

HILLCREST & HENSINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

**Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 23rd September 2010
at St John's Church Hall, Hensingham**

Meeting started at 6.30pm

Forum Chair: Cumbria County Councillor Mike Hawkins

**Councillors Present: Cllr Margarita Docherty, Cllr Geoff Garrity, Cllr Norman Williams
and Cllr Andrew Wonnacott**

Apologies: Keith Cartner

Declaration of Interest:

Short Breaks Unit – Cllr Mike Hawkins

Whitehaven Bowling Club – Cllr Norman Williams

As Jonathan was officially on his day off this item was brought forward.

Neighbourhood Policing PCSO Jonathan Mann for Hillcrest & Hensingham

- Main problem is with youth in the cemetery behind the Kings Arms, the police are working with other agencies and partners to solve this, the Police have increased patrols to catch the offenders and deal with them appropriately;
- Safer Stronger Community (SSC) priority meeting is held the last Wednesday of each month usually at Whitehaven Civic Hall at 11:30 am, it's an opportunity for residents to raise any concerns they may have in their area;
- Teenagers have been hanging around Outpatients at the West Cumberland Hospital; the Police are working with the Hospital and are having regular monthly meetings with the Head of Security.

PCSOs are there to work with communities, they are given specific areas to provide a high visibility foot patrol and give as much reassurance as possible to residents.

Topic 1: Whitehaven Transport Interchange

Speaker: Lynne Thomas, Project Manager

The Whitehaven Transport Interchange is a high priority scheme in the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme to deliver improved transport facilities in the town and to assist in economic and environmental regeneration. The proposed development site is to the north of the town centre, adjacent to Tesco supermarket and the railway station.

Key Objectives are to create:

- Pedestrian friendly environment;
- Improved links between the Interchange, harbour and the town centre;
- Cycle link between the waterfront and the C2C cycle route;
- Reduced traffic dominance in the Interchange area;
- High quality car parking environment at the railway station and;
- Public space at the gateway to Whitehaven.

The Power point presentation covered:

Final design options for the Transport Interchange giving background, context around site, objectives for this project, final design with an opportunity to hear any comments or observations.

The scheme is now at the stage where planning permission is to be sought and funding to be agreed with County Council and Britain's Energy Coast.

Questions and Discussion

Q When do you think it will be finished?

A It all depends on when we start; it will run alongside the Tesco refurbishment and when the petrol station is moved, which could be last in their programme. It will be two years from when we start.

Q Is there going to be a roundabout?

A No the traffic will run as it does now with priority for New Road.

Note: It was suggested that the roundabout is being designed at the main junction where the traffic currently goes into Tesco. The traffic exiting from Tesco will be moved to this other junction; which means there will be less traffic using the junction from the Railway Station.

Q Tesco are losing some car parking spaces, they will not want to be losing spaces.

A Tesco will not be losing parking spaces; the public realm is at the front. Tesco will get on with their development they don't have a start date, when this can happen is unknown; it will take two years to construct from whenever Tesco finish although there are bits that we can start with.

Tony Potts, Chair of Copeland Rail Users said that he had reservations about the design from the rail aspect, the railway station is stuck at the back, obscured by the trees that will drop leaves, it's not a good idea to have trees and what are you doing about the platforms? He then sighted the problems at Harrington Station, as with all stations along the line, with the low platforms and outlining a solution in the pilot scheme "Harrington Hump".

A Apart from moving the platform for use for car parking, money will be spent on the Interchange itself and will not be addressing the need to get onto the train.

Q Are you looking at a Harrington hump for Whitehaven?

I want more prominence to the Railway station;
Open up the space to make the station more accessible.

A We can't move the Railway station, we have to do the best we can within the constraints we have, your comments will be taken back but I'm sure these issues have been considered.

Q It's largely cosmetic?

A Your concerns should be directed to Northern Rail and Network Rail.

Q Where did you come up with the term "Transport Interchange"? It doesn't say what you want it to do.

A It means making it easier for people to transfer from rail to buses.

Q What's going to happen to the old bus station and sheds, they are going to spoil the outlook?

A They are privately owned and there's nothing we can do with them as they are outside our remit.

Q I feel it is piecemeal, doing it in isolation of the town, may not have the desired effect.
A I reject that, I am aware of what is going on with Tesco as are the designers who are also working with the Streetscapes project which is looking at the way the traffic flows around the town, it will look like a coherent project from the materials that are used.

Q Connecting with the town, are we getting rid of the bus stops in the town?
A Nothing I am doing will have any effect on the bus routes.

Q Connecting bus and rail with the town and cycle access onto the harbour, are you doing things to get people connected with Lowther Street such as the signage etc. there isn't a natural people flow.
A The signage does need to be improved, it isn't an easy flow, and we can do something about the signage through the Streetscape project.

Q With the volume of traffic coming down the hill on New Road and Bransty Row, even if you're the only one, my worry is about the buses coming out of the junction.
A We are working within the constraints of the site and traffic management.

Q You've shown up high quality finishes, but CCC doesn't maintain them, how are you going to maintain it when there's no money?
A We are looking carefully at all projects, at the maintenance and revenue implications; in most towns around Cumbria we are getting to a standard for materials in the town centre, creating a "wow factor" in the town centre and as you travel further out less "wow" and less costly, it is something CCC are getting smarter at; the Area Engineer does have a say as he has responsibility for the materials that he can maintain and can afford to maintain.

Topic 2: Update on the Redevelopment of the West Cumberland Hospital **Speaker: David Hounslea, Project Director**

Funding update – In July 2010 Approval by Department of Health secured £70 million funding; £20 million from The Trust and Strategic Health Authority was already secure however the remaining £10 million from NWDA was no longer available owing to abolition of Regional Development Agencies.

Site up date – changes have been made to the ring road and replacement car parking was introduced in May 2010; demolition of former Buttermere, Crummock and Windermere Wards and the former Estates workshops has now been completed; a site for the new build almost cleared with Contractor's compound established.

Design update – Design team and clinical user groups commenced work September 2009; all site surveys completed; full planning permission granted by Copeland Borough Council; plans for new build signed off by clinical users at room-by-room level.

Next steps – Scheme being reviewed by hospital clinicians and GP commissioners following the NHS White Paper in July 2010; make sure that the new hospital meets the needs of Copeland and Allerdale patients into the future; ensure consistency with the proposed hospital and health centre developments at Cockermouth and Cleator Moor; plan to deliver the scheme within a reduced budget, if NWDA's £10m can not be replaced.

Communication - for latest information and downloads there is a project website and newsletter; to make comments or suggestions there is an email address, telephone number, call into Project office, write on Comment Wall or take part in Patient surveys carried out by Cumbria LINK.

Questions and Discussion

Q Where are you hoping to relocate Yewdale?
A We'll keep it on site; we're working with staff on this.
Q Does it have to be level before you start?

A Yes it does have to be taken down, two thirds of the site has already been cleared but we can't progress. The start of the new build will be next summer, we've got to get Yewdale moved, and it's limited what we can do while the patients are still there.

Q Is it going to be a reduced build or will it be the same size?

A I'm aware of the commitment in the original consultation; there is no intention to change that.

Q £10 million loss – these projects never run to budget.

A The arrangement we have with the contractor is a guaranteed price, unless we change the scheme, the risk is taken by the contractor.

Q Why is this new build going hand in hand with reduction of admin?

A I am responsible for delivering the hospital, this question is more for the Financial Director, although our Trust has to make savings in running costs.

Comment: Jobs are being taken from this area and are going abroad.

Q Is the Teaching Centre not going ahead; where was that on the first slide?

A The Proposal was not just for a Teaching Centre but an Academic Centre.

Q If the economic state improves would you be able to build that in?

A I have met with Britain's Energy Coast and Strategic Health Authority and am pursuing lines of enquiry.

Q If we can't recoup this £10 million which part will be sacrificed?

A It will be for the clinicians to decide.

Q Will there be a loss of services?

A No we won't lose services, we will lose floor area.

Q When do you expect it to be completed?

A It will be completed in phases:

- Complete new build;
- Move from old to new department;
- Refurbish buildings being retained and demolish buildings not being used;
- Car parking 2012-2013 before rest of work completed.

First we will build the three levels, creating a three storey block:

Level 2 - Support Ancillary facilities, Stores, Laboratories and staff areas;

Level 3 – Emergency floors, Out of Hours Services, Acute Coronary;

Level 4 - Operations and Day surgeries.

The Helipad is staying where it is.

Q There's currently ongoing refurbishment in areas that are going to be knocked down in three years time?

A Patients have to use them, they have to be safe and at a reasonable standard.

Q Contractors Laing O'Rourke are they still going to be the contractors to do the work, if the work doesn't start until the summer?

A We are required by the Treasury to demonstrate best value for money; we're working with Laing O'Rourke and their advisers.

Q How much of the capital has been spent so far?

A £6.5 million has been spent on demolition, planning fees, anything at the front end of the project.

Q The Trust manager told Catering staff that Laing O'Rourke are not coming back on site until March next year, if it is them.

A The physical enabling work has now been done, the site is set up, the contractors cabins are there, the next part of the physical work will take place next spring.

Q Could you put more information in the News to reassure people?

A Articles have been put in both Councils newsletters, papers for our Trust Board meetings; we have our own newsletter and website.

Q If you haven't done a good deal what happens then?

A They won't sign the work off until you prove you have.

Q Will it delay the building of the hospital? If the Treasury decide it isn't a good deal, can you renegotiate?

A Yes, they wouldn't sign it off as a good business case for us to start the work.

Community News and Updates

• Homestays Project – Nicki Pennington Homestays Adviser

Homestays is Cumbria County Council's Supported Lodgings Scheme, established in 2007, it is a countywide project available to all young people who have or still are in the Care of the Local Authority. The aim of the project is to offer young people between the ages of 16-25 supported accommodation to assist them in making a positive transition to living independently.

Homestays recruits people in the community who are able to offer a young person a room in their home and support the young person to develop independent living skills. The Homestays Provider will receive support through training, support groups, regular contact with Homestays Advisers and a weekly allowance of £165.00 to cover the cost of rent and support.

Questions and Discussion

Q How does it match up with foster care?

A There is a key difference in the role of the provider, recognising a youngster is on the road to independence, they are in the transition to adulthood, to give them respect it's not complete lodgings or foster care.

A We were established in 2007 and have done 27 placements, it's slow but sure; we're still at the project stage. We are looking for young people making that step to independence and committed to living independently, we will support and be alongside them.

For young people with substance dependence this scheme wouldn't be right for them.

Q How long do placements last?

A A few months; funding changes for a 16 year old they could ultimately have four years; we work with young people and providers and there are reviews.

Q After 4 years how do they sort out their accommodation?

A We would help sort them out, early on they would have an independent living plan, the key thing is moving on and we consider this at the beginning, it's a journey we will support them with through to independence.

Q In an ideal situation, do providers keep an interest in the youngster as they move on and be there if needed?

A One of the key aims is for the young person to develop their own support network, human nature is to develop a bond but it's not an expectation.

- **Cumbria Amnesty Appeal – Rob Huck**

There is a petition to raise awareness in support of a campaign for a county wide Gun and Knife amnesty with the hope that it will roll out across the country nationally, 3,000 signatures have been collected so far. In the past amnesties have proved to be effective and in 2003 46,000 illegal weapons were handed in after a shooting incident in Birmingham. At the moment it is at the discretion of the police as to whether anyone handing a weapon in would be prosecuted, an amnesty means they wouldn't be prosecuted. Craig Mackay the Chief Constable of Cumbria Constabulary and Ray Cole, Chair of Cumbria Police Authority met with the Police Minister last week and are supporting this campaign. In addition Jamie Reed has said he is happy to present the petition to Parliament at the end of October. They are trying to bring some positivity out of the incident on 2nd June.

Petition sheets and envelopes to reply were available for the forum to take away.

- **Short Breaks Unit in Melbreak House, Hensingham**

It was reported that Childrens Services have been waiting since the 14th July for confirmation from the government as to how much capital money was to be re-allocated under Aiming High for Disabled Children. No confirmation has been received other than money that was held over from a previous financial year to contribute to a new build unit may be reclaimed. If this was the case the project would have a funding shortfall and could not proceed. The delay has also meant that any build programme would not be complete until June of next year which adds a further risk as monies have to be spent this financial year. The project is therefore awaiting further government advice and until then is on hold.

- **Cumbria County Council Plan Consultation 2011-2014**

Information was given on the first phase of consultation, 13 September – 11 October, for feedback from local people on which services are seen as essential and as extras.

Phase Two (November 1-15) will focus on specific options for changes to service areas when the outcome of the government's Comprehensive Spending Review and its impact upon the council is known.

Phase Three (December 9 – January 10) Stakeholders are invited to comment on the final draft Council Plan and Budget before a final decision will be made by county councillors at Full Council on February 17 2011.

- **West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely** – latest update was circulated for information.

Grants Budget for 2010/2011 - £5,443.32 Youth Budget £ 955.50

Grant Applicant Presentations

The grant applicants made their presentations

Consideration of Applications – Applicants and their supporters including councillors withdrew whilst those remaining, decided the awards).

Grants Awarded

ORGANISATION	PURPOSE OF GRANT	AMOUNT AWARDED
Copeland Amateur Theatrical Society	For a professional sound technician and equipment for the 'Spend, Spend, Spend' musical performance in February 2011	£450.00
Whitehaven Bowling Club	Towards the improvements to the Club's facilities	£450.00
Hensingham A F C	Towards the cost of a camera and Coaching and Referee training programmes	£750.00

Topics for future meetings

- **Whitehaven Streetscapes**

Dates of next forums

Thursdays 25th November 2010 and 10th February 2011

The meeting finished at 8:35 pm