

**Minutes of the Loughborough South West Area Forum held at
Loughborough Town Hall on Wednesday, 1st October 2008.**

PRESENT

Members

Councillor Peter Lewis (Chair)	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Rachel Hughes	Co-opted Member
Councillor Jane Hunt	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor Ron Jukes	Charnwood Borough Council
Michael Pearson	Co-opted Member
Councillor Graeme Smith	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor Neville Stork	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Theta Taylor	Co-opted Member
Councillor Jill Vincent	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor David Walker	Charnwood Borough Council
John Walker	Co-opted Member

Officers

Chris Bagley	Leicestershire County Council
Richard Bennett	Charnwood Borough Council
PC Dave Bliss	Leicestershire Constabulary Police
Richard Brown	Charnwood Borough Council
Clare Clarke	Charnwood Borough Council
Richard Downing	Leicestershire County Council
Georgina Doyle	Charnwood Borough Council
Dave Hankin	Charnwood Borough Council
Tony Herrington	Charnwood Borough Council
Mike Hooper	Charnwood Borough Council
Keith Ireland	Charnwood Borough Council
PCSO Claire Mant	Leicestershire Constabulary Police
Andy Robinson	Leicestershire County Council

Also present:

Councillor Hilary Fryer	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor David Snartt	Charnwood Borough Council

APOLOGIES: Adrian McInnes

In addition to the neighbourhood representatives attending as Forum Members, a further seven local residents and representatives of community groups attended the meeting and took part in discussions.

I. Welcome from Chair

The Chair of the Forum, Councillor P. Lewis, welcomed all in attendance.

2. Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation

Prior to consideration of the item the Chair informed attendees that those members of the Forum that were elected Councillors had informally decided that it would be inappropriate for them to comment at this stage of the Local Development Framework (LDF) consultation. He added that the proposals were those of the planning officers and that no collective views had been formed by elected Members.

Councillor Hilary Fryer, Charnwood Borough Council Cabinet Lead Member for Development and Planning, introduced the item, stating that the aim was to raise awareness of the LDF Core Strategy Consultation period, which would begin on 24th October 2008, and to provide the public with information on how they could take part.

Richard Bennett, Head of Planning Policy, Charnwood Borough Council, then gave a presentation, a copy of which is available at www.leicestershireforums.org/lborosw/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.

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

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

- The proposed housing development to the West of Loughborough would not encroach onto the Grade 2 Listed area of Garendon Historic Park and Gardens, an English Heritage registered park and garden;
- Whilst traffic levels would inevitably increase within the proposed areas for development, all implications would be considered so that impacts could be mitigated to acceptable levels;
- The possibility of scattering developments throughout the Borough on many smaller sites, rather than in 'hub' areas, had been considered but it was felt that congestion would be more difficult to mitigate whereas the proposed developments would allow real transport solutions to be provided;
- Plans would need to be flexible enough to cope with the political changes in planning policy that could occur over the next 18 years. Major development sites

- would be delivered in phases along with the necessary infrastructure and there would be key markers in the development process that would trigger the delivery of particular services. It would be highly unlikely for developers to build houses should demand not be there;
- It was stressed that Code 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes had to be met by 2016 and would be secured through Building Regulations. Large development sites could provide the best opportunity for renewable energy schemes and other measures to be planned comprehensively to meet this requirement before 2016;
 - Employment patterns of people living in North Charnwood showed that the majority commute to Loughborough and the immediate surrounding area. A relatively small proportion commuted to Nottingham and Derby.
 - It was suggested that as a large percentage of Charnwood residents work in Leicester, development should take place to the south of Loughborough;
 - It was requested that more consultation events than currently organised be scheduled to take place in Loughborough.

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

It was AGREED that the consultation item be noted.

3. Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement

It had been intended that the Forum receive an interactive presentation from Leicestershire County Council on the Sustainable Community Strategy. Due to a failure of technology, the item could not be considered. A copy of the planned presentation is available at www.leicestershireforums.org/lborosw/meetings.html.

It was AGREED that consultation item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Forum.

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.

Mr Rush 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.

Attendees then made the following comments:

- Once individual Area Forums have their own budget it would be possible for community groups to bid for funds to put towards the initiative;
- A local experiment had taken place in Herrick Road where residents had cleaned up 'eyesore' houses with landlords incurring the costs;
- In Falkirk, Scotland there was an initiative in which roundabouts were let out to local horticultural nurseries;
- It was suggested that local schools could partake in the In Bloom initiative to aid their community cohesion aims;
- It was suggested that the courts could be contacted for permission to utilise Community Service personnel;
- It was essential that the project committee took all health and safety issues into account;
- Rachel Hughes agreed to approach the University's Student Action Group with a view to their partaking in the initiative;
- Dave Hankin agreed to look into the possibility of utilising Section 106 monies.

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:

- (i) that Rachel Hughes approach the University's Student Action Group with a view to their partaking in the initiative;**
- (ii) that Dave Hankin investigate the possibility of utilising Section 106 monies;**
- (iii) that all attendees be encouraged to promote the Loughborough In Bloom initiative;**
- (iv) that the item be noted.**

5. Public Question Time and Feedback

At the 3rd July 2008 meeting of the Forum it had been requested that a report regarding grass verges maintenance be considered at a future meeting. The Chair reported that the County Council had set up a five member panel to consider the matter and that reports would be considered by both the County Council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the full County Council.

Updates on all other actions arising from the Forum's last meeting were circulated. These are attached to these minutes as a SCHEDULE.

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

(i) Epinal Way

It was asked if there were plans to pedestrianise part of the A6? If so, how would this affect bus routes? Would there be a bus stop at The Rushes? And will the traffic problems in the vicinity of The Rushes car park be taken into account?

The Chair replied that buses would be allowed entry in a controlled way. Dave Hankin continued that the aim was to create 'hubs' and that Ashby Square and Baxter Gate routes would require redirecting. The all-day parking of school buses meant that having stops at The Rushes would be problematic. Dave also gave assurances that the Highways Department would consider all health and safety issues as a matter of course.

(ii) Collection of Rubbish

With regard to the collection of rubbish, Information was sought on what action could be taken against landlords that were not accredited.

Councillor Smith suggested getting in touch with the Borough Council's Cleansing Section. John Walker added that the University had no control over such matters. Keith Ireland undertook to investigate any specific issues that attendees may wish to raise after the meeting.

(iii) Jettys

It was reported that local jettys were in a dreadful state of disrepair, with True Lovers Walk being cited as dangerous.

It was AGREED:

- (i) **that the issue be reported to the relevant authority;**
- (ii) **that the Chair raise the matter with the Highways Forum.**

(iv) Drains

It was reported that there were a number of blocked drains within the Storer Ward.

It was AGREED that the issue be reported to the relevant authority.

(v) 120 Bus Service

In addition to the issues surrounding the 120 bus service raised at the Forum's previous meeting, the problem of unsuitable return times from Ashby was reported.

It was AGREED that the Chair would ensure that the additional information is reported when the service is considered by the Highways Forum.

(vi) Charnwood Borough Council Corporate Style.

It was suggested that the multi-coloured bars included on Council publicity may be unhelpful for people with visual impairments.

It was AGREED that the issue be raised with the Council's Communications Team.

(vii) Promotion of the Loughborough South West Area Forum

It was reported that the Forum was advertised in the Loughborough Mail but the article didn't state the venue. Also, the Leicestershire Forums website calendar did not include Forum dates and links from the two Council websites were not sufficiently highlighted.

It was AGREED that the issues raised be addressed in advance of the next round of Forum meetings.

(viii) Parking on Coniston Crescent

Problems relating to parking on Coniston Crescent and the general vicinity of the University were discussed. A letter on the matter from the University Vice-Chancellor had been published in full in the Loughborough Echo.

The Chair reported that the matter had been considered by the Highways Forum but that the issues were yet to be resolved.

FORMAL SESSION

Prior to consideration of the first formal item, the Chair expressed concern about the number of presentations included on the agenda and stressed the need to ensure that the public have the opportunity to raise matters important to their local communities.

6. 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 Michael Pearson become Chair and Cllr Smith become Vice-Chair for a two year period.

Michael Pearson in the Chair.

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

7. Minutes and Actions Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 3rd July 2008 were confirmed as a true record subject to the following:

- Minute No 1, Paragraph 1 – Reference to Councillor Smith be amended to Councillor Lewis.
- Rachel Hughes be added to the list of members present.

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

8. Report from Priority Neighbourhood Team

The Chair stated that no updates had been received. A report would be considered at the next meeting of the Forum.

9. Issues for Future Forum Meetings

The progression of the Loughborough In Bloom initiative was identified for consideration at a future Forum meeting.

Members then expressed the following views:

- Some partner agencies needed to better fulfil their duty to engage with the Forum;
- Having rounds of Area Forum meetings encouraged them to be local authority led;
- Area Forums should consider large issues concerning visions for future prosperity;
- Too many operational items specific to small areas were considered by the Forum when they should be referred to the relevant authority for action;

It was AGREED that the Chair raise the listed issues at the next meeting of the Area Forum Co-ordination Group.

10. Summary of Actions from the Meeting

Minute No	Matter	For Action By
3	Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement	Richard Downing
4	Loughborough In Bloom	Rachel Hughes
4	Loughborough In Bloom	Dave Hankin
5(iii)(i)	Jettys	TBC
5(iii)(ii)	Jettys	Councillor Peter Lewis
5(iv)	Drains	Dave Woolsey
5(v)	120 Bus Service	Councillor Peter Lewis
5(vi)	CBC Corporate Style	Sonia Collier
5(vii)	Promotion of the Loughborough South West Area Forum	Richard Downing / Mike Hooper
7	Minutes and Actions Arising	Mike Hooper
9	Issues for Future Forum Meetings	Mike Hooper / Michael Pearson

11. Close

The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all those present for their attendance and ensuring that any actions arising would be acted upon.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.18 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 or 01509 634502.

Actions arising from 3rd July Area Forum

- **'Alcohol Free Zone' signage** – The wording of the signs were chosen to comply with Home Office guidance. Alternative wording will be considered for future signage.
- **Promotion of the work of the Anti-social Behaviour Group** – Following suggestions from the last Forum meeting:
 - 10,000 copies of the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Guidance leaflets (as circulated) were printed and have been distributed to all Parishes, libraries and Police stations.
 - An order for fridge magnets is being placed.
 - A quarterly ASB newsletter has been produced, the first edition of which will be ready for distribution mid October and will provide information about complaints received, actions taken and initiatives implemented during the preceding quarter.
 - A multi agency 'Halloween and Bonfire Night' action plan has been raised with promotional information available in poster format, presentations for school assemblies and advice letters for school children in Charnwood.
 - A Press Release is imminent.
- **Charnwood Borough Council sale of graffiti removal kits** – The Council aim to raise awareness to the public that such kits exist and that they are available for purchase if the public desire to do so. This awareness will be raised through the Council's revamped website very shortly. The Council's Environmental Enforcement Officers do use some graffiti removal wipes but there are limitations with them as they are only appropriate in certain circumstances (i.e. marker pens but not all spray paints). The larger kits would be too expensive and raise questions over who has permission to clean off graffiti on certain types of premises etc. The web page on the Council's website alerts the public to the fact that these removal kits exist and are available to purchase. The site does not promote any individual companies for obvious reasons but does highlight the benefit of such kits and their existence.
- **120 bus service** – To be considered by the Highways Forum on 21st October 2008.
- **Collection of rubbish from student houses – By-laws and landlord Clauses** – The Forum will receive a report at their next meeting, to be held on Tuesday, 24th February 2009.