

## MINUTES OF THE AREA FORUM WEST

29 July 2010

The Area Forum West met at Nether Whitacre Village Hall, Station Road, Whitacre Heath at 6.30pm.

- Present:** County Councillor Lea in the Chair  
Borough Councillors Lewis, M Moss, Payne, Phillips and Swann.
- In attendance:** Steve Maxey, Amanda Tonks, Alethea Wilson and Robert Beggs - North Warwickshire Borough Council  
Alistair Rigby and Bob Perks – Warwickshire County Council  
Sergeant Ron Drake, Inspector Robin Clifton and PCSO's Warwickshire Police  
Andy Bates – Warwickshire Fire and Rescue  
Jo Gordon – LEADER Project  
Jean and Ian Thomas – Piccadilly Community Association  
Steve Turner – Wood End Community Association  
Robin Pearson – Coleshill and District Civic Society  
M Brown, Kevin Oakley, John Poole – Lea Marston Parish Council  
Regina Upton – Nether Whitacre Parish Council  
Carol Fox – Warwickshire Police Authority  
Alan Vaughton, Paulette Ross, Anne Rimmer and Mark Weatherley – Curdworth Parish Council  
Tony Hardman – North Warwickshire Neighbourhood Watch  
Peter and Patricia Cooley – Water Orton Residents  
Richard Prosser – Hurley Resident
- Apologies:** Councillor B Moss, John Rowland (Middleton Parish Council) and Sue Turner (Wood End Community Association)

### 1 **Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2010 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 2 **Matters Arising**

#### Parking Improvements outside Water Orton Primary School

Councillor Payne highlighted the agreement by the North Warwickshire Area Committee, WCC to fund double yellow lines around Weland Court island.

## Allocation of Funding to Schools and Priority Areas for Parent Support Advisers

The following feedback was given on behalf of Warwickshire County Council:-

Peter Thompson, Senior Area Schools and Communities Officer – Funding for schools is based on an agreed formula. 80% is on the basis of pupil numbers, with an element for base allocation depending on whether the school is primary or secondary, plus an allowance for floor area, plus a Special Educational Need (SEN) element depending on size and make-up of a school's SEN register. The rural nature of North Warwickshire is not a factor working either for or against North Warwickshire schools.

Sally Lightfoot, Head of Family and Parenting Support Team – Parent Support Advisors (PSA) have been allocated to school clusters on the basis of the number of pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM) in the cluster. (Research shows that children on FSM do less well than their counterparts). The incidence of FSM is higher in Nuneaton and Bedworth and other more urban areas.

The role of the PSA is to support Primary age pupils on 3 key areas: Attendance; Attainment; and Transition.

There are 2 PSA's working in North Warwickshire at the moment. Two more are to be recruited for Coleshill and Anchor Valley clusters.

### **3 Safer Neighbourhoods – Partners and Communities Together (PACT)**

Sergeant Ron Drake, Warwickshire Police, together with Robert Beggs, North Warwickshire Borough Council presented a summary of the progress and actions that had been undertaken on the three PACT priorities nominated by the Forum at its last meeting (anti-social behaviour at Wood End; anti-social behaviour and vehicle crime – train station car park, Water Orton; and speeding – Tamworth Road (B4098) Whitacre and Coton Road, Nether Whitacre. A copy of the summary detailing these actions can be viewed on the Council's website [www.northwarks.gov.uk](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk) via the link for meetings and minutes.

Inspector Robin Clifton, Task Force, outlined the work undertaken by his Division in North Warwickshire which included policing roads, investigating road traffic accidents and casualty reduction. He gave details of the new Road Safety Strategy and various initiatives that were being undertaken by his Officers in Bassetts Pole and along the A446.

Robert Beggs, North Warwickshire Borough Council, circulated details of changes to the proposed gating order at Hams Hall. The proposal includes new gating positions and was currently out for formal consultation with statutory agencies ending on 10 August. This is a follow up second round of formal consultation. The suggested changes were to site the gates after the roundabout on Faraday Avenue rather than before. This meant that an additional gate on Edison would be required to prevent cars congregating there and to address issues with illegal parking of lorries in the area. Robert confirmed that North Warwickshire Borough Council would be responding positively to this consultation.

A general discussion then followed about the next set of priorities to take forward for this round.

Steve Turner, Wood End Community Association requested that consideration be given to setting up a trial Designated Public Places Order in Wood End as one of the priorities. Sgt Ron Drake requested that Steve Turner contact him direct to arrange a meeting with relevant partners so this could be dealt with separately rather than as one of the Forum priorities.

Councillor Payne detailed anti-social behaviour problems that were being experienced as a result of the siting of a kick wall in the play area at Water Orton. Local Members had not been consulted on the siting of this equipment. It was agreed that this matter should be raised directly with the Parish Council as they had been responsible for the siting of the wall in this position when it was donated to them by NWBC. Sgt Ron Drake also undertook to look into the anti-social behaviour at this site.

It was decided that the priorities to be taken forward from Area Forum West were:-

- Anti-Social Behaviour – Wood End
- Anti-Social Behaviour - Rangeway, Kingsbury
- Anti-Social Behaviour – Glebefields, Curdworth

Carol Fox, Police Authority representative for the Area Forum West area introduced herself to the meeting. She explained her role was to monitor Police performance and to report back to the Police Authority every 12 weeks. The Police Authority wanted members of the public to give them their views on policing issues and experiences to enable them to do their job better.

Details of how to contact Carol could be found on the WCC website ([www.warwickshire.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/councillors)).

#### 4 Public Questions and Parish Issues

Richard Prosser, Hurley resident, submitted the following question:-

Severe cuts in public expenditure will be continuing. The latest edition of North Talk only contains articles showing how the Council is spending money for little or no economic benefit – nothing about savings.

Economic revival is going to start with the small business sector growing and taking on new employees.

How is the Council going to help them? – for instance through the Planning and Development Department helping and supporting rather than obstructing; reducing rates by outsourcing refuse collection, housing maintenance; selling Leisure Centres; using local businesses first for any outside work – verge cutting, grounds maintenance.

Steve Maxey, NWBC said that the recent edition of North Talk did contain information relating to claiming Benefits, financial support available and on how to avoid loan sharks. The Council's Planning and Development Department supported small businesses within the context of the policies for the Borough. Once the Comprehensive Spending Review had been published the Council would know what its targets were and what action needed to be taken. If outsourcing of services was found to be viable then this could also be considered.

Tony Hardman, Kingsbury resident and Vice Chair of North Warwickshire Neighbourhood Watch submitted the following questions:-

- Lorries abusing the 7.5 tonne restrictions at the Village end of Trinity Road in Kingsbury – can the signage be improved as it is hard to see from the Village end and in poor condition and hidden by the vegetation from EMR approach as they turn right out of EMR and go over the restricted Railway bridge.

Response:

County Highways Team, WCC

Arrangements will be made for the vegetation to be cut back from the existing signs.

Traffic Group, WCC

“Except for access” plate to be replaced by Maintenance Team. It is not normal practice to provide direction signs (including weight limit information) at entrance/exit from business premises such as EMR).

Advance warning signs are already in place on Tamworth Road in both directions.

- Lorries queuing 6 deep outside EMR early in the morning creating a blind spot and traffic hazard.

Response:

Warwickshire Police

Road users must drive to conditions present or prevailing at the time and take account of the lorries' presence and take care when overtaking or passing a line of parked vehicles.

The lorry drivers have a responsibility also not to cause an obstruction or a danger to other road users. However, once at EMR where do they go? They could turn round which would be difficult or go into Kingsbury village where I believe there is a weight limit.

EMR need to assist at busy times. They will say they can't get the lorries in any more quickly due to the need for them to use the weighbridge. However, I understand EMR are considering a second weighbridge which will help EMR staff assist with traffic control at busy times.

- Lorries of foreign nationality constantly getting stuck both sides of Piccadilly bridge – the problem seems to be getting worse since the signs have been moved from Kingsbury Link island.

Response:

Traffic Group, WCC

The sign will be replaced.

Alan Vaughton (Curdworth Parish Council) asked if better signage for HGV drivers could be erected near to the Curdworth canal bridge. Earlier in the week Wishaw Lane had been blocked for three hours after a heavy goods vehicle had grounded whilst going over the bridge. It was agreed that this matter be referred to the County Highways.

## 5 **Car Boot Sales**

Steve Maxey, NWBC, explained that anyone wishing to hold a car boot sale must give the Council notice that they intended to do so. An operator can, of right, hold a car boot sale on 14 days in any one location. A set of conditions cannot be attached to the car boot sale operation as no permission is required from the Borough Council. If an operator holds a car boot sale on more than 14 days in the same location action can be taken by NWBC. Steve asked local residents to let him know if it was felt that the 14 days were being exceeded. He added that Trading Standards Officials do visit car boot sales and take any action necessary and that staff from the Council's Food Safety section also inspect food sellers at these events. The Council's Environmental Health section can also be contacted if there was a noise nuisance emanating from the site or the

burning of materials which gave rise to black smoke. Officers have made various spot checks on Sundays and to date no problems had been identified.

Peter Cooley, Water Orton resident, raised the issue of car boot sales being held regularly on the car park of the Dog Inn, Water Orton and the problems that were being caused for local residents. He had spoken to officers at NWBC regarding this, but was dissatisfied with the response he had received. Steve Maxey asked Mr Cooley to speak to him regarding his concerns in more detail after the meeting.

Kevin Oakley, Lea Marston Parish Council said that the operators of a Circus held previously had been seen emptying the contents of portable toilets on to the land they had used. Two weeks later the same field was used for a car boot sale.

The issue of notices put up advertising car boot sales which had not been removed following the event was discussed. Steve Maxey advised that if these notices were on the public highway contact should be made with WCC Highways Department regarding their removal. If they were on private land then details should be given to the Borough Council.

Steve Maxey asked those present who had specific issues with car boot sales held in the area to speak to him after the meeting so he could liaise with colleagues at the Borough Council regarding these problems.

Alistair Rigby spoke on behalf of County Highways, WCC regarding mud on roads following car boot sales. County Highways would normally have a look at the site and make a judgement as to what action to take and how quickly. County Highways have a duty to ensure the safety of road users. If hazardous a sweeper would be deployed as soon as possible and payment chased later. If moderate the landowner, if we know who it is, would be contacted to clean up within a given time or risk being charged for the clean up. The weather conditions are also a factor and would be considered as part of the initial assessment.

## **6 Outcomes of the Playing Pitch Strategy**

Alethea Wilson (NWBC) informed the meeting that consultants had been commissioned to carry out an outdoor sports assessment. They had looked at the quality, distribution and use of outdoor facilities across a range of sports, including rugby, football, tennis, bowls and hockey. A draft strategy had been produced and was out for consultation with the sports governing bodies prior to formal adoption by the Borough Council in October. Feedback on the draft strategy could be made via the Council's website ([www.northwarks.gov.uk](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk)) or by contacting the Borough Council – details could be found in the handouts available at the meeting.

## **7 North Warwickshire LEADER Update**

Jo Gordon, Project Development Officer, presented an overview on the LEADER project which was a £1 million rural development fund for local communities in North Warwickshire. Jo explained that because 50% of the funding was provided by DEFRA, the effects on spending cuts were not known at present.

Applications were being considered and appraised at the moment and a new call for applications would take place in October. Applications were welcomed from community groups, organisations and individuals. Projects must address the needs of the Sustainable Community Strategy key areas, which were;

- Access to services
- Transport
- Communication

The Local Action Group, made up of statutory bodies and community groups were looking for volunteers from the Area Forum area to put themselves forward to become part of the group. The main role of the group would be to appraise project applications and become part of the decision making process. Anyone interested was asked to contact Jo Gordon or complete a handout made available at the meeting.

## **8 Representation on Outside Bodies**

The Borough Council asked for recommendations for appointments to the outside bodies 'local' to the area covered by this Area Forum.

It was agreed that the following should be appointed for a period of one year expiring in May 2011.

Kingsbury Liaison Group – Councillor B Moss  
Middleton Hall Trust – Councillor Lea  
Piccadilly Community Association – Councillor Lewis  
Stanyer's Charity – Councillors B and M Moss  
Wood End Community Centre – Councillor Phillips

## **9 Future Agenda Items**

- Sustainable Community Strategy priorities – detailed discussion
- Police Authority Community Confidence

10 **Any Other Business**

Steve Turner (WECA) said that this week the collection of refuse had commenced in Wood End at 6.15am and he had been asked by residents if a request could be made to revert back to a later start time.

11 **Future Meeting Dates**

14 October 2010 – Hurley Village Hall

Chairman