

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM
MONDAY, 6 JUNE, 2011 AT 7.00PM
AT RUGELEY ROSE, TAYLOR'S LANE, RUGELEY

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Councillors:

Davies, D.N. (Chairman)
Jones, R. (Vice Chair man)

Allt, Mrs. A.	Grocott, M.R.
Brown, G.C.	Molineux, G.N.
Easton, R.	Williams, Mrs. P.
Fisher, P.A.	

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

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

Representatives from the following organizations:

Staffordshire County Council (Highways)	(Mr. W. Mortiboys)
Staffordshire Police	(Insp. C. Ellerton; PC W. Moreton)
Neighbourhood Watch	(Ms. V. Singleton)
Staffordshire Fire & Rescue	(W. Southall)
Staffordshire County Council	(Councillors)
Rugeley Town Council	(Councillors)
Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council	(Councillors)

Approximately 7 local residents

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor D.N. Davies was re-elected as Chairman, and Councillor R. Jones elected as Vice-Chairman for the current Municipal Year.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cannock Chase District Councillors A. Williams and B. Williams; W. Southall, Staffs. Fire and Rescue Service; Mrs. P. Hadley, Crimestoppers; Tim Jones and Ruth Robinson.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 16 March, 2011 were accepted as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising

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

Cllr. Jones reiterated concerns raised previously.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that, unfortunately, the capital programme for the year was already committed and the type of works that were being suggested would be too costly. The location was not a proven accident spot (noted that accident statistics in this regard only measure personal injury, not damage to vehicles).

Suggestions were put forward in respect of reducing the number of lanes going onto and off the island, and Mr. Mortiboys agreed that this might be a workable solution, as the lanes had been designed for heavier traffic flows before the Rugeley bypass was constructed. He would discuss the matter further with SCC Cllr. R. Easton with a view to his gaining support through his Divisional Highway Programme.

Nuisance Caused by Utilities Works (Gas) in the Area

Cllr. Grocott advised that the works at Plovers Rise had now been completed and reinstatement had taken place.

Cllr. Davies commented that Crabtree Way also appeared to have been completed.

Overgrown Planting on Roundabouts

Mr. Mortiboys advised that he had inspected a number of roundabouts, and they were not overgrown. In fact, the dense planting was a deliberate safety feature to prevent motorists seeing over the roundabout and second guessing traffic coming from the right.

Pumping Station, Hagley Fields

In response to a question about whether there was a particular problem on Friday nights, Insp. Ellerton advised that the weekends generally were a problem, but that the Matrix Team had added the location to its inspection rota. Generally, the work of the team was proving successful, though it was recognized that in many cases, solving a problem in one location only resulted in it reappearing shortly afterwards in another. Nonetheless, the Police continued to work with schools and partners to try and overcome the problems through education and provision of alternative activities etc.

A resident advised that it was a problem every night in some locations, citing the "druggies' den" on the other side of the Hagley Fields park. Insp. Ellerton advised that he would ask the local policing team to look into the matter.

Local Policing Matters

Cllr. Davies asked Insp. Ellerton if he could provide any further updates in respect of local policing in Rugeley. Insp. Ellerton reiterated what he had advised previously, i.e. that he was now the Deputy Divisional Commander covering both Rugeley and Cannock, but based in Rugeley; response officers would remain based in Rugeley, although briefed in Cannock; Neighbourhood teams would be based in Rugeley; and, there were no firm plans to relocate the Police station.

6. Anti-Social Behaviour – Durham Drive Alley

Cllr. Mrs. Williams advised that Cllr. Tony Williams had suggested the matter be brought to the forum. Cllr. Mrs. Williams reported that a letter had been circulated to local residents and written responses and personal feedback to Councillors, indicated that the clear consensus was that the alley should not be closed as requested, and that the complaint appeared to come from only one household.

Insp. Ellerton advised that there had only been one recent incident of anti-social behaviour (youth riding a mini motorcycle). PC Moreton advised that suggested schemes for gating off the alleyway would cause more problems than they would solve in the majority of cases, as school children who currently used the alleyway would be forced onto the main highway footpaths.

Mr. Mortiboys advised that he should have declared an interest, as he is a Governor at Chase View School, and his son uses the alleyway to go to / from school.

It was agreed that Rugeley town council would write back to the complainant advising that, following feedback from residents, it could no longer support the request to close the alleyway.

7. Questions for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)

No questions had been submitted in advance; however, Mr. Mortiboys agreed to receive questions from the floor which he would address where he was able.

Standard of Work in Response to Councillor Requests

Cllr. Jones commented that he was unhappy with the standard of repairs undertaken in response to his requests for footpath repairs.

Mr. Mortiboys agreed to feedback the comments to the engineer concerned, but advised that emergency repairs may have been undertaken in the short term to make the footpaths safe until proper works could be done.

Cllr. Davies reported that repair / resurfacing works in Church Lane were also to a poor standard and only part of the road had been done.

SCC Cllr. Martin advised that these were also only short term safety repairs and the whole road was due to be resurfaced.

Mr. Mortiboys concurred that the road was programmed for a full scale machined strip / resurfacing.

Repairs at the Bottom of Anson Street

Cllr. Grocott commented that he was pleased to note SCC contractors working on the

junction on Sunday at a time when it caused least inconvenience to road users. However, he was also disappointed to note that the works outside of Chancel School had been deferred until later in the holidays.

In respect of the latter point, Mr. Mortiboys advised that the works outside the Chancel School would take up to two weeks, and included a raised crossing. This would be far too disruptive to carry out during term time and the half term holidays were not long enough to accommodate the works. Furthermore, the county only had a limited number of the road planning and resurfacing machines available, so the works had to be programmed at an appropriate time.

8. Questions for Staffordshire Police

In addition to matters covered under "Matters Arising", above, the following points were raised:

Cllr. Grocott thanked the Police for their assistance with the recent festival and parade. Insp. Ellerton enquired if the Town Council still intended participating in the "Back to School with a Bang" event on 3 September. This was confirmed.

Watkiss Drive

Cllr. Mrs. Allt advised that she had been asked on behalf of local tenants to raise concerns about kids kicking balls against doors, vehicles etc in the Watkiss Drive area.

Cllr. Grocott advised that the Cannock Chase Council had previously been asked to put up "No Ball Games" signs on the green area at the bottom, but had been advised that the land was privately owned.

7.5Tonne Weight Limit on Wolseley Road

SCC Cllr. Martin asked if any action was being taken to ensure that the vehicle weight limit was enforced on Wolseley Road, as following construction of the bypass, commercial vehicles should no longer need to use the road. Cllr. Martin suggested that if the Police were to undertake spot checking, word would soon get around and commercial vehicles would stop using the road.

Insp. Ellerton advised that he was aware of the problems to which Cllr. Martin referred.

9. Questions for Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service

N/A

10. Credit Union

The Chairman reminded those present that a short questionnaire was attached to the agenda seeking to establish levels of interest in a credit union in the Cannock Chase District area. The form could be completed and handed in to the Council Officers present who would forward it to the Economic Development section, or it could be taken away and sent in to the Economic Development section at the Civic Centre; or completed online.

Cllr. Mrs. Williams advised that CCDC's Cabinet had previously considered a request for support for a credit union, but that one would have incurred costs associated with

the salaries of full time employees.

Cllr. Davies commented that not all credit unions operated in that way and one based in Lichfield was run by volunteers, and a similar operation covering the Chase area would probably only require support in the form of an office.

Comments were made that there was insufficient supporting information. Had there been more and the matter better publicised it was suggested that a better response might have been achieved.

11. Any Other Business

The discussion in respect of publicising the credit union questionnaire led to a discussion on attendance / promotion of the community forums.

Mr. Partridge advised that the events were reasonably well publicised within the budgetary constraints imposed on his service, and posters were made available to each of the Ward members and others to help promote the events. Where possible, electronic media was utilized to reduce costs. Generally, there did not appear to be much public interest in the forums, unless there happened to be an issue of particular concern in the local vicinity, in which case attendances increased. However, even in those instances, it was not unusual for the interested parties to leave immediately after their item had been discussed. Nonetheless, efforts would be made to improve awareness of the forums, perhaps through greater liaison with partners, and subject to budgetary constraints.

Angi Cooney, Rugeley Traders Association, said that she would be prepared to publicise the forums and also any information / questionnaires in respect of the credit union.

12. Forward Agenda

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

13. Next Meeting

The Forum was asked to note the date of the next meeting as Thursday, 8 September, 2011. It was agreed that the meeting should be held at the Rugeley Rose, if available.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

CHAIRMAN