

ST NEOTS NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

MONDAY, 26 JULY 2010

ACTION SHEET

PRESENT:

Panel	Councillor B Chapman (Chairman)	Huntingdonshire District Council
	Inspector M Greenhalgh	Cambridgeshire Constabulary
	Mr R Dykes	Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
	Mr P Chatterton	Luminus
	County Councillor Mrs C Hutton	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Councillor I Wilkie	Hail Weston Parish Council
Forum	48 members of other authorities, organisations and the public.	

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors I C Bates, R S Farrer and J A Gray, Mr M Golding, Ms M Laszynski and Mrs C Way.

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
1	<p>Appointment of Chairman</p> <p>Mr R Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services at Huntingdonshire District Council opened the meeting by advising those present, that when first establishing the Neighbourhood Forums, it had been agreed that the District Council should chair meetings in the first year of operation. As the former Chairman, Councillor A N Gilbert had resigned from the District Council in May, Councillor B S Chapman had been appointed to chair the Forum for the remainder of the year.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Chairman, Councillor B S Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced members of the Panel.</p>	
2	<p>Notes of previous meeting held on 29 March 2010</p> <p>The Notes of the meeting held on 29th March 2010 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3	<p>St Neots Neighbourhood Forum Progress Report</p> <p>The Forum noted the response by County Council's Highways to concerns raised at the last meeting regarding traffic calming measures on Monarch Road, Eaton Socon, St. Neots.</p> <p>The remaining issues raised were dealt with later in the meeting.</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY	TO NOTE
4	<p>Neighbourhood Policing Profile</p> <p>Following discussion at the previous meeting regarding speeding on rural roads, Inspector C Skipper, who was responsible for road safety in west Cambridgeshire, had been invited to attend the Forum. Inspector Skipper explained that it was the purpose of his team to reduce casualties and anti-social behaviour, deny criminals use of the roads and enhance public confidence by undertaking patrols on rural roads. The team comprised 70 officers who, in shifts, patrolled the County's roads on a continuous basis. He added that the team was aware of the issues arising on the B645 from Kimbolton to Buckden which existed even before the opening of the A14 when it was still a major east-west route as the A45. Other routes in the County currently under scrutiny included the B660 Holme to Ramsey and roads in Fenland and Ely. All had become popular routes for use of excessive speed by both motorcyclists and car drivers. Inspector Skipper mentioned that the high performance of current motor cycles often caused problems for unwary drivers. Speeds in excess of 100mph had been recorded with one as high as 134mph. In addition to monitoring vehicle speeds, Inspector Skipper advised that his patrols visited isolated car parks and dealt with anti social behaviour by youngsters in cars and he explained the powers that the police now had to confiscate and destroy vehicles in such circumstances.</p> <p>With limited resources, Inspector Skipper undertook to try to continue to address the problems experienced on local roads and he invited the Forum to help by conveying any information to Police about specific problem areas.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding use of speed cameras in Stonely, Inspector Skipper undertook to investigate whether cameras had been considered for this location adding that the offences might not occur sufficiently often to justify the cost of installing them.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Hutton undertook to establish the costs involved in installing interactive speed warning signs but she added that it was not the County Council's current policy to install signs of this nature.</p> <p>In terms of the wider policing profile, Inspector M Greenhalgh introduced himself to the Forum as the Sector Inspector for the local area. Inspector Greenhalgh gave a presentation on the work of the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the July 2010 profile for St. Neots and Eynesbury.</p> <p>(Copies of the full document were circulated at the meeting.)</p> <p>He reported that there had been a minor increase in crime of 2.6% over the same period in 2009, caused mainly by an increase in vehicle crime (3.8% increase) and violence against the person (4.4% increase). Priory Park and Eynesbury Wards in St. Neots were identified as the areas accounting for 52% of all crime in the St. Neots Neighbourhood.</p> <p>During discussion, Councillor Mrs Hutton congratulated Inspector Greenhalgh for achieving a reduction in anti-social behaviour particularly in St. Neots Eynesbury Ward where there had been 199 fewer incidents. He replied that this had been achieved by targeting specific individuals and by serving one ASBO.</p> <p>Councillor R J West drew the Inspector's attention to his perception of increased motorbike activity in Buckden and excessive speeds between the village and The Offords with Councillor P J Downes reiterating that problems persisted for villages along the B645 especially Stonely and Tilbrook. Councillor Mrs B E Boddington also drew attention to speeding problems in Great Gransden which presented additional problems because of the shortage of footways for pedestrians to walk in safety..</p>		<p>Cambs Constabulary</p> <p>County Council</p>

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	<p>Councillor K J Churchill pointed out that there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour on the new housing development located on the former Samuel Jones site in Little Paxton which could deteriorate if not dealt with.</p> <p>Inspector Greenhalgh provided an update of the priorities identified at the previous neighbourhood forum meeting. In addition to the matter of speeding on the B645 which had been dealt with earlier in the meeting, Inspector Greenhalgh reported that liaison with shops and businesses and use of plain clothes and uniformed patrols had identified those offenders who repeatedly engaged in theft from shops, with one offender having been banned and one receiving a custodial sentence. This success had led to the award of an HBAC (thief catcher of the year) award to the PCSO involved. He also described the action taken by his Team to manage the night time economy in the town centre particularly during the recent football world cup tournament. He indicated that he was particularly pleased to report that Pub Watch now involved 27 landlords and that the traffic light system would be used in Huntingdonshire as a whole given its success locally.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding the incidence of cross border crime on the rural boundaries with Northamptonshire, Inspector Greenhalgh replied that there was close liaison between the two police forces and that generally this did not appear to be a problem at the moment.</p> <p>In response to a suggestion that the resources of the Neighbourhood Policing Team were insufficient to give Kimbolton the attention it required, Inspector Greenhalgh informed the Forum that both crime levels and response rates had reduced suggesting that the work of the Team was producing good results locally.</p> <p>Inspector Greenhalgh concluded by suggesting, from the evidence available to the Police Analysts, that the policing priorities for the coming quarter in the St. Neots neighbourhood were -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Priory Park and Market Square, St. Neots - crime relating to the night time economy; ◆ Priory Park and High Street, St. Neots - theft from shops; and New Street, St. Neots – rowdy and anti-social behaviour. 		Cambs Constabulary
5	<p>Update on Education consultation re Longsands and St Neots Community College</p> <p>Councillor D Harty, Portfolio Holder for Learning at Cambridgeshire County Council, updated the Forum on the progress of the proposal to establish a federation between the secondary schools at Longsands College and St. Neots Community College. He announced that the federation would be operational with effect from 1st October 2010, that a new governing body comprising representatives from both schools had been appointed and had already met on one occasion and that a new Executive Principal, Mr R Whatmough had been appointed. Individual consultation meetings at both schools also had taken place. He suggested that the process towards federation still was at an early stage but that it would continue to develop throughout the summer and beyond.</p> <p>In response to a question from a resident, Councillor Harty replied that the federation would enhance the provision of secondary education in St. Neots by ensuring that the best expertise and skills were directed towards the delivery of high quality education throughout the town and surrounding area.</p>		

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6	<p>Parish Plans</p> <p>Ms S Johnston, Community Adviser of Cambridgeshire ACRE, gave a presentation to the Forum on community led or parish plans. She explained that a community led plan recorded how a parish wished to develop and what action was required to achieve goals that had been identified. Ms Johnston outlined the benefits to be derived from the production of the plan, the process and costs involved and the support available to assist parish councils in undertaking the task. She explained that although parish council support was critical if a parish plan was to proceed, this was an exercise for the community as a whole and that, depending on the size of the parish, an average of 1,400 hours in volunteer time would be required to complete the task. The average cost of a plan was now assessed at £2000 with more of the work including the analysis of questionnaires being dealt with locally rather than by specialist companies. It was confirmed that the District Council currently grant aided Cambridgeshire ACRE in the sum of £10,000 to help with the process but that grants for individual parishes were unlikely to be available.</p> <p>Whilst commending the principle, Councillor Downes questioned whether a parish council would be able to access sufficient funds in the current climate to enable any actions identified to be implemented. Ms Johnston explained that there were still funding opportunities available but that a parish council would be expected to contribute by way of fund raising activities and other means to the undertaking of the plan process. In responding to challenges from residents about the benefit to a community of a parish plan, Ms Johnston concluded by reiterating the value of community participation and the help that could be given by Cambridgeshire ACRE to access funding and grants to assist parishes in completing the process.</p>		
7	<p>Rural Transport</p> <p>Councillor West invited Mrs L McGoldrick of Nene and Ouse Community Transport and Mr P Nelson, Public Transport Manager of Cambridgeshire County Council to address the meeting on the transport service and the legislative framework within which public transport services operated.</p> <p>Mrs McGoldrick explained that the Nene and Ouse Community Transport Service was a non-profit making service which had been operating across Huntingdonshire for five years. She added that the service was sponsored by Cambridgeshire County and Huntingdonshire District Councils and involved the running of door to door transport for those who lived in rural areas, for adults and young people without transport, and for senior citizens and people with disabilities. She added that currently there were 1,200 members in the District who had subscribed to the scheme at a cost of £15 p.a. and that there were a number of scheduled destinations for shopping, theatre and seaside visits. Users were required to make a booking 24 hours prior to departure after which they would be collected at an allotted time. In total, there were thirteen 16 seat mini buses of which eleven were fully accessible for disabled people. Buses also could be hired for group use at £50 per day. Ms McGoldrick urged those present to promote the service and for this purpose literature was made available to attendees to take away from the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Nelson described the provisions of the Transport Act 1985 which had changed the bus industry by privatising the companies and de-regulating services outside London. He emphasised that private companies provided bus services within Cambridgeshire and that the County Council had a discretion rather than a duty to subsidise what it considered were essential routes for local communities. The County Council's budget totalled £3m per annum, some of</p>		

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	<p>which was contributed by Cambridge City and other District Councils and via Section 106 Agreements. Some 80 other contracts were subsidised currently by the County Council primarily on a historic basis but Mr Nelson advised that a more objective approach had been developed based on the social value of routes for travel for employment, shopping, health etc. In addition, the County Council contributed £220,000 p.a. towards community transport of various formats.</p> <p>A resident contended that local bus services were not practical for the journey to and from work and that services could become self-financing if time tables were made more attractive to working people who paid fares in full. Mr Nelson explained that 86% of the services in the County were provided by Stagecoach which made it more difficult to influence their timetabling and routing decisions.</p> <p>Another resident drew Mr Nelson's attention to the pollution caused by exhaust arising from buses with their engines switched on in the Market Square, St. Neots and he undertook to raise this with the bus companies concerned.</p>		County Council
8	<p>Other Neighbourhood Issues</p> <p>The Chairman asked those present if they wished to raise any issues of local concern.</p> <p>Attention was drawn to the proposed planning application for a wind farm between Kimbolton and Stow Longa. Given the number of listed and historic buildings in Kimbolton, a resident asked whether the District Council's Development Management Panel would be sufficiently briefed on the perceived adverse effects that such an application, if supported, could have on the heritage of Kimbolton. It was suggested that an Officer from the Planning Policy Team should be invited to the next meeting to explain the procedure for considering the impact of planning applications on listed buildings and Conservation Areas.</p> <p>A resident referred to the congestion which was created by parents dropping children off by car at St. Mary's School, Eynesbury.</p> <p>Mention also was made of –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the need for traffic calming or high visibility police presence at Barford Road, St. Neots; ◆ the preponderance of HGV traffic in Mill Lane, Little Paxton; the poor condition of the footway at Meadow Road, Great Gransden and of the carriageway surface at Stonely.. 		<p>District Council</p> <p>County Council</p> <p>Cambs Constabulary/ County Council</p>
9	<p>Panel Prioritisation</p> <p>The Panel agreed the following policing priorities for the three months to October 2010 –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cross Keys Mews, St. Neots Town Centre - Anti-Social Behaviour; 2. Eaton Lock, St. Neots - Anti Social Behaviour; 3. Speeding in Stonely and Mill Road, Buckden. <p>Panel Members were asked to address those issues marked for their attention in the notes of the Forum meeting and actions/update sheet.</p>		Cambs Constabulary
10	Future Agenda Items		

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY	TO NOTE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Update on youth work - Ms C Way; ◆ Leisure Development in St. Neots; ◆ Wind Farm Development in Kimbolton. 		District Council
11	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>25th October 2010 at the Mandeville Hall in Kimbolton.</p>		All

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – www.huntsdc.gov.uk