

**Minutes of the Loughborough North West Area Forum held at
All Saints' Church Hall, Thorpe Acre Road, Loughborough on
Tuesday, 17th February 2009**

PRESENT

Members

Councillor Max Hunt (Chair)	Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council
Councillor Roy Campsall	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor David Goss	Charnwood Borough Council
Councillor Christine Harris	Charnwood Borough Council
Mr Robert Jones	Co-opted Member
Mrs Val Watts	Co-opted Member
Councillor Patrick Youell	Charnwood Borough Council

Officers

Mr Richard Downing	Community Engagement Manager (Charnwood and Melton) Leicestershire County Council
PC 4430 Anna Fowell	Dishley, Gorse Covert and Thorpe Acre Beat
Mr Paul Goodman	Community Engagement Officer, Leicestershire County Council
PC 655 Jim Harvey	Sharpley and Garendon Beat
Mr Andy Hayes	Community Project Officer, Leicestershire County Council
Mr Michael Hooper	Committee Services Officer, Charnwood Borough Council
Mr Simon Jackson	Director of Governance and Procurement, Charnwood Borough Council
Mr Tom Kiernan	Head of Communities and Partnerships, Charnwood Borough Council
Mr Steve Lownden	Associate Director Non Acute Care, NHS Leicestershire County & Rutland
Mr Simon McIntosh	Leicestershire Together
PCSO 6147 Paul Sanders	Loughborough University Beat
Sergeant 129 Andy Thornley	Loughborough Town Centre Beat,

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Leicestershire County and Charnwood Borough
Councillor Peter Lewis

APOLOGIES: Charnwood Borough Councillor Debbie Green, Mrs Sandie Gough,
Mrs Isa Hogan and Charnwood Borough and Leicestershire County Councillor Betty
Newton

In addition to the neighbourhood representatives attending as Forum Members, 6 further residents and representatives of community groups attended the meeting and took part in discussions.

I. Welcome from Chair

The Chair of the Forum, Councillor Max Hunt, welcomed all in attendance and provided a brief overview of the structure of the Area Forum meeting and the items included on the agenda.

2. Emerging Strategy for the River Soar and Grand Union Canal

Andy Hayes, Community Project Officer, Leicestershire County Council, gave the Area Forum a presentation detailing the emerging strategy for the River Soar and Grand Union Canal, a copy of which can be viewed at <http://www.leicestershireforums.org/lboronw/papers-for-loughborough-nw-area.html>.

In November 2007 The Waterways Trust had gained funding from the East Midlands Development Agency for the development of the 23 miles of river corridor between Kilby Bridge in Oadby and Bishop Meadow Lock in Loughborough. Since then the Waterways Trust and British Waterways had appointed consultants to work alongside key stakeholders (Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, Blaby District Council, Leicestershire Promotions, the Environment Agency, and Leicester Regeneration Company) in collating information on existing strategies, the successes of previous projects, proposed projects and aspirations.

Andy Hayes said that consultation questionnaires seeking public opinions were available both in local libraries and online at <http://ldsweb02.arup.com/riversoarstrategy/questions.php>.

Upon opening up discussion with attendees:

- Councillor Harris said that the Soar Valley and the Grand Union Canal formed a large part of the Local Plan and stressed that any development plans needed to be beneficial to the local community and ensure that tourism and access were key elements.
- Andy Hayes said that local authorities had expressed concerns about the current state of Loughborough Wharf. He was hopeful that it could be developed to become an amenity area, although potential flooding was an issue.
- A controversial element of the Emerging Strategy was the suggestion to rename the river and canal a 'waterway'.

The Chair closed the item by thanking Andy Hayes for his presentation and urging people to participate in the consultation.

It was AGREED that the presentation be noted.

3. Community Policing

Sergeant Andy Thornley, Loughborough Town Centre Beat, introduced to the Area Forum himself and local Beat Officers PC 655 Jim Harvey, Sharpley and Garendon Beat, PC 4430 Anna Fowell, Dishley, Gorse Covert and Thorpe Acre Beat and PCSO 6147 Paul Sanders, Loughborough University Beat.

The Chair praised the Police for their work within the area and Sergeant Thornley invited questions from the floor. No questions were forthcoming so Sergeant Thornley invited questions to be submitted outside of the meeting.

It was AGREED:

- (i) **that any questions for the Police be submitted either direct, via question cards or to Mike Hooper, contact details at the end of these minutes;**
- (ii) **that Officers be thanked for their attendance.**

4. Update on the Work of the Priority Neighbourhood Team

Tom Kiernan, Head of Communities and Partnerships, Charnwood Borough Council opened the item by informing people of the work of the Community Safety Partnership, comprised of members from Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council, the Leicestershire Constabulary, NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland and the Fire Service. Other agencies involved included Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing, Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Area, Leicestershire Drug & Alcohol Action Team, Leicestershire Youth Offending Service, Loughborough Women's Aid, Loughborough Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Charnwood Racial Equality Council, Turning Point, Loughborough University and Voluntary Action Charnwood.

It was announced that local residents and businesses in Charnwood would have the chance to discuss their concerns about community safety related issues with the Charnwood Community Safety Partnership at two public information question and answer events. The first event would be held on Tuesday 17th March 2009 between 7.00pm and 9.00pm at John Storer House, Loughborough. The second event would be held on 16th April at the Rothley Centre, 12 Mountsorrel Lane, Rothley LE7 7PR. In addition the Leicester Safer Communities Strategy Board would be holding a public meeting at 6.00 pm on 19th March 2009 at County Hall, Glenfield.

Tom Kiernan continued to say that the agencies within the Partnership were working towards becoming better integrated, that they were aware of the need to improve community engagement, and that they needed to better reassure communities that issues were being tackled. He also said that a new strategic approach had been adopted which would incorporate better communication with Ward Members, more 'ground-level' data, and eventually the creation of a multi-agency and multi-sector partnership.

Questions were invited from the floor:

- A member of the public made three points: He felt that anti-social behaviour contracts favoured criminals, that a recent government publication indicated that there was no binge-drinking on the Ashby Road estate, and that The Hut on Ashby Road had received no information from Charnwood Borough Council on the community events mentioned by Tom Kiernan.

Tom Kiernan replied that data protection laws in relation to individuals had to be observed. He said that it was essential that members of the public report their concerns about anti-social behaviour to the authorities and that should they do so they would receive direct and personal feedback. He added that anti-social behaviour was not an area specific problem but one that affected much of the country.

- The Chair said that communities required leadership at ground-level rather than from offices.

Tom Kiernan stated that the Council recognised the need to better engage communities and that was why 50-60% of his work took place away from the office.

- A member of the public said that in the past he had tried to report anti-social behaviour to both Charnwood Borough Council and the Police but had received no response from either. He added that it was the same people causing trouble within the community as it was 6-7 years ago and reasoned that the best way to tackle the issue would be for Council and Police officers to work alongside residents in developing and integrating a workable strategy into the community.

Tom Kiernan agreed that any strategy agreed without consulting communities would be useless and said that the kind of community self-regulating that occurred in the past no longer took place.

- A member of the public remarked that communities were much more diverse than in the past and encouraged attendees to report any examples of anti-social behaviour to the Police.
- A member of the public asked if Charnwood Borough Council officers would be 'knocking on doors' as part of their consultation.

Tom Kiernan responded that it was vital that the public had the chance to have their say and that the Council would be asking for their opinions on what the three most important areas that could be tackled in partnership were.

Tom Kiernan closed the item by ensuring residents that their comments were valued and reiterating the need for communities and authorities to work together in tackling anti-social behaviour.

It was AGREED:

- (i) that the comments received, as detailed above, be fed back to Charnwood Borough Council and the Police;**
- (ii) that Tom Kiernan be thanked for the update.**

5. Loughborough Special Rate

Simon Jackson, Director of Governance and Procurement, Charnwood Borough Council, gave the Area Forum a brief outline of what the Loughborough Special Rate (LSR) was. Included within Council Tax bills and basically the equivalent of a Parish Precept, the Loughborough Special Expenses were established when the Council was created in 1974. The principle had always been to seek to charge Loughborough with the type of expenses it would normally bear if it had a town council which bore the usual expenses charged on a town or parish council. A list of the services benefiting from it could be viewed at:

<http://www.leicestershireforums.org/lboronw/papers-for-loughborough-nw-area-.html>.

It was AGREED:

- (i) that a breakdown of the schemes included with the Loughborough Special Rate be circulated with the minutes;**
- (ii) that the report be noted.**

6. NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland Operating Plan

Steve Lowden, Associate Director Non-acute Care, NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland (formerly the Primary Care Trust), provided the Forum with the following feedback to questions received at their last meeting:

- Measures taken to identify risk in advance of accidents and falls occurring – the NHS had an integrated falls and burns strategy, an abridged copy of which would be provided at the next meeting of the Forum.

- Enabling adults with learning difficulties to live independently – there had recently been a critical national report on the NHS treatment received by people with learning disabilities. NHS LCR were currently consulting on their action plan to address the recommendations in the report.
- Respite care – a copy of a page from the Leicestershire County Council website was circulated. Information on what respite care consisted of, how it could be obtained and the cost implications were available at http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/social_services/support_home/respite_care.htm.

Steve Lowden then gave a presentation on local priorities for 2009/10, a copy of which can be viewed at <http://www.leicestershireforums.org/lboronw/papers-for-loughborough-nw-area-.html>.

Questions and comments were opened up to the floor:

- A member of the public said that he had a son with learning difficulties but had heard nothing of the consultation mentioned within the feedback report. Steve Lowden undertook to personally provide details.
- The Chair said that ‘Breaking the Barriers’, a specialist employment team within Leicestershire County Council that provide support for working age young people and adults who have experienced accident, injury, illness or a disability and wish to begin, maintain or return to work, should be made aware of the consultation.
- A member of the public asked whether as part of their consultation NHS LCR had looked at the approaches taken by NHS Nottinghamshire County and NHS Coventry. Steve Lowden replied that they had looked at Nottinghamshire’s approach. He said that whilst they believed that the services currently on offer were good they also recognised that they could be improved upon, adding that three additional learning difficulties nurses were due to take up posts and that the Leicester Learning Difficulties Centre was world renowned national and an international resource.
- NHS LCR recognised dementia services as a key area and had commissioned a review two months ago which they were mapping against a national review published a week ago.

Steve Lowden thanked people for their questions and asked that they take part in the disabilities consultation.

It was AGREED:

- (i) **that an abridged copy of the integrated falls and burns strategy be circulated at the next meeting of the Forum;**

- (ii) **that the comments received, as detailed above, be fed back to NHS Leicestershire County & Rutland;**
- (iii) **that Steve Lowden be thanked for his presentation.**

7. Public Question Time and Feedback

Green Spaces

At their meeting held on 11th June 2008 the Forum requested feedback on a number of issues and requests raised under the banner of the Promotion of Green Areas. Accordingly, Charnwood Borough Council's Green Spaces Development Manager provided responses to all of the issues and requests raised. However, as the Council were unable to fulfil most of the requests due to a lack of funding available, the Forum resolved to invite the Cabinet Lead Member to attend their next meeting to discuss matters ahead of the setting of the Council's budget for 2009/10.

Councillor Peter Lewis, Cabinet Lead Member for Culture and Leisure, told the Forum that some signage had been added to play areas but that budgets remained tight. The Council had priorities to focus upon but issues raised concerning areas that were not current priorities would not be forgotten.

The Chair suggested that Parished areas received better services from parish precept funds than Loughborough residents received from Loughborough Special Rate funds. Councillor Lewis replied that there were many complicated issues involved in the organisation of the Loughborough Special Rate but that the Council was committed to achieving the best results with the funds available, adding that signage was very expensive and reiterating that the requests would not be forgotten. Councillor Christine Harris countered that the cost of new signage was less than the cost of repairing damage that could have been avoided had people had better signage to guide them.

Councillor Roy Campsall felt that voluntary action from communities could help greatly in improving green areas. Councillor Lewis agreed and said that it had been suggested that all community and volunteer groups should get together on an annual basis to share their ideas and practises. In the meantime he urged the public to contact either their Ward Members or himself if they had green issues that they wished to raise.

Councillor Lewis told the Forum that the Borough Council had recently published a new set of guidelines detailing the maintenance standards that the Council would be applying to their work. The document and a feedback form to allow the public to let the Council know what they think of it could be found at

http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/output_specification_green_spaces_document.

Councillor Lewis then informed the Forum of an appeal by the Borough Council's nature conservation experts for volunteers to help save an endangered population of mistletoe within Thorpe Acre. More details could be found at http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/news/2009/02/17/mistletoe_is_for_life_not_just_for_christmas.

Feedback from Previous Meetings of the Forum

Following analysis of the Sustainable Community Strategy / Local Area Agreement presentation given at the last meeting of the Forum, Simon McIntosh said that a report was due to be considered by the County Council's Cabinet. Based upon the responses given at Area Forums across the county, the top priorities were tackling anti-social behaviour and making Leicestershire a safer and more attractive place in which to live.

Further feedback, as circulated at the meeting, is attached as an Appendix. The Chair suggested that the standard of feedback presented to the Forum needed to be improved upon with detailed written reports be provided when appropriate.

Public Question Time

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

- That car parking on grass verges had become a major issue on the Ashby Road estate and that Britain in Bloom judges would frown upon it.
- That too many grass verges were overgrown between Thorpe Acre Road and Epinal Way and that the verge opposite Thorpe Acre School was particular awful.
- That tree lined avenues needed to be preserved.

It was AGREED:

- (i) that a report detailing the progress made on the Loughborough In Bloom initiative be circulated with the minutes of the Forum;**
- (ii) that a report incorporating the following be received at the next meeting of the Forum:**
 - **an update on the Loughborough in Bloom initiative;**
 - **action taken to address parking on grass verges;**
 - **action taken to address the problem of overgrown grass verges;**
 - **details of the Safer Routes to Schools scheme.**

FORMAL SESSION

8. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 13th October 2008 were confirmed as a true record.

9. Co-option of Forum Members

The Chair proposed that Reverend Keith Elliot be invited to become a member of the Loughborough North West Area Forum.

It was AGREED that Reverend Keith Elliot be invited to become a member of the Loughborough North West Area Forum.

10. Capital Grants

The Forum was being asked to comment on a Charnwood Capital Grant application and consider whether or not it was in support of it. That position would be considered by the Borough Council's Grants Panel when it decided the application.

Gorse Covert Community Association

An application for £20,000 towards the refurbishment of the Centre was considered.

It was AGREED that the Borough Council's Grants Panel be informed that the Forum supports the application.

11. Issues for Future Forum Meetings

The following items were identified for consideration at a future Forum meeting:

- Report incorporating Loughborough in Bloom, grass verges and Safer Routes to Schools.
- Parking on Footways.
- Benches.

The Chair said that Forum members should relay specific details of issues to Mike Hooper, contact details at the end of these minutes, to enable agencies to provide appropriate and timely responses.

12. Summary of Actions from the Meeting

Minute No	Matter	For Action By
4(i)	Charnwood Borough Council and the Police;	Tom Kiernan, CBC
5(i)	Loughborough Special Rate breakdown	Mike Hooper, CBC
6(i)	Integrated falls and burns strategy	Steve Lowden, NHSLC&R
6(ii)	NHS Leicestershire County & Rutland feedback	Steve Lowden, NHSLC&R
7(i)	Loughborough In Bloom update	Various CBC & Loughborough Echo
7(ii) / 11	Loughborough in Bloom, grass verges, Safer Routes to Schools.	Various CBC & LCC
9	Co-option of Forum Members	Mike Hooper, CBC
10	Capital Grants	Mike Hooper, CBC
11	Future Items	Mike Hooper, CBC

13. Close

The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all those present for their attendance.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.53 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 previous Area Forum Meetings

- **Community Health Agenda** – Steve Lowden to report back on:
 - Measures taken to identify risk of accidents
 - Enabling adults with learning difficulties
 - Respite Care
 - Incidences of hospital viruses (from June 2008)

- **Local Development Framework** – Richard Bennett, Head of Planning Policy, CBC, on the current position – The Core Strategy Further Consultation closed on 5th December 2008 after six weeks. The public meetings and exhibitions during the first two weeks were very well attended and we had the opportunity to talk about the proposals with over 1,500 people. The Council received over 1,100 responses and these have been made available on the Council's website for people to view. The responses are currently being processed so that the key issues can be identified. These will also be made available on our website around the end of March. Officers also attended round four of the area forums and the minutes of these events are available to download from our website too.

Over the coming months Officers will be working through the key issues raised by respondents and refining the wording of the next version of the plan. No decisions will be taken on location of major development until more detailed information is gathered on the transport implications, which is expected by the summer of 2009. The council hopes to publish a final draft of the plan for consultation in October 2009.

- **Loughborough In Bloom** – the route will take pass through Ashby Road via Holywell Drive and return via Snells Nook Lane. Articles will continue to feature in the Echo. If anyone has an idea for a project please contact Andy Rush on andy_rush@mrn.co.uk or 01509 635802.

Peter Blitz, Team Leader, Development Control, CBC – 'I can't think of any Section 106 agreements that I have been involved with that would sanction the use of money from landscape obligations to be used for this purpose. In fact, normally, there aren't any obligations that involve commuted sums for landscaping as such, unless it is related to open space maintenance. Money secured for general recreation provision could/should not be used, in my view. I think it would always be difficult to demonstrate the essential link between an "in bloom" type initiative and the essential need for community facilities generated specifically by an individual development.'

- **Horror Nights Event** – CBC officers investigated the matter and a statement was released.

- **Maxwell Drive** – There has been an increased litter picking campaign in and around Jubilee Park and the Shopping Centre and Street Cleansing have liaised with local schools to educate young people with regard to littering.

- **Gorse Covert** – Both the issues raised – underage drinking and bonfires – have been addressed and no further incidents have been reported. Should any further incidents occur the public are urged to inform the CBC Anti-social Behaviour Team on 01509 634920 and the Police on 0116 222222.
- **Burleigh Way Extension – Cycle Path** – Richard Downing to report back.
- **Shortcliffe Park** – the youth shelter, funded by Youth Zone funding, has been approved in principle, following a community meeting on 26st January 2009, and we are waiting to see if there are any planning issues involved in installation.

The consultation that was run in conjunction with ARECA last November was inconclusive, with a very poor response rate. I'm reluctant to support a community bid for lottery money to develop facilities for young people on Shortcliffe Park regarding a Multi Use Games Area / BMX course, without more evidence of community support/involvement with ARECA, but it may be that there is no alternative but to go ahead and lead on this, as there seems to be a strong will from all agencies involved to develop something for young people on Shortcliffe Park.

- **Youth Service Information** – All Borough Councillors now receive the same Youth Service information as Leicestershire County Councillors.
- **Police** – Drug dealing update to be provided under Priority Neighbourhood Team report.
- **Grant Application – The Hut, Ashby Road** - the Panel decided that it could not approve the application in its current form due to technical aspects of the application needing to be improved. Rather than refuse the application, the Panel invited the applicant to discuss the issues with them. So far they have not received a response.