

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**RUGELEY AND BRERETON COMMUNITY FORUM**  
**MONDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 2012 AT 7.00PM**  
**AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, RUGELEY TOWN COUNCIL, TAYLOR'S LANE,**  
**RUGELEY**

PRESENT: Cannock Chase Councillors:

Jones, R. (Chair)

Ault, Mrs. A.	Lovell, A.
Bennett, C.	Molineux, G.N.
Bottomer, B.H.	
Dudson, A.	Other District
Fisher, P.A.	Councillor(s):
Grocott; M.R.	Rowley, J.

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

T. McGvoern	Corporate Director
K. Lawlor	Head of Environmental Services
M. Edmonds	Head of Commissioning
S. Partridge	Democratic Services Manager

Representatives from the following organisations:

Staffordshire Police	(Sgt. D. Edge)
Neighbourhood Watch	(Ms. V. Singleton)
Staffordshire County Council	(SCC Cllr. G. Martin)
Mid-Staffordshire NHS	(Ms. J. Hendry, Director of Quality
Foundation Trust	and Patient Experience)

Approximately 20 local residents

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from CCDC Councillors D.N. Davies; J. Johnson; A. Lovell; County Councillor R. Easton; a number of Town / Parish Councillors; the Venerable Chris Liley, Archdeacon of Lichfield; and some local residents.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. M. Grocott declared that he was a Trustee of Rugeley Cricket Club.

## 3. **Notes**

The notes of the meeting held on 11 September, 2012 were accepted as a correct record, subject to the date in the title being corrected.

## 4. **Matters Arising (Not Otherwise Covered on the Agenda)**

### Item 4. Partial Collapse of Bridge over Brook, Adjacent to Western Springs Road

The Head of Environmental Services read out a further update from the Council's Property Services section:

"Council Officers recently attended a meeting with County Structures, their approved Contractor, and the Environment Agency to discuss the way forward. The bridge is showing further signs of deterioration and, therefore, to prevent a complete collapse and possible blocking of the stream it is proposed to :

- Shore up the foundations by depositing stone on the downstream side
- Remove a dangerous tree.

Unfortunately the stream is a haven for white clawed crayfish which are a protected species and they may be in some of the crevices in the bridge debris. A licenced ecologist is therefore going to have to prepare a method statement for the construction work and, possibly, physically re-locate any crayfish before this work can commence. The Environment Agency, as part of a wider flood management scheme, may wish to remove the weirs currently along the course of the stream and, as such, until this proposal is firmed up, no further work to replace the bridge will be undertaken although a further meeting is planned to agree the initial programme of works / costs in early December and to discuss options for replacing the bridge.

In the meanwhile a temporary diversion has been agreed with the County Council through the gate fronting Western Springs Road and across Hagley Park Playing Fields to a point where it can rejoin the Trail."

### Advertising of Rugeley Forum in Rugeley Area Office

A Member advised that he was disappointed to note that the Council's Area Office did not have a notice up for the Rugeley & Brereton Community Forum, but did have one for the Hednesford Forum. The Democratic Services Manager apologised for the oversight and

confirmed that steps had been taken to ensure it would not happen again.

A resident commented that he had looked on the Rugeley Town Council website and had been unable to find any information on there. The Democratic Services Manager advised that the Forum was organised by the District Council, not the Town Council, and information on times, location, agenda etc were available from the CCDC website.

## **5. Questions Submitted by Ms. H. Southwell Jr., Resident of Arch Street**

Answers had been prepared in advance in response to Ms. Southwell's questions and these were included on the agenda (*italicised* below):

- “Residents of Arch Street would like their street tidier. We have bins on pavements not put back after emptying causing problems for pushchairs and wheelchair users and trolley users. Some are there all year round. Cigarette ends where people smoke on doorsteps, litter, dog fouling not picked up, 3 feet high weeds. Some residents sweep pavements and gutters outside their houses to keep it looking nice; this is only the minority.”

*Cannock Chase Council has made a number of attempts in the past to engage with local residents in the area about putting their bins away after collection, which hasn't had the long-term success hoped for.*

*The Council's Community Partnership Team are undertaking a pilot "Love Your Streets" campaign in 5 streets - Springhill Terrace, Kelly Avenue, Newman Grove, Ravenhill Terrace and Coulthwaite Way – in Brereton. The team has agreed to consider if something similar can be run in an area including Arch Street in the new year, dependent on the success of the pilot scheme.*

*Streets in the area are swept on a 13 week programme (4 times a year) along with all other streets in the district. Unfortunately, due to the exceptional amount of rain this year initial weed treatments of the highways were unsuccessful; however the County have undertaken a second treatment that seems more successful.*

- “The area by the bridge owned by the railway is an eyesore. The nettles overgrown on the pavement causing you to walk on the road at times children in pushchairs get stung by them. The hedges are overgrown and not maintained by the Railway and maybe if it were tidy the residents might be encouraged to keep their own area of street tidy (any suggestions?).”

*Staffordshire County Council has advised that it has a Neighbourhood Highway Team that visits Parishes 2-3 times a year*

*to cover these sort of issues - cutting back overgrowth, weed clearance, sign cleaning etc. – and the location will be added to the list.*

*Although the Rugeley visits were completed for the year, it was hoped to get this location in the Brereton programme planned for October.*

*CCDC Environmental Services Officers had also inspected the street and would review inspections. In addition the weeds on the footpath from the railway bridge land were reported to Railtrack's control room for them to action.*

- “Also the anti-social behaviour last weekend (September) caused lots of damage to residents cars. Youths were “free running” over car roofs and bonnets causing dented in bonnets to many vehicles. Victims reported it to the Police. Pleased with prompt response from the Police.”
- “My question is can anything be done to improve the appearance of the street? Can any of the concerns above be addressed in any way? Thank you.”

Ms. Southwell noted the answers provided. In addition, she also asked a supplementary question about lighting of skips on the highway.

The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that he would seek clarification from the County and communicate this to Ms. Southwell. He also promised to further look into the issue of getting residents to put their bins away.

For info, the following response was provided by County Highways and communicated to Ms. Southwell:

*“Skips on the highway are controlled by Staffordshire County Council. Anyone wishing to position a skip on the highway needs to apply to the Network Management Unit at County, who will issue approval / licence and guidelines for signing and guarding of the skip. The requirement for lighting of the skip is assessed individually dependent on the position and proximity to street lighting.”*

## **6. Questions Submitted by Mrs. R. Robinson, Resident of Old Eaton Road**

Answers had been prepared in advance in response to Mrs. Robinson's questions and these were included on the agenda (*italicised* below):

1. “An update needed on the pile of building “rubbish” dumped by Mr. [name withheld] on the course of the Brook adjacent to the bypass / Five Arches bridge.”

*The Head of Environmental Services read out the following response from the Head of Environmental Health:*

*“The site was previously pasture land and lies in the flood plain 30m south of the river Trent adjacent to the Cannock – Rugeley branch railway line.*

*The site is used to recycle around 18,000 tonnes of inert waste each year having being relocated there on a temporary basis to allow the construction of Rugeley by pass which opened there in September 2007. The land has the necessary permit for this use together with temporary planning permission.*

*A planning application from April this year resulted in permission for the use of the site to continue for the storage and recycling of construction waste materials and associated products for a further temporary period of 12 months.*

*The area has been inspected and no evidence of waste material was found in the watercourse.”*

2. “An update needed on the state of the Old Chancel Church.”

*The Venerable Chris Liley, Archdeacon of Lichfield, had been invited to attend to provide the Forum with an update on this item later on the agenda. However, due to a conflicting meeting, he had provided an update, which the Chairman read out:*

*“The Ven. Chris Liley, Archdeacon of Lichfield, apologises for the clash in dates for the meeting of the Forum and the open meeting for the Rugeley Chancel. With regard to the business to be transacted this evening, it will mainly be in the following areas:-*

- (a) Repairs to date – this section will report on the architect’s analysis of the necessary works to the three areas: the tower, the arcading and the old chancel.*

*The works to make the tower safe and to remove the floor have been affected, but the outstanding area of the tower roof needs to be addressed. The work on the arcading has now been specified and we are hoping to move on this with immediate effect. The Old Chancel presents a far greater challenge, but of course this will be the centre to our considerations about any future business proposals.*

- (b) The application to take the church building out of use for*

*public worship – formally this was termed redundancy and we had spent a number of months gaining legal opinion as to whether the original faculty when St Augustine’s was built was still sufficient for us to allow to transfer the ownership to a third party. Unfortunately it has transpired that because the building has been used for public worship, we have to go through the process from the beginning. The redundancy application is now therefore in the process of the various committees and there has been an inspection from the Church Buildings Committee in London to ascertain any conditions surrounding the future use of the building. We await their report.*

*(c) Future use – as we are fully aware, the development of this site will depend on a group of people being able to take on ownership and to oversee a development here. At the meeting tonight we will consider what possible frameworks of ownership might be possible and how we take the first steps to establish such a group.*

*(d) Future consultation – this date to be agreed at the meeting.”*

3. “Who is responsible for the repair of the Church wall, where there was a post box. This was removed – the wall still remains damaged and an eyesore, at the entrance to Market St. etc.”

*CCDC Officers have advised that the post box was removed following a road traffic accident (RTA). The wall is part of the closed churchyard and, as such, the Council’s liability. The repairs haven’t been completed as the Council has been trying to source a post box to fit back in the wall. The Post Office were happy for this to be done providing it was sealed so it couldn’t be used (their policy is to centralise collections where possible). They did actually provide a box but it was far too big for the hole.*

*The problem is that the wall is a listed structure and, as such, matching stone needs to be sourced. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get a stonemason for such a small job. The intention was to tag it onto a larger job next time one presents itself.*

Councillor Grocott suggested that the Council’s response did not, in fact, address the area of concern, which related to the churchyard wall running from Station Road to the Aldi store. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that this would be fed back to Officers.

4. “The Heritage Trail – unable to identify in Rugeley!!! There are no

signposts actually in the town – merely 2 or 3 dirty and hardly identifiable slabs in the town centre, i.e. by Iceland and the one in Bees Lane is almost covered by a rubbish bin. And Bees Lane is an absolute disgrace as part of the Heritage Trail – Taxi rank, parking, weeds and a blank wall that should be white but open to graffiti (and where do you go from there?)”

*CCDC Officers have advised that the Heritage Trail was a grant funded capital project and there was no revenue identified for repairs after the initial installations were completed. However, some monies have been identified that may be able to used for this purpose and the Parks and Open Spaces Manager is looking into how best to address the issues identified.*

*The Bees Lane section of the Trail comes under the responsibility of County Highways. There is a double sided directional Heritage Trail (blue) sign at the end of the ramp to the car park on the western end of Bees Lane directing people across Elmore Lane to Crossley Stone and along to Sheepfair. At the eastern end of Bees Lane where it meets Market Street there is a blue sign directing users northwards along Market Street or along Bees Lane if going in the opposite direction. Given that Market Street is a pedestrianised area, a number of stone slabs, approx 300mm square were set into the paving to act as markers for the route through the area inc Market Square. These end adjacent to the Pig and Bell Public House at the end of the pedestrianised section. Standard highways signage should continue northwards from here along Market Street.*

*There are two Heritage trail wooden information signs within Market Square that the Council is responsible for. Apart from relating local history they outline the basic route. There is a similar sign outside Elmore Park on the Crossley Stone entrance and a further on the northern end of Sheepfair.*

## **7. The Old Chancel, St. Augustine’s Church, Rugeley**

The Venerable Chris Liley, Archdeacon of Lichfield provided an update to the Forum, which the Chairman had previously read out (see 6.2, above).

## **8. Consultation on Stadium Site**

Mike Edmonds, Head of Commissioning, gave a presentation on the consultation on the Stadium site, which was running until 30 November, 2012. Copies of a questionnaire were available in the room, and he encouraged those present to complete them on the night or to take them away and return them by the end of the week. The questionnaire asked consultees to indicate their top ten preferred options for future

use of the site.

## **9. Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust**

Julie Hendry, Director of Quality and Patient Experience, attended to answer questions and provide an update on a variety of Trust related matters.

### Overnight Opening of Stafford A & E

In response to questions, Ms. Hendry advised that while the criteria had been met to permit overnight (re)opening of A & E at Stafford Hospital, it had not been supported by the Stafford and Surrounds and Cannock Commissioning Board who had decided not to re-commission the 24/7 opening. The Commissioning Board had expressed concerns about the sustainability of a 24/7 A & E service in the longer term given the relatively small staffing numbers and the national drivers for more specialist patient treatment (e.g. trauma, stroke, vascular) to be treated in specialist centres resulting in better outcomes for patients. The Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the clinical team had been working together to agree a new model for 24/7 Emergency and Urgent Care Services and the model would be piloted as soon as possible so that the majority of the 12 - 15 patients per night who currently had to travel elsewhere could be treated there.

### Closure of Kitchens at Cannock Hospital

Ms. Hendry confirmed that the kitchens at Cannock Hospital would close for the preparation / cooking of food from early December, 2012. Food would instead be prepared in Stafford and transported across to Cannock. It was estimated that this would realise net savings in the region of £500,000 per annum. Regrettably, 3 staff would be made redundant, but the rest would be redeployed at Stafford (kitchens), or at Cannock as "Ward Hostesses". The Ward Hostesses would be responsible for serving up the meals, including assisting patients to eat, if required, rather than relying on nurses to do this. It was anticipated that this would significantly improve the patient experience, reduce waste and, most importantly, free up nurses for nursing duties.

Members of the public and Councillors expressed their immediate concerns at the proposals; particularly in respect of contingency arrangements e.g. in the event of inclement weather preventing food getting through; and the quality of the food itself. Ms. Hendry advised that there were contingency provisions in place: some stocks of cold food would be kept at Cannock; and she could give assurances that it was intended to not only maintain the quality of the food but to improve it and the eating experience for patients.

### Monitor Review

Ms. Hendry advised that the Monitor review was intended to protect health services for patients at Mid-Staffs. Foundation Trust and seek a long term solution on behalf of the community. Monitor said that the Trust had made significant improvements in the clinical care provided for patients but the services need to be secured in the long term. Monitor had appointed a team of experts (Ernst and Young) to work with local commissioners and clinicians to find a solution that protected services for the patients and was sustainable for the future. The team was expected to report back with a final plan in Spring 2013.

### Other Matters

Some of those present expressed concern at “potential vested interests” of the CCG, and the fact that the Group appeared to be effectively run by only 4 G.P.’s. Ms. Hendry advised that the Group, and in particular, Dr. Johnny McMahon, always had the best interests of patients at heart.

#### **10. Questions for Staffordshire County Council (Highways)**

There were no Officers in attendance from the County Council, however, written responses had been provided to questions earlier on the agenda.

The Chairman said that it was disappointing to once again note the absence of a County Council representative to answer Highways related questions.

#### **11. Questions for Staffordshire Police**

Sgt. Davis Edge introduced himself to the Forum and gave an update on local policing matters.

- There had been a general reduction in crime locally.
- Anti-social Behaviour in region of Fernwood Shops – Sgt. Edge advised that 49 youths had been issued with letters or ASBO’s under Operation Matrix, and there had been a noticeable reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- The Police were also working in conjunction with the Community Fire Service Team, who had a mobile games area that was proving very successful in getting youths to get involved in activities, rather than anti-social behaviour.
- Boy racers at McDonalds – Sgt. Edge explained the issues concerning young drivers doing “timed races” between McDonalds branches in Cannock and Rugeley.
- PC Shorto, Neighbourhood ASB Officer, would be delivering awareness raising talks at Fair Oak and Hagley Schools.
- Annual ACPO “Don’t Drink & Drive” campaign was set for launch on 1 December, 2012 and would run until 1 January, 2013.
- Immobilise website – Sgt. Edge advised that [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com) was a free website where individuals could register valuable items to

aid in their recovery in the event of loss or theft.

- Sgt. Evans also advised everybody to be aware of increased criminal activity (theft) during the Winter months and, in particular, over the festive season. This ranged from domestic break-ins to theft of agricultural machinery.

#### Other Concerns Raised by Residents

- Litter on Etching Hill – A resident advised that following a number of litter picks and a reasonably untroubled period, youths were once again congregating to “party” on Etching Hill, and leaving / smashing bottles etc. Other residents suggested that this was as a result of the Cricket Ground being fenced off, and the problem was never actually resolved, merely moved from one place to another.
- Drug Dealing and Youths Consuming Alcohol in Vicinity of Rugeley Youth Centre – a resident said she was aware that this was happening and asked that the Police do something about it.

Sgt. Edge promised to look into these matters.

#### **12. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services**

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting for the Fire and Rescue Services, consequently no representative had been sent to the meeting.

No other matters were raised for referral back to the Fire and Rescue Service.

#### **13. Any Other Business**

Mrs. Edgington of Huntsmans Walk said that she wished to record her thanks to Cllrs. Grocott (CCDC / RTC) and Martin (SCC) for their efforts in arranging for overgrown foliage, weeds and nettles to be cut back and / or treatments applied.

#### **14. Next Meeting**

Monday, 11 March, 2013. Venue to be confirmed, but the Chair advised he would like to take the Forum “on the road”, possibly to Brereton.

#### **15. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings**

The Chairman reminded those present that pro formas were attached to their agendas for questions / items to be raised at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

---

CHAIRMAN