

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

HEATH HAYES, NORTON CANES AND RAWNSLEY COMMUNITY FORUM

HELD ON THURSDAY, 14 JUNE, 2012 AT 7.00 P.M.

AT HAYES GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE, HAYES GREEN, HEATH HAYES

PRESENT: Councillors

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

Bernard, Mrs. A.F. Rowley, J.
Gilbert, P. Todd, Mrs. D.
Jones, Ms. J. L.

Other District Councillors in Attendance

Councillor R. Todd

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mr. K. Lawlor, Head of Environmental Services
Mrs. C. Bowker, Senior Committee Officer
Ms. V. Henderson, Consultation and Engagement Officer

Also Present:-

Sgt. D. Edge, Staffordshire Police
PC N. Griffiths, Staffordshire Police
PC D. Hickman, Staffordshire Police
Ms. V. Singleton, Staffordshire Police, Neighbourhood Watch
Parish Councillors
No Members of the public were in attendance

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor J. D. Bernard was appointed as Chairman and Councillor M. Sutherland was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Community Forum for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

2. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. L. Whitehouse.

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

No declarations of interests were made.

4. Notes

The Notes of the meeting held on 5 March, 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed.

5. Questions for Staffordshire Police

The Police representatives were asked what the position was locally with respect to crime issues. Sgt. Edge reported that Heath Hayes and neighbouring areas were a good place to live. Some minor issues had arisen with regard to youths playing football after school in Sweetbriar Way. A Member explained that an area in Eden Close had been adapted for this purpose. The Police explained that the youths were not causing any issues. In Norton Canes concerns had arisen with regard to teenagers with mini motor bikes and this was being monitored and pro active actions were being taken. Incidents of ASB had taken place around the cricket club area which was being monitored by Police Officers and incidents were now diminishing.

In reply to a query on how the Speed Watch Scheme was progressing, the Police explained that it was sometimes difficult to get volunteers for the scheme. However PC N. Griffiths reported that he was hopeful that he would be able to get more volunteers to undertake the necessary training.

Concern was raised by a Parish Councillor that he had not noticed the mobile camera van recently in the area. The Police explained that it was used across the county and where it was going to be deployed was advertised in the press. Other Members advised that they had seen it in the area recently.

A 'Ring of Steel' anti crime initiative was being undertaken which recorded known criminals registration plates entering the county tracked their whereabouts and helped in gathering intelligence information.

The Staffordshire Police Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator reported that crime was low in the area. However residents needed to be vigilant and keep doors and windows closed and remove sat navs from cars. The Police reported that they did use a decoy car which contained a laptop and sat nav which could be traced if stolen as a way of catching criminals.

6. Update on Mid Staffs. Hospital

Lyn Hill Tout, the Chief Executive of Mid Staffs. Hospitals apologised for not attending the meeting of the Forum in March as the appointment had inadvertently been removed from her diary.

The Chief Executive explained that there were many rumours circulating with respect to the hospitals and she would provide an update on a number of issues.

The Forum was advised that under the Health and Social Care Act, 2012 it was proposed to abolish NHS primary care trusts and health care funds would be transferred to 'clinical commissioning groups', partly run by general practitioners (GPs).

Cannock hospital had many good services including rehabilitation, rheumatology, orthopaedic, and physiotherapy, including a hydro pool. However there were large parts of the hospital not being used as some services have moved to other premises. The Clinical Commissioning Group considered it important to deliver health services at the hospital and were looking at how they could be utilised as much as possible, whilst maintaining current care. The minor injuries unit provided by the Primary Care

Partnership Trust would continue to be provided. The Chief Executive considered that Cannock hospital had a long term future.

With regard to Stafford hospital the Chief Executive explained that there was speculation that it was to be down graded due to problems with doctors at the A&E department. The Forum was advised that major trauma casualties were taken to Stoke hospital and stroke patients to Wolverhampton as the outcome was better for those treated in specialist centres.

Stafford hospital was networking with large hospitals as a way of addressing staffing problems and safety issues in the A&E department. The intention was to have re-opened the department in June, however concern had been raised by senior doctors with respect to the judgement of junior doctors when left on their own. It was envisaged that the department would re-open toward the end of September or beginning of October, 2012. The department would be opened as soon as it was safe to do so.

It had been recommended that 6 Consultants should be in post, currently there were now 5 at Stafford. The hospital was working with University of North Staffordshire as a form of providing resilience by rotating staff.

The Chief Executive explained that sometimes patients attended the A&E department with minor ailments, but they still had to be seen. Ways of addressing this issue were being explored. Currently the public could telephone NHS direct, go to their GP, attend the minor injury unit and access the out of hours service.

There were still areas of concern, especially when patients had been discharged with cannulas still in place. New procedures as a guide to nurses were being introduced. When patients were being discharged it now required two trained nurses to do a visual check and sign a form certifying that this had been done. Posters were being placed around wards and corridors to raise awareness of the issue. A further check was carried out when the patient was in the discharge lounge, although overall responsibility lay with the nurses on the ward and they would be held to account.

A second public enquiry around Regulation at Stafford hospital would be reported to the Secretary of State in October and it was anticipated that the results would be known in early November 2012.

The Chief Executive reported that with regard to waiting times, a few areas were not meeting the 18 week target from referral by GPs for non urgent issues. Cancer patients were being treated within the two week target. The Chief Executive paid tribute to the staff for their efforts in getting patients treated as quickly as possible and was pleased to report that mortality rates at the hospitals had fallen.

A Parish Councillor commended what had been carried out, but was concerned that services were being moved out of Cannock hospital as residents preferred to attend a local facility. The Chief Executive explained that only low risk patients could be treated at Cannock and discussions were taking place with GPs on how the hospital could be used more effectively. Improved use of all resources at the hospitals were being explored.

Concern was raised with regard to the 'hospital bugs' and it was reported that C Diff and MRSA cases were reducing locally and nationally year on year. However new bugs were emerging and it was important to find ways of dealing with those. A Member enquired how often the hand sanitising gel containers were refilled as when visiting Stafford hospital one of them had been found to be empty. The Chief Executive advised that she would look into the matter and report back to the Member.

A Member expressed concern that it had been initially intended to reopen Stafford A & E department in March, then June and now September/October. The Chief Executive reiterated that this was due to concerns expressed by senior doctors in relation to when junior doctors were left on their own between the hours of 2 am and 7 pm.

The Ambulance Service had worked well during the time that the A&E department was closed and there was no evidence that people had come to more harm whilst having to travel further. The closure had been well managed, although patients and visitors had to travel further. Patients were repatriated as soon as possible. It was explained that there was a financial implication to the A&E department not being open at night.

A Member commended the Chief Executive for not opening the A&E department when it was not safe to do so and for facing the associated backlash. The Chief Executive reported that the hospital had been open and transparent regarding issues, however this had led to negative press and this was what the community read about.

The Forum was advised that when The Chief Executive had first been appointed she had received many letters of complaints, but now was receiving a more positive feedback and receiving many thank you letters and these were now outnumbering complaints.

The Chairman thanked Lyn Hill-Tout for attending the Forum and providing the update.

- 7.
- **Specific reason(s) for 'no show' of PCT representative/why no stand-in**
 - **Can Council arrange issue of specific list of who or whom is responsible for various issues taken over/inherited from Police, ie fireworks, other nuisances, on pavement parking**
 - **There seems to be a large body of evidence in the public domain of the statistics of prior consultation on traffic calming. It appears that on the matter of Hednesford Road only 56 questionnaires were returned of which less than 26 were in favour of any measures. Surely democracy is ill served by such small numbers being taken as ratification to permit the measures at all?**
 - **Parking prosecutions given for Chapel Street given as 15 per year. This is unacceptable and reflects the lack of emphasis and endeavour in place by Cannock Chase District Council.**

Due to Mr. P. Gibbs absence a Member raised the issues which had been requested to be included on the agenda.

The absence of the Chief Executive at the March meeting of the Forum had been explained earlier in the meeting.

Notes relating to legislation regarding fireworks, noise and on street parking enforcement were available for those who wanted to take a copy.

With respect to traffic calming, County and District Councillor J. Rowley advised that 1,100 questionnaires had gone out to residents on the Hednesford Road and the side streets in that area. He reported that 242 completed questionnaires had been returned. However when the results were broken down to directly affected frontages it was found that 56% of residents on Hednesford Road supported traffic calming and 44% did not. A Member asked why they had gone out to those living in side streets if

the County Council would not take their responses into consideration.

A representative from the Highways Department at the County Council had been unable to attend. They had, however, sent a response regarding traffic calming on Hednesford Road which stated that the County Council took the views of local communities very seriously when implementing measures to create a safer environment for all road users.

This particular Local Safety Scheme was instigated due to the number of collisions at the location and extensive consultation was subsequently carried out to determine the preferred engineering measures required to improve road safety.

The County Council was about to undertake surveys with the community to ascertain their comments on the construction of the scheme and would be arranging for an independent body to undertake a Road Safety Assessment of the measures, now they were in place. They would continue to monitor vehicle speeds and the occurrence of road traffic accidents at the location to evaluate the success of the scheme.

With regard to parking prosecutions for Chapel Street, the Head of Environmental Services advised that from April 2011 until March, 2012 there had been 36 penalty charge notices issued in Chapel Street. From April 2012, Chapel Street was visited on a daily basis by Parking Enforcement Officers. It was explained that some of those parking in Chapel Street were blue badge holders. The Head of Environmental Services agreed to check the policy in respect to whether Parking Enforcement Officers notified the Police when parked vehicles were causing an obstruction.

8. Dates of Future Meetings

The Chairman requested that future meetings be rearranged as they were scheduled to be held on Wednesdays and there would be a clash with Parish Council meetings.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm