

**MICKLE TRAFFORD COMMUNITY FORUM
DUNHAM ON THE HILL
9 SEPTEMBER 2009
(7:00pm – 9:15pm)**

Present: Councillor Eleanor Johnson (Chair)
Councillor Brian Crowe
Councillor Andrew Storrar

Speakers: Simon Mann, Development Director, Chester Zoo
Kieran Collins, Area Highways Manager.
Martin Dowle, Road Safety Manager, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service
Inspector Phil Hodgeson, Cheshire Police

Officers: Sally Buttifant, Area Working
Rob Callow, Area Manager
Simon Goacher, Head of Legal Services
Patrick Sebastian, Democratic Services

Also in attendance 10 Members of the Public & visiting Parish Councillors.

Meeting Summary and Action Points

Welcome from Councillor Eleanor Johnson

The Chair, Councillor Johnson declared the meeting open and welcomed members of the public and Speakers.

Highways Maintenance – Presentation

The Forum received a presentation from Mr Kieran Collins, Area Highways Manager that detailed the Core Aims of the Cheshire West and Chester Highways and Transportation Service:

- To reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Cheshire West's roads.
- To improve the condition of Cheshire West's roads, footways and bridges.
- To manage the impact of traffic and resulting congestion on Cheshire West's communities.
- Improve the quality of and access to transport networks and services in Cheshire West.

Mr Collins further informed the Forum on a variety of data including a summary of the assets Mr Collins further informed the Forum on a variety of data including a summary of the assets under control and management (totalling in excess of £2bn). Those present were also provided further detail in respect of the following processes / topic areas:

- Locally responsive – staff know their area
- Implement the Council Policy & Procedures
- Routine works and highway safety
- Minor improvements
- Structural maintenance
- Winter maintenance
- Emergency works

The Forum noted the statutory duties imposed on the Highways and Transportation service under the following Acts:

- Highways Act 1980 - Imposes a duty to maintain a highway which is maintainable at public expense.
- Road Traffic Act 1988 - Imposes a duty on highway authorities to promote road safety
- The Traffic Management Act 2004 - Imposes a duty of network management, principally securing the expeditious movement of traffic including avoiding, eliminating or reducing disruption.
- The New Road and Street Works Act 1991 - Highway authorities to co-ordinate works, protect the structure of the street and integrity of apparatus and ensure safety for all users.
- Railway and Transport Act 2003, section 111 - To maintain the road, free from snow and ice.

Mr Collins reported information about the relationship with Utility Companies (highway repair standards) and the Council's online fault reporting process.

The Chair thanked Mr Collins for his attendance and presentation.

Natural Vision Chester Zoo – Presentation

The Forum received a presentation from Mr Simon Mann, Development Director, that informed of Chester Zoo plans to transform the existing attraction into an all year round, all weather, short-break resort.

The Forum heard that Chester Zoo is already currently the UK's No. 1 wildlife attraction, the second-largest UK paying visitor attraction (Association of Leading Visitor Attractions) and independently rated as one of the:

Top 6 zoos in Europe (independent 2009 survey)
Top 15 zoos in World (Forbes Magazine)

Mr Mann explained that building on the Zoos international profile, in 2002/03 the Zoo and NWDA become partners on a Regional Biodiversity Park project, this in turn presented further opportunities for a transformational Project reflecting:

- Chester Zoo as an International Destination
- Chester Zoo as true champions and investors in conservation and biodiversity
- Driving long term financial and economic success of Chester Zoo
- Driving improvements to the region's wider product offer and delivering benefits to regional businesses

Aiming to transform Chester Zoo:

- from a Seasonal, Day Visitor, Regional Zoo
- to an All Year, All Weather, Short-Break Resort

Chester Zoo Plan - Five Key Elements for Success:

1. A new master-plan with an overarching story line, themed zones, all weather offering and a hygiene level of quality environment and visitor services.
2. WOW experiences, immersion and regular exhibit renewal.
3. Commercialisation - quality overnight accommodation, conference, catering, retail, and other appropriate income- generating activities.
4. Support tourism and regional tie-in through co-operative marketing and branding activities to encourage overnight stays. Resort Cheshire.
5. Be true champions of biodiversity and sustainability, both local and global.

As short question and answer session followed, covering such topics as the style and size of proposed hotel accommodation on the site, the Africa Dome – size and location, and Chester Zoo involvement in the preservation of endangered species.

The Chair thanked Mr Mann for his attendance and presentation.

Fire Service Update

Martin Dowle, Road Safety Manager, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service attended the meeting and updated Members and residents on recent initiatives and work within the community. These included:

- Past 12 months – 20k homes visited for home safety assessments
- Reductions of 25% and 36% on N.I.33 (injuries and housing damage respectively)
- Reduction on NHS costs as a result
- Targeting of the over 65 year olds for fire awareness information and home checks.
- Use of Fire Service vehicles and staff, working with the NHS on outreach programmes (for example immunisation programmes)
- Fire Cadet programmes
- Road Safety matters – driver engagement days, and work with the Cheshire Road Safety Partnership.

Police Update

Inspector Phil Hodgeson, Cheshire Police attended the meeting and updated Members and residents on recent initiatives and work within the community. These included:

- Actions taken following the recent ‘spike’ in burglary and theft crimes in the Mickle Trafford Area – Members noted that arrests had been made and prosecutions were expected arising from Operation Maldiva.
- Staffing matters and PCSO allocations.
- Recovered property arising from Operation Marathon.
- The level of sophistication found in crime nowadays.
- How the more rural, affluent areas of Cheshire are targeted, and the need for vigilance, and awareness.

Date of Next Community Forum Meeting

**Wednesday 4th November 7pm - 9pm
Church Hall, Elton**

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