

MARKET HARBOROUGH

Notes of the Meeting held on 3rd March 2010,
At the Evangelical Church Hall
Bath Street, Market Harborough

Chair: David Johnson.

Attendance: 26 Members of the Public.

Councillors: Davis, Johnson, Knowles, Dr. S. Hill, Pain, Rook, Roeber and Mrs. Simpson
Officers: R. Abbott, M. Howling, E. O'Neill, P. Rowbotham, D. Van Der Wardt, C. Howe
2 Police Officers

1. Matters Rising and Update on Action Sheet

- Several complaints were received from attendees about not receiving the meeting papers. R. Abbott confirmed that the meeting papers had been circulated as normal but will investigate why some individuals did not receive them.
- Reopening of footpath between Saddington and Kibworth Road (LCC) Update. C. Howe, from Leicestershire County Council Highways, provided the following update:

Pressure is being put on both Network Rail and the developers to resolve this matter. Both the Secretary of State for transport and Edward Garnier MP are aware of this situation. The situation continues to be monitored. If any loose debris is noted please inform LCC Highways.

- Cyclists who ride on pavements. This is now a priority of Police Beat 17.
- Access to Lidl Carpark, Market Harborough - C. Howe, from Leicestershire County Council Highways, provided the following update:
The matter has been passed to our Traffic Management staff to assess. To date there have been no traffic incidents. The area will continue to be monitored.
- Councillor Pain wished to thank J. Kemp, of Harborough District Council Street Scene Services, for organising to remove loose rubble from Willow Crescent, Market Harborough.

2. Seven Locks Housing, an overview by Chris Foster

Chris Foster From Seven Locks Housing gave a short presentation on the nature of housing associations. The meeting asked her to take away and investigate the following points:

- Harborough BSafe has had to fix some door bars that were incorrectly installed by Seven Locks. Reimbursement for this service was promised.
- Seven Locks did some work to loft spaces in East Street, Market Harborough. Some of the work is defective due to lack of insulation to pipe-work and loose rubble being left behind.

C. Foster agreed to investigate these problems.

3. Question Time

- Q1: Re. Recycling at the Clover Court Bungalows:
Each week when the recycling teams collect from the rear of East Street, they go through the green bins. Anything that has been put in that the operative feels should not have been put in there it is removed; removed items are not put into another bin, they are left on the ground or to blow away.

An aged person is more likely to make a mistake than a younger person, so why are their wheelie bins sorted out to discover the contents? The bins in other areas, including mine in Rainsborough Gardens, are emptied no matter what the contents are.

A: Councillor Rook: there is no reason why this should be occurring; please inform Harborough District Council Waste Department of any instances of this so that they can resolve problems.

Councillor Rook also stated that he was meeting with FOCSA, the Council's waste contractors, on Friday 5th March and would raise this issue with them.

Q2: Why is it not compulsory for all Councillors to attend these meetings? How can they engage with the residents of the wards if many never attend?

A: Ward Members try to attend as many meetings as possible but have extremely full diaries. It should be remembered that Have Your Say Meetings are not the only means by which Ward Members can be contacted.

Q3: Can anything be done by the police about the obstructing vehicles in both Hearth Street and East Street, particularly at school drop-off times? Hearth Street gets blocked off so other vehicles cannot negotiate up or down. Car owners do not park but abandon their cars across the lower kern areas, double parking in places – all this because there is a back exit from Fairfield Road School. Clover Court residents used to have days out but this has now stopped because the coach drivers cannot get up Hearth Street.

A: Police: we are aware of this situation. We have written to the school and put stickers on offending cars to deter this. Unfortunately any action seems to have only short-term effects. The problem will continue to be monitored; unfortunately there is only so much the police can do in such circumstances

Q4: Queries over policing methods in this area.

A: This question was deferred until next Meeting with the agreement of the question owner.

Q5: Can the Chair raise the Safer Neighbourhood initiative as the cut-off date is 10th March 2010?

A: Marion Lewis informed the meeting about the Safer Neighbourhood Initiative. Local Funding is available for safety-related issues. A meeting is being held on 23rd March 2010 to discuss the community's ideas what it would like to see resolved.

Q6: Do Highways carry out any routine inspections?

A: Yes. Inspection priorities are determined by the use-classification of roads. Routine inspections of footpaths are also carried out.

Q7: If you discover a highway problem that has been caused due to contractors (such as gas or electric) digging up the road, do you contact the contractor and ask them to rectify the problem?

A: Yes, although there is normally a limit of three years within which we can identify a problem and ask for it to be put right. We can fine contractors if they fail to put a defect right.

Q8: Is the Airfield Farm development still involved with the planned relief road?

A: Airfield Farm is currently being looked at as part of the forthcoming LDF plan (this will be published next autumn). Harborough District Council is working closely with Leicestershire County Council on the matter.

Q9: Update please by Clive Howe (Highways) on the traffic calming full-lane blocks in Western Avenue and Stuart Road. This dates back to a question by me 18 to 24 months ago.

A: Clive Howe advised he would report back at the next meeting.

- Q10: A blocked gully in Market Harborough between Bellfields Street and the railway bridge is causing a problem. Can anything be done for fix this?
A: C. Howe advised the meeting that he would personally inspect the problem and provide an update.

Concerning the proposed closure of the toilets, a number of questions were asked relating to this and are listed below:

- Q11: Does any Local Government body have a statutory duty to provide public toilets in Market Harborough? If so, which? I understand that Harborough District Council does not have a statutory duty to do so?
- Q12: I would like to ask what consultation did the Council take with over 500+ disabled people and visitors, we only have two radar keys toilets and now only one.
- Q13. In view of the fact that no consultation took place, between the council and the disabled and disabled groups at a local level, as the current legislation indicates is necessary, is the closure decision one that has any legality?.
- A: Councillor Rook referred to Standard Note: SN/SC/976 where it stated, that local authorities are under no statutory obligation to provide public conveniences. And for this reason there is no issue concerning legality or breaking of rules.

The Meeting expressed dissatisfaction and by a show of hands requested that the Executive reconsider the decision.

- Q15: Car-parking charges are shortly to be increased to a minimum of 50p. It is frustrating that when tickets are purchased they are specific to particular car-park. It would be better if car-parking tickets were transferable between different car parks so that vehicle-owners can move between car parks.
- A: Councillor Rook agreed to discuss the suggestion with the Council Executive.

4. Your Voice Your Choice Update

D. Van Der Wardt advised the meeting that £20, 000 is available to the community of Market Harborough.

A workshop will be held in the Methodist Church on 28th April 2010 between 6p.m. and 9p.m. to gather ideas from the community on how the funds should be spent.

5. Local Police Matters

The local Police provided an update on local policing and noted that:

- Incidents of reported crime are down 11% on the previous six months.
- Prevention of personal theft such as purse-snatching will be the police priority for the next six months.
- The Local Police are currently trying to secure local, designated power to confiscate alcohol from pedestrians.

Q: The police regularly visit Clover Court to monitor the CCTV. Whilst at Clover Court could the police please patrol the bungalow area. When an emergency arises residents are told that there is no one available to call. They are promised someone will call later, but never do.

A: The Police agreed to look into this.

6. Have Your Say Meetings: results and outcome of the review

R. Abbott, Communications and Consultations Manager, provided an update on the progress of the Have Your Say review.

The process, that began in April 2010, is now complete. As part of this process the Have Your Say branding will be brought into line with the County Council Community Forum branding. To ensure continuity and to assist in the development of these meetings a Chair would need to be appointed. The meeting agreed that the chair should commit to a period of 12 months. It was also suggested that a Vice-Chair be elected who could take over the Chair role after 12 months.

Training on the role of the Chair will be made available if needed.

7. Dates for next meetings

- 16th June, 7-9pm – Evangelical Church Bath Street
- 29th September – 7-9pm venue to be confirmed
- 9th March 2011 – 7-9pm – venue to be confirmed

8. Matters of Urgency

The meeting requested that K. Griffiths, and other relevant directors, of the NHS be asked to attend the next meeting of the Market Harborough Community Forum to report on the progress on the need for a new hospital.

The Meeting ended at 9.10p.m.