

CASTLETON AREA FORUM

Tuesday 4 December 2018
Castleton Community Centre, Manchester Road,
Castleton, Rochdale

MINUTES

Present: M. Magner (Chair), R. Hughes, N. Hughes, F. Salt, R. Davison, B. Partington, S. Woodhall, M. Darlington, N. Statham, S. Whitworth, T. Brogan, J. Ferrier, F. Cryer, C. Cryer, G. O’Gorman, M. Webb, A. Simpson and I. Grindrod

Councillors: J. Hornby and B. Sheerin

Officers: S. Hay (Townships, Rochdale Council) and PC Farmer (GMP)

Apologies: D. Ludwig, M. Ferrier and M. Mole

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES/CODE OF CONDUCT

Introductions were made and all were welcomed to the meeting. The code of conduct was circulated. All attendees were asked to abide by the code for the duration of the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING/MATTERS ARISING/UPDATES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 September 2018 were approved and the following updates given.

Tetrosyl – Planning Permission and approval from the HSE

The Chair wrote a very detailed letter on 29 September 2018 on behalf of the forum with a full chronology since 1 March 2015 to MP Liz McInnes with a request for her to assist in the speedy progression of the matter, but had only received a holding response from Councillor Neil Emmott.

A letter dated 23 November 2018 from David Rogers, Group General Counsel of Tetrosyl Limited to Rochdale Council’s Director of Economy, John Searle, was read out. The letter gave no detail and stated they are operating below the lower tier COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) thresholds and hence it is not currently subject to these regulations but hope to obtain an upper tier COMAH Licence in the New Year.

Pending an update from Councillor Neil Emmott, the Chair will write a further letter to Rochdale Council’s Chief Executive, again on behalf of the forum, expressing the concerns of the community and requesting that at that high level pressure is actually put on the Health and Safety Executive to police Tetrosyl and establish the actual situation, levels and type of storage.

Smalley Street – House cellars flooding due to lack of resurfacing works

The resurfacing work has all been completed to a high standard and thanks were given.

Castleton Hotel – Allegation of unauthorised change of use to hostel

Rochdale Council’s Housing Standards Team is investigating and they have been asked for an update.

Cherrington Drive road surface

Highways have been asked to inspect the poor resurfacing work, assess and carry out remedial

repairs and they have been chased up for an update.

Royle Barn Road fly tipping

The fly tipping has been removed, the area cleaned up and all graffiti removed.

Chesham Avenue road surface

All the remedial repair work has been completed.

Silk Street – Lorries parking opposite Tesco's entrance

All repair work to the footpath and kerb edges has been carried out. Councillor Hornby has escalated the congestion issues to Highways.

Former Carcraft Site fly tipping

The area has been cleared and cleaned up.

Alley gate at Alexander Street/Partington Street/Jameson Street – Fly tipping and bins issues

All fly tipping was removed and the skip, but further fly tipping has taken place which will also be removed. This situation is a work in progress and Rochdale Council's Enforcement Team is serving Notice on the residents.

Royle Road/Gypsy Lane Corner sewerage smell

Environmental Health has been asked for an update on the pungent sewerage smell at the corner of Woolworth's Club, next to the electricity sub-station.

Smalley Street/Station Approach Junction – Vehicles Driving Up No Entry

Highways have assessed the junction signage and report that the current signage is adequate and the issue is a moving traffic offence which is a matter for the Police to enforce.

The Farewell/Royle Barn Road – Damage to kerb edges

The repair work to the damaged kerb edges has been completed.

3. GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

PC Farmer gave the crime statistics since the last forum. She reported there have been fifteen burglary dwellings, nine thefts from motor vehicle and five thefts of motor vehicle.

She has met with the Ward Councillors and Highways over speeding issues on Manchester Road and read out the following Highways statement:

“Any requests for Speed Cameras, fixed or mobile and Red Light Cameras have to go through a strict criteria set by The Government. This criteria is based on the number of recorded personal injury accidents over the last three years which are speed related or red light running, current vehicle speeds and the provision of a safe place for equipment to be sited and in the case of a mobile site a vehicle has a safe and legal area to park. Any potential site has to have a history of road casualties over the last three year period available which have been linked to speeding or in the case of traffic signals, red light running. Speed surveys would also have to be undertaken to check the average speeds and the 85%ile. Looking at the latest collision records for Manchester Road, the area would not reach the required number of points to meet the criteria for a Fixed Camera Site, it may meet it for a mobile site, although the majority of collisions are not speed related. A mobile site would also have to have speed surveys and be assessed for a safe, legal and visible place for a mobile van to be located. The traffic signals would not meet the criteria for a red light running camera as there have been no recorded collisions”

Community Speed Watch Operations have been carried out, the speed gun used is not calibrated and cannot be used as evidence to enforce, but written warnings can and they have been sent to offending vehicle owners.

PC Farmer explained that there are already approved locations for the siting of mobile enforcement

vehicles which are used and will continue to be used. She is planning in the New Year to replicate the recently publicised Operation Considerate, during which a large number of vehicles were seized. The Operation will involve other agencies and address the issues of speeding, no vehicle documentation, not wearing seat belts, use of mobile phones and vehicle worthiness. Highway plans are being developed for Manchester Road in the next eighteen months which will reduce lane width and naturally slow vehicles down.

Public Realm Inspector, Diane Lodwig, is obtaining quotes to install knee rail around the lower points of Kingsland Common to prevent vehicles driving on to it; installation of a knee rail around the entire common would be too costly. Consideration is being given to allowing the grass around the perimeter to grow to three or four feet, leaving the centre to be used socially.

Long standing anti-social behaviour and drug abuse around the canal bridge was discussed and the area is being patrolled. The presence of shrines is a delicate subject and if on private land is a matter for the land owner to resolve.

All were reminded to be aware of home and vehicle security, not to leave valuables or presents on show, keep lights and alarms on and make it look like someone is home.

PC Farmer is holding a Christmas coffee afternoon at Castleton Community Centre between 12 noon and 3pm on Friday 14 December 2018 with mince pies, a raffle and carol singers from St Edwards Primary School, all are welcome.

4. OPEN FORUM

Trows Lane and Cowm Top Lane fly tipping

Two fly tipping hotspots reported at Trows Lane and Cowm Top Lane with some of it builder's waste. Public Realm Inspector, Diane Lodwig, is aware of the problem and she has visited the location and inspected for evidence. All residents were requested to report the fly tipping but not to touch it as they can ruin the evidential integrity.

Air pollution

A recent Government report on air pollution highlighted two areas in Castleton, namely Manchester Road and Edinburgh Way, as exceeding their limit for Nitrogen Oxides which is a concern to the community. Motorways are exempt. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities are looking at the problem overall and Councillor Sheerin will raise the issue at their next group meeting, together with the impact of increasing use of wood burners also with Rochdale Council's representative on the Combined Authorities.

5. REPORTS

Castleton EC Residents

No report received.

Friends of Carnegie Castleton

The Friends group are taking up the Lease on 1 January 2019 and they will be moving in to the old Reading Room which will be bigger than it was due to the removal of items such as a sink. It is planned to open up as a Heritage Centre on the 1 April 2019. A solicitors firm will occupy the top floor. More members and volunteers would be most welcome.

Friends of Castleton Station/Support the Oldham, Rochdale & Manchester Rail Lines/East Lancs Railway

Fund raising is ongoing and proving hard work. A heritage style information board, similar to Sowerby Bridge or Littleborough Station, will cost in the region of £3,800 which is currently beyond means. £200 has been received from Northern Trains and £200 from Community Rail Partnership. The Cooperative Community Fund for local causes has been applied to and an official answer is awaited, as is a response from Tesco.

STORM are engaged in two campaigns, the poor air quality at Victoria Station, particularly around platforms five and six under the Arena and missing trains. MP Liz McInnes was written to about these issues on 14 November 2018 but no response has been received yet. Every newsletter is also sent to her office.

Anyone is welcome to go on the STORM website to report any issues or bad service. Four trains stop in Castleton two in each direction, other trains come through nearly empty without stopping when it could collect waiting passengers from cancelled trains. The wait at Rochdale Station for a connecting train to Littleborough is twenty minutes when the two journeys together are only six minutes.

St. Gabriel's

The Notability Choir will be performing at 7pm on Friday 14 December 2018. £5 a ticket including mulled wine and Christmas cheer.

Rehearsals for the Dick Whittington Pantomime are well under way.

Rochdale Township in Bloom

This year's achievements have been phenomenal. The North West In Bloom Judges were so impressed with Castleton that they put forward both the Railway Station and the new Memorial Gardens to be part of the Rochdale entry in to the National Britain In Bloom contest where as finalists Rochdale was awarded a Gold medal in Belfast that Councillor Sheerin was very pleased to accept.

A celebratory event was held in Rochdale Town Hall where the voluntary sector effort was recognised and rewarded with prizes such as Volunteer of the Year. The People's Choice was won by Castleton War Memorial.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Thanks were given to the Ward Councillors for funding the additional World War One commemorative silhouette in the grounds of St. Aidan's Church which adds to the area.

Councillors' Surgeries

Surgeries at 10.30am–11.30am at the following venues:

First Saturday in month – St Aidan's Church Hall

Second Saturday in month – Castleton Community Centre

Third Saturday in month – Chesham Community Room

Fourth Saturday in month – Castleton Community Centre

7. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 5 March 2019 at 7pm in Castleton Community Centre.