



**Minutes of a meeting of the Shepshed, Hathern and Dishley Area Forum
held at Robert Bakewell School, Barkby Drive, Loughborough
on Monday 27 October 2008**

Present

Councillor B. Burr (Chair)	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor D. Bebbington	Charnwood Borough Council and Shepshed Town Council
Councillor R. Dann	Hathern Parish Council (Chair)
Ms. P. Freckelton	Shepshed Neighbourhood Watch
Councillor A. Harper	Hathern Parish Council
Councillor S. Hodgson	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor J. Hunt	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr. S. Mitchell	Forum Area Resident (Shepshed)
Ms. L. Needham	Forum Area Resident
Mrs. M.E. Newton CC	Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council
Mr. K. Parker CC	Leicestershire County Council and Shepshed Town Council
Councillor C. Popley	Charnwood Borough Council and Shepshed Town Council
Councillor J. Popley	Shepshed Town Council
Councillor C. Radford	Charnwood Borough Council and Shepshed Town Council
Mr. R. Shepherd CC	Leader, Charnwood Borough Council Leicestershire County Council
Mr. D. Stevenson	Forum Area Resident (Shepshed)
Mrs. E. Stevenson	Forum Area Resident (Shepshed)
Councillor J. Tassell	Shepshed Town Council
Councillor D. Walker	Charnwood Borough Council

Officers and Requested Attendees

Richard Bennett	Head of Planning Policy, Charnwood borough Council.
Jo Cooper	Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT
Richard Downing	Community Engagement Manager, Leicestershire County Council
Paul Goodman	Community Engagement Officer, Leicestershire County Council
Dave Hankin	Director of Development, Charnwood Borough Council
Simon McIntosh	Group Manager, Communities and Better Places, Leicestershire County Council

PC 1264 Neville	Shepshed Local Policing Unit
David Platts	Programmes and Resources, Charnwood Borough Council
Neil Thompson	Principal Planning Officers, Charnwood Borough Council
Louise Hall	Committee Officer, Leicestershire County Council

35. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

36. Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation

Councillor Shepherd, Leader of Charnwood Borough Council introduced Dave Hankin, Richard Bennett and Neil Thompson, and welcomed the opportunity for members of the public to hear from officers about important strategic issues such as these which would greatly impact Charnwood in the future until 2026. He advised the Forum that it was important that those present consider the proposals put forward and make their views known both at this meeting but also to officers at Charnwood Borough Council. In making comments consideration should be given not only to the impact of the proposals on the area but also whether there would be merit in the Council exploring further, other areas in the borough that would be better suited for such developments. He added that these views were very important and would help to shape the Framework.

Richard Bennett, Planning Officer from Charnwood Borough Council gave a PowerPoint presentation setting out the latest proposals in the Core Strategy, the key planning documents that will inform the Local Development Framework. Copies of the slides used in the presentation are filed with these minutes.

The Forum was advised that the challenge facing this Council along with all other Councils was to provide additional housing to meet the expected demand as well as provide the necessary infrastructure and jobs whilst at the same having regard to and reducing the environmental impacts of such developments.

The Charnwood Core Strategy has been in preparation for some time. Briefly this involved looking at the potential of sites around Loughborough, Shepshed and the north of Leicester and assessing these against certain defined social, economic and environmental objectives so as to identify their advantages and disadvantages. It also had to develop proposals in agreement with the Regional Spatial Strategy, which seeks to prioritise development in the largest settlements. Arising from this initial appraisal the following two areas have been identified for further study:-

- An area to the west of Loughborough and towards Shepshed
- An area to the East of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton

The proposals which affect the area covered by this Forum relate to the Shepshed area. It is proposed to provide 3,500 new homes and 20 hectares of employment land new shops, open space, schools and community facilities. This area has been identified on the basis that it:-

- offers the opportunity to link the new development with the existing communities of Loughborough and Shepshed whilst maintaining distinct identities;
- provides a synergy with the proposed science park to the south of the A512, the university, and the existing employment area at Dishley and beyond
- Would help to secure the future of the Garendon Historic Park and Gardens for public access as a district park
- would help address issues of relative disadvantage and provision of social housing on the eastern side of Shepshed and western side of Loughborough (a Priority Neighbourhood)

However, it was recognised that:

- Traffic generation would be an issue (as with all the alternative options) and a package of transportation measures to address this had yet to be devised. A new access road was likely to cross part of the Garendon Historic Park and Garden
- The Black Brook was susceptible to flooding
- The proposal would impact on the settlement identity of Hathern and Shepshed, involve the use of some grade 2 agricultural land

The proposals now being put forward were at an early stage of development and as such no detailed plans were available. If the two areas identified were to be 'agreed' by the Cabinet at Charnwood as meriting further investigation detailed plans would then be drawn up. These detailed plans would then be the subject of a further round of consultation.

The following points/concerns were put forward by residents in the course of the discussion:-

Consultation

- a) Concern was expressed that whilst two new primary schools had been suggested as part of the development the Local Education Authority had advised that the Secondary education requirements could be satisfied by existing schools in the area.
- b) Concern was expressed as to how children would be expected to get to Burleigh College from the suggested development as this school would be expected to incorporate many of the children there.

Bus fares could prove costly for many families and it would not be in line with current aims to promote car use by parents.

- c) Residents questioned how the development would help to regenerate Shepshed and Loughborough.

Officer Response

Shepshed and Loughborough residents would benefit from the opportunity to access jobs and new community facilities in the development area as well as the proposed science park extension to which transport links would be strengthened. In addition the increase in population would provide opportunities for both Shepshed and Loughborough Town centres to respond with more and improved shops and services

- d) Proposals included plans for provision of housing for elderly people and the Forum requested that officers expand on the nature of this provision

Officer Response

The specific nature of the older persons housing had not been decided as yet but would be looked at shortly as part of the forthcoming Housing Strategy Review.

- e) That the sites suggested were a result of developer interest and not strategic planning on behalf of the Borough Council.

Officer Response

The Council had considered a number of alternative sites some of which had developer interest and others which did not. The Council must demonstrate that the development is deliverable by 2026 as part of the criteria for the plan to be judged as 'sound' by Government. Identifying a preference for an option where there is no developer interest would fail to meet the test that the plan was sound.

- f) That some years ago a new settlement had been proposed at Wymeswold airfield and this should be looked at as part of the consultation.

Officer Response

It was confirmed by the Director of Development that the Council had considered this site as one of the alternative options but it had not been chosen as the preferred site for various reasons in particular that it would not comply with the Regional Spatial Strategy, it would promote unsustainable car based trips and require costly road infrastructure which was unlikely to be

economically viable.

- g) Officers were asked to explain why the Borough Council was in disagreement with the County Council over the selection of the Loughborough West Site (LCC preferring the Loughborough East option).

Officer Response

The County Council's work had a different methodology, in particular it had looked at ways to solve Loughborough's traffic problem in line with preparation for the Regional Plan Review process but had been criticised by the Inspector at the Public Inquiry. The Borough Council took the view that a consistent and broadly based transport assessment was required to understand the implications of each of the options on an equitable basis and to support the evidence base.

- h) Officers were asked to highlight the negative aspects that had been identified with regard to the Loughborough West site.

Officer Response

- *Limited in terms of its ability to accommodate any further development in the future*
 - *Flood risk arising around the Black Brook*
 - *Biodiversity issues*
 - *Difficult to fully mitigate the impact of the development on the identity of Hathern and Shepshed*
 - *Road access from A512 likely to cross the Registered Park and Gardens*
 - *Cannot fully mitigate transport implications (same for all options)*
- i) One Forum member voiced their agreement with the decision to remove Hathern as a Service centre.
- j) The Forum expressed concern that the identities of Loughborough Hathern and Shepshed as unique entities were protected.

Officer Response

The detailed layout of the site would need to be carefully planned if this option were to be taken further forward. It was hoped that a landscape buffer to the east of the motorway and the positioning of development behind the ridgeline to the north of the Black Brook would maintain the openness between the development area, Shepshed and Hathern.

In general, Officers reminded those present that the proposals at this stage were aimed at identifying those areas of the Borough

which would meet the Regional Spatial Strategy criteria and therefore merit further investigation. As such detailed proposals were not drawn up. These would be drawn up if and when a decision were taken by the Cabinet on the sites to be investigated

The concerns about the availability of the full consultation document were noted. Copies were available to view on the website. The timescale for consultation was 24th October to 5th December 2008.

The Chairman thanked all those present for their contribution to the debate and assured them that the comments made would be drawn to the attention of members of Cabinet. He reminded the Forum that the consultation period would close on 5th December and that there was an opportunity for people to submit any further comments either via the website or the response sheets which were with copies of the summary proposals which were circulated to all at the meeting.

36. Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement

Simon McIntosh, group Manager, Communities and Better Places, Leicestershire County Council invited everyone present to take part in a voting exercise designed to take account of public opinion in setting the budget of the Leicestershire Together partners, including the County Council. The priorities 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 Together¹ and the results of the voting exercise would be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

37. Public Question Time and Feedback

The following questions were asked and responses given:

- (i) Councillor Cynthia Popley asked for an update on the consultations regarding the possible move of the Walk-in Centre to the Hospital site on Epinal Way.

Jo Cooper of the PCT responded; she confirmed that the public consultation had finished on the 5th October 2008 and that the results were currently being analysed by researchers at Loughborough University. A further update would be

¹ 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.

provided for the Forum when available.

- (ii) Town Councillor John Popley referred to the closure of the Loughborough Hospital respite ward for people with mental illnesses and the loss this represented to healthcare facilities in the Forum Area. He asked whether there were plans to replace or reopen the ward.

Jo Cooper could not respond as mental health services are the responsibility of Leicestershire Partnership Trust. Officers would endeavour to provide feedback at the next forum meeting.

38. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

It was moved, seconded and carried that Mr J. Popley be elected Chairman of the Forum for the next two years. Councillor Burr continued in the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Councillor Radford was nominated as Vice Chair, however concerns were expressed by members of the forum that both Chair and Vice Chair should not be from Shepshed when the Forum represents three geographical areas and that it would also be preferable to have a non-politician as the Vice Chair.

It was AGREED that nominations would be sought from non councillors or councillors not representing the Shepshed Ward before the next meeting when the Vice Chair position would be elected to.

39. Apologies

No apologies had been received.

40. Charnwood Grants

- (i) The Forum considered an application on behalf of Shepshed Town Council for a request for funding of £20,617 as a 50% contribution to the cost of resurfacing works and improvements to the Car Park at Glenmore Park Shepshed as part of a programme of work towards bringing the site up to standard for use by local businesses and residents and as a possible site for a Farmers Market.

It was noted that the Charnwood Grants Panel Assessment had said:

'Scores on promoting local business and accessibility but does not link well to Charnwood Borough Council's corporate priorities.'

It was AGREED that the application be supported.

- (ii) The Forum considered an application on behalf of Glenmore Community Centre for a request for funding of £1,197 as a 50% contribution to the cost of replacing chairs at the Centre in Shepshed.

It was noted that the Charnwood Grants Panel Assessment had said:

'Significant outputs for small cost. Could be improved by local purchase and use of recycled materials.'

It was AGREED that the application be supported.

41. Minutes and Actions Arising

Councillor Radford had sent apologies to the last meeting which had not been recorded. With this amendment noted the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

42. Issues for Future Forum Meetings

It was AGREED that the following issues be discussed at future Forums:-

- Crime and Local Policing.
- Charnwood Borough and Parish Grants.
- Voluntary Action Charnwood – Funding Opportunities
- Grass cutting and street cleaning – Joint report

43. Summary of Actions from the Meeting

The Chair summarised actions arising from the meeting. Richard Downing would ensure that actions were fulfilled.

44. Date of next meeting

NOTED:

The next meeting would be held at 7.00p.m on Monday, 26 January 2009, at Shepshed High School, Forest St, Shepshed.

It was also AGREED that future meetings would, where at all possible, not clash with school holidays.

7.00 p.m. – 9.30 p.m.
27/10/08

CHAIRMAN