

Minutes of a meeting of the Blaby South Community Forum held at the Pavilion, Sports Field Lane, Huncote on Tuesday 19 February 2008.

Present

Cllr. J. Battell	Huncote Parish Council
Cllr. K. Davies	Huncote Parish Council
Cllr. R. Dixon	Sapcote Parish Council
Cllr. D. Freer	Blaby District Council and Croft Parish Council
Cllr. N. Gilson	Blaby District Council
Mr. A. Ingles	Voluntary Action Blaby District
Cllr. A. Knight	Huncote Parish Council
Ms H. Johnson	Resident
Mr. M. Lee	Sharnford Traffic Action Group
Cllr. I. McVitie	Huncote Parish Council
Cllr. M. Murphy	Blaby District Council
Mr. P.E. O'Sullivan	Resident
Cllr. G. Thurlow	Croft Parish Council
P.C. 936 Vadnia	Leicestershire Constabulary
Cllr. E. A. Webster-Williams	Blaby District Council (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Whelband	Thurlaston Parish Council
Mr. E. F. White	Leicestershire County Council and Blaby District Council

Officers

Ms K. Ball	Community Engagement Manager, Leicestershire County Council
Mrs. S. Cavill	Leicestershire and Rutland PCT
G. Clark	Planning policy Manager, Blaby District Council
Mr. J. Leach	Head of Community and Neighbourhood Services , Blaby District Council
Mr. R.P. Steffens	Committee Officer, Leicestershire County Council
P. Tebbitt	Senior Planning Officer, Blaby District Council
Mr. D. Van der Wardt	Team Leader – Community Engagement, Leicestershire County Council

8. Chairman's Welcome.

Cllr. Webster-Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that had agreed to Chair the first part of the meeting in his capacity as Chairman of the Blaby Local Strategic Partnership but hoped that members would be able to agree upon and elect a Chairman for the Forum during the meeting.

9. Apologies for Absences.

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of Cllr. M. Birchall of Leicester Forest West Parish meeting.

10. Declarations of Interest.

No declarations of interest were made.

11. Minutes.

The minutes for the meeting held on 22 November 2007 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

12. Matters Arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

13. Election of Chairman.

It was moved, seconded and carried:

‘That Mr. Michael J. R. Lee be elected Chairman of the Forum.’

Mr. Michael Lee – in the Chair

14. Change to the Order of Business.

It was agreed to take the item on the Sustainable Community Strategy before the item on the Primary Care Trust Operating Plan.

15. District of Blaby Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Forum received a presentation on the District of Blaby Sustainable Community Strategy, which enabled consideration to be given to how Community Forums could make a difference to the Strategy. A copy of the presentation slides is filed with these minutes.

Members of the Forum were asked to consider and answer the following questions:-

- What things affect your area?
- What levers/tools, etc are there to make a difference locally?
- What do you as Community leaders need from us to help?

(The answers were subsequently collated into a chart, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.)

The Chairman suggested that the Forum should receive presentations from communities setting out how the community saw itself at the present time and how it should develop in the future.

AGREED:

That feedback on the issues raised be provided to the Community Forum when appropriate.

16. Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trust (PCT) – Operating Plan.

The Forum received a presentation on the PCT's local priorities for 2008/09 including a vision which was to make Leicestershire and Rutland the healthiest place in the U.K. A copy of the presentation slides is filed with these minutes.

The nationally prescribed priorities and 16 local priorities amounted to a significant challenge to the PCT, which would require best use of resources.

Access to services was discussed, particularly in respect of public transport, car parking charges at certain hospitals and access to cognitive therapy. The view was also expressed that people were so concerned about 'superbugs' in hospitals that they were delaying appointments. Although there had been a reduction in cases of MRSA, and a smaller reduction in Clostridium Difficile, the message detailing what hospitals had achieved was not being promoted sufficiently enough to allay people's fears.

Mr. Ingles reported on efforts by Voluntary Action Blaby District to obtain long term sponsorship by local companies to help meet transport costs. Although local companies often responded positively to one-off sponsorship requests they were less keen on a longer term commitment. Nevertheless the VAB continued to strive to find sponsors.

AGREED:

To note consultation on the PCT's Operating Plan.

17. Blaby Local Development Framework.

The Forum received a presentation on future planning issues facing the District of Blaby, set in the context of local, regional and national planning issues. A copy of the presentation slides is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:-

- New Housing Development should also include shops and other local facilities. The development at Thorpe Astley had not originally included such facilities although they were now being introduced.

- Transport infrastructure was one of the main keys to successful development. Existing roads in the Forum area were not good enough to cope with further growth. For example, Stoney Stanton was at times inundated with traffic following development in the locality. It was suggested that the County Council's proposed park and ride scheme in Enderby would attract even more traffic into the Forum area. The County and City Councils had persuaded Blaby District Council that the park and ride scheme would benefit the area as a whole.
- Transport planners needed to work with Network Rail about re-opening stations at, for example, Croft and Elmesthorpe, with a view to relieving traffic congestion. It was noted that the opening of Blaby Station was a proposal in the Local Plan. It was also noted that there were more imaginative alternatives to solving traffic congestion, such as building lightweight railways or lightweight tramway systems.
- Couples or single people living in large houses should be encouraged to move into smaller, more appropriate accommodation and thus free up larger houses for large families who could afford them.
- Travellers/itinerants/gypsies were an issue locally. Many local parents had withdrawn their children from Sapcote All Saints Primary School because of the number of itinerant children who now attended that school.
- The planning processes which had to be followed were very slow compared with rapid changes in society. It was therefore difficult for plans to keep up with change.

AGREED:

- (a) That officers of Leicestershire County Council be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss traffic issues, and in particular movement of heavy goods vehicles in Sharnford;
- (b) that the next stages of an issues and options paper on the Blaby Local Development Framework be brought to Forum at the appropriate time;
- (c) that representatives of appropriate agencies be invited to the next meeting to discuss how approval is granted for Gypsy and Traveller sites, particularly in Sapcote

18. Question Time.

No questions were asked.

19. Items for the next Agenda.

In addition to issues previously identified at the meeting, the following items were also discussed:

(a) HGVs in Sharnford.

The Chairman mentioned that he was in communication with Leicestershire County Council as the Secretary of Sharnford Traffic Action Group (STAG) concerning the designation of the B4114 as a lorry route even though the road was too narrow for HGVs to pass each other. There were also concerns in Sharnford about environmental health issues caused by granite dust and diesel particulates.

The Chairman asked how the local community could respond to this designation.

It was noted that a representative of Leicestershire County Council would be invited to the next meeting to discuss traffic issues.

(b) 11 – 16 Education

AGREED:

That a representative of Leicestershire County Council be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss arrangements for 11-16 education locally.

20. Date, Time and Venue for next meeting.

AGREED:

- (a) That the next meeting be held at Huncote Community Centre, Huncote Primary School, Denman Lane, LE9 3BS at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday 11 June, 2008;
- (b) that consideration be given at the next meeting to an alternative venue before the following meeting.

6.30 p.m. – 8.45 p.m.
19.02.08

CHAIRMAN