

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM**  
**MONDAY, 9 MARCH 2009 AT 7.00PM**  
**AT THE ROSE THEATRE, TAYLORS LANE, RUGELEY**

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Council Forum Members:

Councillors

Grocott, M.R. (Chairman)

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

Cannock Chase Council Officers

Mr. I. Tennant	Head of Housing
Mr. M. Challoner	Principal Committee Officer

Representatives from the following organisations:

Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire Police  
Staffordshire Police Neighborhood Watch  
Rugeley Town Council  
Brereton Parish Council  
Press  
Approximately 40 local residents

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R.G. Meaden, B. Williams and County Councillor G.E. Roberts).

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, Chief Inspector Nick Baker of Staffordshire Police presented certificates of appreciation to students of Hagley Park Sports College for their work in the local community.

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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Williams, Mrs. P.	Governor of Chancel Primary School	Personal

**45. Notes of the Previous Meeting**

The Notes of the meeting held on 1 December 2008 were approved as a correct record.

**46. Progress Report on the Pedestrianisation of Rugeley Town Centre**

The Chairman read out the following statement:

“Following the last meeting of the Forum, it was agreed that officers of the County Council, Staffordshire Police and Ward Members meet to walk around the pedestrianised area of the Town Centre.

Following this meeting, I have been provided with the following update from Mark Keeling of the County Council:

“A meeting took place as planned and myself, the Police and Councillors also had a walk around the entry/exit points of the pedestrian area. In general, the amount of cars in the town was minimal however, a few “contractor” vehicles were within the pedestrianised area.

At the end of the meeting I agreed to check with the Traffic Regulation Department to seek information on who is responsible for renewing the 1976 Order. Having spoken to Kevin Smith from Traffic Regulation he stated that this would be the responsibility of the County Council. Therefore, the request would come back to me.

Any alteration to a Traffic Order can take many months to implement from the start of the process, which is decided through a priority system. There were many suggestions made during the meeting on who has access and who hasn't, however I feel that lots of separate dispensations will only confuse matters and make it difficult to enforce. The signs must be kept as simple as possible therefore, the prohibition must be as simple and clear as possible without any, if possible, variations.

In the meantime I suggest we improve the signing at the entry points to the pedestrianised area, which I am happy to arrange. The new signs will state “Pedestrianised Area” rather than just prohibition of motor vehicles sign which some people may not understand”.

The Forum sought clarification with regard to the timescale for revising the Order and whether any future order would allow disabled access through the town centre.

Mr. Dave Botfield of Staffordshire County Council advised that it could take a significant amount of time to revise an Order, possibly up to 12 months and that the Order may need to include a number of exemptions to allow disabled access and access for certain vehicles.

**47. School Crossing – Chancel Primary School**

Mr. Botfield reported that there were two controlled crossing points in the vicinity of Chancel Primary School, one on Station Road and the other on Wolseley Road. With

regard to the replacement of school crossing wardens, he advised that it was not the County Council's policy to replace school crossing wardens on their retirement where there were controlled crossing points near to a school.

He also added that the County Council would investigate the possibility of introducing a weight restriction on Wolseley Road and would endeavor to carry out a survey of the number of HGV's passing the school before the end of April.

With regard to possibility of installing traffic calming measures at the site, Mr. Botfield reported that such measures were prioritised in accordance with accident data and there were no recorded accidents having occurred at the site.

#### **48. Bower Lane, Rugeley**

Mr. Porter asked a number of questions in relation to Bower Lane.

Before responding to the questions, Mr. Botfield submitted the apologies of Mr. James Bailey who was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior appointment.

In response to Question 1 Mr. Botfield was of the view that this question had been addressed at the last meeting. He stated that Bower Lane was regularly inspected and was in a reasonable condition with no major defects. However, following an inspection that day it was found that the "sets" needed to be addressed and Mr. Botfield agreed to ensure the work would be undertaken.

With regard to Question 2, Mr. Botfield advised that whilst he accepted the concerns that a number of vehicles were speeding along Bower Lane, the number of vehicles exceeding the speed limit and the speed at which the vehicles were recorded as traveling were, on the whole, not excessive. He added that Bower Lane was not a core road network and therefore there would be no increase in the number of visits by the Safety Camera Van Partnership.

In response to Question 3, Inspector Chris Ellerton reported that a number of road safety operations had been carried out, including one at Hednesford Road, but that these had been limited due to the dark nights and the need to consider the health and safety of Police Officers. He indicated that the Police were endeavoring to respond to incidents within the resources available.

#### **49. Members Allowances and the Cost of Planning Appeals**

In response to questions from Mr. Heathcote of St. Michael's Road, Brereton, the Chairman reported that the total cost of allowances and expenses paid to Members during 2007/08 amounted to £404,029.00.

He also added that with regard to the cost of defending planning decisions in 2007/08 through the planning appeal process, the Council's Planning Services Manager had advised that the award of costs against the Council during this period had been in respect of one case relating to the redevelopment of 21-27 Lion Street, Rugeley. This could not be quantified as the award had not been settled.

**50. Request for Improved Signage and Road Markings Along Rugeley Bypass**

Councillor Geoff Martin of Rugeley Town Council expressed concern with regard to poor signage and lighting along Rugeley Bypass. He indicated that people who are not familiar with the road believed it to be a dual carriage way and the Town Council had expressed a number concerns regarding the potential for an accident.

Mr. Botfield advised the Forum that in view of the fact that the bypass was a newly constructed road, all of the road markings and signage should be to the required standard. He agreed check the accident data in relation to the bypass and provide an update at the next meeting of the Forum.

**51. Enforcement of Weight Restrictions in Anson Street, Rugeley**

The Forum noted that this item had been dealt with as part of Minute 47.

**52. Request for CCTV Improvement in Rugeley Town Centre**

In response to a question submitted by Mr. & Mrs. Hawley of the Music Box in Rugeley Town Centre, the Chairman read out the following statement:

"I have been advised that the Council have recently received a quote from the Council's contractor for the installation of a dome camera adjacent to the Music Box store. The cost of the supply and installation of the camera is in the region of £26,000. Given the limited resources available to the Council at the current time, it is unlikely that an additional CCTV camera can be installed.

However, I understand that at a recent Community Action Team meeting, it was suggested that the existing CCTV camera in Brook Square could be moved to an alternative location in order that it covers the area around the Music Box. I have requested that a quotation is obtained to possibly undertake this work and I shall report further at the next meeting of the Forum."

It was agreed that progress on this matter be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

**53. Questions for Staffordshire Police**

Members of the public were invited to ask questions of the representatives from Staffordshire Police in relation to local policing matters.

Problems with Anti-Social Behavior

A local resident referred to problems of antisocial behavior in Fortescue Play Area and the closure of entrances at Chadsfield Play Area.

Inspector Ellerton reported that the police were aware of problems of anti-social behavior at Fortescue Play Area and were responding to incidents. He added that the Police were looking to extend the alcohol prohibition area and were liaising closely with the Council's Licensing Unit.

### Wilko's Car Park

A number of residents expressed concern with regard to the condition of the car park at Wilkinsons in Rugeley.

Rhona Gudgin, Street Warden Manager, advised the Forum that there was an issue over the ownership of the land adjacent to Wilkinsons car park and that repairs to the land could not be undertaken without the consent of the landowner. She added that officers were investigating the matter.

### Enforcement of Road Traffic Laws

Councillor A. Williams raised the matter of the enforcement of road traffic laws by the Police.

Inspector Ellerton reported that the Police actively enforced road traffic legislation and proactively tackled issues. He advised Councillor Williams that he would arrange for Sergeant Chris Green to discuss the matter with him.

Mrs. Rosemary Crawley of the Police Authority added that the Police had initiated a major drive to reduce bureaucracy within the force, which had resulted in the equivalent of 48 police officers on the beat.

### Problems with Under Age Drinking and Litter Along Wolseley Road

A local resident expressed concern with regard to underage drinking along Wolseley Road and the associated problems of litter.

Inspector Ellerton understood the concerns of residents and indicated that the Police were working with licensed premises in order to combat the sale of alcohol to under 18's. He also reported that additional officers had been deployed on Friday and Saturday evenings in order to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour.

### Shops to the Rear of Bow Street, Rugeley

A local resident raised the following concerns: -

- (i) Problems with rubbish at the shops to the rear of Bow Street, Rugeley,
- (ii) Speeding cars and loud music at the car park at the top of Market Hall,
- (iii) Problems with litter, including broken glass and syringes.

Inspector Ellerton agreed that Sergeant Green would discuss the matter with the local resident following the meeting.

## **54. Water Feature, Rugeley Town Centre**

The Forum were updated with regard the progress of Rugeley Town Centre Water Feature.

Councillor N.K. Stanley reported that the Ward Councillors for the area would be

undertaking a survey of local residents to ascertain their views with regard to the proposed water feature.

**55. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings**

Suggestions of issues to be discussed at future meetings of the Forum were sought. It was explained that appropriate representatives would be invited to attend and debate issues and answer any questions.

**56. Dates of Future Meetings**

The Forum noted the provisional dates of meetings of the Forum:

- 16 June 2009
- 1 September 2009
- 7 December 2009
- 22 March 2010

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CHAIRMAN