

Joint Budget Consultation Event

3rd December 2007, 6:30pm at Syston Town Council

- The Purpose of this event was to:
 - Identify positive action we have achieved in terms of joint working e.g. Partnership Action Weeks
 - Identify actions, linked to the budget and current priorities, in relation to what will be done in the next financial year.
 - Consult (light touch) with participants on priority services.
 - Promote the Community Forums and Charnwood Borough Council Citizen's Panel.
 - Communicate with what the plans are for all three partners for the coming year.
- A total of 22 people attended this event including individuals from the town council, local parish councils and the voluntary and community sectors.
- The panel was made up of Cllr Richard Shepherd (Leader, CBC); Brian Hayes (Chief Executive, CBC); Cllr David Parsons (Leader, LCC); Brian Roberts, (Director of Corporate Resources, LCC); Chief Superintendent Daimon Tilley (North Area Commander, Leicestershire Constabulary) and Sue Cavill (Associate Director Communications and Engagement, Leicestershire and Rutland PCT)
- The format of the event was a series of presentations from CBC, County, the Police and the PCT followed by a question and answer session.
- The following is a summary of the questions asked at the event and the responses given by the panel.

Question One (Thurmaston Parish Councillor)

“Why do we have a three tier system when the city has a single tier which works well? What are the benefits?”

Cllr Parsons Response: In rural areas there is more of a need to have a local council close to you and then above that you need a council to act at the strategic level. However, we do recognise there are issues and will work with colleagues to make the system better. Also, the county is a 4 star authority – one better than the city.

Question Two (Sileby Ward Councillor)

“I am concerned about talk that the walk in centre is to be moved from the centre of Loughborough to Epinal Way. However, this will make it harder to get to from the South of Borough. It is better where it is”.

Sue Cavill (PCT) response: We are looking at the options and if decide to move the centre we will work with the council to address accessibility and transport issues.

Question Three (Paul ????)

“You’ve been talking about central government short changing education and the police. Why?”

Cllr Parsons response: The government consider our county to be affluent and so get less funding as extra money is diverted to more affluent areas. However, we are succeeding in getting investment in one area – capital (investment in infrastructure building including new schools). However, we need to push the need for more revenue to run services. He also felt the reasons we are underfunded are political – that government is putting the money into areas where it has the most support.

C. Supt. Tilley response: Police funding is worked out using a government funding formula. However, the formula worked out that Leicestershire should get more funding than the government were willing to give us so we will not get the full amount.

Sue Cavill (PCT) response: PCT are not in same position as others due to increase in funding from government but we are not being complacent. We are looking at where costs will be likely to increase in the next few years and how this will be dealt with.

Question Four (???)

“What has been the percentage increase in faith schools and what is your attitude towards them? Do they increase separation in society?”

Cllr Parsons response: Only about 10% of schools in the county are faith schools and they do not separate society. I would not tolerate it if they began to do this.

Question Five (???)

“There is a lot of emphasis on care in the community in relation to health – getting more people home sooner. Do you plan to provide funding / support for this in the community? Who will support people in their homes?”

Sue Cavill (PCT) response: As we develop this idea we will look at what is needed to support it. We have a pot of money that could be used for this where a need is identified.

Question Six (???)

“I have heard that bureaucracy in the police could be reduced by 25%. Does C. Supt Tilley subscribe to the need to reduce police officers filling in forms”?

Ch. Supt Tilley response: The current review, led by ex-head of the police service of Northern Ireland looks promising. Previous reviews have only shaved off the odd minute or two which means nothing. The current review is looking at saving significant chunks of police officer time but can’t say it will be as much as 25%.

Question Seven (Charles Truman)

“I feel we are moving from a democratic society to a codified society”.

“I notice no one from the church is here and there are no young people. Need to engage young people more. Also concerned about treatment of young Muslims at mosques”.

“Surprised that we have to pay for brown bins and feel that we should be able to recycle more items of packaging – e.g. cottage cheese cartons”.

“ I am concerned about the time it takes to see a GP and referrals”.

“Concerned about the loss of school playing fields”.

Cllr Shepherd response: We are trying to involve young people. In area forums some of the members have said they want to give up their spaces for younger members.

Cllr Parsons response: We have done some work that shows that at any one time we are engaging with upto 40% of young people. However, need to recognise that young people may not want to take part in this type of engagement – they have other things to do.

I don't feel that young Muslims are being mistreated. I have been to see this system working across the county and feel it is a positive thing. They are forces for good and young people do a lot of work after school.

Brian Hayes response: We are going to reduce the cost of the bins as much as is affordable. This will help to reduce rubbish tonnage and increase recycling rates. In terms of the items we recycle we can't recycle everything due to the costs involved in doing this. We go for the biggest hits. However, we have increased the types of items you can recycle at our bring sites including tetra packs and drink cans. Also, we continue to look at ways we can recycle more and if we don't reduce the amount of waste going to landfill in the next few years costs are likely to increase astronomically.

Brian Roberts response: The cost of landfill is huge and the tax we have to pay to the govt for this keep going up. We are looking at a number of options to address this including the incineration of our waste.

Sue Cavill response: We are looking at shortening the time to see a GP and recognise the problems relating to the interpretation of the rule that you should be able to see your GP within 48 hours.

Question Eight (Geoff Wainwright, Mountsorrel)

“Why do businesses have to pay to have their waste recycled? Why can't this be done by the council”?

“The Number 99 bus runs from Mountsorrel at 9:10am but is empty because people can't use their pass until 9:30am. Why do we have to stick to this and subsidise an empty bus service when all it needs is a bit more flexibility”.

“When I travel from Mountsorrel to Loughborough I go over 15 speed bumps. If you count the ups and the downs on a two-way journey that is 60 bumps”!

Cllr Parsons response: I agree with you on the bus situation and I think we have been in correspondence before. If you get in touch we can work together to look for a solution as there must be a more common sense approach.

Comment from attendee (Paul ???, Thurmaston)

“My business sends ½ tonne of waste for recycling processing every day. Whilst we pay for this I can’t see that the Council could cope with the demand if they took on this responsibility”.

Comment from attendee (Roy ???)

“I think the police structure is working really well and neighbourhood policing works very well and am more than satisfied with the street wardens”.

Comment from attendee (Charles Truman)

“Why can’t we have a single ticket for different types of transport – like the Oyster card in London”.

Question Nine

“Why can’t the police have a larger wedge of the council tax?”

General response from panel: The difficulty is where who we would take money off?

Question Ten

“Are PCSO’s working? Does funding this take up money that could be spent on police officers?”

Ch. Supt Tilley response: PCSO’s do a great job – they compliment us rather than work against us and free up police officer time.