

Lostock Area Forum

Thursday, 28 September 2006

Present: Councillor Doreen Dickinson (Chair), Councillor , Councillors Miss Margaret Iddon

Also present: Mrs Pat Case (Executive Member for Corporate Policy and Performance) and Peter Malpas (Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration)

Co-opted Members: Tommy Wilson (Bretherton Parish Councillor), Anne Peet (Croston Parish Councillor), Derek Ormerod (Ulnes Walton Parish Councillor), Alex Clayton (Lancashire Constabulary), Liz Easterbrook (Partnership Co-Ordinator, Chorley & South Ribble PCT), Alan Whittaker (Lancashire County Councillor), Dominic Rigby (Countryside Officer for Chorley and West Lancashire) and Peter Wilson (Representing Lindsay Hoyle MP)

Chorley Borough Officers: Jamie Carson (Director of Leisure and Cultural Services), John Lechmere (Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment), Simon Clark (Environmental Health Manager), Keith Allen (Streetscene Manager), Pat Rigby (Neighbourhood Warden Shift Supervisor), Steve Pearce (Assistant Head of Democratic Services) and Tony Uren (Democratic Services Officer)

27 residents of Lostock Ward.

18. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair (Councillor Mrs D Dickinson) welcomed everyone present to the third meeting of the Lostock Ward Area Forum and introduced, in particular, Councillor Margaret Iddon (the other Borough Councillor representing the Lostock Ward), two Borough Council Executive Members, County Councillor Alan Whittaker, representatives of the three constituent Parish Councils, Jamie Carson (Lead Officer for the Forum) and Officers from the Borough and County Councils, the Police and the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor G Morgan (Executive Member for Resources), Mr L Hoyle MP, Parish Councillor K Almond (Croston Parish Council) and Ms C Lowthian (District Partnership Officer, Lancashire County Council).

20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the second meeting of the Lostock Area Forum held at Bretherton Endowed C E School, Bretherton on 6 July 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

21. "YOU SAID, WE DID"

The Forum received a schedule containing details of the questions and issues raised by members of the public on question cards at the conclusion of the last Forum meeting on 6 July, together with a summary of the respective responses and actions instigated to address issues.

County Councillor Whittaker updated the Forum on the current situation in relation to the following issues:

(a) **North Road, Bretherton**

The Government had published recently guidelines on speed limits in rural areas, which would assist the Lancashire County Council's high priority review of rural speed limits.

Several local residents reported their major concerns at the surface of North Road and the speed of traffic along the road, which had already caused a number of accidents.

In response, County Councillor Whittaker assured the residents that the County Council takes due account of accident statistics and prioritises its programme of speed restrictions accordingly. County Councillor Whittaker reiterated his support of the imposition of an appropriate speed limit on not only North Road, Bretherton, but also an Ulnes Walton Lane and Bluestone Lane, and intimated that he would be urging the County Council to undertake its review of rural speeds as a high priority with a view to the early implementation of those road schemes.

(b) **Bishop Rawsthorpe School/Out Lane, Croston**

County Councillor Whittaker advised the Forum that, subsequent to the concerns expressed at the last meeting regarding the speed of traffic on Out Lane, Croston and the problems caused by the current access to Bishop Rawsthorpe School, the issues had been discussed with the Head Teacher of the school. The Head Teacher had promised to advise his staff to have due regard to the need for precaution when driving on Out Lane. Any new access to the school would be dependent on the prior rationalisation of parking within the school's campus (which was presently being explored), but, ultimately the implementation of an approved scheme would rely on sufficient financial resources being available from the County Council.

The Head Teacher of Bishop Rawsthorpe School had also been made aware of the noise nuisance created by the emptying of the metal skips provided within the school campus, and had undertaken to endeavour to ensure that the skips were emptied during reasonable daytime hours.

22. KEY ISSUES FOR LOSTOCK - OPEN DISCUSSION

The Chair invited the local residents present at the meeting to raise questions and express views on any matters relating to the provision of local services or issues affecting the Lostock Ward area. In addition, a supply of Question Cards was made available at the meeting as an opportunity for residents to write their enquiries or views on the cards.

The Chair indicated that the appropriate Officer and/or Partner representative would endeavour if possible, to provide a direct response to questions and issues raised at the meeting. If this was not possible, a written reply would be sent to the questioner as soon as possible after the matter had been fully investigated.

Several questions were asked by the local residents at the meeting, either verbally or by way of the question cards. The principal issues and concerns raised by the residents can be summarised as follows:

- Use of Brick crusher on Grape Lane, Croston.
- Signs missing from road signposts.
- Vandalism to BT phone box.
- Proposed Traffic Survey at junction of Moss Lane and North Road, Bretherton.

- Funding of rural bus services.
- Ability of Parish Councils to respond to increasing number of consultations and associated financial implications.
- Planning Application for creation of taxiway for microlight and light aircraft on land at Long Fold Farm, North Road, Bretherton.

A schedule attached to these minutes includes details of each of the separate questions and concerns expressed orally or in writing at the Forum meeting, together with a summary of the respective responses and actions instigated to address the issues.

23. CHORLEY COMMUNITY AGENDA

(a) Chorley Borough Council issues

The Borough Council's Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Jamie Carson) gave a short address to highlight the support the Council can provide to local organisations wishing to deliver services and/or activities for children and young people.

Mr Carson outlined the several ways by which the Borough Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Directorate could assist local organisations and community groups in the planning, funding and operation of schemes to engage young people. The Borough Council, in collaboration with the County Council's Youth and Community Services, was able to advise and support local groups in the development of projects for young people and assist them through the process of implementation. Officers would be able to suggest sources of funding (eg through National Lottery Funds, European Social Fund) and assist funding bids, facilitate contacts with coaches and artists etc; reserve venues; provide advice on marketing and communication techniques; and supervise sessions.

Mr Carson urged all local organisations and community groups interested in pursuing projects aimed at engaging children and young people in the Ward to contact his Directorate.

(b) Lancashire County Council issues

There were no County Council issues additional to the matters detailed in other parts of these minutes raised at the meeting.

(c) Parish Council issues

The three constituent Parish Councils (Bretherton, Croston and Ulnes Walton) had each been invited in advance of the Forum meeting to submit questions on any matter affecting their Parishes. The following issues had consequently been raised by the Parish Councils.

(i) Question from Bretherton, Croston and Ulnes Walton Parish Councils

“The number of advertising placards appearing by the side of the local highways has increased considerably, a particular hot spot is Southport Road. Not only are they an eyesore in the rural environment but also present a distraction for drivers. Many of the boards appear to require planning consent, which clearly has not

been requested. It is questioned how the Borough intends to deal with such advertising material.”

The following response had been provided by Ms W Gudger (Development Control Manager in the Development and Regeneration Directorate):

“The Development Control Section have been pursuing and are continuing to pursue a number of advertisements following an audit of signs being displayed in the Ulnes Walton area. The Section will be continuing to work on dealing with any unauthorised adverts found, alongside other enforcement complaints in accordance with the priorities within the soon to be published Enforcement Charter. If there are particular adverts with which the Parish Council have concerns then those should be brought to the attention of the enforcement team within the Development Control Section.”

Enquiries on enforcement related issues should be made to the Council’s Planning Enforcement Officer at the Gillibrand Street offices on 01257 515226.

(ii) Question from Bretherton, Croston and Ulnes Walton Parish Councils

“A letter has been addressed to all Parishes by the Chief Executive advising that the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel have undertaken an inquiry in to the decriminalisation of parking enforcement in Chorley, and asks what specific locations for enforcement request be notified to the Borough. Confirmation is sought as to exactly what this means for the villages and does this only apply to double yellow lines?”

The following response had been provided by Mr I Price (Parking Manager in the Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment Directorate):

“Under the remit of decriminalised parking enforcement, the Parking Wardens can only assist where there are Traffic Regulation Orders in place. These are usually indicated by a single or double yellow line at the edge of the carriageway. However, we will visit any location where problems are reported to verify if there is anything we can do.”

(iii) Question from Bretherton, Croston and Ulnes Walton Parish Councils

“Concern is expressed at the amount of trade effluent waste being deposited in the fields around the Lostock Ward and the associated unpleasant smells. It is understood that the Environmental Services Team are aware of the situation and have taken steps to investigate the root cause of the problem. It is questioned what action can be taken to alleviate the problems?”

The question generated a number of associated queries and comments on the activity, particularly in respect of the unpleasant odours; the legitimacy of the operations; the suitability of the land; the amount of sludge allowed to be deposited; and the expected time period of the operations.

In response, Mr J Lechmere (Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and the Environment) confirmed that United Utilities were the producers of the enhanced treated sewage sludge being deposited on agricultural fields in the Bretherton and Croston areas. The carriage and disposal of the waste was overseen and regulated by the Environment Agency, who had

been made aware of the complaints from local residents. The reason for the odours emanating from the deposits was attributed to the addition of limestone to the sludge and the spreading method. Mr Lechmere explained that there were currently very few available options for the disposal of sewage sludge and that the Council had been advised that there was no alternative spreading method, which did, in fact, comply with adopted Codes of Practice.

United Utilities could be requested to provide details of its land records, as it was understood that the amount of waste allowed on land was dependent on the quality of the land used for deposits. Mr Lechmere also advised the Forum that, whilst the Borough Council had no regulatory power in relation to United Utilities' operations, the Council could instigate action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 if the odours were deemed to constitute a statutory nuisance. The justification for such action would be linked with the frequency and duration of the odours affecting local residents in their homes. Monitoring forms had, in fact, been provided to the residents who had lodged complaints with a request that they record the frequency and degree of the smell nuisances so that the Council could gauge whether or not enforcement action was warranted.

(iv) Question from Ulnes Walton Parish Council

“The reply to the questions tabled at the last meeting quotes ambulance response times for May 2006. An update on these figures is requested. Would it be possible to table this as a regular item and a report be given on the response times at each Forum?”

The following response has been provided by Ms L Reynolds (Central Lancashire Unscheduled Care Network Manager with Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust):

“The latest performance figures for Chorley and South Ribble PCT – In July 66.4% of Category A ambulances arrived within 8 minutes of the call (target of 75%) and 98% of Category A ambulances arrived within 19 minutes. (Target 95%). Lancashire Ambulance once again met the targets in overall terms but again the response times for the more rural areas are lower. This is indeed reflected in national figures.

The New North West Ambulance Service has been reconfigured to merge three organisations into one thus reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and reducing management costs to reinvest into front line services. The PCT continues to work with the new organisation to ensure services are developed and enhanced appropriately, including an improvement of ambulance response times.

The ambulance service is committed to the implementation of initiatives to take healthcare to the patient in the form of specially trained emergency care practitioners and extending the role of paramedics to prevent avoidable admissions into hospital.”

Ms L Easterbank (Partnership Co-ordinator with the Primary Care Trust) indicated that Ms Reynold would be willing to attend meetings of the three constituent Parish Councils to provide performance updates and report on significant service developments.

(v) Question from Ulnes Walton Parish Council

“The North West Air Ambulance provides a vital service in supporting the normal ambulance service and many lives have been saved through the helicopter being able to respond and get people to hospital with speed. The service is operated through donations and fund raising activities, are there any plans to fund the NWAAs either direct from Central Government or through the normal funding schemes for the ambulance service?”

The following response had been provided by Ms L Reynolds (Central Lancashire Unscheduled Care Network Manager with Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust):

“The NHS contributes to the staffing costs of the air ambulance but there are no plans locally for the running costs to be funded by the NHS. I am also not aware of any national plans to bring the funding of the service into the NHS.

(vi) Ulmes Walton Trail Initiative

Ulmes Walton Parish Councillor D Ormerod gave a brief presentation on an initiative being supported by the Lancashire County Council, Chorley Borough Council, Ulmes Walton Parish Council, the Home Office and the Bridleways Association to create the Ulmes Walton Multi Use Path.

There was an opportunity to create a pathway for use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders to link Bretherton, Ulmes Walton and Croston, leading from Cocker Bar Road in the north to Moor Road in the south, with separate eastward routes to the north and south of the Wymott and Garth Prisons.

Building work at Garth Prison was expected to provide rubble to fill the pot holes and improve the surface of currently derelict tracks along the route of the trail, the appearance of which would be enhanced by a number of sculpture features.

Plans illustrating the intended route of the proposed trail were available at the meeting and Mr D King (Lancashire County Council’s Countryside Officer for Chorley and West Lancashire) attended the meeting to answer residents’ queries on the proposals at the conclusion of the meeting.

(d) Lancashire Police issues

Sergeant Alex Clayton from the Neighbourhood Policing Team advised the Forum of the ‘Bright Sparks’ campaign being organised by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, and supported by the Police, which would entail officers visiting local schools to warn of the dangers of fireworks and bonfires.

A few queries on community safety and policing services were raised at the meeting. Those comments, together with details of Sergeant Clayton’s responses, are incorporated in the attached ‘You Said, We Did’ schedule.

24. FEEDBACK ON THE AREA FORUM PILOT SCHEME

Mr S Pearce (Assistant Head of Democratic Services) reminded the Forum that the meeting had been the last in the current Area Forum Pilot Scheme in the Lostock Ward. Mr Pearce thanked all the residents who had attended the three Forum meetings in Croston, Bretherton and Ulmes Walton, together with each of the Council’s

Partners, Lindsay Hoyle MP and the Council's Officers who had contributed to the organisation of the pilot scheme.

The Council would now need to evaluate the operation of the pilot scheme in the three areas (ie Clayton-le-Woods North Ward, Coppull Parish area and Lostock Ward), with a view to a decision on the way forward being made in December 2006.

In order to assist this evaluation process, questionnaires would be sent to all members of the public on the Council's database as having attended Forum meetings, the respective Parish Councils and Partners to seek their views on the format, organisation and perceived effectiveness of the pilot initiative.

25. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair thanked all the persons present for their attendance and contributions to the Area Forum meeting.

Chair