

**Notes of:** RAWTENSTALL AREA FORUM  
**Venue:** St. Mary's Chambers, Rawtenstall  
**Date of Meeting** 19th June, 2006

**PRESENT** Councillor Swain (In the Chair)  
Councillor Alcroft  
Councillor Barnes  
Councillor Crosta  
Councillor Entwistle  
Councillor Forshaw  
Councillor Gill  
Councillor Graham  
County Councillor H Harding  
Councillor Robertson

Declan Harte, East Lancashire Hospitals representative  
Dorothy Mitchell, Rossendale Community Network  
Inspector Dave Hodson, Lancashire Constabulary  
PS Carole Langhorn, Lancashire Constabulary  
PC Gareth Henderson  
Aled Thomas, NEAT Officer for Rawtenstall  
Alison Tradewell, Civic Services Officer  
Susan Pickup, Member Services Assistant

Approximately 18 members of the public and press attended the meeting.

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**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Councillor Hancock  
Councillor Unsworth  
Councillor Ormerod  
Jerry Smith, LCC District Partnership Officer - Rossendale

**3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 23RD MARCH, 2006**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

- A member of the public expressed concern that she had not received

a response to an item raised at the last Forum meeting regarding issues of road works on Burnley Road and the consultation period. Councillor Harding confirmed that she would look into this matter.

- Several members of the public expressed disappointment on the appearance of the new Asda store on St. Mary's Way, Rawtenstall. Councillor Swain explained that there would be areas on the building which would be dressed in stone and that a large panel of glass would be put in on the St. Mary's side of the building. A Landscaping scheme was to be carried out, though no detailed plans were yet available regarding this aspect. The Planning office were expecting these in the very near future. It was not expected that all the landscaping works would be completed by the opening date in August.

Councillor Barnes raised issues regarding this matter and asked that any future proposals for buildings in Rossendale would be looked at carefully and be in keeping with the surroundings. County Councillor Harding commented that she agreed with these sentiments.

- A comment was made that as the Members had seen the plans beforehand, why pass it?  
Councillor Swain explained that the application met all the criteria.
- Comments were made about the condition of the Town Centre Memorial Gardens, known as Sparrow Park. He stated that the grass was not cut on a regular basis, that the waste bins were always overflowing, and that the benches that were there were always being moved and placed elsewhere, especially at weekends when there tended to be plenty of activity in the area.

Another member of the public also complained about the lack of bedding plans in the gardens.

The NEAT team Officer would investigate the issue of grass cutting, and bedding plants and also the possibility of providing larger waste bins. He would also look into whether the benches could be bolted down to prevent the removal of the same.

- An issue was raised by a member of the public re the graffiti in the subway which was raised at the last Forum meeting.

The NEAT Team Officer reported that since that meeting the graffiti had been removed on several occasions and indeed some graffiti had been removed from that site last week.

## **5. POLICE ISSUES**

Inspector Hodson provided an update on crime statistics. He provided figures for 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006 and from 1st April to date.

- Crime overall from 1st April to 31st March showed an increase in

- Rawtenstall by 40 crimes but from 1st April to date it was down
- Auto crime – Slight increase from 1st April to 31st March but from 1st April this year there was a decrease
- Violent crime – From 1st April to 31st March a reduction of 19 crimes From 1st April to date a reduction of 20 crimes
- Burglary – From 1st April to 31st March - identical to the previous year to date  
There was a 42% detection rate in crimes to date this year.
- Inspector Hodson explained that the “Ring of Steel” initiative was to continue in Rawtenstall and Haslingden. He said it was a successful initiative and that recently two vehicles had been sited in the area which were from the Greater Manchester area and had been involved in Post Office robberies.
- Inspector Hodson indicated that the Police are working on a Multi Agency approach, i.e. Probation Service, Social Services, Council, Job Centres, Green Vale Housing to tackling, preventing, catching and convicting criminals. He explained that 20 people had been chosen in Rossendale for the programme and 15 of those people are now in Prison. The idea is that persistent and prolific offenders are either rehabilitated or are sent back to Prison.
- PS Carole Langhorn from the Neighbourhood Policing Team explained that they were working alongside other Agencies including the Council and NEAT teams, and met monthly to have a PACT meeting (Police and Community Together) which are public meetings which agrees three or four objectives for each area and which target concerns and worries for that particular area. PS Langhorn encouraged members of the public to attend these meetings and gave dates of the next ones.

4th July 1 p.m. Alder Grange Technology and Community School for the Cribden/Goodshaw Wards

6th July 6 p.m. Old Fire Station, Burnley Road, Rawtenstall for the Longholme/Hareholme Wards

- PS Langhorn also confirmed that “Operation Summer Nights” would be continuing again this year and running from 28th April to 28th August this year. A member of public thanked the Police for this operation and said that it had been successful in local areas last year.
- PS Langhorn confirmed that licensing visits would be carried out to various shops to test them for the sale of alcohol. Several had already failed in the Rawtenstall area. This would help the problems which arise in the Town Centres through the sale of alcohol.
- A member of the public asked if the Police had prosecuted anyone for dropping litter as this was a major problem in Rossendale. Inspector Hodson explained that this was dealt with by fixed penalty notices and not prosecution and that there had been a healthy collection rate for these.

## 6. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

The NEAT Team Officer updated the Forum on the current work programme.

- good news on abandoned vehicles in that they were being reported and moved within 24 hours. The Dog Warden was also patrolling areas and issuing fixed penalty notices on dog foulers.
- There was now a free phone number that people could ring to report any used needles in areas. Teams would remove them within the hour. The number is 0800 731 3697
- Education programmes were going to be started in primary schools, High Schools and Colleges
- It was hoped that from September NEAT teams would be able to start issuing and serving Notices for Fly Posting and Graffiti
- Litter bins were being replaced all over the Valley with larger bins which would hopefully resolve the constant overflowing problem

Members of the public were asked to let NEAT teams know of problem areas so that “hit squads” could be sent out to deal with the problems.

- A member of the public expressed concerns about missed bin collections and also the people on assistance in his area had been missed on some occasions and had had to wait until the following week for collection

Councillor Entwistle explained that the current collection system was undergoing changes and that he would update the next Forum on the situation

- Councillor Barnes commended the Litter Picker who she said was now working twice a week in her village and that since this the appearance of the Village was much improved and she passed on her thanks to the Team
- A Member of the public asked if recycling was indeed cost effective and do we receive financial incentives.  
County Councillor Harding responded by saying that £75 million was given in PFI credits – capital to spend – on new technology systems which helped us to reuse recyclables. County Councillor Harding gave an example of a local firm which now makes garden furniture and kerb stones from plastic bags

Councillor Swain congratulated the NEAT team saying that he had reported overflowing bins in Bank Street, as a member of the public, and they were dealt with within one hour.

## **7. PUBLIC EXERCISE “HEALTH AMBITION FOR ROSSENDALE”**

Dorothy Mitchell of Rossendale Community Network facilitated an interactive session. All members of the public were urged to fill in the questionnaire that had been distributed at the meeting.

The questionnaire would be put on the Council’s website for people to complete.

## **8. EAST LANCASHIRE HOSPITALS PUBLIC CONSULTATION & PUBLIC EXERCISE “HEALTH AMBITION FOR ROSSENDALE”**

Declan Harte presented the proposals within the consultation document and played a DVD which set out what the public consultation means.

A debate followed the DVD and a number of questions and concerns were raised by those present. These were responded to by Mr. Harte. Some of the issues raised were as follows:

- **What is the criteria for an area like Rossendale to be able to have a Birthing Centre?**  
There would need to be 200 births a year to justify a Birthing Centre.
- **Will Rossendale receive any more Paramedics as currently there are only 2 Paramedics in Rossendale at the same time?**  
Two additional ambulances have been identified for East Lancashire.
- **Would this mean closing down other hospitals to provide these new facilities?**  
It would mean emptying the hospitals of the work they no longer need and put this into the communities, i.e. outreach clinics would mean not having to go to larger hospitals for many treatments they at present have to.
- **Would they agree that Education is a key element to making sure we all have healthy lifestyles and would they consider doing a programme of Education in Schools**  
Prevention and Promotion is essential and it would be a good idea for programmes to be taken into Schools to educate them on all issues, like healthy food, exercise etc.

The Chair thanked both Mr. Harte and Dorothy Mitchell for their presentations and urged the members of the public to fill in the questionnaires.

**THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7 P.M. AND CLOSED AT 9.05 p.m.**