

Hereford Rural South (Much Birch) PACT Meeting
Tuesday, 13 October 2009
Action Sheet



Richard Quallington (Chair)
Marcia Pert (JMT Member)
PC Andy Bundy
CSO Fiona Wychall
Ruth Kinsella (Amey)
Cassandra Peter (Amey)

Chris Howell (Amey)
Cllr Jo Fishley
John Jones (Much Birch Parish Council)
Chris Bucknell (Herefordshire Partnership)
8 members of the public

Previous Issues	Response
<p>Item 1 (item 6 on previous sheet) The question and response had not been accurately recorded. The question was: If there were to be a referendum on ESG what does the Council consider would be the result? Cllr Jarvis responded at the meeting that he felt at least 60% would be in favour. This had not been reflected in the notes.</p>	<p>HC Response: At the meeting Cllr Jarvis said that in his view around 60% of the population would be in favour of the development. However, this needs to be put in the context of the consultation that has already taken place which showed good support for the scheme. See also response on Item 2.</p>

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New Issues	Response
<p>Item 2: What is Herefordshire Council's attitude about the vast amount of local people who oppose the Edgar Street Grid development? The <i>It's Our City Campaign</i> opposes the retail development. The community is not convinced of the benefit of this development and would like to see more meaningful consultation before the scheme is progressed.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: Cllr Fishley responded that the view of the local Parish Council was that no-one was in favour.</p> <p>Additional Response: Herefordshire Council has already undertaken a significant level of consultation on the Edgar Street Grid proposals and will continue to listen to the community and public on these issues.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council feels it is really important that there is meaningful public debate on big issues which affect the county and its community and is committed to ensuring that those debates continue to happen. The Edgar Street Grid developments have evolved over a period of time and will continue to evolve with the views of the community fed into the proposals.</p> <p>Feedback from the community indicates that there is now broad agreement on most parts of the ESG proposals and Herefordshire Council will continue to listen to concerns regarding the retail quarter and develop the proposals accordingly.</p>

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<p>Item 3: The PACT meetings are not publicised widely enough and there was a need to encourage more people to attend. There was no publicity in the Much Birch Hall so people attending other activities would not know about the PACT. The presentation was also not noted on the flier.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: There are a number of fliers that are sent out to Parish Clerks and local amenities such as libraries, doctors surgeries etc. PACT is publicised in the WMP newsletters which are circulated to 500 homes and e-mailed to 200 people. H&W radio were approached to do an interview but did not respond. Community First would be happy to publicise using its Village Hall contact list so that publicity can be sent direct to venues in future. The presentation should have been shown on the flier and this will be fed back to the communications team.</p>
<p>Item 4: Have the PACT meetings been evaluated to see if the resource cost in terms of officer time was balanced by benefit to the community. There are already a number of other Community Engagement mechanisms such as parish Council meetings where the community can bring their issues.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: Herefordshire Partnership and WMP are constantly looking at the format of the PACT meeting to try and make it better and more interactive. It is hoped that the inclusion of presentations will make PACT a mechanism where the community can bring issues to the notice of officers and also where information of relevance to the local community can be communicated.</p>
<p>Item 5: Would it be possible to have a Cabinet Member and/or the Chief Executive or Leader attend PACT meetings? The community would find it beneficial to be able to talk to those who make the decisions about local issues.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: It would not be possible for Cabinet Members to attend every meeting. Cllr Jarvis (Cabinet member for Environment and Strategic Housing) attended the last meeting and the Chief Executive has attended a previous meeting in the Golden Valley (Peterchurch). It may be possible to arrange this for one public meeting per year which was open to the whole community – would this be something the local people would welcome?</p>
<p>Item 6: Could Neighbourhood Watch and Smartwater signs be put up at the entrance to all hamlets and villages in the area as they are a deterrent to those planning to commit crime.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: The Neighbourhood Watch signs are only put up where there is an active Neighbourhood Watch group who fund and erect the signs themselves. Smartwater signs are erected by the Parish Councils and are readily available to purchase.</p>

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<p>Item 7: How often are speed checks carried out in the area?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: There have recently been speeders caught and ticketed in the Kingsthorne area. WMP noted that the roads in the area seem to be constructed of a noisy substance which makes vehicles appear to be going faster than they actually are. Members of the community are encouraged to report cases of speeding to their local policing officer.</p>
<p>Ruth Kinsella, from Amey, gave a presentation about the new contract between AMEY and the Council. Items 8 to 17 relate to this presentation</p>	
<p>Item 8: Do Parish Councils still employ the Lengthsmen or has this been taken over by Amey?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: The Lengthsmen Scheme is still being used and there are plans to get more of these schemes out into the community. Amey holds the budget but the scheme is operated through the Parish Councils. Amey plan to dedicate more time to developing this scheme and will plan the work with the parish Clerks in order to maximise resources.</p>
<p>Issue 9: How is Amey going to save £1 million?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: Through good control of vacancies and through a better use of existing resources.</p>
<p>Issue 10: What proportion of the overall budget is £1 million.</p>	<p>Additional Information: Our budget is £20m so £1m represents 5% saving</p>
<p>Issue11: There have been temporary lights on the drive through from the Callow to Tesco's (Knocker Hill) for a long time. When is the work going to be done? Maybe notices should have been erected to explain the issue to the public using that road.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting: The road was giving way and the lights were placed there as a safety precaution while the work was being planned. A sign explaining the issue and the timescales involved should have been considered. Work is to be started in early November.</p>

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<p>Issue 12:</p> <p>What mechanisms do Amey have for checking the quality of work done by their contractors?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>The contract has given Amey more scope to try new approaches to road maintenance. A hotbox vehicle was used to repair potholes but now a jet-patcher is being trialled. This forces tar and bitumen into the pothole. This has been used in Kingstone and the repair seems to be holding up well. The jet-patcher gives more flexibility.</p>
<p>Issue13:</p> <p>Can potholes only be repaired so many times before the road needs to be completely resurfaced?</p> <p>Do Amey have a programme for renewing all the roads in the county? The stretch from Knockers Hill to Tram Inn (Lovers lane) is really bad.</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>The quality of stretches of road are constantly monitored to see when resurfacing is needed.</p> <p>The programme of resurfacing is worked out year on year with surveys done annually to ascertain the quality of stretches of road. Scanners are used to check the quality of the bitumen to find out what areas are failing.</p>
<p>Issue 14:</p> <p>Does the Council Highways Department still exist?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>The staff from Highways have been transferred (TUPE'd) across to Amey.</p>
<p>Issue 15:</p> <p>Is Amey going to clear the ditches and culverts which cause flooding on the roads?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>Yes this will be done as part of the annual programme of works. The programme of works is published by quarters and will be put on the website.</p>
<p>Issue 16:</p> <p>Last year the programme of works was put back because the gritters needed to be used more than expected. Will this happen again?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>Unexpected events may cause budgets to be diverted to other areas of work and this is inevitable. Amey aim to make their programme flexible enough to accommodate issues such as this. They can also call on other Amey teams from around the county for emergencies such as flooding.</p>
<p>Issue 17:</p> <p>Is Amey a British company?</p>	<p>Response at the Meeting:</p> <p>The company is British and is supported by a Spanish company. It is a large group - BAA is part of the same group as are some rail businesses.</p>