

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM
MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER, 2014 AT 7.00 P.M.
BOURNE METHODIST CHURCH, HEDNESFORD ROAD, HEATH HAYES

PRESENT: Councillors

Bernard, J.D. (Chairman)
Buttery, M.S. (Vice-Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Holder, M.J.
Burley, Mrs. J.L.	Preece, J.
Dean, A.	Spicer, Mrs. A.
Hardman, B.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.

Other Councillors Present: Toth, J.
Bottomer, B.H.

Officers: T. McGovern, Corporate Director
J. Hunt, Senior Committee Officer

Also present: Members of the Public – approximately 5
M. Keeling, Staffordshire County Council -
(Highways)
L. Bullock, Heath Hayes & Wimblebury Parish
Council

13. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. D. Todd and B. Todd.

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

There were no interests declared.

15. Notes

The Notes of the meeting held on 30 June, 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

16. Question(s) for Staffordshire Police

It was reported that there was no one in attendance from Staffordshire Police and no questions had been received.

17. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services

It was reported that there were no questions received.

18. Consultation on Library Services

The Chairman reported on the current consultation being undertaken in respect of the future of Staffordshire's library service, and explained that under the proposals individuals and community groups would be given the opportunity to lead and manage local libraries with support from Staffordshire County Council, although not all individuals were in favour of this.

Information was available on Staffordshire County Council's website in respect of the current consultation and proposals.

Concern was expressed by a local Parish Councillor regarding the consultation process. He also questioned why there was no one available who could come and discuss the process with the Forum. He asked that a letter be forwarded to Staffordshire County Council from the Forum expressing their concerns.

It was reported and understood by a District Councillor that under the proposals Heath Hayes Library would be run using volunteers, and in his view this was not what local people wanted. He advised that another District Councillor had communicated with a County Council Cabinet Member regarding the proposals and concurred that a letter should be forwarded from the Forum.

Mr. T. McGovern, Corporate Director reported that a number of other public meetings and meetings between the County Council and Town/Parish Council's had been arranged to discuss the consultation process. The non attendance of County Council Library staff at the Forum was due to other commitments as part of the consultation process.

19. Questions received for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)

Mr. M. Keeling, Staffordshire County Council (Highways) was in attendance.

Question received from Mr. Barbrook, local resident.

Can the Community Forum confirm the statement made at the last Forum in Prospect Village Hall that Prospect Avenue, the road and path, due to its state of disrepair and gradual erosion will (at last) be re-surfaced in its

entirety in 2015. And could they please say when in 2015.

This would include the top end of Williamson Avenue as it turns onto Severns Road.

The following was received from Mark Keeling, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager, Staffordshire County Council

“I can confirm that Williamson Avenue and Longstaff Avenue feature within the 2015 Structural Maintenance program, however the program is subject to budget allocation and we will have further information and confirmation towards the end of the year”.

Question received from Mrs. Kershaw, local resident.

The pavements in general in Hazelslade are in a bad state of repair, with one spot just before the shops in Hazelslade. When are they scheduled to be re-surfaced?

The following was received from Mark Keeling, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager, Staffordshire County Council

“Without the name of specific streets I am unable to confirm any details, this is because we do not always surface all roads in a specific area, for example one street may require *complete resurfacing, and others may require preventative treatment whilst others may require no works at all.*

With regard to the general condition of the pavements in the area, the County Council’s Asset Management Plan develops carriageway and footway lifecycle plans to optimise the use of available funding. For those sites that have not yet been prioritized for renewal through the Asset Management Plan the County Council operates a risk management approach to reactive repairs which includes a regular inspection regime. The forward program for carriageway and footway reconstruction will be confirmed later this year once financial allocations have been confirmed.

If there are any specific concerns regarding defects within the footway please contact the County Council on 0300 111 8000 or via e-mail at highways@staffordshire.gov.uk”.

Mrs. Kershaw referred to the shops in Hazelslade and the pavement along that particular stretch which was in a poor state of repair. She also reported that at the junction of Rugeley Road and Rawnsley Road, there was a lack of a footpath and overgrowth of vegetation onto the highway.

Mr. M. Keeling advised that he would pursue this issue and arrange for a team to cut back the overgrowth.

Other Local Highways Issues

It was reported by a local Ward Member that the island installed at the junction of Norton East Road and Brownhills Road, Norton Canes was eroded, and so to was the island at Lakeside. She had taken photographs of the problem, however she had received no response from the Highways team and with winter approaching she was concerned with potholes forming.

Mr. M. Keeling advised that he would pursue this issue.

It was reported by a local Ward Member that there were a number of sunken drains in and around the Cannock area and she was keen to know what this was due to, and also highlighted the problem outside the Express and Star offices in Cannock.

Mr. Keeling informed the Forum that this could be due to pothole deteriorations or iron works. However, if this was a utilities issue the County Council would report it and the utilities company would be required to undertake appropriate repairs.

With regard to the road outside the Express and Star, Mr. Keeling reported that it was possible that the highways team had quickly dressed the surface and made the area safe as a more thorough job would involve the lane being closed. It was possible that a more thorough job would be undertaken, however this could mean a possible waiting time of between 2-3 months.

In response to a question regarding liaison between Members of the Council and Highways, Mr. Keeling reported that the Highways Liaison Team were in regular contact with Members of the Council and were there to help with general enquiries. The team would also undertake site visits although these would be prioritised.

A local Parish Councillor referred to the situation outside Express and Star and was keen to know if the County Council could undertake repairs and then make a charge to the utilities company where a proper repair was not being carried out.

Mr. Keeling explained that the utilities company would be liable under S81 of the Highways Act once they were notified that a repair was required, however the County Highways Team could make the repair and charge the utilities company by the day if needed.

Mr. Keeling would however undertake a visit to the area of concern outside the Express and Star.

A local District Councillor referred to the government budget where millions was provided for pothole repairs and asked how much was given to the County Council and how much of that was spent in Cannock Chase.

Mr. Keeling advised that around £2million additional funding was received and some of this was used for pothole repairs, hotspot patching and bringing some small schemes forward some of which were in the Cannock area.

He advised that it was difficult to identify specific pothole repair areas as Highways based action on priorities and defect category. There was also a forward program of structural schemes within the Cannock area and further information would be provided at a future Forum.

It was reported that the road at the junction of Rawsley Road and Littleworth Road, Rawsley had recently been re-dressed and within a few days indentation marks on the surface were noticeable. The local Ward Member also reported that periodic sweeping had not been seen to be taking place and consequently gravel had spread across the road.

Mr. Keeling would pursue this matter although he reported that the team would first make a pre-surface dressing before any actual works were carried out and the potholes should have been repaired and filled. With regard to the periodic road sweeps, he explained that these were now coming to an end, however he would have an inspection of the area in question carried out and if the surface needed it, a road sweep could be carried out.

In response to a question raised by a local Ward Member concerning Wimblebury Road, Heath Hayes, Mr. Keeling reported that the road had been surfaced dressed and the lining marks on the road humps had not yet been completed, however the team would carry this out shortly.

A local resident referred to the Post Office in Heath Hayes and was keen to know why the double yellow lines had not yet been re-marked. Mr. Keeling explained that he was aware that this area required re-marking, although the area outside the Post Office was busy with parked cars, therefore the lines would most possibly be painted by the team on a Sunday when it was less busy.

A local resident referred to a repair that was recently carried out to a pothole on a section of Cannock Road, Heath Hayes and asked why other repairs were not carried out at the same time.

Mr. Keeling explained that due to liability a work sheet was prepared for each job that was undertaken, and if a job was carried out without a work sheet and an accident occurred, the County Council would be liable. He also stated that the team dealt with a set number of repairs each day and urgent repairs could move the team away from an existing job.

The Chairman reported that where the speed limit on the Cannock Road, Heath Hayes reduced from 40mph to 30mph the dip in the road had subsided. He also reported that the speed bumps on the Wimblebury Road, Heath Hayes had not been painted.

A local resident referred to Chapel Street, Heath Hayes and reported a problem with potholes and a sunken kerb.

Mr. M. Keeling reported that he would look into these issues.

20. Question received by Member of the Public

Question received from Mr. Barbrook, local resident.

Can the Forum please make better efforts to tell local people when these forums are available as advertising them in the local newspaper and placing the details on village notice boards is not effective. Perhaps a black and white leaflet to households giving all the dates & venues, delivered once a year to the households.

The following was received from Steve Partridge, Democratic Services Manager

“The Council would like to thank Mr. Barbrook for raising this point. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure there is adequate public awareness of the community forums. The forums, were initially set up a number of years ago and meet on a quarterly basis in each of the four main population areas within the district, i.e. Cannock; Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawnsley; Hednesford; and Rugeley and Brereton, and form part of the Council’s annual Calendar of Meetings.

Whilst every effort is made to adhere to the published dates, occasionally it may be necessary to change one or more of them in order to accommodate the inclusion of a particular local “live” issue. The actual dates of meetings are then published in the ‘monthly schedule of meetings’ in the local newspaper and on the Council’s website. We also distribute posters to Councillors and other ‘partners’ including Parish Councils, libraries etc, in advance of each meeting, which we ask them to display as appropriate to help in raising awareness. Unfortunately, there is no budgetary provision for additional measures such as the suggested leaflet drop although this will be considered as part of the review of Community Forums.”

21. Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust

Mandi Dunbar, Personal Assistant to Jeff Crawshaw, Deputy Chief Executive, Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust has provided the following update:-

“Our Directors have concluded that as the Trust continues to be going through the Trust Special Administration (TSA) process, it would not be appropriate for them to attend the Community Forums. The Directors would like to assure local people that services at both Cannock Chase and Stafford Hospitals continue as usual and would encourage people to

continue to use them as appropriate.

The transition and integration planning phase of the TSA process has commenced, and will result in Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust (MSFT) services being managed by University Hospitals North Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust ("UHNS") and The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Foundation Trust ("RWT"). Please note that post dissolution both Stafford Hospital and Cannock Chase Hospital will remain open and operational but with the services being managed by UHNS and RWT.

The transfer of services as above will take place at the start of November 2014.

All MSFT staff will transfer with their current pay and associated conditions to either the University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust or The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust under plans agreed between the Trusts to transfer the management of services, and staff have been informed of this.

The majority of staff will remain in the same or comparable roles. Some staff will be asked to take on new roles to support RWT and UHNS in the delivery of the TSA model for clinical services at Stafford and Cannock hospitals.

Please note that the hospitals will remain open as a result of the management of Stafford Hospital transferring to UHNS and the management of Cannock Chase Hospital transferring to RWT. Patients should continue to attend the hospitals as normal."

A local Parish Councillor expressed much concern and dismay that yet again no one from Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust would attend the Forum to provide members of the public with information on their current plans and consultation.

Mr. T. McGovern reported that senior Members from the Council would be meeting with David Loughton, Chief Executive of Wolverhampton NHS Foundation Trust to seek answers to why a consultation on future services had not been undertaken. The meeting was scheduled for sometime this week.

The local Parish Councillor was very unhappy with the current situation and asked for this to be reiterated at the meeting.

22. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman reported that the next Forum was scheduled for Monday 1 December, 2014 and questions from members of the public should be submitted on the forms supplied.

23. Dates of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawsley Community Forum would be held on :-

- Monday 1 December, 2014

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting concluded at 7.45 p.m.)