

# You said, we did

....your local voice

## City Community Forum Feedback News

Edition 1

# Welcome

**Welcome** to the first edition of the City Community Forum newsletter.

This newsletter provides an update on the issues discussed during the first three Community Forum meetings held in May, July and September 2009.

### Your Community Forum

The Community Forum is a great place for you to have your say, find out what's happening in your local area and talk with your local Councillors, Council Officers, Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire & Rescue, other organisations and residents.

The meetings are supported by Cheshire West and Chester Council and are open to all local residents living within the City area. By listening and responding to your views, needs and aspirations, the Council and its partners wish to provide better services, facilities and activities – making the City centre an even better place to live in, work in and enjoy.

A Community Drop-in session runs from 6.00 – 6.30pm and is an important part of the Community Forum as it enables residents to discuss matters of importance on a one to one basis. Alternatively, you may prefer to record your ideas or concerns on the “Issues Board”

## Your Councillors

Your three local ward Councillors will attend each meeting to hear your views and discuss local issues with you. This will enable them to be more fully informed about your community's needs and priorities when taking part in the Council's decision-making about your local services and facilities

### Your City Councillors



**Cllr Tom Parry**  
**Chairman**

**Email:**

Tom.parry@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

**Phone:** 01244 324163



**Cllr Richard Lowe**  
**Deputy Chairman**

**Email:**

Richard.lowe@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

**Phone:** 01244 350714



**Cllr Max Drury**

**Email:**

Max.drury@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

**Phone:** 01244 679188

## Your First Community Forum Chairman

Councillor Tom Parry was elected as the Chairman for this first year. For Tom being a community leader is a key role and responsibility as a local Councillor. He is delighted to be working with fellow Councillors, Richard Lowe - the Forum's Deputy Chairman - and Max Drury, to support the work of the Community Forum for the benefit of all the communities living in and around Chester city centre.

### First for City Ward

Residents and representatives of local community organisations at the City's first Community Forum on Monday 11th May at the Deaf Centre, South View Road highlighted the need to improve key public places and leisure facilities and to make living and working in the city and its surroundings safer and more attractive

Before the start of the meeting, there was an opportunity to find out about the new waste collection system and for residents to discuss their particular needs with the team. The Council's Streetscene Team and Community Safety Wardens were also present to listen and respond to concerns about a range of issues including littering, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.

Michelle Talgam, Chester Area Manager, set out the purpose of the City Community Forum and its relationship with the work of the Council and of other public and voluntary & community sector organisations who work together in partnership to make Chester a better place for all.

Local Police Inspector Mel Williams from Cheshire Police explained about local

neighbourhood policing and recent successes in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour within the area. In particular he highlighted the benefits of working with the University of Chester and of local Home-watch schemes.

Much of the discussion at the first Community Forum centred on new and existing development proposals for the City Centre and as a result, it was agreed that a Special Community Forum would be held to focus on the development and regeneration of Chester city centre.

## Development & Regeneration Special Community Forum

It was a packed house for the special meeting held on 13th July 2009. Chief Executive of Chester Renaissance, Rita Waters informed residents on the programme's aims for new development and city centre improvements designed to make Chester a must see European city by 2015 and the work which was happening with public and private sector partners to make this a reality.

Cliff Mallows, the Council's Head of Regeneration, spoke about the future development of the Northgate Scheme and the planned feasibility study on the Performing Arts Centre. The Council's commitment to enabling these developments to proceed was re-affirmed.

Subsequently, the meeting ended with a chance for residents to put questions to the Council's Area Planning Manager for the Chester about the local planning process

**You said....** Whose responsibility is it to keep empty shop frontages clean and tidy?

**We did....** It is the responsibility of the owner of the building. Both Chester Renaissance and local Councillors are working to make sure the impact of vacant shops is lessened and have improved shop-windows with new displays

**You said....** Why are there so many fast food premises in Northgate Street?

**We did....** When considering applications for changes of use of premises to hot food takeaway the Council considers these in line with its Local Plan policies. These restrict any new non-retail uses on Northgate Street from The Cross to the entrance of The Forum Mall/St Werburgh's Street.

Beyond this on Northgate Street, the local plan allows changes of use from retail to uses such as hot food takeaway subject to certain criteria: the existing character of the street and surrounding area, trends in shopping patterns in the city and the existing provision of non-retail uses in the area. When considering the impact on the character of the area, the Council's planning policy is that a row of more than two non-retail uses is detrimental to the retail character and function of a secondary shopping street.

In some cases, the Council does not have any planning control where food related uses fall into the same use class (A1) as the existing retail premises.

**You said....** Why wasn't the Waitrose development proposal proceeding?

**We did....** The application for planning permission was refused on a number of grounds including its impact on its setting, local area and air quality.

**You said....** Residents wanted to know more about the planned improvements to Chester's cultural, leisure and tourism offer

**We did....** The September meeting will focus on the new Council's plans to strengthen and develop this, with a presentation from Chris Cook, Head of Culture and Recreation, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

## At the Last meeting

At the meeting held on 21st September, Detective Chief Inspector Sue Fraser, Cheshire Police and her team gave an excellent presentation regarding policing in the Inner Chester Area. Residents were informed on the work of the Covert Unit, Dedicated Surveillance Unit and Asset Recovery Unit.

Chris Cook, Head of Culture and Recreation for the Council, highlighted the work that the Council is currently undertaking to produce a Cultural Master-plan for the city of Chester. This is due to be completed in Spring 2010. Noel O'Neill, Head of Facilities Management for Cheshire West and Chester Council, informed residents about the Council's re-location from County Hall to the new HQ building and the rationale for this move

### Date for your Diary

Future meetings will be held on Monday 7th December in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chester starting at 6.00pm and on Monday 15 February 2010, venue to be confirmed.

### Want to know more?

If you would like a local community matter to be considered at a future Community Forum, or would like to be added to the Community Forum mailing list or simply want more information regarding Community Forums please contact **Sonja Booth, Democratic Services Support Officer**, or **Michelle Talgam, Chester Area Manager**

### Want to know more?

- **University of Chester - proposed Student Village, Parkgate Road**
- **Update on Chester's Waste Collection System**
- **Regenerating the Subways - Your views**
- **Operation Facelift - Improving the City Centre environment**
- **Townscape Heritage Initiative - Improving the Railway Station environs**

### Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in Audio, Braille and Large Print formats. If you would like a copy in any of these formats or in another language, please email us at [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) We are also able to provide a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter to support customers with accessing Council services.

**Tel:** 0300 123 7301    **Textphone:** 01606 867 670  
**email:** [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)  
**web:** [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

### Officer Contact

**Michelle Talgam**

Chester Area Manager

**Email:** [michelle.talgam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.talgam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Sonja Booth**

Democratic Services  
Support Officer

**Email:** [sonja.booth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:sonja.booth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 01244 972226

Cheshire West and Chester Council  
County Hall, Chester CH1 2SF  
Tel: 0300 123 8 123

**Visit:** [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)