

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM
WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH, 2011 AT 7.00PM
AT LEA HALL MINERS WELFARE CLUB, SANDY LANE, RUGELEY

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Councillors:

Davies, D.N. (Chairman)
Grocott, M.R. (Vice Chairman)

Ansell, Mrs. P.A.	Molineux, G.N.
Easton, Mrs. D.M.	Stanley, N.K.
Easton, R.	Williams, A.
Jones, R.	Williams, Mrs. P.

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. K. Lawlor	Head of Environmental Services
Mr. S. Partridge	Democratic Services Manager

Representatives from the following organizations:

Staffordshire County Council (Highways)	(Mr. W. Mortiboys)
Staffordshire Police	(Sgt. J. Browning)
Neighbourhood Watch	(Ms. V. Singleton)
Staffordshire County Council	(Councillors)
Rugeley Town Council	(Councillors)
	(Miss. N. Somani, Clerk)
Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council	(Councillors)

Approximately 6 local residents

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cannock Chase District Councillors: R.G. Meaden and B. Williams; Inspector C. Ellerton, Staffordshire Police; Mrs. P. Hadley, Crimestoppers; and W. Southall, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. M.R. Grocott	Trustee of Rugeley Cricket Club	Personal
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3. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 29 January, 2011 were accepted as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Staffordshire Young People's Services

Michelle Williams, Targeted Youth Support Officer, gave an introductory overview of the service, including details of the types of activities undertaken. She also advised of an open event for young people aged 11 years and older taking place at the Rugeley Youth Centre between 11.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on Saturday, 26 March, 2011.

Ms. Williams then received some questions about the current levels of usage of the facility and service and agreed that there remained spare capacity, and she was hoping to increase interest by promoting the event on 26 March, and thereby encourage further take up.

6. Crabtree Way Subway

Mr. Mountford, the local resident who had asked for this item to be put on the agenda was not present; however, he had asked the Chairman to read out a letter supporting his complaint about anti-social nuisance and a request that the subway be closed in order to improve the situation. A selection from several hundred photographs taken by Mr. Mountford were circulated amongst the audience in support of the complaint / request.

Sergeant J. Browning advised that litter in the area had been cleared up to 3 times in the past week, and a number of works had been done to improve the situation by both Staffordshire County Council and the Police, as detailed at previous meetings. The majority of complaints received came from Mr. Mountford.

There was an extended debate about the relative merits of closing, or not, the subway, and other contributing factors affecting anti-social behavior by youths at the subway and other locations. These included Rugeley Cricket Club from whom the Chairman had also received a letter which he read out reiterating many of the points previously raised, including littering; consuming alcohol, smoking, evidence of drug taking and alleged sexual activities.

Mr. Mortiboys, Staffs. County Council, confirmed that the County had no intention of closing the subway. As detailed previously, the cost of filling in the subway and associated works was disproportionate to the claimed level of nuisance and perceived benefits.

Mr. P. Brindley from Rugeley Cricket Club advised that there was to be a meeting on 5 April, at which representatives of the Club, the Police and school(s) would be present to discuss these matters. Michelle Williams said that she or a colleague would also try to attend the meeting.

7. Questions for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)

No questions had been submitted in advance, however, the Chairman invited questions from the floor.

Faulty Streetlamps

Cllr A. Williams asked how much it cost to run a street lamp for an hour, because he was aware of one that was faulty and appeared to be permanently on.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that he thought the cost was in the region of £15 per annum. However, if the fault was reported, it should be remedied by the County's partner, Enterprise.

Potholes

Cllr. Jones enquired what was happening with regard to remedying potholes.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that £4.0 m had been allocated in Staffordshire for the repair of potholes. £2.2 m was money budgetted by the County, while the Government was providing and additional £1.2 m.

The Chairman enquired how works were prioritised.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that they were prioritized based on risk taking account of size and location. For information, he informed the meeting that the majority of potholes appeared along reinstated trenches where works had previously been carried out by utilities' contractors.

Cllr. Stanley enquired how soon after a pothole was identified and prioritized would the work be done.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that it depended on the risk category:

Category 1 would be within 24 hours; category 2 within 7 days; and category 3 within 28 days.

Cllr. Stanley sought further clarification in respect of how to chase up work on an untreated but obviously category 1 or 2 pothole.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that it may be the case that the pothole's location meant it would have to be repaired outside of normal working hours when the road was quieter and the repair could be undertaken safely and with minimum nuisance to road users.

Nuisance Caused by Utilities Works (Gas) in the Area

The Chairman and Cllr. Grocott raised concerns about the long standing programme of works being undertaken by the Gas Board, whose contractors were causing ongoing nuisance and disruption to residents through the works themselves, and the compound that had been created to hold plant and materials. In particular, Catkin Walk, Crabtree Way, Plovers Rise and Swallow Close were cited.

A460 (Western Springs Road) / Petrol Station, off Globe Island

Cllr. Jones raised concerns about cars coming off the Globe Island and turning right, across oncoming traffic, into the petrol station. He suggested that the County Council needed to consider putting some form of central reservation / other restriction to prevent cars turning across the road.

Overgrown Planting on Roundabouts

Cllr. Jones also raised concerns about the state of some roundabouts, which were overgrown and presented a hazard to pedestrians using them to cross the road.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that the County Council was in discussions with the District

Council about the District taking on responsibility for maintenance of the roundabouts following expiry of the County's current contract.

Mr. Mortiboys reminded the meeting that any Highways complaints in respect of potholes, street lights etc should be reported via the hotline number: 0300 111 3000 or online via the County's website.

8. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Pumping Station, Hagley Fields

Cllr. A. Williams requested the Matrix Team be asked to look at the location.

Current Criminal Activities?

The Chairman enquired if there were any current issues that the Forum should be made aware of.

Ms. Singleton advised that reports had been received of bogus Water Board officials operating in the area.

Rugeley Police Station

Cllr. Jones enquired if any assurances could be given in respect of future policing from a base in Rugeley.

Sgt Browning advised that to the best of her knowledge, the current premises would remain operational unless a suitable alternative venue became available. Response officers would remain based in Rugeley, although briefed in Cannock; Neighbourhood teams would be based in Rugeley; and Inspector Ellerton would also remain Rugeley based, although his remit also covered part of Cannock.

9. Any Other Business

No other matters were raised

10. Forward Agenda

The Chairman reminded those present that pro formas were available for questions / items to be raised at the next meeting. No matters were raised from the floor.

11. Next Meeting

The Forum was asked to note the date of the next meeting as Monday, 6 June, 2011. It was agreed that the meeting should be held at the Rugeley Rose, if available.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

CHAIRMAN