

Coppull Parish Area Forum

Wednesday, 20 September 2006

Present: Councillor Mrs Stella Walsh (Chair) and Councillor Edward Smith

Also in attendance: Councillors Peter Malpas (Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration), Mark Perks (Executive Member for Health, Leisure and Well-Being) and Phil Maltby (Lancashire County Council)

Co-opted Members: Lindsay Hoyle MP, County Councillor E Forshaw (Lancashire County Council), Cindy Lowthian (District Partnership Officer, Lancashire County Council), Liz Easterbrook (Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust), Linda Eubank (Coppull Parish Council), Alex Clayton (Lancashire Constabulary), Kate Bennett (Lancashire Constabulary) and Sarah Beattie (Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust)

Chorley Borough Officers: Paul Morris (Executive Director - Corporate and Customer), Simon Clark (Commercial Manager), Chris Mellor (Cultural Services Manager), Gordon Bankes (Democratic Services Officer) and Pat Rigby (Neighbourhood Warden Shift Supervisor)

24 members of the public also in attendance.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor Stella Walsh opened the third Coppull Parish Area Forum by thanking and welcoming everyone to the meeting.

This was the third and final Area Forum pilot meeting for the Coppull Parish Area and there would be an opportunity for those attending to submit their objections on the pilot scheme at the end of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors K Ball, H Heaton, Nora Ball, David Cole, Pat Cuerden, Andrew Birchall, Ian Scott, Marjorie Parkinson, Ronnie Parkinson, Susan Edwards and Inspector Johanne Smith (Lancashire Constabulary).

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting received and agreed the minutes of the Coppull Area Forum meeting held on 13 June 2006.

4. "YOU SAID, WE DID"

A schedule of the responses to the question cards received at the last Forum meeting was attached to the agenda.

County Councillor Forshaw explained that in relation to the issues raised regarding traffic calming the County Council was working closely with the Coppull Parish Council. He was sympathetic to the issues raised but priority in allocating expenditure had to be given to those changes that achieve a reduction of injuries on the County's roads.

The Member of Parliament, Lindsay Hoyle, requested that attempts must be made for traffic calming schemes to be placed on a Capital Programme List and requested that they be made a budget proposal.

County Councillor Forshaw agreed that this would be pursued.

Reference was made by a resident of Shelley Close, Coppull to an incident that occurred 7 weeks ago when Police were contacted regarding a young driver cutting a corner in Byron Crescent and causing damage to a parked taxi. He requested that this be recorded by the County Council.

It was pointed out that this was a Police issue rather than for County Council.

The Member of Parliament raised the issue of CCTV coverage in Coppull and how much were covered by Chorley Borough Council and by the Police. He pointed out that it was not covered 24 hours and not staffed all the time by Chorley Borough Council as had been stated in the response under question 4 of "You Said, We Did".

The current situation was that the cameras are switched on 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The operators work for Chorley Borough Council and work from the CCTV control room at Chorley Police Station. They work from 8.30am to midnight Sunday through to Wednesday and 08.30am to 01.00 Thursday through to Saturday. Information received indicated that if the operator switches the main monitor to any camera, including Coppull cameras the recording is in real time, otherwise the camera is on patrol (automatically set) and records in time lapse (meaning that there are less frames per second) and it condenses the recording so that the hard drive memory discs are not used up.

The Member of Parliament raised the issue of the possible double taxation on the cost of CCTV.

It was explained that the CCTV system had expanded out of the town centre into outlying areas, such as Coppull. To enable the cameras to work we have to ensure a means by which a signal is relayed back to the control room at the Chorley Police Station.

The methods of getting back the signal is affected by a number of factors especially geography. In outlying areas it was virtually impossible to secure a 'line of sight' with the Police Station therefore relaying the signal through a fibre optic cable. This method of connection requires an annual line rental cost which is met by the Parish Council. The view was expressed that Chorley Borough Council should pay for the line rental. Chorley Borough Council pays for the staffing and assisted in contributing to the setting up costs as well as obtaining any from grant funding. The costs of Chorley Borough Council would increase if all costs were incurred by the authority.

The issue raised by the MP as to whether the CCTV cameras on Duxbury Park had a sight line to the Chorley Police Station would be looked at.

5. KEY ISSUES FOR COPPULL - OPEN DISCUSSION

A period of 30 minutes had been allocated to allow local residents to raise questions and express views on any interests relating to the provision of local services in the Coppull Parish area. In addition, a supply of Question Cards were available at the meeting to enable residents to submit their questions and views.

A resident expressed concern at a response she had received from a member of staff at the Council's Contact Centre when she rang to report that the wheely bins had

been left on the footpath obstructing the right of way for pedestrians and in particular those disabled people using scooters.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Paul Morris submitted an apology to the resident explaining that the response the resident had received was not acceptable.

Concern was expressed by a number of residents of reports in the press of the disbandment of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme. There was a fear that if there was a reduction in the number of wardens there would be a reduction in security.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Paul Morris stressed that the Members were looking at the service but there was no intention to diminish the service, but to look at service improvements. No decision had been made.

Initial discussions had been taken with Lancashire Police regarding supporting Police Community Support Officers in Chorley, and the organisation of this scheme.

Reference was made to a recent letter that had gone out to a large proportion of properties within the Borough requesting information from claimants of the 25% single persons' discount on Council Tax payments, which had caused a lot of controversy and anxiety.

The Member of Parliament explained that the letter had gone to a number of households in Coppull and he had received a number of complaints and that these people feared for their entitlement to the 25%. To allay their fears a request was made for a visit to these people at their homes.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Paul Morris explained that the letter had been sent as a partnership exercise to households in Chorley, Lancaster, Preston and South Ribble in collaboration with an outside agency. The letter was aimed to target only those people who were claiming unlawfully the single person discount. The Council had a responsibility to protect public funds, and fraud was currently a big issue with local authorities and government.

It was, however, accepted that reference in the letter to the external agency had been inappropriate.

The Chair accepted that this was distressing for people but it was important to support the Council.

Reference was made to the activities of traffic wardens and the Park Wise Scheme operating in Coppull.

A request was made for a height restriction barrier to be placed at the car park of the Royal British Legion Club to avoid commercial vehicles being parked and causing damage to the surface. The request was welcomed.

County Councillor Forshaw agreed to consult with the County Council Highways on the request and report any findings.

6. CHORLEY COMMUNITY AGENDA

(a) Chorley Borough Council issues

- i) Repair and Maintenance of Coppull Community Centre

The Executive Member for Health, Leisure and Well Being, Councillor Mark Perks explained that at the meeting of the Coppull Parish Forum held on 13 June 2006 a request was made by Coppull Parish Council as to when repairs and tidying up of the Coppull Community Centre was going to be done by Chorley Borough Council. Concern had been expressed at previous meetings of the dilapidated condition of the Centre.

Since June a number of repairs and improvements had been made to the Community Centre based upon an Improvement Plan. Painting and decorating had taken place and improvements to the changing rooms and provision of a toilet for the disabled. There had been an increase in activities at the Community Centre.

ii) The 'Get Up and Go' Sessions held in Coppull and the Progress of Future Activities

At previous meetings of the Forum residents and Coppull Parish Council representatives had expressed the need for activities for the children and young people of Coppull during the Summer months.

The Council's Cultural Services Manager, Chris Mellor gave a brief presentation on the Council's Get Up and Go Programme. Coppull was a priority area as part of the scheme with programmes taking place during school holidays as well as programmes of sports activities taking place in several Coppull Primary Schools. This had resulted in new multi-skills sports club being established at the Leisure Centre.

It had been a good summer with a total of 147 young people taking part in a total of 21 activities.

There was a need to open the schools to allow activities to take place.

An expression of thanks was made to all those who helped to develop the activities during the summer months.

(b) Lancashire County Council issues

Phil Maltby from the County Council's 'Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Service' gave a brief presentation on proposals to develop a Childrens Centre in Coppull, a place where children under 5 years of age and their families could receive integrated services, including health services, family support and child care.

(c) Coppull Parish Council issues

The representative from Coppull Parish Council expressed concern at the speed of vehicles along certain roads in the Parish creating a danger to those in the area. A list of those roads had been drawn up and would be handed to the Police Traffic Division to establish whether traffic calming measures should be made.

(d) Lancashire Police issues

The representative from Lancashire Police reported on the success of "Operation Summer Nights" which had operated in the Coppull area during summer. The operation had concentrated on anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and seized quantities of alcohol in specific problem areas.

Mention was also made of the use of a proposed Dispersal Order for a 6 month period covering an area in the centre of Coppull with powers of arrest.

Reference was made to the speeding issues previously mentioned and that the Police were aware that action was being taken against those individuals caught driving erratically. As a result there had been a reduction in calls of complaint.

The reduction in vandalism and damage in the Preston Road area was welcomed by residents following the targeting of this area by the Police.

The Forum noted the success the Police had achieved in the Coppull area and thanked them for their work.

7. FEEDBACK ON THE AREA FORUM PILOT SCHEME

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting and explained that the Council would write to all attendees of the three pilot scheme areas to request for their feedback on the scheme.

Members of the public were invited to express their views on the format and arrangements for the meetings of the Area Forum and to submit views for consideration by the Borough Council.

Attendances at the three meetings in Coppull had been well attended and a questionnaire would be sent to those who had attended.

The Council's Area Forum Working Group would be considering the feedback at a meeting in November with recommendations to the Executive Cabinet and the Council on the future of Area Forums in Chorley.

Chair