

**Minutes of the Loughborough East Area Forum held at Woodbrook Vale High School, Loughborough on Thursday, 9th October 2008.**

PRESENT

Members

Mr B. Bailey	Hastings Community Association
Councillor A. Bava	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor G. Gay	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor M. Jones	Leicestershire County Council
Ms C. Kirk	Sidings Park Residents Association
Councillor K. Legge	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor J. Miah	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr A. Nevill	Haddon Way Residents Association
Councillor J. Tormey	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr D. Wain	Woodthorpe Residents Associaton

Officers

Mr R. Bennett	Charnwood Borough Council
PCSO D. Bevan	Leicestershire Constabulary
Ms S. Cavill	Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trust
Mr R. Downing	Leicestershire County Council
Ms G. Doyle	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr D. Hankin	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr M. Hooper	Charnwood Borough Council
PCSO J. McGrath	Leicestershire Constabulary
Mr H. Miah	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr A. Russell	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr D. van der Wardt	Leicestershire County Council

APOLOGIES: Ann Benford and Councillor Neville Stork.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J. Bush, P. Lewis and D. Slater

In addition to the 4 neighbourhood group representatives attending as Forum Members, 11 further local residents and representatives of community groups attended the meeting and took part in discussions. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the local press.

I. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Area Forum members were asked to propose a Chair and Vice-Chair for a two year period.

**It was AGREED that Andy Nevill become Chair and Carol Kirk become Vice-Chair for a two year period.**

*Andy Nevill in the Chair.*

Members expressed their thanks to the outgoing Chair, Councillor Neville Stork, for all his work on behalf of the Forum.

## 2. Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation

Richard Bennett, Head of Planning Policy, Charnwood Borough Council, gave a presentation on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation, a copy of which is available at [www.leicestershireforums.org/lboroea/meetings.html](http://www.leicestershireforums.org/lboroea/meetings.html). It was stressed that the consultation document set out all possible alternative sites, explaining their advantages and disadvantages, and that all of the evidence used to inform the consultation document was available for the public to view.

As Councillor Hilary Fryer, Charnwood Borough Council Cabinet Lead Member for Development and Planning, was unable to attend the meeting Councillor John Bush spoke on her behalf, stating that the aim was to raise awareness of the consultation period, which would begin on 24th October 2008, and to provide the public with information on how they could take part.

Richard then led a quiz in which attendees were asked how much they know about the Borough.

Upon opening up discussion from the floor, the following comments were made:

- Officers stressed that this was genuine consultation and urged the public to make representations;
- Officers felt that the 6 week consultation period provided a reasonable amount of time for people to have the chance to make their comments on the document. It was added that whilst the deadline was reasonably flexible, consultation needed to be focussed. More detailed proposals would be included within the final version of the plan, and could be considered during the late Spring 2009 consultation period;
- The Council's Planning Policy team would compile responses. Should the team be overwhelmed by the level of response they could consider employing an external organisation to aid them.
- It was suggested that very few residents from the Loughborough Hastings ward could attend the proposed consultation events. There was a strong feeling amongst the audience that a consultation event was required in the East Loughborough area, with Cobden School being suggested as a venue;
- It was pointed out that not everyone has access to the internet and therefore hard copies should be made available. In response officers stated that copies were available at both Borough and County Council offices and libraries. It was suggested that copies should also be deposited in areas such as school foyers, community group buildings, churches and surgeries;

- It was essential that the views of local people were heard as they were acutely aware of the history of the area and of feelings held within the community;
- It was suggested that a permanent site be found (for the duration of the consultation period) for a moving exhibition;
- The locations of the moving exhibitions had been chosen due to their convenience for local people i.e. Tesco. It was suggested that such exhibitions should also be situated on peoples regular routes i.e. places of worship;
- A series of press releases had seen publicity for the consultation period reach various local newspapers, television and radio;
- It was emphasised that the proposals were those of the planning officers and that no collective views had been formed by elected Members;
- A postcard containing details of consultation events would be delivered to all households in Charnwood;
- It was stressed that the document needed to be produced in different languages in order to make it as widely accessible as possible;
- The Government, rather than the Council, set the housing requirement target. Upon submission of the final document it would be essential for the Council to provide the Planning Inspectorate with evidence of how these targets would be met. If they were unable to provide such evidence the plan would be considered unsound;
- One of the challenges of the LDF was to aide a reverse in the trend for Charnwood residents to work outside of the Borough;
- The postcard did not include a space to allow people to respond and send it back immediately because it was a means of highlighting the consultation events and encouraging attendance. It was important that people had opportunity to consider the proposals before submitting their responses;
- Officers felt that the South Loughborough options would not have the capacity to create and maintain sustainable urban extensions;
- It was suggested that a special edition of Charnwood News could have been produced to promote the consultation period;
- The LDF aimed to ensure that both new and existing facilities were used by residents of both existing and new developments;
- One of the aims of the LDF was to create better balances within communities;
- Community leaders and Councillors were urged to take the message from the meeting out to the community to ensure that older people and less mobile members of the community could hear about the consultation. It was also suggested that people work together to provide travel arrangements to take people to the events.

The Chair closed the item by thanking the officers for their presentation and urging the public to attend consultation events and to put forward their views.

**It was AGREED that the consultation item be noted.**

Note: Aside from consideration of the LDF, frustration was expressed by attendees who said that the Grange Park estate development was not delivering expected public benefits. Dave Hankin explained that the development was not yet complete

and that it could take some time for the legal agreements controlling public benefits to be set in place.

3. Limehurst Avenue Doctors Surgery

The Forum had been due to discuss the proposed closure of the Limehurst Avenue Doctors Surgery. However, Dr Hirani had since withdrawn the closure application.

4. Loughborough In Bloom

Andy Rush, Editor of the Loughborough Echo, introduced the Loughborough In Bloom initiative. In recent years much dissatisfaction had been expressed about the standard of floral displays and grass cutting within the town and the project had been set up with the intention of rectifying the situation. Both Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council had pledged to commit officer support for the project preparatory work and support in kind with regard to planting.

A Loughborough In Bloom project committee had been set up with representatives from across the community, The Echo, the County Council and the Borough Council. It was this committee that the In Bloom application would be submitted in April 2009.

Andy then urged the public not to view the initiative as a way for the Councils to neglect their duties, but as a way in which local communities could come together to improve the aesthetics of their local communities and create a sustainable project that was not reliant upon Council funding.

Upon opening up discussion from the floor, the following comments were made:

- Leicestershire County Council were looking into the legal and health and safety issues associated with allowing the public to attend to grass verges;
- The criteria for judging In Bloom entries reached much wider than mere flower displays;
- The initiative should encourage people to have greater influence over the aesthetics of their area;
- Drains needed to be cleared;
- Rivers needed to be dredged.

Richard Downing then provided an update on associated issues discussed at the last meeting of the Forum, stating that the removal of grass cuttings would double the cost to the Council and that many flowerbeds were currently empty because a shrub planting campaign was scheduled to take place in November (also see attached SCHEDULE).

Andy Rush said that he would be contacting local residents associations to discuss how they could participate in the scheme.

The Chair closed the item by urging attendees to participate in and promote the Loughborough In Bloom initiative as much as possible.

**It was AGREED that the item be noted.**

5. Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement

Derk van der Wardt, Team Leader (Community Engagement), Leicestershire County Council, reported that the Leicestershire Together partnership had agreed the following set of priority outcomes for Leicestershire for the next 5 years:

1. Improved Life Chances for Vulnerable people & places
2. Stronger, more Cohesive Communities
3. A safe and attractive place to live and work
4. A more effective response to Climate Change
5. A prosperous, innovative and dynamic economy
6. A Healthier Leicestershire
7. More effective and efficient service delivery

The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and Local Area Agreement (LAA) would build on these priorities. The SCS outlined high level outcomes across the seven themes whilst the Local Area Agreement (LAA) detailed how, in partnership, the priorities would be achieved.

Derk then led the Forum in an interactive presentation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. The presentation would be given at all seven Charnwood Area Forums and the results would be analysed and fed back to Leicestershire Together partners to help them prioritise resources according to local need.

Attendees were thanked for taking part in the interactive presentation.

**It was AGREED:**

- (i) **that updates on the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement be received at future meetings of the Forum;**
- (ii) **the presentation be noted.**

6. Public Question Time and Feedback

Updates on all actions arising from the Forum's last meeting were circulated. These are attached as a **SCHEDULE**. In addition to the details included in the Schedule the following updates were provided:

Hedgerows at Parkers Field (Min No 4(ii)) – Clarification would be provided at the next meeting of the Forum following clarification of the exact location of the hedgerows.

Baxter Gate Development – Plans were available on Charnwood Borough Council's website. No date had been set for consideration by Plans Committee.

Missing Fence Panel at Sidings Park (Min No 10) – Forum attendees reported that the panel had not been replaced and that as a result children had accessed rail tracks. It was also said that in the past panels had not been bolted in properly and could be undone by young children. A report back was requested for the next meeting of the Forum.

Richard Downing reminded attendees that if they did not wish to raise their questions at the Forum they could submit them via question cards and he would ensure that they receive a response. A number of attendees said that they had submitted questions in this way at the Forum's last meeting but had heard nothing back. Richard had no recollection of the questions being submitted but apologised and said that whilst he would try to locate the cards it would be appreciated if people would resubmit them to ensure that they receive a response.

The Chair invited Members of the public and community group representatives to pose questions and comments to the elected members and agency representatives present:

(i) Drainage

How often were drains cleared?

Drainage was a problem with drainage in Meadow Lane/Burder Street area due to roads being resurfaced but drains not being lifted. Water would collect in the middle of the streets and result in houses being sprayed with water. Drains would clog within weeks of being cleared.

(ii) Grange Park Development

Issue raised on behalf of the Haddon Way Residents Association (HWRA) - The Section 106 Agreement for the Grange Park development included provision for a community centre and a marketing proposal had been drawn up on behalf of William Davis Ltd. HWRA had commissioned and carried out a survey of 2000 local residents and requested that Charnwood Borough Council trigger the purchase of the land on behalf of the community for £1 to help devise and realise the provision of a non-profit community centre. Had the Council made any progress on the matter?

(iii) Speed Limit on Epinal Way

A need was expressed for 30 mph speed limit signs to be installed in Epinal Way.

Derk van der Wardt suggested that a representative from Leicestershire County Council Highways Department be invited to attend the next meeting of the Forum.

**It was AGREED that the relevant officers investigate the matters raised and provide responses.**

## FORMAL SESSION

7. Report from Priority Neighbourhood Team

Hiron Miah, Community Strategy Support Officer, Charnwood Borough Council, informed the Forum that a Ward Walk would be taking place in Shelthorpe on 20th October 2008 and provided maps of the route and approximate timings.

Hiron also circulated a 17 page document detailing actions emanating from the 14th July 2008 Hastings Ward Walk. Copies of this document are available on request by contacting Hiron on 01509 632517 or [hiron.miah@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:hiron.miah@charnwood.gov.uk).

8. Minutes and Actions Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 4th June 2008 were confirmed as a true record subject to the following amendment:

Under Minute No 10, bullet point 3, reference to Councillor Gay be amended to 'Geoff Gay' (Mr Gay was speaking in his capacity as President of the Leicestershire Teachers' Association).

Actions arising from the previous meeting had been reported under the Public Question Time and Feedback item.

**It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 4th June 2008 be confirmed as a true record subject to the amendment detailed above.**

9. Issues for Future Forum Meetings

The Forum identified the Loughborough Eastern Gateway as an item to be considered at a future meeting.

10. Summary of Actions from the Meeting

<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Matter</b>	<b>For Action By</b>
1	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	Mike Hooper, CBC
2	Local Development Framework Core Strategy	Richard Bennett, CBC
5(i)	Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Richard Downing, LCC
6	Hedgerows at Parkers Field	Colin Bailey, CBC
6	Missing Fence Panel at Sidings Park	John Clarke, CBC
6	Missing Question Cards	Richard Downing, LCC
6(i)	Drainage	Dave Hankin, CBC
6(ii)	Grange Park Development	Jonathan Hale, CBC
6(iii)	Speed Limit on Epinall Way	Richard Downing, LCC

The meeting started at 6.35 pm and concluded at 9:06 pm.

**Should you wish to submit questions to a future Forum meeting or if you require copies of any of the presentations detailed within the minutes please contact Mike Hooper, Committee Services Officer, Charnwood Borough Council on [michael.hooper@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:michael.hooper@charnwood.gov.uk) or 01509 634502.**

## Actions arising from 4th June Area Forum

- **Windmill Road (Min No 3)**
  - Focus Consultants have been appointed to deliver the project
  - They have held meetings with all relevant stakeholders and potential partners
  - They have carried out surveys and conducted questionnaires in the area
  - They have developed initial concept briefs for the three main elements of the project:
    - The managed workspace
    - The skills centre
    - The community building
  - They have held meetings with the land owners and developers about delivery
  - Their final report is due at the end of March 2009 and it will include recommendations on funding and delivery
- **Bins at Linear Park (Min No 4(i))** – Response to be provided by Dave Hankin
- **Hedgerows at Parkers Field (Min No 4(ii))** – Clarification would be provided at the next meeting of the Forum following clarification of the exact location of the hedgerows.
- **Maintenance of grass verges and flower beds in Lemington Street and Nottingham Road (Min No 4(ii))** – CBC do maintain these areas. Summer bedding was planted as planned.
- **Clearance of grass cuttings (Min No 4(iv))** – CBC do not clear any grass cuttings with the exception of fine turf surfaces such as cricket tables and bowling greens. To undertake this operation on open spaces throughout the Borough would be an enormous and expensive task. To carry it out at Sidings Park would create a precedent that we could not replicate in other areas.
- **Flowerbeds and hanging baskets at Queen's Park (Min No 4(v))**– Summer bedding for Flower beds and Hanging baskets were delivered in mid-June
- **Flowerbeds at Maxwell Drive and Warwick Way (Min No 4(vi))** – Awaiting response from Richard Downing.
- **Missing fence panel at Sidings Park (Min No 10)**- The fence panels surrounding the play area are a manufactured item and are purchased direct from the manufacturer by one of CBC's fencing contractors. Unfortunately, there were non available at the time, so there was a short time lapse until replacements were available. Contractors have since been instructed to stock extra panels so that if required, they will be available at short notice.