

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CANNOCK COMMUNITY FORUM

TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2012 AT 7.00 P.M.

AT CIVIC CENTRE, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Alcott, G. (Chairman)
Kraujalis, J.T. (Vice-Chairman)

Anslow, C.	Snape, P.A.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Freeman, Miss M.	Toth, J.

Cannock Chase District Councillors:

Councillor G. Adamson
Councillor J. Bernard

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. S. Brown, Chief Executive
Mr. M. Walker, Environmental Protection Manager
Mr. M. Edmonds, Head of Commissioning
Mrs. W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

Also Present

Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe, LPT Commander for Cannock Chase District
Lyn Hill-Tout, Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust
Maggie Oldham, Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust
Local Residents (approximately 26)

26. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F.W.C. Allen and C. Mitchell.

27. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 18 September 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

28. Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust

The Chairman welcomed Lyn Hill-Tout (Chief Executive) and Maggie Oldham (Chief Operating Officer) from Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust to the meeting who were in attendance to answer any questions and provide an update on Trust related matters.

Lyn Hill-Tout thanked the Chairman for extending an invitation to attend the Forum. She advised that the independent regulator, Monitor, had been working with the local commissioners and clinicians looking at options for the provision of healthcare services in Staffordshire. A team of experts had been appointed to recommend a viable long-term solution for patients who use services currently provided by the Trust. The team was expected to report back with a final plan in the Spring of 2013.

She confirmed that the Trust had no plans to close Cannock Hospital. She made reference to the news item that had appeared on the television earlier today and commented that Aidan Burley, MP had recently written to Monitor with a proposal to investigate the possibility of having the whole site transferred to a Community Interest Company which would take over the hospital. The Asset Transfer Unit would need to undertake feasibility work to develop a professional business case for the local community to take ownership of Cannock Hospital. The Chief Executive of Monitor was interested in exploring this suggestion as a potential option as part of the Monitor's review. However, it was explained that the press release from the MP's office had been incorrectly translated and it was being reported that Cannock Hospital was to close. Lyn Hill-Tout reiterated that the Trust had no plans to close Cannock Hospital at present and would be issuing a message to staff. She reiterated that the Trust was proud of the excellent services provided at Cannock Hospital and confirmed that investment in Cannock Hospital was ongoing – a new MRI scanner had recently been opened along with a enhanced Rheumatology equipment. She reminded councillors that there were areas within Cannock Hospital that were underutilised and options were being considered alongside the Monitor review.

Members of the Forum were then offered the opportunity to ask questions. A resident asked whether anyone other than the Trust that could make the decision to close Cannock Hospital. Lyn Hill-Tout advised that the Clinical Commissioning Group had this power, if they did not wish to commission services from Cannock Hospital. Additionally, Monitor could recommend this under their review process. However, she added that Cannock Hospital was a very important facility.

Councillor Toth referred to Aidan Burley's proposal for the local community to take ownership of Cannock Hospital. He considered that this suggestion was moving forward with the backing of the Health Minister and had concern that there had been no consultation.

Lyn Hill-Tout explained that Aidan Burley, whilst speaking during Health Questions in the House of Commons, had asked if the Secretary of State would work with him and the Asset Transfer Unit to develop a professional business for local people to take over the running of Cannock Hospital. She reported that in response Jeremy Hunt had said: "I congratulate my honourable friend for his campaigning and very hard work on this issue, which I think represents a very interesting way forward for community hospitals. I wish him every success and I know members on all side of the House will watch carefully with interest what

happens in Cannock." Lyn Hill-Tout said that it was important the Trust did not become embroiled in politics, but wanted to ensure the best health care for the public, as commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Groups and was disappointed that further uncertainty was caused to the local population and the staff working at Cannock Hospital. She confirmed that once the Monitor review was complete consultation would be undertaken, by the Clinical Commissioning Group/Monitor on the outcome of the review.

Councillor Mrs. Davis explained that she and Councillor Adamson were members of a Working Party regarding Cannock Hospital which had met for the first time a few weeks ago. The MP had been in attendance at the meeting and his proposal had not been agreed to. However, he had chosen to issue a press release outlining his suggestion for Cannock Hospital the same day. She urged members of the public to advise the MP if they did not agree with his proposals. She made reference to the MP's previous suggestion that Cannock Chase Council purchase Cannock Hospital and explained that this would have added an extra 40% on Council Tax payer's bills.

A resident asked Lyn Hill-Tout why Cannock Hospital was underutilised. She explained that the delivery of health had changed over the last few years. For example rheumatology patients used to spend a few days in hospital as an in-patient; however, they were now treated as a day patient. Additionally, other healthcare organisations had decided that they would provide transfer services from Cannock Hospital to other venues.

Councillor Adamson was pleased with the Trust's commitment to Cannock Hospital. He did not consider that the MP was being helpful by putting forward proposals that had not been agreed by the Working Party. He had sympathy for the staff who would be worried by the news article that appeared on the television earlier in the day. He explained that it cost £2m to keep Cannock Hospital running and this excluded that staff salaries. He commented that interested parties should work together to develop ideas to safeguarded the future of Cannock Hospital.

Lyn Hill-Tout advised that she had also attended the Working Group and an explanation had been given that the clinical services which bring in the revenue for the hospital had to be commissioned in order to provide an income – it was not just about keeping a building there.

Councillor Snape asked about a similar scheme to the MP's proposal that was operating in Gloucestershire. Lyn Hill-Tout explained that Tetbury Hospital had transferred to the community. She said that some services were commissioned by the Commissioning Group and the Hospital undertook elective procedures. She suggested that the Working Group could look at this and similar models to ascertain how successful they were.

A resident asked whether there were any practical alternatives to the MP's proposal. In response Lyn Hill-Tout explained that, in addition to the MP's suggestion, the Monitor review was ongoing and would be looking at what services were needed at the Hospital and, working with the Clinical Commissioning Groups, would review what services should be commissioned.

Councillor Mrs. Davis advised that as part of the review process Monitor were

seeking the views of other stakeholders.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust for attending the meeting. He commented that Cannock Hospital should remain with the NHS and was not “for sale”.

29. Questions for Staffordshire Police – submitted in advance

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe to the meeting who was in attendance to answer questions relating to local policing matters that had been submitted in advance.

The following question had been submitted by Gordon Taylor (local resident) who unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting:-

“Parking of cars on grass verges when there is ample parking at properties”.

The Forum noted the responses from Staffordshire County Council Highways Team and Cannock Chase Council’s Waste and Engineering Services Team that were outlined on the agenda.

Chief Inspector Ratcliffe agreed with the responses provided by the Officers and added that the Police would deal with any parking obstructions that fell outside the examples given in the Officers responses.

The Chief Inspector took the opportunity to update the Forum on the anti social behaviour issues that had been taking place in Cannock Park over recent months. He explained that the situation had improved with no recent complaints being received and confirmed that the next partnership meeting was scheduled for January, 2013. In Cannock town centre the bench underneath the bus shelter outside St Luke’s Church had been removed and this, along with increased visibility of the Police, had led to a decrease in anti social behaviour in that area.

He commented that incidents of burglary, robbery and theft of/from motor vehicles were all below the level they were at this time last year. Additionally, he advised that the civil injunction to ban “modified car users” in the District would be heard at Birmingham Crown Court on 6 December 2012. He thanked residents, businesses and the District Council for their assistance in this matter and would provide an update on the outcome of the court hearing at the next Forum meeting.

The Chairman referred to a recent incident whereby fencing had been taken from a children’s play area in Chadsmoor. The efforts of District Council employees working with the Police had led to the offender being caught and convicted.

30. Questions for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Chairman confirmed that no questions had been submitted.

31. Consultation on Stadium Site

The Chairman welcomed Mike Edmonds, Head of Commissioning to the meeting. He gave a brief presentation with regard to the former Cannock Stadium site. He

explained that local people could provide their thoughts and views on the leisure and recreation facilities they would like to see at the former Stadium site.

Local people were being consulted using the following:-

- Letter and consultation questionnaire
- Attendance at local meetings and events
- Telephone interviews
- Social media

The Consultation period would end on 30 November, 2012. The results of the consultation would be presented to the Council's Cabinet for further consideration. The local community would be kept informed through the press and would have the opportunity to provide further comments on the design and planning application proposals.

He commented that the response to the consultation had so far been good with around 360 responses being received. He asked Forum Members to complete the questionnaire which was available at the meeting.

A local resident asked for confirmation of what facilities had previously been located on the site. The Head of Commissioning explained that there had been an 8 lane athletics track, 3 football pitches, a MUGA and changing facilities with a meeting room over.

Councillor Adamson urged the public to complete the questionnaires and he hoped that a community sport and recreation hub would be developed on the site that would be part of this year's Olympic legacy.

32. Poor maintenance of road name plates throughout the District

The item had been submitted by Gordon Taylor, a local resident who was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman read out the following response that had been provided by Steve Schofield, Senior Technical Assistant:-

"Cannock Chase District Council are responsible for street nameplates throughout the District, other directional road signs are the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council as the Highway Authority.

A letter was sent to Mr. Taylor on 24 November 2011 explaining that the budget for repair/replacement street nameplates was removed in April 2009 as a Policy Option.

However, the budget for such maintenance works was reinstated from April 2012 and, therefore, repair and replacement works are again being undertaken within the constraints of the budget which obviously can be overprescribed.

If reports are received with regard to street nameplates either missing or in need of repair these will be investigated and if action is required these will be recorded on a list for repair/replacement and dealt with in due course".

33. Curtailed Road Sweeping – road sweeping is taking place at 6.30am. Is the “Noise Abatement Act” still in force preventing noise before 7am?

The item had been submitted by Gordon Taylor, a local resident, who was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman asked the Forum to note the response from the Waste and Engineering Services Manager that had been included on the agenda. However, in relation to the specific question, the Chairman welcomed Mike Walker, Environmental Protection Manager to the meeting. Mike Walker advised that the provisions of the Noise Abatement Act had been superseded by the Environmental Protection Act, 1990. For a noise to be classed as a statutory nuisance it would need to interfere with someone’s personal comfort or enjoyment of their property. The issues referred to by Mr. Taylor occurred on a very limited basis, perhaps four times a year and therefore, cannot be classed as a statutory nuisance.

The Environmental Protection Manager explained that an officer from Environmental Protection had contacted Mr. Taylor who had accepted the explanation given.

34. Update on the position of the negotiations in respect of the Asda s.106 monies for the Artificial Turf pitch

Stephen Brown, Chief Executive advised that a meeting took place between Cannock Chase Council and Asda on 14 November 2012 to discuss the disputed issues. The Council put forward a proposal to resolve the disagreement and Asda had committed to responding during December 2012 once the issue had been discussed with Asda’s newly appointed Head of Property Services who starts in early December. He confirmed that a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

35. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman explained that a form was available for any issues to be discussed at future meetings of the Forum. Appropriate representatives would be invited to attend and debate the issues and answer any questions.

36. Date of Future Meetings

The Forum noted that the next meeting of the Cannock Community Forum had been arranged for 19 March, 2013.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

CHAIRMAN