were probably in respect of those who had previously reserved burial plots.

The Forum agreed that Cabinet be requested to consider the identification of burial space at Cannock as a matter of urgency. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Forum had no delegated powers to recommend to Cabinet, however he would report the views of the Forum to them for information.

The Deputy Chief Executive read out the following in answer to the second part of the question:-

“Cremated Remains are still being interred at Cannock Cemetery. New plots are still available with the opportunity to increase availability along pathways which can be utilised at a later date. The burial rate varies but there is an estimated 5-6 years of space available.

People who hold deeds to purchased burial plots can exercise their right to bury cremated remains in graves that they hold the deeds to and also to reopen existing Cremated remains plots to inter a second interment of Cremated remains.”

21. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman explained that suggestions for issues to be discussed at future meetings of the Forum were sought and a form was available for this. It was explained that appropriate representatives would be invited to attend and debate issues and answer any questions.

As requested the Parks and Open Spaces Manager would be asked to attend the next meeting in relation to concerns raised regarding Cannock Cemetery.

22. Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman advised that the next meeting would be held on 17 March 2010 at a venue to be arranged.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

