

**Meeting of:** Rawtenstall Area Forum

**Date of Meeting:** Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2005

**Present:** Councillor Swain (in the Chair)  
Councillors Entwistle, Forshaw Graham, Robertson, Young  
County Councillor Harding

**In Attendance:** Chris Counsel – Community Beat Sergeant  
Carolyn Wilkins, Deputy Chief Executive  
Stephen Pimlott, Forward Planning Officer  
Aled Thomas, NEAT Team Officer  
Elaine Newsome, Committee Services Manager, RBC  
11 Members of the Public

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**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

1.1 Councillor Swain welcomed attendees to the meeting. He introduced all parties present and gave a brief on the conduct of the meeting and items for discussion.

**2. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

3.1 The notes of the last meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

**3. POLICE ISSUES**

The Chair welcomed Community Beat Sergeant Chris Counsel to the meeting

4.1 Sergeant Counsel reported on policing issues and gave details of activity since the last meeting.

4.2 He reported on a number of positive results in respect of crime in the locality. An overall reduction in vehicle related and violent crime

4.3 He gave details of Operation Furnace, an initiative which would combat anti-social behaviour issues, target theft and support vulnerable properties.

4.4 In response to an enquiry about the systems for contacting the local police force and improving lines of communication, the meeting was advised that the central contact team, based in Burnley were looking at way to improve communications. Councillor Harding advised that Lancashire has applied to pilot a scheme whereby non-emergency calls to the police would be routed via a three digit number, similar to that of the emergency services. Sergeant Counsel advised that further literature was due to be published shortly which would include walled sized cards containing contact details

4.5 Ms Wilkinson on behalf of the Burnley Road Action Group, brought to the attention of the meeting, a consultation exercise on safety measures on Burnley Road, which would take place over the Christmas period. She

advised on the potential implications for the area and requested that a co-ordinated approach between the Council and police authority, in relation to this matter, would be welcomed. Councillor Harding advised that she would undertake to place this on the agenda for the next Lancashire Local meeting, and that she would request an extension to the consultation period.

Councillor  
Harding

**5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CONSULTATION ON THE CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT**

5.1 Stephen Pimlott, Planning Officer gave a presentation to the Forum on the Issues and Options report on the Core strategy for the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Rossendale. He informed the meeting that the LDF was a portfolio of documents setting out the future developments on the whole of the Borough. He referred to the Core Strategy which was one of the key documents which set at the strategic policies in the Council's planning framework.

5.3 A copy of the Issues and Options report was circulated for discussion at the forum. Stephen Pimlott pointed out that the Council had not made any decisions on its preferred options and following the consultation a further report would be prepared setting out the preferred options for the Core Strategy. A further opportunity would then be afforded for consultation.

5.4 He pointed out that the consultation period in respect of the Issues and Options report circulated was until 6<sup>th</sup> January 2006 and he encouraged the Forum to view the documents on the website and submit comments, observations or responses accordingly.

5.5 A member of the public asked a question on the number of consultants which had been engaged by Rossendale Borough Council on a variety of projects. Carolyn Wilkins advised that consultants had been engaged in areas where the Council required additional skills or technical knowledge, in order that the improvement agenda did not fall behind schedule.

5.6 In response to a question on the future employment of additional technical expertise in the Planning area, Mr Pimlott advised that there was a national shortfall in planning staff, and, as such, Rossendale Borough Council had undertaken a risk managed approach to this piece of work by engaging the services of the country's leading consultants.

5.7 In response to a question on the establishment of a strategic consultative forum to analyse council policy and strategy document, the Forward Planning Officer undertook to set up a forum for this provision, but stated that the purpose of the presentation was to enable the Council to engage with the Community on this matter.

Stephen  
Pimlott

## **6. STREET SCENE AND LIVEABILITY – NEAT TEAMS**

- 6.1 Aled Thomas reported on the role of the Neighbourhood Environmental Action Teams (NEAT) which dealt with community related environmental issues such as graffiti, parks, fly-tipping and missed bins.
- 6.2 He outlined proposals for improved enforcement activity and highlighted that plans were being developed to introduce fixed penalty systems.
- 6.3 In response to a question from Councillor Young, Mr Thomas advised that all enquiries were logged in order to assist in performance monitoring. He further advised that the NEAT team were working alongside the police and other agencies to determine major issues, and that resources would be allocated accordingly
- 6.4 In response to questions from several members of the public, Mr Thomas outlined the enforcement activities and penalties which were currently utilised by the authority. The Chair remarked on the significant progress made by the team, in the short time since it had been established.

## **7. RAWTENSTALL TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN**

- 7.1 The Deputy Chief Executive apologised that this item had not been debated at the meeting held in September.
- 7.2 The meeting was advised on the progress of masterplanning activities in Rawtenstall. The Deputy Chief Executive advised on the consultation process, and that, due to changes in the preferred option road layout, the options would undergo a second public consultation.
- 7.3 In response to questions from members of the public, the Deputy Chief Executive agreed that the outcomes of the consultation should be publicised and undertook to ensure that the information was placed on the Council's website.
- 7.4 In response to question on the development of a new bus terminal, members of the public were advised that current options were being investigated and negotiations were taking place.
- 7.5 In response to a question on the introduction of car parking charges, the Chair advised that this was not a consideration of the masterplan.
- 7.6 In response to a question on the planning application process, the meeting was advised that there would be discussion and information available to members of the public.

**8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

8.1 A member of the public raised concerns in respect of the provision of gritting services and grit bins. County Councillor Harding advised that the gritting routes had changed and that an audit of grit bins had taken place. Those which were well used would be re-introduced, but those that were under utilised would not.

8.2 In response to a request that the issue of the review of hospital service provision be included as a future agenda item, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that there would be a special meeting of the full Council in January 2006 to debate the issue.

8.3 In response to a statement on the bin collection service, the Chair undertook to discuss the various issues with the individual members of the public.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.50pm**