

Camperdown and Weetslade Elected Mayor Listens Event

Note

22 October 2015

Present: Norma Redfearn, Elected Mayor
Councillors Eddie Darke, Ray Glindon, John Harrison, Bruce Pickard,
John Stirling, Alison Waggott-Fairley, Jim Allan, Anne Arkle, Muriel Green
and Joanne Cassidy

Also in attendance:

Malcolm Frazer, Highways Team, Capita
Anne-Marie Chesterfield, Training Officer
Chief Inspector Nicola Musgrave, Northumbria Police
Inspector Ray Smith, Northumbria Police

Apologies: Councillors Carole Burdis, Ian Grayson and Lesley Spillard

The Elected Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that the aim of these events was to bring the Elected Mayor and Cabinet into the community to talk to residents about what is happening in their area.

At this point, those Cabinet Members and Ward Councillors present introduced themselves and outlined their responsibilities.

The Elected Mayor then provided residents with an update based on a number of issues which had been raised with Ward Councillors.

Silverbirch had been allocated for affordable housing. Discussions were still ongoing at this stage regarding the design of the homes.

There had been a query about a Planning Application for the New Sports Development at the Seaton Burn Welfare. Officers in the planning team were not aware of any pre-application to renew the application. The permission which was outline expired on 5 November 2015. The application was outline and they had not submitted any reserved matters so it was unlikely that that they could get these conditions discharged within the time.

In relation to the Former Seaton Burn School Site, officers in Strategic Housing had advised that Bernicia Housing Association were offered various sites and secured Affordable Homes Grant Funding against these sites. However one of these became unworkable in late 2014 due to the receipt of a large number of objections.

In order to retain Bernicia's Affordable Homes Grant within North Tyneside the decision was taken to offer an alternative site for development, this being the former Seaton Burn School site. This was a brown field site in the Weetslade ward.

Bernicia had subsequently developed a proposal for the site, which was the development of 8 no dwellings; 4 no 2 bed houses and 4 no 1 bed apartments, with 12 parking spaces. This met the housing needs within the local area and was acceptable in principle.

Bernicia had completed site investigations and were awaiting the findings of a noise survey before finalising the design.

The results of consultation had been varied with some objections and some support. Objections centred on loss of open space, however Bernicia were confident of a positive outcome regarding the planning application, which should be submitted in the next 6 to 8 weeks.

In relation to speeding along Front Street, a recent speed survey on Front Street had indicated that the average vehicle speed conformed to the current 30mph speed restriction. Unfortunately due of the volume and nature of the traffic on Front Street, the introduction of traffic calming would not be appropriate in this area. In light of this, the Elected Mayor had asked officers to investigate the provision of additional signs and road markings to highlight the speed limit and maintain low speeds.

With regard to the flooding issues along Green Lane, a large section of the new culvert had been incorrectly laid by the contractor. The entire section was being fully re-laid and the area properly reinstated. Works were nearing completion. The remedial works had been completed, sub-soiling and top soiling had been carried out.

Road Resurfacing

Malcolm Frazer, Highways Team, Capita, gave a presentation on road resurfacing in the area. He outlined the different stages of the programme which were 1) localised repairs; 2) planned patching programme; 3) micro-asphalt resurfacing programme; and 4) full resurfacing programme.

Mr Frazer answered various questions from residents and stated that he would follow up on the following issues that were raised:

- i) Inspecting North Road road markings – since new road markings were laid following resurfacing the north carriageway is narrower than the south carriageway; and
- ii) Inspecting the condition of the back lane of Wansbeck Road

In response to a query from a resident regarding works to streets in Burradon it was agreed that the resident would give officers details of the streets concerned.

In response to a query from a resident regarding the lack of litter bins at the bus stops on Dudley Lane/Angerton Terrace, Councillor John Stirling indicated that he would take the matter up with the relevant officers.

Dementia Friends

Anne-Marie Chesterfield, Training Officer, gave a presentation on how to become a Dementia Friend in the community. She explained the aims of Dementia Friends and outlined the key messages that people needed to know about dementia. A short film was also shown and an interactive activity undertaken.

Open Question Time

The floor was opened up to questions from residents. The following questions were asked:

1) Public Rights of Way

I am concerned that the public rights of way in Burradon, Camperdown and Seaton Burn are disappearing. Land owners have been seeding and harvesting the land. This issue is presently with your legal department. What's happening?

The Elected Mayor replied as follows:

We will look into this.

Councillor John Harrison responded as follows:

We took the Local Plan to Council on Tuesday. Part of that Plan deals with the environment and public rights of way. I met with officers this morning to discuss how we maintain and preserve our public rights of way.

Councillor Ray Glendon also commented as follows:

We are dealing with this issue through the legal department.

2) Greenhills Underpass

The underpass is dreadful. There is graffiti and teenagers often congregate there. The language they use at times is disgusting. I won't go through if teenagers are gathering. It also floods after heavy rain. What can be done?

Councillor John Stirling replied as follows:

We can get graffiti removed and attend to lighting etc. The issue of teenagers congregating is more a police matter.

Inspector Ray Smith responded as follows:

We are experiencing some problems with children congregating, often using social media/tweets etc. but they tend to congregate around the lake. This is not a problem which can be solved overnight but we are working on it. We have spoken to pupils of both George Stephenson and Seaton Burn High Schools about behavioural issues

several times and will continue to do so. We have made inroads but there will be some hot spots.

Councillor Jim Allan commented as follows:

It is important for people to ring the police to report such issues. This will build up statistics and help the police identify where the hot spots are.

3) Former Dudley School/Peoples Centre

What's happened to this building?

Councillor John Harrison replied as follows:

It is in private ownership and there are proposals to develop homes.

Councillor Muriel Green commented as follows:

Planning permission was given some months ago for 14 three bedroom properties. The developer has 3 years to move on to the site.

4) Market Street Double Yellow Lines

Are there any future plans for double yellow lines on Market Street?

Councillor Muriel Green replied as follows:

There have been several attempts to have double yellow lines. Consultation has occurred but there were objections and a petition. We did promise to have a look at this again and perhaps we can now do that. Not everyone will be in favour. This is a balancing exercise. We could ask officers to come forward with new plans.

5) Land next to White Swan Centre

There is some waste land next to the White Swan Centre by the bus station. Who owns it and who is responsible for tidying it up as it is an eyesore?

The Elected Mayor replied as follows:

I will find out and let you know.

6) Greenhills Underpass

Returning to the issue of Greenhills underpass, can we not have a method of clearing leaves and drains at the same time? What would happen if someone got knocked down because they could not use the underpass? The Council would be responsible. If the underpass was tiled it wouldn't encourage people to throw rubbish. In its present state it looks as if the Council is not bothered.

Councillor Jim Allan replied as follows:

Some people do cross the road rather than use the underpass. As Ward Councillors we have been asked by a number of people to close the underpass.

The Elected Mayor also replied as follows:

I can reassure you we are bothered and we need to look at how we can improve the underpass.

Councillor John Stirling also responded as follows:

I will visit the underpass with an officer to inspect it to see what can be done to improve the drainage etc.

It was agreed that Councillor Stirling would have a meeting on site with the resident and an officer at a date to be agreed.

7) Speeding and Dog Fouling on Weetslade Road

A lot of cars speed along Weetslade Road. I was trying to turn into my drive at 9.00am one morning and a car must have been doing 60mph coming in the opposite direction. Do the speed signs record drivers exceeding the limit?
Dog fouling is also a problem here.

Councillor John Stirling replied as follows:

Dog fouling is an issue across the borough. I will ask the wardens to monitor this area.

Inspector Ray Smith also replied as follows:

The speed signs are not cameras. However we do have volunteers (Community Speedwatch) to educate and advise. I will ask them to monitor this area. We currently have three volunteers but would like more. There is a link on the Northumbria Police website which explains what the volunteers do.

The Elected Mayor also responded as follows:

If it would assist, details of the Community Speedwatch scheme could be given in a future edition of the Council's magazine.

8) Carriageway Works at Whitehouse Farm

Can you clarify the works that are being undertaken at Whitehouse Farm?

Councillor John Harrison replied as follows:

The development on this piece of land was granted on appeal. The Council opposed the application on traffic management grounds because a roundabout would need to be created. That's the work that's ongoing now. The carriageway will be down to a single lane while this work is happening. There is a 50mph speed restriction at the moment and this will be monitored to see how it pans out. This links in to the Goathland Avenue/Four Lane Ends/Sandy Lane works which will help ease traffic. I would be happy to show the resident a copy of the plans after the meeting.

The Elected Mayor thanked residents, staff and speakers for their attendance. She thanked Chief Inspector Nicola Musgrave and Inspector Ray Smith from Northumbria Police for their attendance.

In closing, the Elected Mayor stated that she hoped residents found such meetings worthwhile. Over the next three years, due to a reduction in Government funding, the Council would need to make savings of around £53m and difficult decisions would have to be made. The Elected Mayor and Cabinet would continue to work in partnership with residents.