

## APPENDIX A

**Notes of:** BACUP AREA FORUM

**Venue:** Bacup Leisure Hall

**Date of Meeting** 15 January 2007

**Present:** Councillor J Driver (in the Chair)  
Councillor Eaton, Farquharson and Lamb  
Inspector Dave Shepherd, Lancashire Constabulary  
David McChesney NEAT Officer, RBC  
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer, RBC  
Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services, RBC  
Councillor Ormerod, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management, RBC  
Jo Gibbs, Assistant District Partnership Officer (Rossendale)  
County Councillor Sean Serridge, Lancashire County Council  
2 members of the public  
1 Representative from the Press

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### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

### 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Julie Jackson (NEAT Manager), Councillor Challinor, Haworth and Councillor P Steen

### 3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2006

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Eaton to be added to the list of apologies.

Councillor Driver informed the meeting that she was the Lead Member for the Open Spaces and Play Strategy and asked both elected Members and members of the public to contact her if they know of any area which could be adapted or altered for use and she would pass this information on to Groundwork, who were working on this piece of work on behalf of Rossendale Borough Council.

Councillor Eaton and Councillor Lamb indicated that they had already submitted their ideas to Groundwork.

#### **4. POLICE ISSUES**

Inspector Shepherd provided an update on crime statistics and initiatives which were taking place within the area.

#### **POLICE ISSUES**

##### **Summary of Update from Inspector Shepherd**

- Closure Order been presented for drug dealing on local premises
- New Community Beat Officer for Greensclough, PC Scott Fairclough
- New Community Support Officer for Stacksteads
- Reduction of crime figures as a whole in Rossendale East. with 364 fewer crimes committed between 1 April 2006 and 14 January 2007 for the whole of Rossendale.
- Car crime is still an issue – all present were urged to be vigilant and not to leave items in cars.
- “Don’t Bother” stickers were available and these were handed to everyone present.
- A dispersal notice had been issued to tackle anti-social behaviour in the Irwell area and was working well.
- ‘Pubwatch’ plays a part in reducing crime.

Inspector Shepherd informed the meeting that Rossendale Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership had been assessed as the best performing CDRP in Lancashire and targets set for 2008 had already been achieved.

##### **Questions/Issues**

- Has the change of licensing hours made a difference to crime in the Borough? Inspector Shepherd stated there was no evidence of this, but not many pubs had asked for an extension of hours and he also indicated that ‘Pubwatch’ had helped.
- Are ASBOs/displacement orders encouraging youths to congregate elsewhere in the Borough? Inspector Shepherd stated that this was not necessarily happening but they were acting on dispersal orders before the alcohol free zones were established.
- Is damage still occurring in Bacup Park? Inspector Shepherd indicated that problems are still occurring with youths drinking in the park, but not as frequently in winter months.

Elected members indicated that the Police do a tremendous job within the Borough and they should be thanked.

Councillor Driver thanked Inspector Shepherd for his report.

## 5. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

Dave McChesney, in the absence of Julie Jackson (NEAT Manager) asked the public to present any problems they may be having in the Borough.

- A member of the public indicated that dog fouling was a problem, particularly in Gladstone Street and also dogs barking late at night. David McChesney indicated that the issue had recently been reported and the Borough's Dog Warden had been made aware of the issue and this was being investigated.
- Dog fouling was also a problem in Houghton Avenue and Hawthorn Road. It was agreed that reminder notices were needed in the area and that dog owners need to take responsibility.
- A question was asked about the length of time the dog warden spends out on the streets. It was agreed that the Council needs to look at this to ensure that this is happening. Councillor Farquharson indicated that there was only one dog warden for the whole of the Borough and there was therefore a need for additional resources.
- A question was raised on the number of fines issued for dog fouling. Although an exact figure was not available it was indicated that the number was quite high.
- A member of the public raised concern about people putting out their bins too early on back Corporation Street and Regent Street. David McChesney agreed to send out a reminder letter of when the bins were being emptied.
- An issue was raised about a member of the public cleaning their garden and sweeping the dirt onto the street and blocking drains. David McChesney agreed to follow up this issue.

Councillor Driver indicated that she had not received any complaints about bin collections over the Christmas period.

## 6. BUDGET CONSULTATION

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management, together with Head of Financial Services, Phil Seddon, gave a short presentation on the Budget Proposals for the new financial year and asked that all present take the time to view the full detail of the consultation document which was available at [www.rossendale.gov.uk](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk) or at local libraries. Mr Seddon highlighted the importance of the public providing comments and feedback on the proposals by 12 February 2007.

The Head of Financial Services indicated that there had been vast changes to the Council over the last three years, with departments being restructured. Staffing had reduced from 500 to just over 200 at the present time.

The proposal was for a 3% increase in the Borough's Council Tax for 2007/08. Rossendale Borough Council keeps around 17p in every pound it collects from Council Tax.

### **Questions raised**

- How much is spent on staff salaries? The Head of Financial Services indicated that this year the figure for staff salaries was £5M
- A question was asked in relation to the reduction in transport subsidies. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management indicated that transport subsidies fall on Lancashire County Council and the Council have asked for routes to be subsidised for certain times of the day.
- A question was asked on Business Rates and how much they would be. The figure would not be available until February but it was proposed to put the money back into the economy.

## **7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Questions asked at the meeting by members of the public.

**In relation to the new development between Pennine Road and Douglas Way. They have put in new sewers which have caused flooding due redirected pipes.**

Councillor Farquharson indicated that action was being taken on this issue and she had been asked to Chair a public meeting for residents to discuss their concerns. An invite letter was due to go to residents in the area shortly.

**In the same development, the builders are not clearing away their packaging which cover the bricks and other building materials.**

David McChesney agreed to look into the matter.

Councillor Driver closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.

**The meeting commenced at 7pm and closed at 8pm.**