

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM
HELD ON TUESDAY, 11 DECEMBER, 2012 AT 7.00 P.M.
AT HEATH HAYES LIBRARY, HEDNESFORD ROAD, HEATH HAYES

PRESENT:
Councillors

Bernard, J. D. (Chairman)
Sutherland, M. (Vice-Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A.F. Rowley, J.
Jones, Ms. J. L.

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mr. T. McGovern, Corporate Director
Mrs. C. Bowker, Senior Committee Officer
Mrs. V. Tollis, Consultation and Engagement Officer

Also Present:-

Inspector C. Ellerton, Staffordshire Police
Mr. A. Commins, Director of Finance, Mid Staffs. Hospitals
No members of the public were in attendance
Parish Councillor J. Beddows

16. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Gilbert, J. Rowley, Ms. A. Spicer, Mrs. D. Todd and Mrs. L. Whitehouse.

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

No Declarations of Interests were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

18. Notes

The Notes of the meeting held on 4 September, 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

19. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Inspector Ellerton was asked what the position was with regard to burglaries in the

area. He advised that the number had reduced compared to the previous year. From April, 2012 there had been 13 burglaries compared to 31 for the same period in the previous year which was a significant reduction. A number of burglaries had occurred recently which were being investigated and Inspector Ellerton explained that it was important that residents made sure their properties were secure, particularly during the dark nights. He reported that a high powered car had been stolen recently which had been recovered within the Lichfield area on the same night. This was a national problem, particularly with respect to BMW cars and actions were being taken to address this problem. Residents should, where possible, house their cars in garages.

Inspector Ellerton informed the Forum that an injunction was now in place with respect to car cruising, although this was not currently running as signage was needing to be in place. It would prohibit street racing from The Orbital, A460 Eastern Way, A5 Watling Street, A5190 Lichfield Road, A34 Walsall Road and A4601 Avon Road. It would be applied to tackle serious issues of speeding, excessive noise, dangerous driving and the use of un-roadworthy cars. The injunction defined car cruising as a congregation of drivers of two or more vehicles between the hours of 7 pm and 7 am. It also covered retail parks which had been congregation points for car cruisers and banned activities including car racing, shouting or swearing, playing loud music, dropping litter and blocking roads. Anyone flouting the injunction, which would run indefinitely, could be taken to court and face a fine or up to two years in prison. Initially the Police would engage with those involved and issue a warning letter making them aware of the terms of the injunction.

An initiative had recently been carried out and approximately 59 people had been spoken to making them aware of the injunction and it was considered that through social networking, others would be made aware. Monitoring would be carried out in the Rugeley area to endeavour to ensure that the problem did not arise there, as it had not been possible to get a blanket injunction across all of Cannock Chase.

Concern was raised regarding drug issues. Inspector Ellerton advised that there were continually issues with respect to drugs and the Police were targeting Cannock town centre. A passive drugs dog would be used in pubs etc. with the co-operation of the licencees focusing on the night hours.

He explained that there were many individuals that had a poor health record and the use of drugs had an impact on the amount of crime being committed. It was considered important that the Police worked closely with the Integrated Offender Unit to address this problem and some success had been made with an approximate reduction of 15% being achieved of those that had offended.

Inspector Ellerton was asked when PCSOs would have the ability to arrest. He explained that PCSOs had been given additional powers after they had received further training. They had the power to detain a person for up to 30 minutes until a Constable arrived. They were able to use reasonable force but preferred to use co-operation and provide reassurance to people. Training was still on going and it was explained that at the present time PCSOs had mixed views on the additional powers.

20. Questions for Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust

Aaron Cummins the Director of Finance from Mid Staffs. Hospitals provided an update on Trust related matters.

He advised that the independent regulator, Monitor, had been working with the local commissioners and clinicians looking at options for the provision of healthcare services in Staffordshire. A team of experts had been appointed to recommend a viable long-term solution for patients who use services currently provided by the Trust. The team was expected to report back with a final plan in the Spring of 2013.

The Trust was on track to meet its agreed deficit budget. Stafford Hospital was now one of the best with lower mortality rates and infections. The Trust had made significant strides in improving the hospitals and had made investments in the provision of an additional MRI scanner and a planned endoscopy suite. Patients records were now kept electronically and some diagnostic equipment had been replaced. The views of staff and patients had been sought on how charitable funding should be used and it was considered that small but beneficial improvements had been made, such as alarm pulls and specialist chairs for stroke victims.

Solutions as to how the financial problems could be solved was being explored. The Clinical Commissioning Groups would take over all responsibilities from the PCT as of 1 April, 2013. Public meetings would be held as there was a need to consult.

A Councillor asked if Cannock Hospital could be transferred to another Trust. Mr. Cummins advised that the hospitals were currently losing approximately £1.1m a month and economies would need to be looked at, that could be delivered safely. He reminded Councillors that approximately 20% of the hospital was not being used and what services could be provided would be explored in order for revenue to be raised to cover costs. The hospital was an important local facility for residents and options were being considered alongside the Monitor review. Additionally, other healthcare organisations had transferred their services from Cannock Hospital to other venues.

Members raised concern that people sometimes struggled to attend the specialist hospitals due to transport difficulties. Aaron Cummins explained that different transport formulas were taken into consideration. The demographics of the area, patients accessing services and the costs of public transport for those who did not have a car were recognised issues.

21. The following issues had been raised by Mr. P. Gibbs

- Refine list of attendees/invitees. If regular invitees do not attend exclude from list?
- Seek (again) an apology from PCT over non attendance.
- Require Highways Department to attend – many residents have highways and maintenance questions. It is not acceptable that the department is in flux due to promotions. If they are paid they should attend.
- It would be appreciated if attending Councillors avoid 'bunching up' into little cliques, from where the meeting is overpowered with party politics.
- Can the minutes and agendas be distributed in a more timely fashion. My copy

took 10 days from created date to delivery. Cannock is not that poor a postal district.

The above issues were considered in Mr. Gibb's absence.

It was explained that the Forum was a public meeting and people could not be excluded from attending. The PCT had apologised for not attending a former meeting of the Forum and had provided an explanation. It was reported that if no highways issues were on the agenda, the Highways Department did not attend and ad hoc questions could not be raised at the meeting. Questions needed to be submitted in advance in order that an answer could be provided. The Chairman advised that questions from members of the public were always dealt with first before Councillors opinions were sought. It was explained that a copy of the agenda had been emailed to Mr. Gibbs. Agendas were despatched at least 5 clear working days before a meeting.

22. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

No questions had been submitted.

23. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman advised that a form for completion was attached to the agenda for any issues wanting to be raised at the next meeting of the Forum. Appropriate representatives would be invited to attend to answer the questions.

24. Date of Future Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum had been arranged for Thursday, 14 March, 2013 at 7.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm