



**Minutes of a meeting of the Bradgate, Rothley, Mountsorrel and Birstall Area Forum held at the Rothley Centre, Rothley on Wednesday 29 October 2008.**

Present

Cllr. Leigh Harper-Davies (Chair)	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. N. C. Bird	Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Council
Cllr. J. Capleton	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. J. Cassidy	Birstall Parish Council
Cllr. C. Collett	Rothley Parish Council
Cllr. P. Day	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. P. Finch	Rothley Parish Council
Cllr. P. Hartshorn	Rothley Parish Council
Cllr. A. Irving	Woodhouse Parish Council
Cllr. J. Jackson	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. Stuart Jones	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. G. May	Swithland Parish Meeting
Cllr. P. Osborne	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Cllr. M. Parker	Anstey Parish Council
Cllr. B. Popple	Rothley Parish Council
Cllr. R. Shepherd	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Cllr. D. Slater	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. D. Snartt	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Cllr. J. Sutherland	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. K. Waterfale	Newton Linford Parish Council
Cllr. D. Wise	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. H. Wise	Rothley Parish Council
Cllr. R. Wilson	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council

Officers

Ms. C. Clarke	Principal Planning Officer, Policy Team – Charnwood Borough Council
Mr. H. Mirali	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr. B. Smith	Committee Officer, Leicestershire County Council

Mr. R.P. Downing	Community Engagement Manager, Leicestershire County Council
Mr. P. Hinton	Emergency Planning Co-ordinator, Charnwood Borough Council
Ms. J. Jackson	Principal Planning Officer, Development Control Team – Charnwood Borough Council
Mr. I. Smith	Project Officer – Emergency Management, Leicestershire County Council

#### Partner agencies

PCSO Mark Butler (Birstall)	Leicestershire Police
PC Paul Bird (Mountsorrel)	Leicestershire Police
PCSO Jade Cameron	Leicestershire Police
PC Alex Foster	Leicestershire Police
PC Leon Hamilton (Anstey)	Leicestershire Police
PC Steve Rhodes (Rothley)	Leicestershire Police
PCSO Phil Wright	Leicestershire Police

#### Members of the public

Maureen Bulmer  
 Ross Duranch  
 Pam Floyd  
 Pauline Fitchett  
 Roger Hill  
 Diane Kachelski  
 Hugh Knight  
 John Leatherland  
 Joan Leatherland  
 David Lindley  
 Winifrid Linley  
 Josephine Northam  
 Peter Roberts MBE  
 Pauline Sheppard  
 Terry Shepherd  
 Barry Sim

#### 35. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of Cllr. R. Uni (Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Council), and Sangita Jobanputra (Voluntary Action, Charnwood).

36. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman invited members of the Forum who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

37. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2008 were taken as read, confirmed and signed, subject to Cllr. Leigh-Harper Davies of Charnwood Borough Council being added to the list of attendees as Chair.

38. Items requested by Forum members

i) Flooding – Actions being taken to minimise the risk of flooding in the Forum area.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Peter Hinton, Emergency Planning Co-ordinator for Charnwood Borough Council, and Ian Smith, Project Officer – Emergency Management for Leicestershire County Council. Presentations were then delivered to the Forum on actions being taken to minimise the risk of flooding in the Forum area.

Arising from the presentation and discussion, the following points were noted:

- Responsibility for flood defence lay with the Environment Agency whilst urban drainage lay with either the highways department at Leicestershire County Council (surface drainage) or Severn Trent, the local water company (underground drainage i.e. sewers);
- In the Charnwood area there were 13 flood wardens who monitored potential flood locations and alerted the Environment Agency to any significant changes to water levels that were of concern;
- Of the 43 flash flood areas in the County, 21 of them were in the Charnwood area;
- The increasing threat of flooding from the main rivers and streams in the area could be attributed to:
  - Climate change
  - Previous urban development in flood plains;
  - The increase in built up environments generally leading to the greater propensity for surface run off associated increase pressure on the capacity of the Victorian sewer network;

- Robust measures were required to minimise the effects of flooding, the following of which local citizens could become involved with:
  - Receiving flood warning alerts from the Environment Agency;
  - Receiving severe weather warnings from the Met Office;
  - Receiving exceptional Rainfall Alerts (ERA) which was undergoing a trial in Leicestershire which was expected to be upgraded to a national warning system in the spring of 2009;
  - Joining parish councils/neighbourhood associations alongside flood wardens to form 'Community Warden Schemes';
  - Become involved in caring for those disrupted by floods (there were plans to open up emergency centres in affected areas).
  
- A flood plan for the County was being introduced which would target 50 at risk communities to endeavour them to be better prepared for the risk and effects of flooding. An increase in the number of community wardens monitoring flood levels was one of the aims of the projects;
  
- There was a need for greater cohesion between the Environment Agency, water companies and local councils to be able to address local concerns. Specific concerns raised were as follows:
  - The need to identify the relevant agency/person responsible for clearing, unblocking and relaying the drain at the centre of Rourke Street, Rothley;
  - Leicestershire County Council's Highways Department had spent many thousands of pounds installing water gullies at the north end of Rothley village. Residents wished to be informed of the proposed maintenance schedules for checking and cleaning the gullies;
  - Flooding in Wellsic Lane, Woodgate was seen to be caused by old drains unable to cope with the quantity of water flowing through it. An associated and dangerous problem during periods of heavy rain/flooding was the faded 'Slow' signs during periods of heavy traffic. Remediation measures could include more signage and speed humps in Wellsic Lane and Town Green Street, Woodgate;
  - There were drainage problems on Hallfields Lane, Rothley which required more regular cleaning.
  
- Any members of the Community who required assistance in dealing with flooding problems could use the following contact points:
  - Charnwood Contact Centre – 01509 632599

- o Ian Smith, Emergency Management, Leicestershire County Council - 0116 305 6733 or via email [ismith@leics.gov.uk](mailto:ismith@leics.gov.uk)

AGREED:

- a) That the Forum should accept the offer from Andy Robinson, Assistant Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council to convene a meeting of colleagues from the County Council, Borough Council and the Environment Agency to look at the issues affecting the Forum area to obtain a joined up response;
- b) That an update on the issues raised and feedback arising from that meeting be brought back to the next meeting of the Forum.

39. Items requested by Service Providers

i) Local Development Framework Core Strategy

Cllr Richard Shepherd, as Leader of Charnwood Borough Council introduced to the Forum the latest proposals in the Core Strategy consultation, which formed part of the Borough Council's 'Charnwood 2026' Local Development Framework.

Clare Clarke, Principal Planning Officer – Policy Team, gave a presentation about the Charnwood 2026 Core Strategy further consultation. The presentation included an overview of the process of preparing the Core Strategy, the issues it looked to address, the key proposals within the consultation document and the how the public could make comments, either using the consultation forms available at the meeting, via telephone, or via the Borough Council's website.

Arising from the subsequent discussion, the following main points were noted:

- There was an overall requirement for 19,300 homes in Charnwood between 2001 and 2026. Since 2001 a number of housing developments had been built and permitted and so there now remained 10,000 homes left to find land for. The sustainable urban extensions proposed would provide for 8,500 of these homes. It was proposed that the remaining 1,500 would be delivered on identified brownfield sites within urban areas and small greenfield allocations to the urban areas and Service Centres identified;
- The plan was being prepared on a long term 20 year basis for the Borough which had to look beyond current economic conditions. It was acknowledged that the economic climate was having a major impact on the delivery of development in the Borough at present and could impact on the timescales for delivering the growth the Council

was consulting on. However, it was the role of Council to make sure that enough land was made available for new homes and jobs so that the housing market could bring these forward when the economy recovers;

- There had been a major national drive for more efficient use of land in recent years where the government had encouraged high density developments and a focus on brownfield/previously developed land. The latest government guidance continued to support this approach but also identified a need for mixed communities that meet the needs of all groups;
- The Council regularly undertook an assessment of the number and suitability of brownfield sites within urban areas and this had informed its approach in this consultation document. The priority was to maximise the use of brownfield land, however there were not enough sites to provide all the homes and jobs required and therefore urban extensions on greenfield land would also be needed;
- Within the consultation, a 'home' could be defined as a mixture of housing types and sizes, including family homes, bungalows, flats or apartments;
- Development needs for everyone in the community would have to be taken into account including the elderly and the Plan would aim to provide homes that met their needs. The need for homes for elderly residents and families had been highlighted in recent research undertaken for the Council;
- The impact on settlement identity had been a key consideration in the process of weighing up different options for the Plan. The settlement identity of Woodthorpe and Woodhouse had figured in officers' analysis of directions for growth. The issue around Loughborough, as with most urban areas, was that the settlement identity of a place was likely to be impacted upon whichever direction the growth was eventually chosen; examples of which were at the west of Loughborough with Shepshed and Hathern and at the east of Loughborough that of Cotes and other Wolds Villages. The Council would aim to minimise the impact on settlement identity wherever development was eventually agreed to be located;
- The land north of Birstall had been considered as one of the direction for growth options, but had not been identified by officers as the best location. This was primarily due to the lack of capacity within the area to accommodate the scale of growth required to support a full range of facilities and services, in particular a secondary school. It was also due to the landscape impact in this location and the impact a development of this scale would have on settlement identity;

- Some concern was expressed about planning applications being able to be used to convert bungalows, mostly built to cater for the elderly, to two storey family homes. It was explained that each planning application for a conversion of a bungalow was considered on its merits and that this fell under the auspices of national planning guidance rather than a local policy such as Charnwood 2026;
- It was proposed that the Gypsy, Traveller and Show People sites needed to be delivered as part of the proposed sustainable urban extensions. It was too early in the process to know where within these areas the sites could be or when they would be delivered;
- In respect of an earlier consultation on the development boundaries of villages, any comments received would be considered as part of the preparation of another Development Plan Document which, like the Core Strategy, would form part of the overall Local Development Framework;
- There was a need for a certain number of vacant properties in the Borough to allow for natural movements in the housing market. The issue of vacant properties had also been considered and accounted for in regional calculation of housing need.

(ii) Police Update on Beat Priorities in the Forum Area

Local police beat officers updated the Forum on the following priorities for the Forum area that had been focussed upon over the last six months:

PC Steve Rhodes – Rothley

- Tackling speeding;
- Tackling anti-social behaviour - including an initiative to obtain a grant for a youth shelter;
- Combating Drug/anti-social use in vehicles - approximately 9 people had recently been arrested for drug taking.

PC Leon Hamilton – Anstey

- Addressing speeding problems –Bradgate and Cropston Roads;
- Tackling anti-social behaviour in the areas of Paper Mill Close, Station Road and the park area;
- Tackling vandalism and criminal damage – significant successes had been made in this area including Central Television footage of restorative justice and positive coverage in local newspapers;
- Tackling anti-social behaviour – including an initiative to provide a low level lighting youth shelter in the local park which would include seating and an internal graffiti walls.

PC Paul Bird – Mountsorrel

- Tackling underage drinking and anti-social behaviour in Rothley Road;
- Addressing damage to the Memorial Hall on Mountsorrel Road;
- Graffiti on Halstead Road;
- Addressing problems with the sports facility at the park – it was planned for CCTV to be introduced to the area.

PCSO Mark Butler – Birstall

- Tackling underage drinking and anti-social behaviour in Meadow Lane, Wanlip Lane and Birstall Park;
- Tackling graffiti and criminal damage in the area;
- Working closely with Birstall Parish Council to set up a youth council, with a view to obtaining funding for a youth club and shelter.

The Chair thanked the local beat officers for their contribution to the meeting.

(iii) Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement – Influencing the Budget! Voting Exercise

Andy Robinson, Assistant Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council invited everyone present to take part in a voting exercise related to the budget of the County Council. The priorities for the County had been agreed through the Sustainable Community Strategy (which community forums had been consulted on) but there would be opportunities to increase spending in certain areas and the voting exercise (which was being carried out at all 27 community or area forums across the County) was an opportunity for communities to influence what the additional priorities in those areas should be. It was noted that the views of the forums would be reported to Leicestershire Together<sup>1</sup> and the results of the voting exercise would be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

(iv) Capital Grant Applications

The Forum considered an application on behalf of Swithland Memorial Hall for a request for funding of £5,532 as a contribution to the purchase of tables and chairs (with storage trolleys) to service the hall users, plus a fixed stage as part of a programme of work towards bringing the village hall up to modern standards. A copy of the application form marked 'B' is filed with these minutes.

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<sup>1</sup> Leicestershire Together is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Leicestershire. It brings together numerous partnerships all seeking to deliver improved services for the people of Leicestershire. Its Sustainable Community Strategy outlines the issues that local people see as a priority and its Local Area Agreement sets out how those issues are being tackled.

It was noted that the Charnwood Grants Panel Assessment had said:  
*'Quite good value for a 50% £5,532 grant but no local purchase, recycled material or sustainability.'*

AGREED:

That the application be supported.

#### 40. Question Time

There were two questions raised under Question Time, as follows:

	<u>Question</u>	<u>Submitted by</u>	<u>Question to</u>	<u>Answer</u>
1.	What has happened to the two public seats by the Red Lion and Fowke Street playing field?	Mr Peter Roberts MBE	Rothley Parish Council	Reply by Rothley Parish Council – The Red Lion seat was removed by the Council prior to building work commencing in the area and a new location for it would be found in the vicinity. The seat at the playing fields had been sawn off, however the inscriptions had been retained and following removal of the remnants of the existing seat would be replaced.
2.	Is the road recently installed in the Fawke Street playing field by WM Davies going to be tarmaced? If not, why not as it is a complete mess?	Mr Peter Roberts MBE	Leicestershire Highways	A response would be provided following the meeting.

AGREED:

That for future meetings, Question Time be placed as the first discussion item on the agenda to maximise the potential for public participation.

#### 41. Reports and Feedback

##### i) Update on Birstall Longslade Swimming Pool

The Chairman passed on the apologies of Cllr Wilson who had intended to report on this item but unfortunately had been required to leave the

meeting early. In his absence, Richard Downing, Community Engagement Manager, reported on the welcome news that the Birstall Longslade swimming pool, which at the previous meeting of the Forum was under threat of closure, had remained open as a result of commitments made by partner agencies, local residents and representations from the Forum. In particular the following actions were noted:

- i) A Friends of Birstall Swimming Group had been established which had secured money from a grant, had already raised £2000 through fundraising and were also thinking of raising additional funds through their weekly subscriptions;
- ii) Voluntary Action Charnwood had also assisted in seeking additional funding for the pool;
- iii) The Group were to establish a Constitution and were receiving advice on financial accounts and the role of a treasurer to enable further funding and future viability could be established;
- iv) The County council had paid for a new boiler and provided brown tourist signs directing users to the pool;
- v) The number of swimming groups and general patronage of the pool had increased significantly in recent months.

AGREED:

That the continued operation of Birstall Longslade Swimming Pool be welcomed and that all those involved in keeping the facility open be thanked for their hard work and dedication.

#### 42. Election of Chair and Vice-chair

AGREED:

- a) That the Cllr. Leigh Harper-Davies be re-elected as Chair for a two year period, with effect from the next meeting of the Forum;
- b) That Cllr. Neville Bird be elected as Vice-Chair for a two year period, with effect from the next meeting of the Forum.

#### 43. Issues for Future Forum meetings

The following matters were identified as issues for consideration at future meetings of the Forum:

- Youth issues;
- Anti-social behaviour and crime update;
- Update on flooding issues.

44. Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Thursday 5 March 2009 at 7.00 pm in the village of Anstey. Members of the Forum would be informed of the time and location of the meeting in due course.

7.00 – 9.20 pm  
29/10/08

CHAIRMAN