

## **Henley and Studley Community Forum**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**7.30pm – Henley in Arden Memorial Hall**

**Members in attendance:** Stephen Thirlwell (Chair)  
Mike Perry  
Richard Hobbs  
Mike Weddell  
Paul Beaman  
Tony Dixon

There were 21 parish representatives, members of the public and support officers in attendance.

Following a welcome from the Chairman, the Forum observed a one minute silence in respect of Armistice Day.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs, Altkinson, Horner, Wright, Topham, Barry and Marshall.

The Chairman gave thanks to Jenny Walsh, Clerk of Beaudesert and Henley PC for stepping in as minute-taker due to the absence of Dot Mitchell who is in hospital at the moment. The Forum sent their good wishes for a speedy recovery.

### **1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.**

Dave Webb nominated Stephen Thirlwell to remain as Chair. This was seconded by Paul Beaman and following a vote, Cllr Thirlwell was duly elected as Chairman. The next elections will be held in May 2010.

The Chairman nominated John Horner as Vice Chair and this was also carried unanimously. John Horner, who was not able to be present at this meeting, would be notified in due course.

### **2. Local policing update**

Sgt Bob Shaw gave an update on the 3 priorities identified at the last meeting:

***Continued publication of the local Police Newsletter*** – Volunteers had now been identified to produce the newsletter with a target date of end of November for publication of the first bulletin.

***Parking in Arden/Castle Road, junction in Henley*** – 26 visits had been made by Police since the last meeting. Mike Perry reported that a meeting with the managers of local schools and partner groups would be held in the near future to review vehicle/pedestrian safety issues due to parent dropping off/collections of children from school. 30 visits had also

been made to Castle Road car park.

***Anti-social behaviour in fields adjacent to Wickham Road, Studley-***

30 visits by police patrols had been made since last reporting which has had a positive effect on this issue.

Sgt Shaw went on to report that he would like to make tackling house burglaries a priority following production of statistics that indicated a 25% rise in this type of crime since the same time last year.

Terrorism concerns had been addressed in local training sessions and the implementation of police policies which incorporated “challenge” as key to the strategy of prevention. All communities were asked to work together as local delivery was the focus for success. Sgt Shaw confirmed following a question, that although no actual terrorism acts had been recorded in our area, links to other incidents of a terrorist nature had been apparent, therefore complacency was unwise.

On other matters, it was noted that a new PCSO would hopefully be joining the team in the near future. Overnight vehicle crime was being closely monitored and a court appearance was pending for a Henley man charged with class A drugs offences.

A summary of % responses to call outs against targets was reported and an analysis of crimes April – November 2009 by comparison with same period in 2008.

Questions from the floor included a query from Mike Perry regarding the voluntary ban on the sale of eggs and flour by local shops in the run-up to Halloween – he asked if consideration could be given to extending this to include fireworks as their early display in the weeks prior to bonfire night could encourage miss-use.

Thanks were given to the Neighbourhood Watch for arranging the delivery of cannabis factory and terrorism training awareness workshops which had been well attended.

Parish Councillor Roger Hubbocks asked if the speed detection camera could be used on the Warwick Road as the 40 mile limit was not being adhered to.

Concern regarding speeding vehicles at Kemps Green was also reported and a request to make the 30mph signage on the western approach to Henley more visible earlier on before the limit is reached.

Although protecting the public from harm was identified as a key local concern, it was not felt appropriate to lobby the area’s MP on this matter, rather that emphasis is placed on local strategy rather than national campaigning.

Vehicles parked too close the main road in Station Road, Henley was also of concern although this appeared to be a mainly day-time problem. Parish Councillor Mrs Carsina Goodman complained about the time taken to report an incident of vandalism recently and obtaining a crime report number was also problematic. The time taken to get through to the correct section was unsatisfactory and call-centre operatives seemed

unfamiliar with local geography which added to the delay. Richard Hobbs added that using the Safer Neighbourhoods website may be quicker than the telephone, although it was not clear whether the website could generate a crime number. There was also the issue that many residents do not have a home computer to access the internet. Cyclists on the pavements was becoming a problem in the area and particular concerns were expressed regarding people in cycling clubs (especially around the Wootton area) who often cycled in groups of two or three abreast on the roads. Cllr Bacon asked why a letter sent six weeks ago to the Chief Constable regarding problems of anti-social behaviour in Studley had not received a reply?

**Action: It was agreed that an invitation be offered to the Police Authority to send a representative to attend the next meeting of this forum.**

### **3. SNT Priorities**

A vote was taken on the list of issues put forward to determine 3 priorities for the Safer Neighbourhood Team. They were as follows:-

1<sup>st</sup> House Burglaries - The forum and safer neighbourhood police areas have experienced a 25% increase in burglary of houses since April 2009 when compared to the same period last year. The neighbourhood policing team will carry out 24 x 2 hour patrols in hot spot areas to tackle burglary offences.

Equal 2<sup>nd</sup> School Parking Arden Road Henley - Ongoing issues with peak time parking issues around junction of Castle Road and Arden Road in Henley in Arden. Actions proposed are to visit area on 24 occasions prior to the next forum at peak times in relation to school parking.

Equal 2<sup>nd</sup> Speeding in Kemps Green Lane - Vehicles reported to be regularly speeding along 60 mph single carriageway road in rural area. Safer Neighbourhood team will carry out 10 x 1 hour speed checks at affected point, also make application to have speed monitoring tapes put across road in affected area.

### **4. “You said, we did”... update from last meeting**

*Library consultation-* accessibility to the Library in Studley for some residents, in order to complete a survey form, was considered likely to cause distortion of the true response to proposals. The WCC officer representative agreed to take the Forum's comments back to the Library Service and report at a future meeting. It was noted that no information on the evidence collected has yet been made available.

*Railings outside Tesco in Studley-* Nick Ellison had met to discuss traffic flow and effects etc. Consideration was being given to possibly moving bus stops to alleviate the problem. Results on the air quality issues for

Studley and Henley could assist in determining a strategy for dealing with the matter.

*Additional evenings for the Youth Centres in Studley and Henley* – Cost constraints appeared to be limiting the opening times of centres and members were asked to consider use of volunteers to man the centres to reduce costs as much as possible.

**Action: Invitation to Youth Groups to attend future meeting to present their needs and outline what their groups use the facilities for.**

***Small wheelie bins*** –were now in hand following grant aid from SDC and WCC. Recycling facilities were also being extended to include foil, plastic trays and yogurt pots – information would be circulated to households in the near future.

***Community Forum information on SDC web site*** – The Chairman extended his thanks to the officers and Parish Councillors who facilitated this request.

***Parking review in Henley*** – This is now underway and responses to public consultation had been noted. Although there had been some concerns by residents of Rose Avenue, Chestnut Avenue, Beaudesert Lane and Warwick Road, the overall gain should be 3 to 4 additional parking spaces for the High Street.

Other matters relating to speeding concerns have been addressed elsewhere in these minutes.

## **5. Fire Service Review**

The Chairman reported that local meetings were underway; a second meeting for Studley was being scheduled due to the huge response to the first meeting held recently. However, the Forum agreed that in order to reach an unbiased opinion at the Henley meeting, which is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> November at the High School, discussion at the Forum should be limited to general information. Richard Hobbs urged that as many community members as possible attend their local meetings and put forward their views. The outcome of discussions and a final decision on the future of the fire service review will be made by the County Council in February 2010.

## **6. Grass-cutting – a coordinated approach**

Robert Weeks from SDC, set out the District Council's budget for spending on grass cutting and outlined some of the cost constraints affecting decision-making with regard to award and retention of contracts for service level provision. Mat Austin then explained quality control measures and received questions from the Forum.

Representatives from the area all expressed concerns regarding lack of continuity of service due to different teams of operatives undertaking work on each cut. They also confirmed that whilst it was fully understood

that there may be insufficient resources to spend more on grass cutting, better use of existing monies should be a target. Contractors failing to follow the designated maps for grass cutting was also a common theme that was reported.

Mr Austin reassured the Forum that failure to remove clippings did not constitute an increased flood risk to drains etc., and adding this task to the specification would place an unacceptable cost burden on the Council. Mr Weeks confirmed that the existing contract which was due to expire in 2011 had recently been renewed till 2013 to secure fixed pricing but added that any issues of quality control should be reported and they would be investigated.

One resident asked that more emphasis was placed on 'more important matters' such as the fire service, but the consensus of opinion focused on 'best value' for the current expenditure rather than expecting the District Council to spend more. Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council working together on a cohesive grass maintenance programme would make sense and could save money.

**Action: A request to be made for WCC and SDC to work together on a co-ordinated approach to grass maintenance and report again at a future meeting of the Forum.**

**7. General discussion and questions from the floor**

- a) press information on extensions to the re-cycling programme is imminent
- b) Winter gritting routes – information should be sent to WCC to include Pettiford Lane as a high risk
- c) Croft car park, Henley – Litter bins that had been installed by the current owners but not emptied have now been removed until adoption by SDC has taken place. There are no plans to introduce charges for cars using the Croft at the present time

**8. Suggested items for agenda of next meeting**

- a) Youth provision for area (see item 4)
- b) X20 bus service – pressure during peak periods 10 and 11 am weekdays
- c) Representative from VASA to attend and report on community initiatives of interest to the Forum

**9. Information sharing**

**There were no items raised.**

**10. Date and time of next meeting : Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at Studley Village Hall.**

The Chairman thanked the minute clerk and ladies who kindly provided teas and coffees then declared the meeting closed at 9.40pm.