
MEETING	RURAL WEST YORK WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	3 FEBRUARY 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HEALEY, 20 RESIDENTS
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS GILLIES AND HUDSON

1. **SURGERY 7PM**

Councillor Healey answered questions from residents

Sgt Andy Haigh and PCSO Nigel Colley answered questions on antisocial behaviour and crime.

Michelle Watling, The Street Environment Officer did a display on a new initiative to reduce littering by teenagers in the area. There was also feedback from the Community Payback Team who get offenders to complete community projects as part of their sentencing. A display was given on the clean up of Bland Lane in Knapton.

Adrian Phipps, The Neighbourhood Management Officer, answered questions from the public.

2. **WELCOME AND MINUTES**

Councillor Healey opened the meeting and gave apologies for Councillor Gillies and Councillor Hudson who had to attend an urgent planning meeting. Apologies were also given for Councillor Horton who was due to speak as a magistrate.

The minutes were agreed and signed.

3. **SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM**

Sergeant Andy Haigh gave a talk on crime and anti social behaviour. Crime figures were very positive with a year on year comparison showing a decrease of 27% in total crime, which is 114 less offences. The level of burglary dwelling had remained the same and there were decreases in criminal damage, auto crime and violent crime. Antisocial behaviour was also down with 399 incidents recorded so far this year.

There had been a spate of burglary other offences from insecure garages and sheds and Sergeant Haigh emphasised the need to spread the word on securing such property. There had also been complaints of anti social behaviour on Poppleton Green but offenders had been apprehended. Also following complaints of anti social behaviour by schoolchildren the Safer Neighbourhood Team had taken steps to reduce this problem.

Sergeant Haigh stated the issue of police visibility had come back as a suggestion for a policing priority. This would not be appropriate as it was a police tactic which the Safer Neighbourhood Team regularly employed. He also covered the issue of speeding stating, if a resident had concern with a speeding issue, they could report it by completing a speed concern report, available from the Safer Neighbourhood Team or the North Yorkshire Police website. This is a simple one side of A4 sheet with questions such as time and days the incidents usually occur. These were then sent and collated by the Traffic Management Unit which worked closely with the Local Authority in dealing with these issues. Sgt Haigh read out a list of roads currently being targeted.

He also stated that a new PCSO for the area was being trained. Initiatives coming up included Operation Spoke which encouraged cycle users to register their cycle to protect against cycle theft.

Q – What constitutes a year on year comparison when talking about crime statistics?

Sgt Haigh – They compare the crime figures since April for the current and previous financial year.

Q – We have had instances of antisocial behaviour in Copmanthorpe, but a lot of it goes unreported. How do you deal with these issues?

A – We encourage everyone to report issues to the team, so that we can take action.

Q – We reported roads in Copmanthorpe that you have read out was it as a result of those reports and what action will be taken?

A – The Traffic Management Unit work closely with the City of York Council and collate all reports so they will have been taken into consideration. Action can include enforcement operations, and preventative measures such as signs or traffic calming measures.

4. GUIDE TO HOLDING EVENTS

John Lacy from the Licensing Unit gave an input into holding events from a licensing perspective. He stated that the Licensing Act of 2003 was designed to simplify the process of applying for licenses by bringing strands together.

John explained that many venues already had a premises licence including many community and school buildings. Therefore you would not need a licence.

If you wanted to hold an event at a venue without a licence then you could apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN). This was devised to make it easier for members of the public and charities to put on events. The notice applies to authorise small scale events in or on any premises involving no more than 499 people at any one time, if over this amount you would need a premises licence.

A TEN can last up to 96 hours and as long as certain criteria are met such as notifying timescales, then only the police can intervene on crime prevention grounds. You need to be over 18 to apply for a notice and the cost is £21. The forms are available on the City of York Council website.

Q – We are hoping to have a regular events at Copmanthorpe?

John Lacy – You can only apply for so many TENs so if it's a regular event you would need a premises licence.

Q – How much notice do you need to give?

A – Ten working days before event to the licensing authority and police.

5. MAGISTRATES IN THE COMMUNITY

Bernard Everett gave a talk on the work of Magistrates. There are over a 100 magistrates in York who are all volunteers. Magistrates are drawn from the community and provide a key service for the community. Work has been done at schools and local employers to promote the work undertaken by Magistrates.

People are welcome to attend the adult magistrates court at any time, they are usually open between 10am and 4pm. The youth courts are not open to the public. Sentencing power for the Magistrates range from a conditional discharge to a maximum prison sentence of 12 months for two offences. There are sentencing guidelines which give the magistrate an idea of how to sentence but there is lot of flexibility built in dependent on individual circumstances.

Q – I visited court and I could not hear what the legal people were saying and it felt like a private members club.

Bernard Everett – Disappointed to hear that, everyone should have a microphone so they must have to forget to switch them on. I will take back your comments on your first impressions.

Q – Can you issue a search warrant?

A – An individual magistrates can, but in practice no magistrate will sign one unless they have heard from a legal advisor. Usually applied for in open court to three magistrates. It is a detailed process to ensure all the relevant questions are answered.

Q – Are fines set or does individual circumstances determine them?

A – Its both, fines are set to offence and seriousness of that offence but levels are maximums and a magistrate is required to look at a persons ability to pay. Can be addressed as a proportion of a persons income.

Q – Who collects the fine

A – Fine collection unit of the courts, they take actions dependant on arrears, such as letters and attachment to earnings.

Q – What percentage goes unpaid?

A – Small percentage, if people persistently don't pay then they can be sent to prison.

Q – Thanks on behalf of the community, how many Anti social behaviour orders are issued?

A – Not sure how many but they are brought in regular intervals to the court and are usually granted.

6. INTRODUCTION TO MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Richard White Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) gave a presentation on maintenance services as provided by the City of York Council. Richard covered the history of the department and the main components of the service.

Richard covered the Winter Maintenance Policy which is available online or in libraries. He stated during the recent bad weather spell that 44% of the road network was gritted which compares favourably with other councils and puts York in the upper quartile. However only 2% of footpaths were gritted and certain criteria applied to which ones took priority. He stated that it would be impossible to clear a large percentage of footpaths as the council does not have the resources to do this in manpower alone.

Richard stated that the winter policy which had been effective for the last fifteen years, was being reviewed in light of the latest extreme weather, to deal with such severe events. He encouraged residents to view the policy and phone in their comments to York 551 551 or email in. He emphasised the need to be realistic when making comments and to consider logistics and resources.

He then went on to cover topics which had been raised so far in the consultation.

- Salt Bins – Two years ago a review of use was undertaken and the number of salt bins was reduced after it was found that 60% were hardly used. There may be a move to bags which cost around £5 as opposed to bins which cost £150.
- Gritting footpaths – Currently reviewing criteria for clearance but logistically impossible to do a large number.
- Secondary Routes – majority not gritted to protect dwindling salt supplies, prioritisation was necessary.
- Cycle paths – Grit has to be trafficked in to allow it to be effective, cycles do not achieve this.
- Pot holes – Richard emphasised the need to report issues, extra resources had been supplied to deal with emergencies. So far there had been a 50-60% increase in reporting.

Richard praised the work done by the gritting teams who worked continually all through the bad weather including Christmas and New Years Day.

Q – What do you do with damaged salt bins?
Richard White – They are used as spare parts.

Q – Where is additional funding coming from?
Cllr Healey – It will come out of the reserves and we have applied to a government fund for potholes but there is no guarantee we will get it.

Q – Copmanthorpe village is split into two parts, so you have to travel to the shops but the roads and footpaths have been treacherous?
Richard – Report it but again but be aware of logistical issues.

Q – Are Neighbourhood Services delivered in house?
A – Yes services have proved very efficient when compared against private contractors.

Q – Some salt bins which have been taken away were on busy junctions and yet there are salt bins placed less dangerous or well used areas, why?
A – The winter maintenance policy is being reviewed and there may be a need to reinstate certain salt bins but always report your concerns into us.

Q – There are footpaths which are near busy bus routes that were not cleared?
A – The criteria for clearing footpaths is currently being looked at.

Q – How do you decide what roads are repaired as I live on a concrete road which is in a bad state of disrepair?
A – Roads are surveyed annually, some more than that. Then other criteria is used such as, bus routes, usage etc. These are then put together and scored and a list is sent to Councillors to decide priorities. We have tried to attract additional funding to improve some roads but this is a national problem.

7. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Councillor Healey stated that improvement schemes for 2009/10 had all been commissioned. He asked for comments on the list put forward for 2010/11.

Q – Why has Poppleton received a large amount?
Councillor Healey – Over the four years we have evened out the spend across the ward to give all villages a chance to get larger pots of funding. It is important to get suggestions in when requested.

Q – Who pays for the newsletter and if it is the council why has additional money been allocated?
A - The city do pay for quarterly four page newsletters
Adrian Phipps – The additional money is to pay for larger eight page editions.

Councillor Healey stated that the decision to agree the schemes could not go ahead at the meeting as it required two councillors present so the decision would be deferred.

8. HAVE YOUR SAY

Councillor Healey asked if anyone had any issues they would like to raise but there were no questions.

He thanked everyone for their input and attendance and closed the meeting.

, Chair

[The meeting started at 7.30 pm and finished at 9.00 pm].