

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CANNOCK COMMUNITY FORUM
TUESDAY 19 MARCH, 2013 AT 7.00 P.M.
AT CIVIC CENTRE, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Alcott, G. (Chairman)

Anslow, C.	Snape, P.A.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Freeman, Miss M.	Toth, J.
Mitchell, C.	

Cannock Chase District Councillors:

Councillor Mrs. A. Spicer

Staffordshire County Councillors:

Councillor P. Corfield

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. S. Shilvock, Head of Environmental Health
Mr. B. Jayes, Street Scene Team Leader
Mrs. W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

Also Present

Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe, LPT Commander for Cannock Chase District
Angela Schulp, District Lead Commissioner, Staffordshire County Council
Robert Courteney-Harris, Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust
Dr. J. McMahon, (Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
Andy Donald (Chief Officer, Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
Local Residents (approximately 30)

The Chairman advised that a Local Plan exhibition was available for the public to view at the end of the Forum meeting. Officers from the Council would be available to answer any questions.

37. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillors F.W.C. Allen.

38. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 27 November, 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

39. Questions for Staffordshire Police

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe to the meeting who was in attendance to answer questions relating to local policing matters that had been submitted in advance.

The Chairman invited Mr. Haywood (local resident) to put forward his question, which was as follows:-

“I understand that a fixed penalty notice was recently issued by a PCSO for parking a motor vehicle on a footpath. Can we expect more action of this type?”

Mr. Haywood explained that since submitting the question he had been made aware that the incident had occurred 3 years ago. However, the basis of the question remained and he asked Chief Inspector Ratcliffe to respond.

Chief Inspector Ratcliffe stated that the question about footpath parking had been discussed at previous Cannock Forum meetings. The Police cover inconsiderate parking and can issue tickets to vehicles that are blocking pavements or driveways. He encouraged residents to contact their Local Police Officers to point out any offending vehicles. Details of Local Officers were due to be circulated shortly. He considered that the education of motorists was important to ensure they parked in a more considerate manner.

He also advised that road safety continued to be a top ten priority for Staffordshire Police. The Police were very proactive and had, only last week, issued approximately 60 Fixed Penalty Notices to motorists for offences such as wearing no seat belts, using mobile phones/internet and not securing children in their cars correctly.

40. Questions for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Chairman confirmed that no questions had been submitted.

41. Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust

The Chairman welcomed Robert Courteney-Harris, Medical Director from Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust to the meeting who was in attendance to answer any questions and provide an update on Trust related matters.

He advised that Lyn Hill-Tout (Chief Executive) had announced that she would be retiring from the Trust at the end of May.

He explained that Monitor, the independent regulator, were looking to appoint Trust Special Administrators to take over the running of the Trust. The Special

Administrators would produce a plan for the reorganisation of the Trust which would go out to public consultation. Any changes proposed would require the approval of the Secretary of State. If the Special Administrators were appointed the Board of Governors and Executive partners would be suspended. The last meeting of the Trust Board in its current form was to be held on 28 March, 2013.

Members expressed their thanks to Lyn Hill-Tout for attending previous Forum meetings and wished her well for her retirement. It was noted that she had worked hard in difficult circumstances during her time at the Trust.

42. Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Stafford and Surrounds CCG

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Johnny McMahon and Andy Donald from the CCG to the meeting. It was explained that in terms of services for Cannock the Primary Care Trust were recommending the following:

- 2 locality solution (Cannock and Stafford)
- Minor injuries unit in Cannock
- Diagnostic provision
- Day cases
- Outpatients

The provision in Cannock was done well and consideration was being given to using the hospital as a Primary Care hub to assist in commissioning the services.

However, with regard to Stafford the Primary Care Trust were recommending services that were very different to what was currently provided. There was support for an emergency urgent care service, outpatients and diagnostic care but no support for an emergency medical facility.

The Forum was informed that it was not proposed to have a Midwife led unit at Stafford as the likely number of deliveries would not be clinically sustainable and each midwife would only be delivering 13 babies per year. It was proposed to have pre/post natal care in Cannock and Stafford but no deliveries at Stafford.

He further advised that the Cannock Chase CCG would become a statutory body in its own right by April 2013. However, conditions would be placed on the body in terms of finance. This newly formed body, which was GP led, would take over the responsibilities from the Primary Care Trust.

The next Governing Body Meeting of the Cannock Chase CCG was to be held in public on 4 April, 2013 between 2.00pm and 4.30pm in the Ballroom, Civic Centre. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Katie Woods at the CCG to book a place as numbers were limited.

Forum Members were then offered the opportunity of asking questions. A member of the public asked where expectant mums were to go if there was no maternity provision at Stafford. Dr. McMahon stated that women were already given a choice of hospitals (Walsall, Stafford or Wolverhampton) and many women chose Walsall and Wolverhampton in preference to Stafford.

A member of the Arthritis Group sought confirmation that their Group could continue to use the facilities at the hospital for their Group meetings. Dr. McMahon confirmed that this would still be supported.

A member of the public commented on the new state of the art A & E facility that was planned for New Cross Hospital and asked whether this would have an effect on the future of Cannock and Stafford Hospitals. Dr. McMahon said that it could only be a benefit to have such a facility so close to Cannock. He confirmed that the new facility would have no impact on the Minor Injuries Unit at Cannock.

Councillor Toth expressed his disappointment over the setting up of CCG's which he considered was not democratic. He also had concern for the future of Stafford Hospital which he considered was being downgraded and it would have a bad impact on Cannock Hospital if it were to close. Additionally, he stated that the A&E departments at Wolverhampton and Stoke were always very busy with people queuing to get in. He did not consider this was a modern NHS service.

Councillor Mrs. Davis considered that both Cannock and Stafford Hospitals would be closed in 5-10 years time. She had concern that the maternity unit in Stafford was to close she commented that there could be an increase in babies being born when the RAF were relocated to a base in Stafford. She urged the public to get involved in the CCG meetings so that they were aware of the future plans of the CCG's, who would be commissioning services for the Cannock Chase area.

Dr. McMahon commented that GP's have a duty to engage with their patients in order to make commissioning decisions. The public could get involved in the Patient Participation Groups through their GP surgeries. There were 27 practices within the CCG and 17 of these had set up Patient Participation Groups. He would be working with the remainder of the practices to encourage them get involved.

A member of the public asked if orthopaedic surgery would remain at Cannock Hospital. Dr. McMahon explained that the CCG's had been asked what services they wished to protect (not what they hoped to commission) and unfortunately, orthopaedic surgery was not chosen to be protected. However, this did not mean they wouldn't wish to commission it in the future.

The Chairman asked for confirmation of the budget for the CCG from 1 April, 2013 as he was under the impression that they would start with a £6million deficit. He had concern that this deficit could affect patients and mean reduced services.

It was confirmed that the CCG would have a budget of £150million for 2013/14. However, the cost of healthcare was rising by 4% each year nationally. Therefore, £6million would have to be found to cover to this 4% rise for next year. The CCG would have to manage their budget, keep within the £150million and look at being more efficient with the services it commissioned.

A local resident commented that as more procedures were being carried out by GP's in their surgeries there would be less need for the hospitals and this may contribute to their demise. In response, it was explained that simple procedures should not be carried out in hospitals; the most cost effective way was for GP's to do them.

Councillor Mrs. Freeman sought reassurance from the CCG that Cannock would receive a fair share of the funding as there were a lot of elderly persons and problems with obesity in the area. It was explained that the CCG would be lobbying the Government if a new funding formula was to be implemented in 2014/15 to ask that the amount of elderly population in the District be taken into account.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from the CCG for attending and reminded the Forum that the next Governing Body Meeting of the Cannock Chase CCG was to be held on 4 April, 2013 between 2.00pm and 4.30pm in the Ballroom.

43. Development of Langbourne House

Prior to consideration of this item the Chairman read out the following statement:

“Any Member of the Planning Control Committee who is in attendance at the Forum and wishes to ensure that they retain their right to participate in the debate and vote on the application when it comes before the Planning Control Committee should ensure that they make no commitment to either supporting or opposing the application. If asked by a member of the public they are best advised to say that they need to keep an open mind until the day of the Committee meeting, by which time they will have read the officer’s report which will contain a detailed assessment of the planning issues and a summary of all views expressed by statutory consultees (including the County Council acting as highway authority, Environment Agency, Natural England, Severn Trent Water, South Staffs Water) and the comments made by the public”.

Councillor Mrs. Davis had requested the item. She welcomed the development at Langbourne House as facilities for the elderly were needed in the District. Whilst she also welcomed the proposal to erect social housing on the Ivy House site, as there were approximately 2000 families wanting homes, she had concern regarding the development as residents were opposing the plans. She made reference to an article in the Express and Star which explained that the County Council had withdrawn their plans and she asked County Councillor Corfield if he could confirm this.

Angela Schulp, District Lead Commissioner explained that the development at Langbourne House was for 63 extra care residential apartments. This would enable the elderly to remain in their own homes and still receive the necessary care instead of going into nursing/residential homes. In addition to the apartments the development included a doctor’s surgery, respite centre, pharmacy, café and hairdressers. The development would therefore be beneficial to the wider community. She explained that Officers from the County Council had met residents last week to discuss their concerns and a further meeting was scheduled for tomorrow.

Councillor Toth raised concern regarding the proposed demolition of Ivy House and considered that the resident’s views should be taken in account. He asked Angela Schulp whether she was aware of the reason why the County had taken the decision to withdraw the plans for the site. Angela Schulp deferred the

response to Councillor Corfield.

Councillor Corfield explained that although the County was keen to proceed with the application it was acknowledged that there was concern regarding the Ivy House aspect. County Council representatives had met residents last week who had expressed their concerns in relation to the demolition of Ivy House and were asking for proper consultation. County Council Officers had been liaising with District Council Officers and there was a further meeting scheduled for tomorrow to continue these discussions. In view of the concerns being raised the County Council had decided that, although they wished to continue with the application, the proposal to demolish Ivy House would be suspended to allow consultation with the public to take place.

Councillor Mitchell asked Councillor Corfield to confirm that the County Council had submitted a planning application for the development of Langbourne House and Ivy House and would therefore have to submit a new application for the Langbourne House site if they wanted to omit the Ivy House site from the application. She also expressed concern that County Council Officers were not aware of these new proposals.

Councillor Corfield confirmed that this was the intention of the County Council and a new application for Langbourne House would be submitted which would exclude Ivy House.

The Chairman expressed concern that the District Council had heard about the County Council's new proposals through the press. He considered that a statement should have been provided from the County outlining their new plans. The public had come along to the Forum this evening to express their views only to find out that the application was being withdrawn.

The Chairman then offered Forum Members the opportunity to ask questions. Councillor Mrs. Spicer asked whether there had been any proper consultation regarding the development. Angela Schulp advised that there had been two consultation events regarding the development at Langbourne House and Ivy House. Approximately 60 residents had attended both of these events.

A local resident asked whether the proposed extra care residential apartments would be available to part buy/rent. Angela Schulp confirmed that all apartments would be socially rented. The two bedroom apartments were designed to suit a couple with an elderly dependent or an individual with a carer in the second bedroom. The resident also commented that Longford Road and Wolverhampton Road residents had not been contacted regarding the proposals. Councillor Corfield explained there had been press coverage regarding the proposals in addition to a mailing in the area advising of the consultation events.

Other residents took the opportunity to express their concerns with regard to the proposed development and outlined the anxiety that residents were feeling about the plans. Concern was raised regarding the height of the proposed buildings, the traffic that would be generated, the related junction improvements to accommodate the developments and the siting of the car park adjacent to homes. The residents were not objecting to the new extra care apartments at Langbourne House but had concern regarding the additional facilities as part of the

redevelopment scheme and to the demolition on Ivy House.

Councillor Toth referred to the demolition of Ivy House. He explained that residents were opposing the demolition and had started a petition which had attracted a substantial number of signatories. He considered the retention of Ivy House was important as it had historical value and there was not much support for it being demolished. He referred to a County Council document in which Ivy House had been referred to as having “substantial historical value” and yet it was being proposed to demolish it. He commented that as the County Council had indicated that new plans for the site would be submitted, residents would be able to have their say. He suggested that the County Council should consider converting the Ivy House building into flats.

Residents were informed that when the County Council submitted the new plans any objections/concerns would have to be resubmitted.

44. Questions submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Haywood:

“Congratulations to the staff concerned with securing the wreaths on the war memorial. They have looked lovely and many people have passed very favourable comments. Can you please advise me as to why the wreaths have now been removed leaving the memorial looking so cold and bare?”

Barry Jayes, Street Scene Team Leader advised that it had been the normal practice for the past three years to remove wreaths from War Memorials just after the 2nd week in January.

During 2010 the Rugeley Branch of the British Legion, in discussions with Councillor Gerald Molineux, confirmed they wished wreaths to remain on war memorials until after the Christmas break and then be removed after a ‘reasonable’ period. Therefore, the date of approximately 2 weeks after the Christmas break was agreed. By this time wreaths began to look a little worse for wear and often began to break up (depending upon the weather) and started to look very neglected.

Remembrance Sunday last year was on 11th November 2012. Wreaths were removed from January 14th 2013. This meant that the wreaths were left on all of the War Memorials for at least 2 months.

He further commented that there has been some recent correspondence with the Council over the timing of the removal of wreaths. It was explained that Tony McGovern, the Councils Corporate Director had written to the British Legion, the Remembrance Committee and the Police stating that the Council would be happy to meet and discuss any reasonable request in respect of the timing for the removal of old wreaths as long as a common approach was taken across the District for all 7 War memorials. However, he was not aware that any contact had been made with the Council.

Councillor Mitchell explained that this issue had been raised with her and she had therefore asked Tony McGovern to look into the matter.

“It is pleasing that the Rose Garden in the Park has recently received a lot of

attention. However, part of this garden is a sensory garden established with donations and grants but much has now been lost for this year as the blossom and flower buds on the plants have been removed with pruning. Who made the decision to do this and why? Can we expect that a more sympathetic pruning regime will be in place in future so that we may enjoy these plants?"

Barry Jayes advised that this question related to a group of Viburnum shrubs in the Rose Garden which were very overgrown, full of dead wood and were in need of a hard prune.

Arising from the discussions with the Police last year regarding anti social behaviour in the park, particularly around the rose garden, these shrubs were identified for hard pruning. Youths had been messing about on the grass areas to the rear of these shrubs and were effectively hidden from view. This work was linked to all of the hard pruning back that had been carried out around the top bowling green so as to open up the area and remove potential hiding places. The decision was therefore taken to prune these shrubs back this month.

He advised that Viburnum's are one of a number of shrubs that can be hard pruned back without this harming the shrub itself in any way. The shrubs have only been pruned back to 1.5 - 1.7 metres or around 4 to 5 feet. It was appreciated that some spring flowers would be lost but the decision was made in view of safety and security issues.

The shrubs have been pruned hard at the correct time for such pruning and will quickly put on new growth and will be in flower again next spring.

Following the response, a member of Friends of Cannock Park confirmed that a plaque (donated by the Rotary Club) was erected behind the bench in the Rose Garden advising that it was a sensory garden.

"In the case of the Astro turf project at the Cardinal Griffin School, I understand that the school has applied to the Council not to install the acoustic fence as is required in the planning approval. If this request is granted can you advised where the money for that item will be used".

Steve Shilvock, Head of Environmental Health advised that the Council's Development Control Manager has confirmed that, to date, an application to vary the original planning application to not install an acoustic fence in respect of the Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) facility at Cardinal Griffin Catholic High School has not been received.

The accounts in respect of the development of the ATP have not yet been finalised (still within the 12 month defect period) but it is understood by all funding partners that should there be any under spend on the project such funds would be used to contribute to the annual provision fund to be set aside to replace the carpet in the future (8-10 years).

In response to a question he commented that the installation of the acoustic fence would be enforceable by the Planning Enforcement Officer.

A local resident raised concerns regarding noise generated by users of the ATP and considered it would get worse during the summer months. The Head of Environmental Health highlighted the importance of making noise complaints known to the Council.

There was some discussion about the school having requested a three month trial period to assess the situation prior to erecting the acoustic fence. Councillor Mitchell agreed to investigate the matter.

45. Update on the position of the negotiations in respect of the Asda s.106 monies for the Artificial Turf pitch

Steve Shilvock, Head of Environmental Health advised the Council has put forward a proposal to ASDA to resolve the dispute over the s106 funds. To date, no response has been received to this proposal. Officers of the Council will continue to contact representatives of ASDA for a response.

46. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

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

47. Date of Future Meetings

The Forum noted that meeting of the Cannock Community Forum had been arranged as follows:

Tuesday 11 June, 2013
Tuesday 17 September, 2013
Tuesday 10 December, 2013
Tuesday 4 March, 2013

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

CHAIRMAN