

Notes of: **BACUP AREA FORUM**

Venue: **Bacup Leisure Hall**

Date of Meeting **25 June 2007**

Present: **Councillor W Challinor (in the Chair)**
Councillors J Farquharson, G Haworth and C Lamb
Sergeant Gordon McGeechan, Lancashire
Constabulary
Greg Cooper, Lancashire County Council
Stephen Booth, Lancashire County Council
Jo Gibbs, Assistant District Partnership Officer
(Rossendale), Lancashire County Council
Illona Snow-Miller, RBC

4 members of the public
1 Representative from the Press

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from D McChesney (NEAT Officer, RBC), Councillors J Driver, J Eaton, F Lynskey and P Steen, County Councillor S Serridge and Inspector N Wilkinson.

3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2007

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

The Chair reported that all issues in Item 3a had been carried out by the NEAT Team.

In reference to Item 3a (2) Councillor Farquharson reported that the problem of bins and litter on Corporation Street and Regent Street was still a problem as rubbish quickly re-appeared after Council visits to clear the area.

It was agreed that the NEAT Team be asked to continue checks on the area.

4. POLICE ISSUES

Sergeant McGeechan reported that Inspector Shepherd had changed jobs and was now working out of the area.

Summary of April/March Update from Sergeant McGeechan

- Reported cases of criminal damage were down on last year's figures by 24.7% (200 offences).
- Violent crime for the same period was down by 18.2% (135 offences).
- Vehicle crime was only down by 4 instances; therefore residents present were asked to leave cars empty of property and locked.
- Domestic burglaries were up by 1 crime against the same period last year. Sgt McGeechan encouraged householders to keep doors locked, even when in their homes.
- Burglaries in other buildings, such as sheds, were becoming the target of thieves and residents were asked to take precautions to secure their premises.
- Overall crime in the area was down 13.6% with 337 less victims than the same period last year. This is the third year that crime has reduced in Rossendale East.
- The Dispersal Zone in Bacup ran out in February but was followed by the drinks ban which is being constantly monitored.
- Youth drinking in Stubblelee Park is a problem. The Council are looking into installation of CCTV and parents will be encouraged to educate and control their children.
- A drugs operation on Britannia Avenue has resulted in a Closure Order.
- Operation Summer Nights, to be launched 1st July, aims to show the positive aspects of young people and discourage alcohol related incidents. Additional policing will be provided Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

5. NEAT TEAM UPDATE

As no officer was available this item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. BACUP CULVERT PROPOSED WORK

Stephen Booth, Bridge Design Officer and Greg Cooper, Project Manager, both of Lancashire County Council, attended the meeting to inform residents of consultation relating to a £1.1M town centre improvement project to strengthen the existing bridge over the River Irwell.

A drop-in consultation day was organised for 27th June 2007 from 11am to 7pm at Bacup Library when any interested parties would be able to discuss proposals and voice their concerns. This event had been widely publicised.

Consultation had already taken place with bus and taxi firms, the Council, town centre traders and pedestrians as the main issue was the traffic management system to be in place for the duration of the works.

The Chair encouraged people to attend the consultation day and put their comments in writing.

Ms Snow-Miller added that information regarding the works and diversions would be added to the Council's website.

Questions raised

- Are County Council aware of other works currently taking place alongside the river at Newline? Ms Snow-Miller advised that this was not linked to LCC works and the Environment Agency would be able to assist.
- Shop keepers are concerned about the disruption and detrimental affect to their business – could they have a representative attend progress meetings. Greg Cooper agreed that a representative of the shop keepers would be invited to progress meetings.
- Could additional signage be erected to direct traffic and warn of works on roads into the area? Greg Cooper agreed to look into additional signage.
- Strong concern was raised about buses being diverted along Union Street. Greg Cooper explained that Union Street would be made one way only with no parking which should improve the situation. All Councillors had not received all briefing notes available. It was agreed that Roger Bramley be asked to send all previous and future briefing notes about the works to all Borough and County Councillors.

The Chair agreed to convey all concerns raised regarding the works at the Transport Meeting next week.

7. HOT TOPIC – ‘HOW TO GAIN ACCESS GRANTS ALLOCATED TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM’

The Chair, Councillor Challinor, explained that £20K had been allocated to the whole of Rossendale: with approximately £4,800 to the Bacup area. A Selection Panel would be made up of three elected Members and this Panel would make decisions about allocation of funding.

Ms Snow-Miller further advised that the grants would be advertised to local groups and people wishing to apply should contact their local councillor who would help put their bid forward.

8. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM WORKING GROUP

It was agreed that this item would be decided by political groups.

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTICE BOARDS

The Chair explained that neighbourhood notice boards would be erected around the Borough and asked for suggested locations.

Suggestions were made for: Bacup centre, by the library; Weir Park, corner of Heald Lane; and Toll Bar (where the Christmas tree is located).

Any other suggestions could be forwarded to Councillors or to Ms Snow-Miller.

10. OPEN FORUM

A resident of Bacup reported that there was a problem with large vehicles taking a shortcut from the quarry on Pennine Road down Tong Lane and onto Todmorden Road. These lorries were going onto the pavement as they turned the corner onto Todmorden Road which could affect pedestrians and the wall next to the road. Concern was also raised because of the culvert running under the road.

Ms Gibbs agreed to pass this information onto Highways Section at County Council.

As there were no further questions Councillor Challinor closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and closed at 8.20pm.