
MEETING	HUNTINGTON & NEW EARSWICK WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	2 FEBRUARY 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HYMAN, ORRELL AND RUNCIMAN 25 LOCAL RESIDENTS DON CRAWFORD, NEW EARSWICK PARISH COUNCIL CAROL CLAYTON, HUNTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL CLAIRE TAYLOR AND MORA SCAIFE, NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT UNIT, LIZ LEVETT, STREET ENVIRONMENT SERVICE, ANDY BINNER AND RICHARD WHITE, HIGHWAYS MAINTENACNE TEAM PC LAILAH NIJAILA AND PCSO KATIE MILNER, NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, ERICA TAYLOR AND JON COULSON, YORK MAGISTRATES, JOHN COOKE, GROUP RESPONSE COMMUNITY RANGERS

1. 7PM SURGERY

- 1.1 Residents had an opportunity to talk to Councillors Keith Hyman, Keith Orrell and Carol Runciman, Don Crawford from New Earswick Parish Council, Carol Clayton from Huntington Parish Council, Claire Taylor and Mora Scaife from CYC Neighbourhood Management Unit, Liz Levett from CYC Street Environment Services, Richard White and Andy Binner from CYC Highways Maintenance team, PC Lailah Nijaila and PCSO Katie Milner from the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Erica Taylor and Jon Coulson from York Magistrates and John Cooke from Group Response Community Rangers.
- 1.2 Residents also had the opportunity to watch 'Don't be a Minger', a dvd produced by the Street Environment Service to be distributed to all secondary schools to educate young people about the impact of littering.

2. 7.30PM MAIN MEETING - WELCOME AND MINUTES

- 2.1 Councillor Keith Orrell welcomed residents to the meeting.
- 2.2 The minutes of the last meeting on 20th October 2009 were approved and signed by Cllr Keith Orrell.

3. POLICE REPORT AND PRIORITIES

PC Lailah Nijaila and PCSO Katie Milner from the ward Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) gave an update on policing issues in the ward. The following points were noted:

- 3.1 PCSO Katie Milner has just joined the team and this now puts the team at full capacity. The SNT is now made up of Sgt John Freer, PC Lailah Nijaila and PCSOs John Armstrong, Fiona Nevens, Natalie Turner and Katie Milner.
- 3.2 There has been a 12% reduction in crime across the ward over the last year. This is a significant decrease for the third year running.
- 3.3 Operation Spoke is underway which is specifically aimed at trying to reduce cycle crime across the city. Residents can have their bikes marked a unique reference number using a UV pen which is then logged along with the residents' details on a national database. If their bike is ever stolen and then recovered, the police will be able to identify who it belongs to. The team are holding an Operation Spoke session at New Earswick Folk Hall on 27th February. There will be further monthly sessions and residents should look out for posters advertising these.

The following questions and comments were noted:

a) Can anything be done about unsafe cycling?

The team issue tickets to people as and when they catch them.

b) Is there a charge to retrieve bikes under the Operation Spoke scheme?

Response was given that there is not a charge.

c) Have you been involved with the Smartwater initiative?

An explanation was given that Smartwater is a liquid that you put on your property which cannot be rubbed off but it does rub off onto fibrous clothing. Everyone that is arrested has to go through a smartwater UV light. Around two years ago the team purchased a number of packs and gave them out to residents but they are expensive and the budget ran out. They now encourage residents to buy them for themselves.

4. HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

Richard White and Andy Binner gave an overview of the responsibilities of the highways maintenance team and their response to the recent spell of bad weather. The following points were noted:

- 4.1 The Highways Maintenance team is responsible for carriageway resurfacing, footway reconstruction, street lighting, gully cleaning, winter maintenance, pest control, flooding/warping, verge maintenance, highways trees, road lining and anti skid and street signs.
- 4.2 This year has seen the worst winter on record for 30 years with 20 days of snow and ice and temperatures falling as low as -10 at times.
- 4.3 The gritting wagons went out 90 times on the primary network putting down a total of 4,200 tonnes of salt. This is double the amount normally put down throughout the whole winter season. An overview of the winter maintenance policy is on the City of York Council website.

The priority area's in terms of gritting is known as the 'primary network' and includes all the main arteries in and out of the city, all major bus routes and 15km of footpaths which includes all city centre footpaths and those around shopping centres and around old peoples homes. Gritting is carried out on a 'secondary network' if conditions require it but is dependent on budgets and resources. To date the winter maintenance budget for this financial year is overspent by £400,000.

- 4.4 It was stressed the council do not have the resources to grit every street and footpath in the city. Requests from residents are looked at on a case by case basis but there is no guarantee it will be done.
- 4.5 The winter maintenance policy is being reviewed and residents' comments are welcomed.
- 4.6 The recent bad weather has highlighted a number of key issues to be addressed in the review; lack of salt bins, lack of clearing of footpaths, secondary routes and cycle paths and the repair of pot holes.
- 4.7 Following the recent bad weather pot holes are appearing all over the roads. The biggest potholes and those on high speed roads are being prioritised as they are the ones most likely to cause an accident. All the potholes will be repaired in due course and residents were encouraged to report them on (01904) 551551.
- 4.8 Richard and Andrew registered their thanks to the gritting staff who worked tirelessly for 20 days to keep the city moving.

The following comments and questions were noted:

a) The main pavement running through New Earswick was not gritted and it was treacherous.

Response was given that it is impossible for the council to grit every pavement in the city. This will be looked at under the winter maintenance review.

b) Where do home owners stand on clearing the footpaths outside their properties?

Response was given that this is difficult to answer because the law on this has never been tested. However, as long as you are making a reasonable and genuine effort to clear the footpath, it is unlikely that anyone could sue you.

c) I understand that your priority was to keep the main network moving but my cul-de-sac was treacherous and it was very difficult to get about.

Response was given that no false promises can be made, the council will never be in a position to grit every single road. The team will be looking at the provision of salt bins during the review.

d) Will you have the funds and resources available to repair the roads which are rapidly deteriorating after the bad weather?

Response was given that the team are endeavouring to get the network back up to standard as soon as possible. The council have put an application into a government fund for a grant to help repair the roads after extreme weather conditions.

e) Cyclists and motorcyclists are very vulnerable riding on roads with potholes.

Response was given that the team are prioritising the repair of pot holes on high speed and main network roads.

f) The potholes around utility trenches are particularly bad.

Response was given that the team are working closely with the street work co-ordinators to try to get them to do a better job of patching up the roads. There has been a number of occasions where they have been asked to come back because they have not done a proper job.

g) How do you make the decision whether to patch the road up or resurface it? The junction between Highthorn Road and Anthea Drive is particularly bad.

Response was given that initially all pot holes will be patched up. In June all roads in the city are surveyed and graded and then this information is used to determine which roads need resurfacing a priority. The team will have a look at this particular location. **Action**

5. YORK MAGISTRATES

Jon Coulson and Erica Taylor gave a talk on the role of magistrates as part of their 'Magistrates in the Community' project. The following points were noted:

- 5.1 All criminal cases go through the Magistrates Court. Very serious cases move up to the Crown Court.
- 5.2 Jon and Erica are both lay magistrates at York Magistrates' Court. They are not professionally qualified and are not paid. On average they are involved in 20-30 cases per year.
- 5.3 Anyone over the age of 18 can apply to be a Magistrate with the retirement aged being 70. Applicants have to go through a selection panel where they have to demonstrate characteristics such as good decision making and good character. The applicants employer must also be supportive and be willing to give them time off work to carry out their duties. Once appointed, magistrates have to go through a lot of training on court procedure and the law.
- 5.4 The magistrates work as a panel of three and operate to set guidelines.
- 5.5 Magistrates have to make a decision on a case by case basis whether it is something they have the power to deal with. Very serious crimes must go to the Crown Court but 'summary offences' such as a motoring offence can stay with the Magistrates Court.
- 5.6 The main purpose of the magistrates court is to stop the individual re-offending. They have a range of sentencing powers ranging from fines and community service through to a prison sentence of up to six months. They have the power to run two prison sentences consecutively but if the demands more than this it must be transferred to the Crown Court.

- 5.7 Sitting within the Magistrates Court are a Youth Panel, a Family Panel and a Drugs Panel. The magistrates have the power to sentence someone under the age of 18 for up to two years.
- 5.8 The main purpose of the Youth Court is to stop the youth re-offending. The magistrates work alongside the police to administer youth restorative justice. This involved the police taking the offender to see the victim where they jointly decide what the punishment should be. These cases rarely get as far as the Magistrates Court.
- 5.9 Residents were invited to phone the Magistrates' Court if they would like to have a look around and observe the court in action. Adult courts are open to the public and can be observed anytime.

The following question was noted:

- a) What pressure are you under in terms of sentencing bearing in mind that the prisons are full?

Response was given that the magistrates role is to administer justice and they cannot take those sorts of pressures into account.

6. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2010/11

Cllr Keith Orrell invited residents to comment on the proposed list of ward committee schemes to be funded from the 2010/11 budget.

- 4.1 Although the budget for 2010/11 has not been finalised, the schemes list has been drawn up on the basis it will be a similar amount to the 2009/10 budget of £43K.

The following questions and comments were noted:

- a) Given that we may have a change of government soon, can we rely on this budget?

Response was given that this budget comes from Council Tax funds and will not be affected by a change of government. The budget will be confirmed on 25th February.

- 4.2 The provisional schemes list was formally agreed and signed off.

7. HAVE YOUR SAY

Residents were given the opportunity to Have their Say on issues in the ward.

7.1 The following questions and comments were noted:

- a) I cycle from Huntington to Clifton Moor every day. Is there anything in place to improve the cycle routes in Huntington?

Response was given that now that York has Cycling City status, as many improvements are being made as possible. The team will look into this.

Action

b) Cars are parking on the pavement outside the chemist on Huntington Road and causing an obstruction.

Response was given that cars causing an obstruction are a police matter. The resident was advised to take a registration number and report it to the police on 0845 6060247.

c) When will the cycle barriers be installed in the snicket between Geldof Road and the 68 centre?

Response was given that this has been delayed due to the bad weather but are due to go in imminently.

d) There is a problem with dog fouling in the ward, what can be done about this?

Response was given that it is possible to prosecute irresponsible dog owners but the problem is catching them. Dog wardens do regular patrols and will prosecute if they see anyone not clearing up after their dog. Residents should ring the dog wardens on (01904) 551551 to report dog fouling in particular areas.

e) Who is responsible for the path at Brockfield Shops? It is in a terrible state.

The shop owns the land. The ward team will look into this. **Action**

f) There is an issue with parking on the brow of Mill Hill with vehicles parking in inappropriate places. Can a solid white line be put on the brow of the hill?

Response was given that the ward team will speak to Highways about this. **Action**

Cllr's Hyman, Orrell and Runciman, Chairs

[The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.55 pm].