



The Chairman welcomed Sgt. D. Edge to the meeting who was in attendance to answer questions relating to local policing matters that had been submitted in advance. As no questions had been submitted in advance, Sgt. Edge took questions from the floor.

A local resident raised concern about groups of youths gathering in the Hednesford area. She commented that a local shop owner (AJ's in Cardigan Place) had recently had her windows smashed twice in two months. She had telephoned the Police to report the incident and had been advised to contact the Council to establish if the CCTV cameras had been recording. However, on contacting the Council she was advised to go through the Police. These incidents had caused distress to the lady concerned and had cost her £250 excess each time on her insurance claim.

Sgt. Edge explained that he was concerned with the response the lady had received as the incident should have been dealt with by the Police. He would ask the local policing officer to contact the lady concerned to discuss the incidents and offer reassurance.

With regards to anti social behaviour in general, he commented that the Police were aware of the areas where ASB was occurring and patrol strategies had been put in place to tackle this. With the better weather arriving there would be a seasonal peak in ASB and the police would work with PCSO's and the local neighbourhood team to address any issues that arose.

The local resident commented that the CCTV operator had indicated that images were often blurred and it was difficult to identify individuals. Sgt. Edge explained that images were sometimes blurred due to the cameras being sighted a distance away and there being a need to zoom in. However, it was often the case that officers could recognise offenders by the clothing they were wearing or by their manner.

The Chairman referred to the recent incidents of vandalism at the new Aquarius building whereby the upper windows on the glass-fronted building had been smashed and the glass canopy below was also broken. The incidents had caused damage amounting to a considerable sum of money.

Sgt. Burns explained that the Police had a strategy in place to deal with offenders once they were caught.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration confirmed that the developer, St. Modwen had recently installed CCTV which gave crystal clear images. The developers were hopeful that the ASB/vandalism would be dealt with by the Police as they did not wish to amend the scheme.

Councillor Todd commented that the perception of CCTV was negative

and questioned whether the images gathered had led to any convictions.

Sgt. Edge confirmed that, nationally, CCTV was a huge success and images gathered had led to a significant number of convictions and the Government had provided substantial funding for CCTV. The Corporate Director agreed and commented that the CCTV operators spent a lot of time copying the images for use as evidence in convictions. He also advised that the Council was trialling a new digital wireless camera in one location. This was more mobile, would cut costs and would also provide better images. If the trial was successful it was intended to provide two additional cameras in locations within Hednesford town centre.

Councillor Pearson commented on the recent number of thefts of land rovers/pick up type trucks. Sgt. Edge confirmed he was not aware of an increase in theft of motor vehicles in the area.

Councillor Mrs. Grice referred to the recent incident of fly-tipping on land at Redbrook Lane, Brereton and had concern that a similar incident could occur at the West Cannock No 5 Sports and Social Club. The incident was being investigated by the Environment Agency due to the large scale of the fly-tipping. Sgt. Edge explained that this would be a matter for the land owner of the Club to consider.

The Chairman thanked Sgt. Edge for attending the Forum and responding to the questions raised.

## **6. Questions for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services**

It was reported that no questions had been submitted.

## **7. Speeding Traffic – Keys Park Road, Hednesford**

Item had been requested by Councillor G. Ball. Mark Keeling, Staffordshire County Council (Highways) was unable to attend the Forum but had provided the following response:

“We have now completed an investigation and feasibility study for Keys Park Road. There are various considerations that have been highlighted that will be discussed with County Councillors George Adamson and Christine Mitchell. I will be meeting with the Councillors shortly to discuss this and other highways issues within the area. We will continue to monitor the site and provide enforcement support with the use of the mobile camera as part of an ongoing programme”.

The Chairman confirmed that he had recently met with Mark Keeling and that Highways Officers were looking at various options to slow the traffic down.

Councillor Gamble raised concern that Councillor Ball had been asking this question for two years and an Officer from Staffordshire County

Highways had not yet attended a Forum meeting.

## **8. Update on Hednesford Town Centre Regeneration**

Item requested by Councillor G. Ball. Bob Phillips, Head of Planning and Regeneration advised that the retail/leisure regeneration scheme was nearing completion with Aldi due to open in the first week of August. The final unit on the Rugeley Road site was under offer to Pizza Hut. With regard to Phase 2 (Tesco) he confirmed that St Modwen were considering an offer of interest that had been expressed in the vacant unit under the Community facility. Additionally, St. Modwen's had indicated they wished to push through the walls by Discount UK to make two units. The Forum also noted that the lease on the Community facility had been completed today

He also advised that there were discussions ongoing with Traders regarding the Rugeley Road car park in addition to discussions with Aldi regarding the operation of the car park. Once all the spaces were operating and the units had been let an early review of the car park would be undertaken to assess the impact. The Council considered that there was a substantial amount of car parking spaces available in various locations. However, the management of these would need to be addressed.

Councillor Grice commented that the parking warden had recently illegally parked his car outside B & M whilst he then went on to issue tickets to the other cars that were parked illegally. It was considered that this did not set a good impression. The Corporate Director confirmed that the Council held the contract with APCOA and would therefore investigate this matter.

Councillor Pearson explained that the Joint Parking Committee would be meeting in July and the issue of extending the waiting time from 20 minutes on Market Street would be considered. The Head of Planning and Regeneration confirmed that consultants had carried out a survey of the Rugeley Road car park and indicated that it would be helpful if vehicles were allowed to park for a longer period on Market Street. The Chairman advised that he too would be supporting a longer waiting time of 40 minutes along Market Street when the matter was considered at the Joint Parking Committee.

Concern was expressed regarding the pedestrian crossing from the park to Tesco's as it was not clear where to cross safely.

## **9. Update on Hednesford Park**

Item requested by Councillor G. Ball. Tony McGovern, Corporate Director advised that the Council the agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) had been signed off.

He confirmed that in addition to the HLF money additional funding had

been secured from Staffordshire Environmental Fund to provide tennis courts. This was for the sum of £30,000 which had to be spent by the end of June. Therefore, work had commenced on the construction of the tennis courts in May and would be continuing for some weeks. Both adult and junior courts would be provided.

In addition to the £3m HLF project the Council was also exploring the possibility of establishing a full size ATP on one of the football pitches on the park (providing there was adequate space). There was currently only one full size ATP in the District and this was located at Cardinal Griffin School. The Council would be assessing whether Hednesford Park was the appropriate location for the second full size ATP to be provided in the District. A few alternative locations in the Hednesford area would also be explored. He confirmed that this £1m investment along with the £3m HLF project was a substantial investment into Hednesford parks/leisure facilities.

Councillor Ball asked whether there had been any progression with the skateboard park. The Corporate Director advised that the skateboard park had been identified as priority; however, no start date had been confirmed. There was a significant amount of building work being undertaken on the site to develop the tennis courts and it was not considered appropriate for the skateboard park to be built at the same time. This would create health and safety issues as the children using the skateboard park would be playing on what was in fact a building site.

He also confirmed that there were proposals to improve the existing car park in the HLF scheme. However, the requirements for additional parking for the ATP scheme would also need to be assessed without compromising the HLF scheme.

Councillor Pearson advised the Forum that Friends of Hednesford Park were holding a meeting this Thursday at 7.00pm at Pye Green Community Centre.

#### **10. Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust - update**

The Chairman advised that Trust had provided two updates and these were distributed to those present. The update stated that the TSA's had requested additional time from Monitor to develop their draft recommendations. As a result of this, the proposed public meetings had been cancelled and would be rescheduled accordingly once the new timetable had been confirmed. The update also advised on the catering arrangements. Concern was raised at the significant costs involved in having to publicise the cancellation of the proposed meetings.

The Chairman advised that Wolverhampton Acute and Walsall had expressed an interest in being involved in the future management of Cannock Hospital to address the under-utilisation issue.

Councillor Gamble explained that the Health Scrutiny Committee had looked at the catering arrangements at Cannock Chase Hospital and considered that the service was running well.

**11. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings**

The Chairman reported that the next Forum was scheduled for 18 September, 2013. Any questions would need to be submitted on the forms supplied.

**12. Dates of Future Meetings**

The Chairman confirmed the dates of the meetings of the Hednesford Community Forum:-

18 September, 2013 – at the new Aquarius facility (if available)

11 December, 2013

3 March, 2014

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CHAIRMAN

(The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.)