

**MICKLE TRAFFORD COMMUNITY FORUM
VILLAGE SCHOOL, MICKLE TRAFFORD
15 JULY 2009
(7:00pm – 9:35pm)**

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

Mal Baker, Cheshire Police
Rob Callow, Area Manager
Helen Davies, Area Working
Helen De Lemos, Senior Manager Waste Strategy
Fiona Edwards, Area Planning Manager
David Hughes, Local Press
Dermot Lacey, Head of ICT
Erwin Neudorfer, Community Safety Warden
David Owen, Policy & Performance
Jeremy Owens, Senior Manager Spatial Planning
John Salt, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Patrick Sebastian, Democratic Services

Approx: 150 Members of the Public & visiting Parish Councillors

Meeting Summary and Action Points

Welcome from Councillor Eleanor Johnson

Councillor Johnson opened the meeting, welcomed members of the public and Speakers, and informed those present that due to the high level of interest in the planning enforcement item, this item would be taken first. Councillors, Speakers and supporting officers introduced themselves.

Planning Enforcement

Planning and Policy Officers set out the framework under which the Council must operate in terms of the provision Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and the processes followed when unauthorised (not illegal) encampments arise. It was noted that the Council currently has 2 outstanding planning applications, and discussions would have to be in general terms to avoid any question of pre-determination.

Questions were asked, and discussion took place in respect of :

- Liaison with enforcement officers.
- Timescales involved.
- Reliance on Policy.
- Government Directives.
- Temporary Stop Notices, Injunctions.

- Requirement to register objections at the time of application.
- Residents frustration at the apparent lack of a consistent approach.
- If travellers establishing permanent sites – why treated as travellers?
- Access to Officers / Legal / Enforcement during weekends / Bank Holidays.
- DCLG circular 01/06 – special cases.
- Adequate Provision.
- Lack of progress as result of LGR – test of the new authority.
- Credibility
- Treat others as residents are treated.
- Strong message for change.
- Request for CWC to be more aggressive in its enforcement of unauthorised development.
- What's happened to the work already undertaken by predecessor Councils?
- No MP or prospective MP present, why?
- Use of Bye-Laws?
- Lawyers, Agents, Sale of Land to travellers. Due Dilligence?
- Right of the public to attend Planning meetings and Appeals.
- Notice of, and location of Appeals meetings.
- Role of the Inspectorate.
- Suggested that the local MP also be present at future discussions.

In summary:

- 1) A feeling that the Council responds more leniently towards travellers than local residents particularly when dealing with planning breaches/enforcement issues
- 2) Progress regarding identification of permanent traveller site/sites for Cheshire West & Chester
- 3) Mickle Trafford has experienced illegal encampment problems for many years and there has been no effective response by the Council to address the problem

Action

A special meeting of the Forum to be convened in Mickle Trafford to discuss the subject of Gypsy and Traveller unlawful encampments, and the Council's proposals for dedicated permanent traveller sites.

Fire Service Update

John Salt, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation on the work of the Fire and Rescue Service emphasising how the role had changed in terms of giving advice and risk management.

Statistics on Cheshire's fires and road traffic accidents versus the rest of the UK were provided.

Waste Collection Contract

Helen De Lemos, Senior Manager Waste Strategy updated the Forum on how changes to working practices under the new contract had impacted on recycling figures for the area. These included:

- Twice the volume of recycled material in the first 4 week period compared to previously.
- 25% reduction on waste going to landfill.
- Rise in the amount of green waste collected (even allowing for seasonal adjustment).
- 110 thousand collections per week.

Issues raised by public attendees:

- Information about collection dates.
- Recycling of specific plastic items and tetra-pacs.
- Blue bin not big enough for 2 weekly collections.
- Bins not replaced properly (Lee-by-Backford)
- Request for smaller lorry (Puddington – roads being damaged)
- Re-evaluation of Goway Land Fill site?

Actions

- 1) Democratic Services Officer to liaise with Ms De Lemos for update on above mentioned issues.
- 2) A further progress report to the Community Forum in 6 months time.

Boundary Commission Proposals

David Owen, Policy & Performance updated the Forum on the electoral arrangements of Cheshire West & Chester currently under review. The Council is expected, on or before 4 August, to submit a proposal for future warding arrangements to the Boundary Committee for England.

Mr Owen advised that subsequent to the 4 August deadline, feedback was expected from the Boundary Committee by 10 November with the formal announcement on revised warding proposals in Summer 2010, ready for Elections May 2011.

No views were expressed on this matter.

Topics for Future Meetings

A questioner asked if it was true that CWAC Home Care Workers were being asked to 'put in' for voluntary redundancy. The Chair requested that the questioner provided their name and address at the close of the meeting to enable further information to be provided.

A questioner asked about the subject of maintenance for Public Rights of Way.

Date of Next Meeting

**Special
Mickle Trafford Village Hall.
Tuesday 11th August 7pm - 9pm**

Note:

Copies of a note detailing proposals to amend legislation 'The Role of Local Councillors, Licensing Act 2003' was circulated at the meeting. No comments were received.

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