

Notes of: RAWTENSTALL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Venue: Hardman Mill, New Hall Hey, Rawtenstall

Date of Meeting: 25th June, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor A Swain (in the Chair)
Councillors Barnes, P.J. Gill, C.J. Gill, Graham, Robertson,
Tickner, County Councillor H. Harding

PC G. Henderson, Lancashire Constabulary
PC Michael Johnson
Dave Whiteman, NEAT Manager
Jerry Smith, Lancashire County Council's District
Partnership Officer
Alison Tradewell, Civic Services Officer/PA to Leader
Approximately 5 members of the public and 1
representative from the press attended the meeting.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting and introduced the Members, Officers and Police that were present at the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were given for Councillors Crosta, Forshaw, Hancock, Hewlett, Ormerod and Unsworth.

3. NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The notes of the last meeting held on 29th January were agreed as a correct record.

(a) Action Sheet

- CCTV on Bank Street – Cllr Barnes had been in contact with the the Community Safety Officer. The original funding was now not available for this scheme and she was going to contact the Community Safety Officer again about the matter
- Cllr Barnes confirmed that the “Portaloo” had been installed as requested
- Cllr Barnes confirmed that there had been a meeting re East Street and that both herself and Councillor Gill would be going out to speak to the residents of East Street
- All members had received the information regarding breakdown of specific times and average users of public transport

(b) Matters arising including information present to Lancashire Local The report was noted.

4. POLICE UPDATE

PC Henderson provided an update on the crime statistics, comparing the period 1/03/06-12/06/06 to 1/03/07-12.06/07.

	All Crime	Burglaries in dwellings	Vehicle Crime	Damage	Violent Crime	Hate Crime	Anti Social Behaviour	Stealing from shops	Burglary other than in a dwelling, e.g. Factories, sheds	Robbery Personal Property	Robbery Business Property
1/3/06-12/6/06	460	14	53	131	81	1	591	39	44	2	1
1/3/07-12/06/07	417	23	16	138	53	14	541	14	22	2	1

PC Henderson reported that there had been a reduction in violent crime, particularly around town centres.

PC Henderson reported on the “Test Purchasing” exercise of public houses and off-licences. This exercise is to target establishments which are selling alcohol to young people. Two public houses had failed and these offences were being taken to Court shortly. This exercise is a continuous and ongoing one.

PC Henderson also gave details of an exercise in working in partnership with the DVLA on targeting cars which are not taxed. The Agents from the DVLA have the ability to clamp vehicles on the road side. The fine would be £200 to have the clamp removed plus any back tax owing. Failure to do this could mean removal of the car and finally the vehicle can be crushed. The Police can then also look into whether the vehicle is insured and they are then able to take action on this. This is an ongoing operation in the valley. Burnley Road, Rawtenstall is one area which has been targeted recently.

Operation Summer Nights, which deals with anti social behaviour, low level crime, alcohol related incidents is continuing. Officers target hotspots generally on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening.

Councillor Tickner asked if we are reactive or proactive on Operation Summer Nights? PC Henderson responded that it was a combination of both. Once hotspots have been identified, the Community Beat Managers will walk or drive through these areas, so they are visible to all, usually between the hours of 6 p.m.-9 p.m.

Councillor Barnes asked if the Police measure fear of crime in their statistics? PC Henderson said this is a very difficult one to measure but they do now have a special department that deals with victims of crimes and they make contact with the person at each stage of the investigation. They give feedback to the person(s) involved, and keeps them up to date with progress.

Public Questions/Issues

- How long should it take to remove graffiti?
If the graffiti is racist or offensive in any way then it should be dealt with within 24 hours of it being reported. This is priority. Some surfaces are very difficult to clean and take longer. If the writing is just squiggles or

non offensive material then it will take longer but the NEAT teams will remove it as quickly as possible.

Two areas were identified by Members that had graffiti on them.

- Burnley Road East, on bus stops, sides of houses
- Underpass near Library – PC Henderson said that there is a possible project happening re this area involving schools. They were awaiting a decision on funding re this.

A member of the public said that though Summer Nights was a very successful operation, there were incidents which were happening at 2a.m.-3 a.m. when the Community Police are not available and you then have to ring Burnley and take pot luck. PC Henderson said that if there was a continuing problem in an area which had been identified, then they would look into it and get the Officers out in the early hours if necessary to investigate and deal with the problem, but reiterated that these matters need to be reported.

Councillor P. Gill complimented the Community Policing in the Hareholme Ward. Councillor Barnes echoed that and said that the PACT meetings in her own Ward were working very well, and kept the community involved in what is going on in their own area.

The Chair thanked PC Henderson and PC Johnson for their attendance.

5. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

Dave Whiteman, Neat Manager, presented an update on the work of the NEAT teams.

There were now 3 Teams in the Valley covering Rawtenstall, Helmshore, Haslingden and Edenfield and Bacup and Whitworth. There is a Manager and 2 support Officers for each team.

He reported that over the last week they had been running the campaign “Streetwise” at Bacup Leisure Hall which was an education programme for school children on litter, recycling, and other issues. They had had the Police, Fire Service, Dog Warden and Paramedics visiting the sessions and he said it had been very successful and was very encouraging to see how much children actually knew about recycling. There would be another programme rolled out after September time for the new School term.

The Teams were continuing to work on “grot spots” and invited people to ring any of the NEAT teams to report any known “grot spots”.

“Ward Walks” had now commenced with Members where they identified areas in their own wards which needed improvement/work.

Concerns raised by others were as follows:

- A member of the public had put a bag of clothes out by the bin to be taken on the recycling day. The Refuse collector had told him that they should take them to a Charity shop or put it in the green bin as waste and that they were not taking them.

The NEAT Manager responded that this should not be the case, they should be

- taking them and he would chase this up.
- Side Waste – Would there be some advertising around the new rules and regulations which were coming into force in October. Also there seemed to be much confusion over which plastics were recyclable and which were not.

The NEAT Manager explained that there would be plenty of advertising around the new legislation re Side waste. They were currently in the process of having leaflets designed, which would be going out to consultation to Members beforehand, about the recycling and Side waste issues. The aim was to produce an easy to follow guide for everyone. These would be going out to every householder in Rossendale and if members of the public wanted someone to go out to their house to explain and go through any issues they would be more than willing to do this. He said that between now and October they will be giving as much advice and publicity as possible on these issues.

- Councillor Robertson asked whether some back to back houses in her Ward would be able to have one large bin rather than all have single bins. Would they actively encourage this?

The NEAT Manager confirmed this would be possible and if she gave him the details he would look into it for her.

- Regarding Side Waste, how about the security of bins which are not kept on the owners property? How would people stop others from putting rubbish in bins? Have we asked other Local Authorities how they deal with waste? For example, Liverpool collect their waste weekly. How much life had the Whiney Hill site left? Were we looking at other ways of disposing of rubbish like incineration?
- The NEAT Manager confirm that security of bins was an issue they needed to look at. If it became a constant problem for a householder, they would, if necessary, examine the rubbish and try to find some evidence from it who it belonged to. If they did find evidence they would contact the person concerned to speak to them about the issue.

The NEAT Manager confirmed that they have compared how other Local Authorities collect waste.

County Councillor Harding confirmed that there was around 40 years left at the Whiney Hill site.

The NEAT Manager explained that incinerating all waste brought other problems, for example, emissions, dioxins.

- Councillor Barnes asked County Councillor Harding if Whiney Hill was selling space to other Local Authorities for their waste?

County Councillor Harding responded that yes they take waste from all over. The site is owned by Sita and they can sell space to whoever they want to.

6. HOT TOPIC – GRANT ALLOCATION TO NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Councillor Swain gave details on the scheme which would be considered at Full Council on 27th June. He briefly explained the process of how groups would be able to apply for grants. It was proposed that Rawtenstall would receive £7,260 based on their population figure. Councillor Swain explained that the Working Group would meet prior to the next Neighbourhood Forum on the 24th September to consider the applications received. It was open to all groups in the community to apply. Councillor Swain had received a request from “Civic Pride” and he would contact them and explain the process of how they should apply.

A comment was made that there is such a proliferation of groups within Rossendale that you may get the same applying to each Neighbourhood Forum for a grant.

Also groups that are very organised and well established might get all the money and the smaller not as well known and organised groups may miss out?

Councillor Swain responded that the NEAT Team and the Community Partnership Officer would be looking at each application and will provide comments on each one before going to the Working Group for their approval/refusal. He also commented that it was up to the Members to contact the groups they know of and to promote this scheme.

A question was asked at what type of group was this aimed at? Could Youth groups for instance apply?

Councillor Swain responded that it was open to any group.

County Councillor Harding commented that there were also other avenues for Youth Groups to look at. There was Youth Opportunities funding who were always looking for suitable bids and very rarely spent all the allocated monies. County Councillor Harding suggested it might be an idea to have a look at how the scheme had worked after the first 12 months and see if there was a case there for any match funding from say L.C.C.

7. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM WORKING GROUP

Councillor C. Gill asked if she was on the Working Group would it make it difficult for voting purposes if she was aware personally of a Group who has applied for a grant? A discussion was held on this point. A comment was made that most of the Members would probably know at least one of the Groups requesting a grant. It was suggested that a member could declare an interest beforehand and get a substitute.

Councillor Swain asked for nominations to the Working Group.

It was agreed that Councillors Barnes, C. Gill and A. Swain would serve on the Working Group with the proviso that C. Gill could change to Councillor A. Hewlett once a decision had been made on possible conflict of interests.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTICE BOARDS

The NEAT Manager explained that this was a new idea and they were asking for suggestions of site locations where they could go. At this stage it was just an idea though there would be a small budget for them. It was being suggested that between 3 and 4 Notice Boards for the whole of Rawtenstall.

Various question and comments were raised:

- What size would they be?
No definite ideas on this as yet. Would be open to discussion and depending on the location.
- What would they be used for?
The idea is to use them for the community and to advertise things within that Community.
- Would they be lockable and would someone from the community have to be responsible for them?
Again this had not been decided. If they were lockable notice boards then a member of the NEAT Team would be responsible for this and be a key holder.
- What would be the design of them?
This was open for discussion. It would be discussed with each group.

Councillor Robertson said she had a site in mind in Waterfoot. Councillor Barnes suggested the site where the garden was in the centre of Crawshawbooth. The NEAT Manager asked them to contact him about the venues and he would discuss with them.

9. OPEN FORUM

A number of questions were raised by the floor and are summarised below:

A question was raised regarding grass cutting in Rawtenstall. It was felt that many areas were overgrown and not being cut on a regular basis. Particular areas which were mentioned were areas between Oaklands Road and Haslingden Road where shrubs were grown out into the pathway and considered a danger by a member of the public.

On the same issue it was noted that the area where the Fire Station is situated on the roundabout was also overgrown. In general, it was felt that many areas around Rossendale were not being cut on a regular basis and the question was asked if anyone was maintaining these areas.

A comment was made that it seemed that Lancashire County Council did some areas, Rossendale BC did some others and also Greenvale. Would it not be better if just one took the responsibility and re-charged to the others?

A request for a breakdown of staffing within the Parks and Gardens was requested for the next meeting, i.e. numbers, who is Manager.

A suggestion of a possible meeting to discuss the grass cutting issue between RBC, LCC and Greenvale was made by Councillor Barnes.

Issues on the condition of certain roads was raised.

In particular Craven Street, Schofield Road and Oakley Road. It was stated that Craven Street had been curbed many years ago but had never had the tarmac finish put on to it. Schofield Road had had the pot holes marked by spray some time ago, but again they have never been done.

A request was made for a speed camera on Haslingden Old Road. A resident from that area explained how fast the traffic travelled along there and although it was a 30 mph speed limit very few adhered to it. This would be a Police matter and it would be passed on to them for their comments.

Concerns were raised about the fact that the double yellow lines had not yet been painted on the newly resurfaced area between the Nat West Bank and Betting Shop? It was felt that it was essential that this was done quickly as it was a very dangerous area where cars are currently parking. Also although the curbed had been dropped it had not been dropped enough.

A question was asked about how often are the gullies emptied per year?

THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.00 P.M. AND CLOSED AT 8.45 P.M.