

# PELSALL AND RUSHALL LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Tuesday 13 February 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

at Rushall Community Centre, Springfields, Rushall, Walsall

## Present

Councillor Catherine Micklewright (Chairman)  
Mr John Ree (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Clive Ault  
Inspector Greg Bates  
Mr Ron Carpenter  
Councillor Al Griffiths  
Mrs Margaret Hayes  
Councillor Marco Longhi  
Mr Anthony Orlik  
Councillor Garry Perry  
Mrs Ann Rice  
Mr James Thomas  
Councillor Rachel Walker

## In Attendance:

Ms Aliyaah Baines  
Sgt Martin Brown  
Sgt K Rowlands  
Mrs Lesley Jones  
Mrs Linda Pascall (NHS)  
Mr Gareth Robinson (NHS)

## 182/07 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr Robert Hughes and Ms. Rachael Humphreys. There was also an apology from Councillor Walker who would be arriving late at the meeting.

## 183/07 Minutes

### Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Pelsall and Rushall Local Neighbourhood Partnership held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2006, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Partnership, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

184/07 **Update on Items from Last Meeting**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the contents of the report be received and noted.

185/07 **Selection Panel Update**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the contents of the report be received and noted.

186/07 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Garry Perry declared a personal and pecuniary interest in agenda item number 8 – Walsall Hospitals Foundation Trust, and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillors Micklewright and Ault advised the meeting that they would leave the room if any matters relating to planning issues were discussed as they were members of the Development Control Committee.

187/07 **Petitions**

Councillor Perry presented the following Petitions:-

**(1) Residents of Oak Road Pelsall:**

Residents were requesting designated grass verges in front of their homes to be changed into parking spaces for their cars, thus making the roads much safer and helping to prevent further vandalism to their cars; Councillor Perry informed the Partnership that the properties were under the ownership of Walsall Housing Group

**(2) Residents of Highfield Road North, Pelsall:**

Residents were requesting off-road parking for residents of Highfield Road North, in particular, the frontages of numbers 5-19 due to unwarranted vandalism to residents' cars.

**Resolved**

That the petitions be received and noted and forwarded by the LNP to the relevant Officers and Partners for action and that a progress report be submitted to the LNP.

188/07 **Public Forum**

**Canal Access Track, Pelsall**

Mr. Ramsell of Canal Cottages, Pelsall said that the access track by the canal bridge leading to the cottages was in a very bad state of repair and full of pot holes. He asked whether action could be taken to rectify this problem.

**Appointment of Locally Appointed Partners**

Mrs. S. Sheasby of Green Lane, Pelsall referred to a letter which her husband, Mr. Brian Sheasby had received in respect of his application to become a Locally Appointed Partner. She wished to discuss the contents of the letter.

The Chairman said that this was a personal matter and not one she considered should be raised in Public Forum. She therefore ruled further consideration of this matter out of order.

**Health Community Consultation Groups**

Mr S Yates of Greenfield Road, Shelfield, Walsall, referred to the former Health Action Zone Groups which he believed had been very effective in the local community. He said that the Government had now replaced these with Health Community Consultation Groups which he considered to be a retrograde step. He asked whether there was any way the work of the HAZ Groups could be continued.

Councillor Perry advised the Partnership that he understood that some HAZ Groups were continuing and were funded as charities. He suggested that these issues be discussed further at the Health and People CAG meeting on 27 February 2007. He was supported in these comments by Mr John Ree the Chairman of the Health and People CAG.

### **Parking Problems in Church Road, Pelsall**

Mr Dave Wood of Church Road, Pelsall, said that there were still problems with inconsiderate parking by car owners using Pelsall Labour Club, blocking the highway in Church Road and opposite the club on Pelsall Common. He was concerned about the potential hazard for emergency vehicles trying to access Church Road.

Councillor Longhi said that residents of Church Road, Pelsall were also concerned about the state of the alleyway between Church Road and Chapel Street because of dog fouling there. He said that he had asked the responsible Council officers to investigate this health hazard as it had been a long standing issue of concern for local residents.

### **Parking on Pelsall Common**

Mrs Maureen Payton of Friends of Pelsall Common said that when there had been problems with cars using the Labour Club parking on Pelsall Common last summer, the licensee had been very helpful at discouraging parking by putting up signs in the club. She said that this has worked for a while. She enquired whether as part of the extensive bollards programme currently being undertaken in Pelsall Village, the LNP would like the Friends to investigate the possibility of installing attractive physical barriers on this part of the common.

### **Pelsall Festive Lights**

Mr. Bob Parker of Heath End Residents Association enquired who had paid for the festive lights in Pelsall over the Christmas period. He said that there had been reports in local newspapers suggesting that Amey PLC had met these costs.

In response, Councillor Perry said that Pelsall Pride, of which was he was Chairman had launched an "Adopt A Light" appeal to raise funds for this purpose. The cost of the lights had been met through a combination of funds raised at special events, sponsorship, donations from Pelsall people and village traders. He said that he would be happy to provide invoices for the cost of the work to anyone interested. He said that as an act of goodwill, Amey PLC had agreed to install the lights free of charge but this had been their sole contribution to the project.

### **Problems with Ragwort**

Mr. Bob Parker of Heath End Residents' Association enquired about the Council's policy for the treatment of ragwort as this was a big problem in many parts of the LNP area.

As a point of information, Mr. Parker was advised that the Council has no enforcement powers. In the case of private land, the Council can only request owners to remove ragwort. Powers to remove ragwort were now the responsibility of DEFRA.

The Chairman commented that the Green Space Horticultural Officer at Walsall Council had been very helpful in arranging for ragwort to be removed from Pelsall Common.

### **Tame Drive/Trent Road – Traffic Problems**

Mr. Bob Parker of Heath End Residents' Association spoke of the concerns of residents of Tame Drive/Trent Road, Pelsall, relating to commercial vehicles parking on the junction of the two roads. He said that this was causing problems to vehicles turning out of Tame Drive and also to local residents as children and youths were congregating in the shadow of the vehicles. There had been reports of damage being caused to brickwork and the boarding of old persons' homes.

Councillor Perry advised that a site meeting of residents of Avon Crescent and the surrounding area was scheduled for 16 February and the concerns raised by Mr Parker would be picked up at that meeting.

### **Canal Towpath in Rushall Area**

Mr. D. Myatt of Westminster Road, Rushall asked whether the LNP could bring any pressure to bear on British Waterways to repair damage to the canal towpaths in the Rushall area.

### **Construction of Footpath in Mayou Court, Pelsall**

Mr. Roger Mahon of Norbury Avenue, Pelsall enquired if anything could be done to improve the footpath between Norbury Avenue and the High Street (Mayou Court). He said that when Mayou Court was built, block paving had been constructed that covered over the drains and this caused flooding problems for local residents when it rained. He said that local residents were concerned as to whether planning regulations had been properly observed when this work was undertaken.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour in Cartbridge Lane South, Rushall**

Mr. J. Bird of Cartbridge Lane, Rushall said that local residents were still experiencing nuisance from people riding mini-motorbikes and also from fly tipping in Cartbridge Lane South.

The Chairman said that reference to these issues was made at agenda item 10 – Community Action Groups – Update Report and would be discussed at this point in the meeting.

### **The Chairman and Councillor Ault left the room**

### **Mr. J. Ree in the Chair**

### **Use of Green Belt Land in Cartbridge Lane, Rushall, as a Caravan Site**

Mr. J. Bird of Cartbridge Lane, Rushall voiced his concerns relating to the use of Green Belt land in Cartbridge Lane as a caravan site. He said that this matter had been raised at a previous LNP by local residents. He referred to a survey of local residents and said that the overwhelming majority of residents were against the development of this Green Belt land.

As a point of information, Councillor Griffiths said that he understood that a report on this issue would be submitted to Development Control Committee for consideration shortly.

### **The Chairman and Councillor Ault returned to the meeting.**

### **The Chairman in the Chair**

### **Former Birds Timber Yard, Rushall**

Mr. D. Myatt of Westminster Road, Rushall enquired why demolition work at the former Birds timber yard in Rushall had ceased.

Councillor Griffiths said that he would be able to provide Mr. Myatt with information on this matter following the meeting.

The LNP requested that all matters raised in Public Forum be investigated further with relevant Council officers and other Partnership representatives and that the results of these investigations be reported back to the LNP.

### **Foundation Trust**

A presentation on Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust's move to Foundation Trust status was given by Mr. Gareth Robinson, Director, Women's and Children's Services and Mrs. Linda Pascall, Divisional Director of Planned Care.

Following the presentation, Mr. Robinson and Mrs. Pascall answered questions from Partnership members and the general public. On behalf of the Partnership, the Chairman thanked them for their attendance and presentation.

189/07 **LNP Funding Update**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Neighbourhood Partnership Officer (Ms. A. Baines) informed the Partnership that £600 had been allocated towards dog fouling bins in the LNP area. The sites recommended by CAG were set out in the report and the Partnership was requested to select three sites from the list.

Referring to the project agreed, subject to a full breakdown of proposed costs, at the last meeting for providing a sign for the Rushall Olympic Football Club, Ms. Baines gave the following details.

The cost of the supply and erection of a double-sided directional sign and a steel post for additional supporting of the sign was £562.50. With on-going maintenance charges and administration charges the total cost came to £1,200.

Ms. Baines said that it was proposed to allocate the remaining LNP 2005/06 funding of £441.40 towards the sign. The rest of the £1,200 costs would be met by Rushall Olympic Football Club. There was general agreement to this proposal.

Following discussion, the LNP agreed:-

- (1) To note the progress on projects in the report;
- (2) To approve the following three allocations for siting dog fouling bins in the LNP area:-
  - Rowley place (near Daw End School entrance)
  - Ryders Hayes Lane
  - Highfield Road North

190/07 **Community Action Group Update**

A report was submitted:-

(see Annexed)

Mr. John Ree and Councillor Garry Perry, Chairmen of The Health and People and Safer and Stronger CAGs reported on progress of their respective CAGs to date.

Mr. Ree said that The Health and People CAG had further discussed the issue of publicity and ways in which the LNP's profile could be raised in the area. As a result of this, a communications working party had been established to move this forward. A mapping exercise of local community boards was being carried out and the results of this would be reported back to the next Health and People CAG. Mr. Ree said that Rachael Humphreys, the LNP tPCT representative would be attending the next meeting. There were several items of local concern that the CAG could have an input into, for example, problems of transport for older people, coronary heart disease rates, drug and alcohol problems for young people and mental health issues. The Health and People CAG would be producing a development plan to progress these issues and he urged everyone to attend the next meeting on 27 February at 6.00 pm at the Autumn Close meeting room, High Heath, Pelsall.

Councillor Perry reported on the recent Safer and Stronger CAG meeting. He referred to the problems reported to the previous LNP meeting relating to local residents' concerns about cars, vans, and mini-motorbikes parked on land adjacent to the corner of Ryders Hayes Lane, Pelsall. He said that the problems had eased with the removal of certain vehicles and sheds and he gave credit to the Partnership initiative involving the Police, Council Environmental Health Officers and Planners as well as local Councillors who had brought this about.

Councillor Perry said that the Goscote Valley Regeneration Scheme/ Workshop would be held at Pelsall Cricket Club on 19 February 2007 to which all affected residents were invited.

Councillor Perry said that there had been further discussions on anti-social behaviour issues in Cartbridge Lane South, Rushall. A further site visit had been arranged with residents to review action to date and what further action was needed.

In conclusion, Councillor Perry said that an additional Police Community Officer would be allocated to the Pelsall team within the next 5 to 6 weeks and this should help with community safety. He thanked Inspector Bates for this initiative.

Mr. Jim Thomas said that the residents of Cartbridge Lane had been suffering with anti-social behaviour problems for a long period of time. He believed it was important for decisive action to be taken to sort this matter out once and for all.

Councillor Walker referred to the problems with fly-tipping in Cartbridge Lane South and said that it was planned to install CCTV cameras there to discourage fly tipping and to identify the culprits.



In response to points raised, Councillor Perry confirmed that representatives of the tPCT and Age Concern would be attending the Community Event arranged for 10 March 2007 at Pelsall Community Centre. They would be offering senior citizens an exchange of their old bedroom slippers for new non-slip ones as part of the Fall Prevention initiative.

**Resolved**

The LNP agreed:-

- (1) to continue in attendance at the Community Action Group meetings;
- (2) to note the progress of the Community Action Groups as outlined in the report.

191/07 **Extended Schools**

A presentation on the development of Extended Schools in the Borough was made by Mr Anthony Orlik, the Head Teacher of St. Michael's CE Primary School, Pelsall.

Following the presentation, Mr Orlik answered questions from Partnership members and the general public.

On behalf of the Partnership, the Chairman thanked Mr Orlik for his attendance and his presentation.

192/07 **Post Office Network**

A briefing on the future of the Post Office Network was given by Councillor Garry Perry.

Following discussion, the Partnership agreed to respond to the Government's consultation on the future of the Post Office Network as follows:-

**Resolved**

That the Pelsall and Rushall LNP (including the communities of High Heath and Shelfield) make the following comments:-

- We would oppose any closure of the existing Post Offices within our area namely, Rushall Post Office, Pelsall Post Office, Spring Lane, Barns Lane and Lichfield Road Post Offices;

- Post Office services are vital in providing an accessible service to the most vulnerable in our communities, namely the elderly and young families/parents;
- We have deprived areas that fall just outside of the 10% of super output areas but within the 20%, we would like consideration of this to be given;
- At least one Post Office within our LNP area should become a 'Crown Post Office' and therefore a Flagship of community access;
- We support measures to enhance the products on offer at Post Offices particularly financial products;
- Post Offices should be given the freedom to compete with other financial and banking services in offering similar products such as mortgages;
- We welcome investigation into the input of Local Authorities in the future delivery of Post Office Services.

193/07 **Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for Pelsall**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry said that the three Pelsall Ward Councillors had met with Council officers late last year to look at ways of managing conservation in Pelsall. They had extended their investigations to look at everything that affected the future well being of Pelsall, including the village centre. He said that some very successful schemes had been carried out in other towns and villages to not only conserve but to also regenerate the area. He believed it was important to maintain the architectural and historical character of Pelsall, while at the same time ensuring that modernisation projects, such as the new medical centre and library fitted into the context of this.

Councillor Longhi endorsed Councillor Perry's comments. He said that time and time again other areas of the borough had received funding for major regeneration projects and Pelsall had missed out. Regeneration schemes would play a key role in levering funding into Pelsall.

**Resolved**

That the contents of the report be received and noted.

194/07 **Pelsall Parking Problems**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry said that, in noting the comments of traders, the LNP also needed to address the needs of the general public who wished to shop in Pelsall. The LNP had a duty to Pelsall residents who were now deterred from shopping in the village because of the lack of parking facilities.

The Chairman said that the present arrangements were discriminatory in that there was a notice in the High Street restricting disabled car users to three hours maximum parking whereas there was no parking restriction for other car users. She said this needed to be addressed by Council officers.

Mrs. Maureen Payton of the Friends of Pelsall Common said that in the past a scheme had been considered to construct a road on land at the back of the shops in High Street, Pelsall, thus connecting Ash Tree Road with Chapel Street. Instead, the Council had used the land at the bottom of Ash Tree Road once occupied by a flour mill, to construct a small car park. She queried the possibility of reviving the original scheme to construct a road there, with a view to easing parking problems in High Street, Pelsall.

Following discussion, the LNP agreed:-

- (1) To take into account the consultations already undertaken with local businesses but to request Council officers to carry out further consultations with residents living close to High Street with a view to implementing a two hour parking restriction in High Street, Pelsall;
- (2) That in noting that a scheme was previously considered, to request officers to further investigate the possibility of constructing a road on the land at the back of the shops in High Street, Pelsall thus connecting Ash Tree Road with Chapel Street with a view to easing parking problems in High Street, Pelsall.

195/07 **Late Item**

**Spray on anti dog fouling signs**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

The LNP agreed:-

- (1) to accept a stencil for use on public pavements and authorise its use in accordance with guidance from officers regarding location and safety;
- (2) to Councillor Rachel Walker becoming an LNP Area Street Champion;
- (3) to suggestions for sites to use the stencil and spray to be forwarded through the Local Neighbourhood Partnership Team.

196/07 **Concerns about Recycling**

Mr Jim Thomas said that he was becoming concerned about the Council’s policy on recycling. He said that on two occasions he had visited the Council’s refuse sites in Aldridge and Bloxwich and had observed that during busy periods, waste had not been separated but had been thrown into the landfill skip. He said that as members of the public were instructed to sort their rubbish and to separate various items for disposal, he found this disturbing.

As a point of information, Councillor Walker, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Street Pride, said that similar incidents had been reported to her.

In view of these concerns, it was:-

**Resolved**

That a report be submitted to the LNP on the Council’s recycling policy in view of concerns that, during busy periods, staff at the Council ‘s two recycling sites are not separating waste, but dumping all of it in the landfill skips.

**Termination of Meeting**

The meeting terminated at 9.20 p m.

Chairman: .....

Date: .....