

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM
MONDAY, 29 NOVEMBER, 2010 AT 7.00PM
AT RUGELEY ROSE THEATRE, TAYLORS LANE, RUGELEY

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Council Forum Members:

Councillors:

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

Molineux, G.N. Williams, A.
Stanley, N.K. Williams, Mrs. P.

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mrs. J. Aupers	Head of Governance and Organisational Development
Mr. S. Partridge	Democratic Services Manager

Representatives of Other Organisations:

Mr. W. Mortiboys	Staffordshire County Council, Highways
Insp. C. Ellerton	Staffordshire Police
W. Southall	Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Mrs. P. Hadley	Crimestoppers
Ms. V. Singleton	Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator
Councillors	Rugeley Town Council
Councillors	Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council
Councillors	Staffordshire County Council

Local Residents (approx 10)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cannock Chase District Councillors:
Mrs. D. M. Easton; R. Easton; R.G. Meaden; R. Jones; R.G. Meaden; and B. Williams.
A number of local residents had also sent their apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 7 September, 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

7. Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour, Subway at Crabtree Lane

SCC Councillor G. Martin advised that he had agreed to pay for 2 bins from his Community Fund allowance, and the District Council had agreed to empty them.

4. (5(44ii)) State of Repair of Footpaths

Councillor Grocott advised that the issue concerned the state of repair of the road as well as the footpaths outside / in the vicinity of the Chancel School.

5. Crimestoppers

Mrs. Pauline Hadley, Regional Manager, Crimestoppers gave a presentation, followed by a short question and answer session, about the role and work of Crimestoppers. Crimestoppers is an established Charity, independent of the Police, but liaising with them to help solve crimes. Their mission is to encourage and empower everyone to provide information about crimes and criminals without having to speak directly to the Police or attend court as a witness. They are also able to offer rewards of between £100 and £1,000 in the event that crimes are solved.

Members of the public praised the work of the organisation.

6. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Risk Reduction Manager Wes Southall gave a presentation about role of the Fire and Rescue Service, and the range of services offered by them. These covered everything from putting out fires and attending road traffic accidents (RTA's), to undertaking commercial fire and safety risk assessments; and community based work, such as checking / installing fire alarms / smoke detectors; checking electric blankets; giving domestic safety advice; and running a Fire Cadet Scheme. Mr. Southall also gave a status update in respect of local fire stations.

Members of the public then asked questions.

7. Questions for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)

The Chairman asked for an update in respect of the County's plans for gritting in adverse weather conditions. Mr. Wayne Mortiboys advised that the County had increased substantially its stocks of salt. Normally, 13,500 tonnes were carried in stock;

however, following the experiences of the previous winter, stock levels had been increased to 30,000 tonnes. 600 tonnes of salt are used on every circuit County's roads, covering 43% of the network. During the winter of 2009-10, the circuits had been reduced to cover only A and B routes as a response to diminishing stock. For 2010-11 liaison had taken place with Arriva to ensure that bus routes were included to avoid some of the problems of the previous year.

The Chairman enquired if it was policy to reduce the number of grit bins, as he had noticed that there appeared to be fewer about. Mr. Mortiboys advised that this was not the case, but, unfortunately, it was known that bins were occasionally moved or stolen and the County couldn't afford to keep on replacing them.

Councillors and Members of the public asked a number of questions about specific locations, which Mr. Mortiboys answered. He also explained that different materials were better suited to different applications. For example, grit was more effective on highways, while salt or brine was better on footpaths. Councillor N. Stanley enquired if the County would consider providing equipment to Parish / Town Councils if they were prepared to undertake gritting / spraying etc. themselves. Mr. Mortiboys advised that the County could not afford to simply provide equipment that may not be used, but if the Parish / Town Councils were prepared to purchase suitable equipment, then, in principle, the County would consider providing stocks.

With regard to "gritting" maps and schedules, Mr. Mortiboys advised the meeting that these could be accessed via the County's website.

Mr. Mortiboys also advised that the County had provided, free of charge, ducting to the Globe Island for Rugeley Town Council's Christmas tree.

8. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Inspector Ellerton updated the meeting in respect of recent crime and anti-social behaviour incidents.

Ms. V. Singleton, Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Watch service and the benefits to be had from joining / establishing a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Members of the public discussed a number of instances of recent anti-social behaviour, such as damage to parks and play equipment; fire setting, drinking in public places, including parks and open spaces. Inspector Ellerton responded to particular issues where he was able, and noted the others.

The Chairman enquired if Inspector Ellerton had any idea of the likely impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on local policing in the Rugeley and Brereton area. Inspector Ellerton advised that, without going into specifics, it would be a case of effectively reducing the force while maintaining service levels. To this end, they would have to consider innovative ways of delivering effective policing.

9. Any Other Business

Dry Waste Recycling ("Blue Bins")

Councillor A. Williams advised the meeting that the blue bins had been a great success since their introduction in the summer. There had been a 32% increase in recycling (comparing August, 2010 with the corresponding period in the previous year), representing 213 tonnes of rubbish not being sent to landfill. He wished to record his thanks to the residents of the district.

10. Forward Agenda

No specific items were raised.

11. Next Meeting

Councillor A. Williams suggested that Lea Hall Miners Welfare Club be considered as an alternative venue for the next meeting, on or around the previously agreed date of 21 March, 2011.

(Note: It has since been agreed that the meeting will be held at the Lea Hall Club on Wednesday, 16 March, 2011.)

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN