

Notes of: WHITWORTH AREA FORUM

Venue: Whitworth Community High School, Hall Fold, Whitworth

Date of Meeting 5th June 2006

Present: Councillor D Barnes (in the Chair)
Councillor L Barnes
Councillor Neal
County Councillor Serridge, Lancashire County Council
Inspector Dave Shepherd, Lancashire Constabulary
Chris Markham, Assistant Operations Manager
Catherine Taylor, NEAT Officer, RBC
Jenni Cook, Committee Officer, RBC
David Dawson, Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale PCT
Dorothy Mitchell, Rossendale Community Network

Apologies: Councillor H Steen

Also Present: Approximately 15 members of the public and 5 members of staff from the Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale PCT who sat in the audience.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting and the Council Officers and other representatives present introduced themselves.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Rossendale Borough Councillor H Steen who had mayoral commitments.

3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2006

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

Action Sheet:

- A member of the public asked that the Action Sheet be appended to the Agenda as Item 3a and the Committee Officer would arrange this for the next round of forums.

- Theft of manhole covers at Old Lane and Quarry Street – these had now been replaced and the Action Sheet should be updated.
- Hall Street signage – County Councillor Serridge informed the Forum that a Public Consultation was underway and it was expected that the situation would be resolved soon.

Matters Arising

Minute 8 – Public Question Time

A member of the public asked for clarification of why Shawforth & Whitworth had not been included in the Local Area Development Plan. Councillor Neal stated that this was a Government funding issue and that this matter was not under the control of Rossendale Borough Council.

4. POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Shepherd provided an update on crime statistics and noted that crime as a whole was reduced across the Borough.

- Inspector Shepherd urged all present to not to leave any items unattended in cars, in particular satellite navigation equipment.
- PACT meetings were being publicised in local churches in response to a request.
- The new Civic Hall would contain accommodation for the Police once completed. This was expected to be early October. It was noted that this would not be staffed 24/7 and Inspector Shepherd took this opportunity to publicly commend Mr Dave Jackson for his work with Amberwatch.
- There had been a spate of vandalism with regard to the new flower boxes in Whitworth. Inspector Shepherd asked that members of the public report any suspicious activity. It was noted that some members of the public had encountered difficulties in getting through to the Police and Inspector Shepherd reassured the Forum that calling 01706 873350 would get through to the Police, but that for emergencies, 999 should be used.
- Cars had been racing up and down Market Street in the early hours. Inspector Shepherd acknowledged the problem and noted that the new cameras would help to resolve this situation.

5. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

The Forum was updated on current work being carried out by the NEAT Team including the “Grot Spots” initiative. The public were asked to suggest more sites for the “Hit Teams” to target.

- Hall Street – The NEAT Officer noted that this area was being targeted on an ongoing basis and that she was in contact with the Head of the High School.
- Spring Mill Site – This area was currently being secured by the owner of the site and then cleared. The NEAT Officer to inspect on 6th June 2006.
- Wallbank and Footpath to Healy Dell – The situation was being monitored and regular clean-ups were planned.
- A member of the public thanked the NEAT Team for quickly clearing up some racist graffiti that had been reported. This matter had also been investigated by the Police.
- The NEAT Team were also thanked for clearing the Old Lane area, however it was noted that there were still some areas near the trees that needed clearing. The NEAT Officer confirmed that this would be done and monitored.
- The Assistant Operations Manager acknowledged concerns from the public and Councillors about the new collection schedule and asked the public to bear with them whilst “teething problems” were resolved.
- It was noted that new, larger vehicles were on their way, which would alleviate the problems.
- The Assistant Operations Manager urged the public to report any missed collections so that this could be rectified.
- A member of the public representing Masseycroft raised concerns about black text on the blue recycling bags being hard to read. The NEAT Officer stated that they should have received recycling leaflets and would arrange for these to be sent out as a matter of urgency.
- It was clarified that blue bags were provided for sheltered accommodation.

- Councillor Neal noted that a wall reported several weeks ago had still not been repaired. The NEAT Officer agreed to contact the Town Council as a matter of urgency.
- It was noted that the recycling bin at Hall Street was often overflowing. The Assistant Operations Manager stated that the bins would be emptied on Tuesdays and Fridays and once the new vehicles had arrived, these collections would be integrated into the refuse rounds.
- The Assistant Operations Manager noted that he was currently testing brackets in Bacup designed to reduce contamination of the recycling bins and these were expected to be rolled out across the Borough soon.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- A member of the public asked for clarification of land currently being developed at Edward Street with respect to unconditional land sales. Councillor Neal agreed to investigate the situation and respond directly to the member of public.
- A member of the public asked that the condition of pavements and footpaths in Whitworth be investigated and improved. County Councillor Serridge agreed to investigate this matter and would speak to the member of public after the meeting.
- A “Highways Update” was requested to be on the agenda at all Area Forums. The Committee Officer agreed to report this request back to Democratic Services.

7. EAST LANCASHIRE HOSPITALS PUBLIC CONSULTATION & PUBLIC EXERCISE “HEALTH AMBITION FOR ROSSENDALE”

At this point Dorothy Mitchell of Rossendale Community Network facilitated an interactive session.

It was noted that Whitworth residents received much of their healthcare from Rochdale PCT. However all members of the public present were urged to return the questionnaire that had been distributed at the meeting. The questionnaire would be put on the Council’s website and Councillor Neal requested a batch of questionnaires that he could distribute to the medical centre, the library, etc.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and closed at 8.40pm