

Notes of: HASLINGDEN AREA FORUM
(including Edenfield and Helmshore)

Venue: Haslingden Primary School

Date of Meeting: 13 March 2006

PRESENT: Councillor Ruddick (in the Chair)
Councillors Atkinson, J Pawson, S Pawson, Thorne and Sandiford

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Entwistle,
Police Inspector Dave Hodson, Lancashire Constabulary
Pc Linda Haywood, Lancashire Constabulary
Claire Angus, NEAT Team Officer
Eugene Leal, Traffic & Parking Manager
Heather Moore, Executive Office Manager
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer
12 Members of the Public/|Representative of Local
Organisations and 1 Representative of the Press

1. APOLOGIES : Councillors Nicholass and Starkey

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Ruddick chaired the meeting and welcomed members of the public. He introduced the elected members, officers and the police representative who were present at the meeting.

3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 15th December had been distributed with the agenda and were agreed as a correct record.

4. POLICE ISSUES

Pc Linda Haywood informed the meeting that as a matter of priority more officers had been deployed to cover Friday and Saturday nights Another operation 'Summer Nights' would then begin.

She reported that drug offences had decreased although warrants were still being issued. The Police had identified 'low-time suppliers' with 3 on bail at the present time and they had also identified another supplier in Helmshore.

In relation to the 'Ring of Steel', initiative, Inspector Hodson indicated there had been stop checks in areas along dual carriageways, and this would continue until April 2006.

A member of the public, who was a shop owner in the centre of Haslingden, informed the meeting of the use of CCTV radio link which had been offered on a 'trial period', indicating that almost 75% of shopkeepers had returned them, mainly because of the cost implications.

A question was asked of the police for them to provide shopkeepers, if possible, with a list of offenders. Pc Haywood indicated that plans were already in place to provide shopkeepers with photographs of offenders which would need to be kept out of sight to the public.

Pc Hodson advised that a PACT priority was CCTV in Haslingden town centre and the Police were currently looking into the matter.

5. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

Claire Angus, NEAT team officer, reported on a number of improvements to the refuse and recycling service which would be introduced in April 2006, at which time the Council would begin to accept textiles and cardboard as part of recycling.

She informed the meeting that collection days would change and all customers would be notified accordingly by way of an information pack during the week commencing 13 March 2006

Claire Angus informed the meeting that as part of the improvements there would no longer be Monday collections to support the bank holiday arrangements and to minimise disruption to customers

Concerns were raised in respect of parked cars blocking access for the refuse vans. Councillor Ruddick indicated that the Council were testing new technology which would track refuse vehicles so that in the event of a missed bin the nearest team could be sent to that location. He went on to inform the meeting of a number of other Council run initiatives (Sharp squad and Hit squad)

5. REVIEW TEAM ON THE PROVISION OF COUNCIL CAR PARKS

Councillor Entwistle, as lead member on the Car Park Review Team explained that the review team were looking at the conditions and facilities of car parking in the Borough and the purpose of attendance at the area forums was to gather information from the public on that issue.

Eugene Leal, Traffic and Parking Manager informed the meeting that the Council wanted to ask each area what their problems were, with each area having different issues. This would enable the Council to co-ordinate a Rossendale approach on all the car parks and was an information gathering exercise to enable the review team to make their final decisions.

He went on to say that Haslingden had unrestricted parking and he requested views of the meeting which would feed into the decision making process.

Concern was expressed by some members of the public and the fact that car parking spaces were being reduced.

Eugene Leal put forward a number of suggestions indicating that the Council wanted shoppers to park near to shops and where possible, people who work in Haslingden to park on the outskirts.

Several members of the public present expressed that they did not want paid for parking to be introduced. They also recommended that additional parking spaces be introduced.

Concerns were raised in respect of the use of the taxi ranks and a request was made that this be taken into consideration in the consultation.

It was reported that no decision had been made on the introduction of car parking charges and this would be considered as part of the consultation process. It was noted that the Council was currently looking into proposals in respect of signed sponsorship of car parks.

The public was asked to complete the comments sheets which were presented at the meeting and these would be taken into consideration by the review team.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A number of issues were raised and these are as follows:-

- A member of the public asked about the free transport for the over 60s and Councillor Ruddick responded by saying that transport within the Borough was free to the over 60s and those with disabled passes. Transport out of the Borough, but in Lancashire, is half price. Another member of the public asked if the Council would support the transport for over 60s is free for anywhere in Lancashire and not just within the Borough
- A question was asked in relation to the sale of Haslingden Public Hall and Rossendale Town Hall. Councillor Ruddick explained that this would be put into the Capital Reserve which could be spent in a number of ways including car parking provision.

Councillor Ruddick closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance

(The meeting opened at 7pm and closed at 9.05pm)