

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM

MONDAY, 11 JUNE, 2012 AT 7.00PM

AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, RUGELEY TOWN COUNCIL, TAYLOR'S LANE, RUGELEY

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Councillors:

Jones, R. (Chair)
Johnson, J.P. (Vice)

Allt, Mrs. A.	Lovell, A.
Bennett, C.	Molineux, G.N.
Bottomer, B.H.	
Davies, D.N.	Other District Councillor(s):
Fisher, P.A.	Rowley, J.
Grocott, M.R.	

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. T. McGovern	Corporate Director
Mr. S. Partridge	Democratic Services Manager

Representatives from the following organisations:

Staffordshire Police	(Insp. C. Ellerton)
Staffordshire County Council - Highways	(M. Keeling)
Staffordshire County Council	(SCC Cllrs. R. Easton and G. Martin)
Lichfield Diocese	(G. Hunt, SCC, for Archdeacon Chris Liley)
Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust	(C. Ovington, Director of Nursing)
Town / Parish Councils	

Approximately 15 local residents

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor R. Jones was elected as Chairman, and Councillor J. Johnson as Vice-Chairman for the current Municipal Year.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A. Dudson.

Apologies were also submitted on behalf of A. Burley, M.P.; Sgt. J. Browning (Staffs. Police); Staffs. Fire & Rescue Service; and a number of Town / Parish Councillors.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. M. Grocott declared that he was a Trustee of Rugeley Cricket Club.

4. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 21 March, 2012 were accepted as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising (Not Otherwise Covered on the Agenda)

Item 9. Chaseley Road Residents

Mrs. Pauline Hadley, advised that the assurances she had been given with regard to the type and location of the fence had proved to be misleading and her initial concerns had proved to be correct. There was an extensive discussion about residents concerns in this regard. The Corporate Director advised that would take the matter up with the Planning Department and, if necessary, he would ask that a Planning Officer attend the next Forum meeting.

There were no other matters arising.

6. The Old Chancel, St. Augustine's Church, Rugeley

Mr. G. Hunt, Community Partnerships Officer, Staffordshire County Council, provided an update on behalf of the, Archdeacon of Lichfield.

Mr. Hunt outlined the key matters of concern, as discussed previously, and a potential plan of action:

- The tower required remedial works firstly to make it safe and secondly to make it potentially usable (initial costs estimated in the region of £22,500).
- The arcade required works to stabilise the structure (estimated costs: £1,500. SCC Cllr. G. Martin has agreed to fund from Local Communities Fund).
- The chancel required repair works to weatherproof the building and prevent further structural deterioration (estimated costs: £34,500. Potential sources of funding identified: Staffordshire Environmental Fund (up to 50%); SCC Village Halls and Community Centres Grant (up to 50% excluding professional fees)).

Mr. Hunt advised that the Archdeacon had confirmed that:

- He had met with the Rector who would make the application for grant funding.
- The Parish would pay professional fees for the specification etc for the arcading and the tower.
- The Rector would speak to the District Council's Conservation Officer regarding an alternative option in respect of repairs to the tower, i.e. taking out the floor and leaving it open to the elements.

- The Archdeacon would also begin to put a scheme together for the redundancy of the buildings, which would permit future transfer under lease to an appropriate responsible community body.

Cllr. J. Johnson advised that he had been informed that there were mosaics of historic significance on the site, which might impact on the status of the building and potential funding streams.

There was then a wide ranging discussion about how the Old Chancel Ruins could better publicised, including the possible creation of a "Friends of" group; and the use of social media, such as Facebook, and other media, such as the Rugeley Traders newsletter.

7. Questions for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)

Mr. Mark Keeling attended on behalf of the Highways Authority. The following concerns were raised from the floor:

Partial Collapse of Bridge over Brook, adjacent to Western Springs Road

Mr. Keeling thanked the Member for bringing the matter to his attention; and said he would get it looked into.

Poor State of Repair of Street Signs

This was largely a District Council issue, which had been raised at a previous forum when it had been reported that that budget had been scrapped. However, £7,000 had been put back to cover the whole district in the current year; with a similar amount the following year. Work would be undertaken to establish repair / replacement priorities. It was suggested that members of the public report their street sign concerns to the Council, copied to their local councillor, so that the Councillor was aware of the issue and could follow up on the member of the public's behalf.

Standard of Reinstatements by Utility Companies

Mr. Keeling was asked what criteria were placed on utility companies in terms of the standards of reinstatements following ground works. Mr. Keeling advised that they were only required to reinstate to the previous condition, which led to patchwork effect on affected roads and footpaths. The situation was exacerbated if a second utility company subsequently undertook other works, and would only ever get back to a pristine condition following a full blown resurfacing or surface treatment.

8. Questions for Staffordshire Police

The Chairman thanked the Police for their support at the recent Rugeley Charter Fair. Inspector Ellerton advised that he would pass on his thanks to the local Police and Special Constables involved.

Inspector Ellerton was questioned about the local impact on front line policing of

budgetary cuts. Inspector Ellerton advised that it was hard to be precise at that time; however, he was pleased to report that an additional 2 cars had been made available to him for the period of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the European Championships, as it was recognized that such events led to increases in domestic violence and theft from vehicles.

8. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting for the Fire and Rescue Services, consequently no representative had been sent to the meeting.

No other matters were raised for referral back to the Fire and Rescue Service.

9. Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust

Mr. Colin Ovington, Director of Nursing, attended on behalf of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. The following matters were raised from the floor:

Overnight Reopening of A & E Department, Stafford Hospital

Mr. Ovington advised that the reopening of the overnight A & E service had been deferred from June to October.

Councillors and members of the public expressed concern that there was a rumoured longer term plan which would see the overnight service not being reinstated at all and closure of the A & E Department in line with "Government plans". Concern was also expressed that the deferred timescale was coincident with the anticipated publication of the report to the Secretary of State for Health on the Public Inquiry into the running of Stafford Hospital, which was due in mid-October.

Mr. Ovington advised that he was not aware of any such plan and the timing of the publication of the report was purely coincidental. In principle, the overnight service could have restarted from June as there was a sufficient core of staff to run the service. However, a number of vacancies remained to be filled (3 x mid-level Doctors; 5 x Nursing staff), and it was considered essential that the department should function effectively as a team and it was, therefore, important that everybody be in place and practiced in working together before going live.

The Chairman requested that Mr. Ovington, or a colleague, should be invited to attend the next Forum meeting in September, to provide a further update.

9. Any Other Business

Public Footpath between Wolseley Road and the Bloody Steps

It was noted that the footpath was very overgrown.

Mr. Keeling advised that he would look into the matter.

Green Lane Playing Fields

A resident advised that she had raised the matter some weeks previously. The site of a former maintenance hut was prone to flooding owing to services having not previously

been cut off. This work had now been done and the site needed leveling off to bring it back into use.

The Corporate Director advised that he would follow up on the matter.

10. Next Meeting

The Forum was asked to note the date of the next meeting as Tuesday, 11 September, 2012 at the Council Chamber, Rugeley Town Council, unless notified to the contrary.

11. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman reminded those present that pro formas were attached to their agendas for questions / items to be raised at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

CHAIRMAN