



18<sup>th</sup> May 2009  
Your reference :  
Our reference : LAS/NH  
Ask for : Nigel Heckford

Area Forums  
Directorate of Communities and  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Town Hall  
Lancaster Road  
Preston PR1 2RL

**To: Members and Officers of  
The Northern Area Forum**

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County Councillors F De Molfetta, M Welsh

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Northern Area Forum - 28 May 2009**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Northern Area Forum to be held on Thursday, 28th May, 2009 at 7.00 pm at the Harris Park Conference Centre, Garstang Road.

The Agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours faithfully

*Angela Harrison LLB Hons, Dip LG*

**Assistant Director (City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)**

**Northern Area Forum**  
**Thursday, 28 May 2009**

**AGENDA**

1. **Welcome and Introduction by the Chairman of the Northern Area Forum**

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting** (Pages 1 - 8)

The minutes of the last meeting are attached for your information (*Appendix A*).

3. **Matters Arising** (Pages 9 - 14)

Please see the attached table which provides a summary of the responses to written questions received at the last meeting (*Appendix B*). Members of the public, who have received a written response and wish to take it further, should in the first instance communicate directly with the person who supplied the response.

4. **Neighbourhood Services**

The Head of Waste Management will be in attendance to provide information and answer any questions about topics including street cleansing, recycling and grounds maintenance.

5. **Help Direct**

Through Help Direct, any person 18 plus in Lancashire will get access to practical support, good advice and guidance or simply the right information they need before a problem becomes a crisis.

Help Direct is a new approach to helping people get that bit of extra support they need to stay independent, to keep healthy, to keep their home and garden in good order, to take part in leisure activities or to have opportunities to get involved in their local community.

Help Direct is intended to be a key element in the modernisation of adult social care services and it will bring together a wide range of organisations, community activities and community and voluntary sector organisations to help people find solutions to their everyday problems.

A brief presentation will be provided to the meeting on this new service.

6. **Lancashire Constabulary.**

A representative from Lancashire Constabulary will be in attendance to update the Forum on local policing priorities for the area and also respond to any queries that residents may have.

7. **30 Minute Public Question Time**

At the last meeting of the Northern Area Forum a new format Open Forum was piloted which enabled residents to speak individually to their local ward councilors, County Councillor and service providers.

The pilot was extremely well received and successfully provided more people with the opportunity to raise questions and concerns. As a result the Chairman of the Forum has taken the decision to continue to with the new style Open Forum which will involve Councillors and representatives from the Police and the Council's Neighbourhood Services function being on hand to discuss issues and concerns on a one to one basis.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Area Forum is scheduled to take place on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at Harris Park Conference Centre

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**Northern Area Forum**

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**Northern Area Forum**  
**12 March 2009**  
**Harris Park Conference Centre, Garstang Road**

**Present:** Councillor Mrs K R Cartwright in the Chair; Councillor Mrs J Greenhalgh, Vice-Chair; Councillor Driver, Fazackerley, S Greenhalgh, Hackett, Hammond, Onyon, Mrs Thomas, S Thompson and Mrs Truby

**Also in attendance:** County Councillor De Molfetta

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs McManus and T Thompson

**SC1. Welcome and Introduction by the Chair of the Northern Area Forum**

Councillor Cartwright (Chairman) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

The Chairman explained that there would be a change to the regular 30 minute Open Forum with a new format being piloted. This would give residents the opportunity to speak individually with their own ward Councillors, County Councillor, the Police, Neighbourhood Services, and Stagecoach. The Chairman advised that anyone who had a particular concern or who wished to have a written response to their question should complete a question card and hand it to the Area Forum Officers.

**SC2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the last meeting of the Northern Area Forum held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009, be received and signed as a correct record noting the following amendment:-

- Under SC6, Lancashire Constabulary, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, it should be changed to the Central Division as a whole had received 10 additional Community Beat Officers

**SC3. Matters Arising**

The Chairman referred the meeting to a table of responses to written questions received at the last meeting. She advised that members of the

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public who had received a written response should, in the first instance, communicate directly with the person who supplied the response.

### **SC4. Area Forum Funding**

The Chairman drew the meeting's attention to the Area Forum Request Schedule and explained that Area Forum Funding for the financial year had now come to an end.

The following organisation had been invited to attend the meeting to provide a brief update of their Funding Award and to be presented with a large presentation cheque:-

- The Filberts Neighbourhood Watch

### **SC5. Lancashire Constabulary**

The Chairman welcomed Inspector Jameel Murtza to the meeting to provide an update on local policing issues and initiatives.

Inspector Murtza began by informing the meeting that on a whole, the Central Division, had achieved good results. Acquisitive crime had reduced by 19.8%, criminal damage had decreased by 18.8% and assaults with less serious injury were down by 12.9%. For Fulwood, acquisitive crime was down by 12.3%, assaults with less serious injury had reduced by 14.1% and criminal damage had reduced by 18.5%.

Inspector Murtza gave the meeting an update on the Police pledge which ensures that members of the public are contacted within 24 hours of their initial contact with the Police. He advised that initial results appeared to be showing that the Police were now meeting this promise.

With regards to PACT meetings Inspector Murtza stated that one of the priorities is to increase Police Officer visibility. There are also a number of initiatives being developed across the Division and the County. Inspector Murtza highlighted that the targets for next year will be focused around public confidence and satisfaction.

Inspector Murtza stated that response officers have now been aligned and cross trained on dealing with Neighbourhood Policing issues which is intended to enhance the dedicated service already provided by the areas dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team. Inspector Murtza advised that PC Shorrocks from the Neighbourhood Policing team is responsible for the College and Moor Park Ward.

The following issues were discussed:-

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- The question was asked as to whether people were able to call into Fulwood Police Station. Inspector Murtza advised that people can call into Fulwood Police Station although it is operational during Office hours and not 24 hours per day.
- One resident suggested that Officers should use bicycles more to patrol the streets. Inspector Murtza stated that Community Beat Officers do indeed have access to bikes but explained that, due to operational demands, they may not be able to use them everyday. Sergeant Dixon added that all the Plungington team have bikes as do Lea.
- A local resident asked if there had been any success with burglaries in the area. It was noted that there has been at least a 50% detection rate this month in regards to burglaries.

### SC6. Neighbourhood Services

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mark Taylor, Head of Clean Environment Services, to the meeting to provide a short update on the work of Preston City Council's Neighbourhood Services Division.

Mr Taylor summarised the work of Neighbourhood Services and the three departments encompassed in the division which are street cleansing and litter education, horticulture, parks and green spaces, and refuse collection and recycling. Mr Taylor advised that there had been 2 successful prosecutions for fly-tipping and significant fines had been issued. Detritus and soil build up along cycle routes and pavements has now been cleared.

Mr Taylor informed the meeting that there has been joint working to achieve a major clean up of the banked areas on Bucklands & Murdock Avenue. The shrubs have also been replaced on the Anderton Way roundabout and also the Williams Lane roundabout. Mr Taylor explained that consultation has taken place with residents on how to improve the Mill Lane play area. He advised the meeting to contact Martin Peel, Parks Development Officer – Play, with any suggestions at [m.peel@preston.gov.uk](mailto:m.peel@preston.gov.uk).

A decision had been made on the Skate Park Project with Ashton Park being chosen as the potential location. A development team had now been created which included young people.

Mr Taylor provided an update on Haslam Park advising that a hedge planting event had taken place which had been a huge success. It was advised that improvements had made to the sensory garden. Mr Taylor explained that the park had been re-submitted for Green Flag status.

A copy of the presentation is available to download from [www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk) .

The following issues were raised:-

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- Thanks were given to Preston City Council for their work preventing fly-tipping. The resident asked what work was taking place regarding the issue with rat infestation. Mr Taylor answered that the Council's Environmental Health Function dealt with such issues and asked the resident to put the question on a card for a response. He added that litter levels affect rodent levels and that the public can help by disposing of their litter properly.
- One resident asked that Gypsy Lane which is a continuation of Churchill Road be added to the list of grot spots as residents try to keep clean but fly tipping still occurs. Mr Taylor informed the resident that he would add this area and he was glad that it had been reported.

### SC7. Stagecoach

The Chairman welcomed Mr James Mellor, Commercial Manager, and Mr Rob Jones, Operations Manager for Preston, to the meeting to answer any questions that people may have and provide information on bus services.

The meeting were informed that the acquisition of Preston Bus took effect on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009. Many changes will be taking place with revised services starting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2009. It was noted that there would be no fundamental changes to the buses but they would be more evenly spaced and less buses would be placed on routes of high congestion. The representative from Stagecoach explained that he had brought along to the meeting timetables, leaflets, a summary of changes, and route maps, which the public could peruse and he would be happy to post out if individuals left their details. He added that this information would be sent out to all homes in Preston.

The following issues were discussed:-

- One resident stated that there was no local bus and the only buses to run along Garstang Road were the number 40 & 41 which ran every 30 minutes. The resident suggested that the number 22 bus could be re-routed to cover the area as sometimes the 40 & 41 service may arrive early but do not wait. It was answered that the buses should not leave before the designated time and if this happens residents should bring to the attention of Stagecoach. It was added that problems have occurred with the number 40 & 41 services being held up as the traffic at Broughton could be unpredictable.
- Concern was raised that there was no bus along Garstang Road which went to the hospital and he suggested that a bus be re-routed which would cover this. It was explained that Stagecoach could not justify a bus along Garstang Road as the demand was not high

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enough. The timetables were being revised and they could look at 2 buses per hour, however, Stagecoach would need to strike a balance between simple core routes and route variations along different roads. He advised the resident to write their query on a card and this would be looked into.

- A local resident advised that he had to walk half a mile to the nearest bus stop to go into town and would like a bus to be re-routed as there were many estates around the area and people who would use the service. The resident also asked how Stagecoach carried out its market research. The representative from Stagecoach advised that there was a need to balance revenue with financial risk as one additional bus running from Monday to Saturday would need to generate approximately £110,000 in revenue to be deemed sustainable. The Chairman added that it could be worthwhile to carry out some market research in the area and asked residents to complete cards as this would be a foundation for the representatives to take this idea back to Stagecoach.
- An attendee of the meeting stated that there should be some records regarding the usage of the route from when the number 32 bus was removed.
- One resident expressed his unhappiness that Stagecoach had acquired Preston Bus. It was advised that the resident should write to the Managing Director of Stagecoach regarding his concerns.
- It was asked whether the fares would increase when the changes take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. It was noted that there were no planned changes to the fares for the foreseeable future.

### **sc8. Ethics and Standards and the Role of Local Councillors**

The Chair welcomed Caron Parmenter, Head of Legal Services and Brian Heath, of the Standards Committee, to the meeting to provide information on the work of the Standards Committee, why ethics are important in local government and how complaints can be made. Councillors are required to comply with a strict Code of Conduct which is in place to ensure that Elected Members of local authorities live up to the high ethical standards expected of elected representatives.

It was explained that the purpose of the presentation was to advise the meeting about ethics and standards of the Council's Elected Members in Preston and the measures that are in place to ensure that those ethics and standards are maintained at the highest level. It was noted that the presentation contained information about why ethics and standards are important, the role and members of Preston's local Standards Committee and how to make a complaint. The ethics and standards of members were described as requiring elected representatives to conduct themselves by a set of principles which are 'morally acceptable to society'.

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It was explained that citizens should expect, experience and perceive there to be good ethical behaviour and governance whenever decisions are taken by the Council and resources allocated that affect citizens' lives and communities. It was emphasised that in the main there are very rarely incidences of serious poor behaviour at a local level and that where incidences do occur these have a disproportionate impact on the public's perception of local democracy as a whole.

The main role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct throughout the work and operation of Preston Council. One of the aims is to create a sense of 'ethical well-being' in the authority. The committee is at the heart of the standards framework and promotes, educates, and supports Elected Members of the Council in following the highest standards of conduct. As well as a pro-active role in creating an ethical organisation the Committee also receives and makes determinations on complaints against Members and has available to it a number of sanctions where breaches of the Code of Conduct have been found.

The Standards Committee comprises of a mixture of people from different backgrounds and walks of life. It has 4 members of the City Council, 3 representatives from Parish Councils and 4 independent members. The presence of independent representatives on the Committee helps increase public confidence and gives a clear signal to the community that the Committee is fair. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee are both Independent Members.

The conduct expected of local authority members is set out in the Members' Code of Conduct. By signing up to the Code of Conduct, a member is actively taking on a formal obligation to abide by its requirements. The Code of Conduct forms the bedrock of the conduct regime and aims to promote the public's trust and confidence in their members and faith in local democracy. It does this by providing a robust set of standards of behaviour for Members to abide by and work within. In doing this, the Code also protects Members from unreasonable expectations of behaviour being put on them.

The Council's Standards Assessment Sub-Committee is responsible for considering complaints against Members who may have breached the Code of Conduct. Any complaint must be about one or more named members of Preston City Council or the 8 Parish Councils which fall in the Preston Area. The complaint must be that an Elected Member has, or may have, breached the Code of Conduct. Complaints about dissatisfaction with a decision or action of the authority or one of its committees, a service provided by the authority or the authority's procedures do not fall within the jurisdiction of the standards committee. The complaint must be in writing.

The meeting was informed that a Guidance Note can be obtained from the Council or the Council's website ([www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk)). The guidance

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provides detailed information about the complaint process and what can be expected to happen.

A copy of the presentation is available to download from [www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk) .

The following issues were discussed:-

- A Member of the Forum highlighted the fact that he felt that it was important for people to be aware of the real impact of some(times) frivolous and mischievous complaints made against members and that the process for dealing with such complaint should be more robust.
- One resident asked for information on the political composition of Councillors on the Committee and how complaints are considered. It was answered that there were 4 Councillors on the Committee as each Political Group nominates a member. It was explained that when a complaint is made an Assessment Sub Committee will form and will make a decision as to whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has in fact occurred.

### **sc9. Open Forum**

The Chairman advised the meeting that the new format pilot for the Open Forum would then take place in the adjoining room. The residents would have the opportunity to speak individually with their own ward Councillors, County Councillor, and also any officers which were present including the Police, Neighbourhood Services, Stagecoach and the Standards Committee. The Chairman asked that the residents complete cards to give their feedback on the new format.

### **sc10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Northern Area Forum is scheduled to take place at 7.00pm on 28<sup>th</sup> May at a venue to be confirmed.

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**Northern Area Forum – Question Update – March 2009**

Question/Issues	Referred To	Response So Far
<p>1. I would like the owners of Stagecoach to understand the difficulty of having to walk down to Black Bull Lane from Garstang Road when the weather is bad and also the difficulty when returning with shopping. Please can we have a bus along Garstang Road, extra to the 40/41 service?</p>	<p>Stagecoach</p>	<p>The current 40/41 bus services provide the main service along the Northern section of Garstang Road, at a frequency set to reflect the levels of patronage and the costs of operating the route. I appreciate that the services can sometimes suffer from reliability problems; some unavoidable, but we are going to conduct some monitoring on the 40/41 to try and identify any patterns in unreliability that can be addressed.</p> <p>As regards introducing additional, local services to the area, we will seriously look into the possibility, although any service would have to operate as a trial in the 'off-peak' period initially, to gauge demand. While I cannot make any promises at this stage, I can guarantee that we will make every effort to explore the options.</p>

<p>2. The reason that the buses are not used by the people who live on the Avenues off is obvious, the bus service on Blackbull Lane is very frequent. We need a local bus for the hospital.</p>	<p>Stagecoach</p>	<p>The current 40/41 bus service provides the main service along the Northern section of Garstang Road, at a frequency set to reflect the levels of patronage and the costs of operating the route. I appreciate that the services can sometimes suffer from reliability problems; some unavoidable, but we are going to conduct some monitoring on the 40/41 to try and identify any patterns in unreliability that can be addressed.</p> <p>As regards introducing additional, local services to the area, we will seriously look into the possibility, although any service would have to operate as a trial in the 'off-peak' period initially, to gauge demand. While I cannot make any promises at this stage, I can guarantee that we will make every effort to explore the options.</p>
<p>3. Stagecoach: May I request a study into the viability of a more frequent local bus service along the A6 Garstang Road between Preston Bus Station and the Black Bull &amp; Royal Preston Hospital.</p>	<p>Stagecoach</p>	<p>The current 40/41 bus service provides the main service along the Northern section of Garstang Road, at a frequency set to reflect the levels of patronage and the costs of operating the route. I appreciate that the services can sometimes suffer from reliability problems; some unavoidable, but we are going to conduct some monitoring on the</p>

		<p>40/41 to try and identify any patterns in unreliability that can be addressed.</p> <p>As regards introducing additional, local services to the area, we will seriously look into the possibility, although any service would have to operate as a trial in the 'off-peak' period initially, to gauge demand. While I cannot make any promises at this stage, I can guarantee that we will make every effort to explore the options.</p>
<p>4. For Stagecoach – As a resident of Highgate Park I request a study of the viability of a frequent (15 mins) local bus service from Preston Bus Station directly North along the A6 Garstang Road to the Black Bull/Royal Preston Hospital. There are many estates and housing concentrations adjacent to this route.</p>	<p>Stagecoach</p>	<p>The current 40/41 bus service provides the main service along the Northern section of Garstang Road, at a frequency set to reflect the levels of patronage and the costs of operating the route. I appreciate that the services can sometimes suffer from reliability problems; some unavoidable, but we are going to conduct some monitoring on the 40/41 to try and identify any patterns in unreliability that can be addressed.</p> <p>As regards introducing additional, local services to the area, we will seriously look into the possibility, although any service would have to operate as a trial in the 'off-peak' period initially, to gauge demand. While I cannot make any</p>

		promises at this stage, I can guarantee that we will make every effort to explore the options.
<p>5. To Chris Hayward (Planning Officer). Re: planning No. 06/2008/0973 Eaves Brook Bridge. Thank you for your letter dated 18/02/2009. Just to inform you that we still strongly object to the above planning</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>The Planning Committee resolved to grant planning permission after having heard details of the written objections received.</p>
<p>6. Re: - Sharoe Green Lane Lulworth Road Junction. No parking on double yellow lines.</p> <p>Close to the mini-roundabout at the above junction, no yellow lines are visible since recent road re-surfacing etc has been completed. This is a narrow section of road regularly used by fast moving ambulances and police cars, also buses and local traffic.</p> <p>Now vehicles are parking in this area causing a hazard to passing traffic and pedestrians. Please could we have the double yellow lines back in this area to prevent danger of an imminent accident and ease the traffic obstructions? Thank you.</p>	<p>Lancashire County Council</p>	<p>The missing section of waiting restrictions on Sharoe Green Lane have been added to the maintenance programme and will be reinstated in due course.</p>
<p>7. Litter - How many prosecutions in 2008 (lots of litter on Moor Park Football pitches). Pitches the day after matches – Why not fine the football teams?</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>We issued 37 fixed penalty notices and made 1 successful prosecution for fly-tipping, littering and fly-posting during 2008.</p>

<p>8. How much does the Ethics and Standards department cost?</p>	<p>Legal Department</p>	<p>The Committee is a Committee of the Council attended by 4 Independent Members, 4 Councillors and 3 Parish Councillors. It is supported by Officers in running the business of the Committee. A cost cannot be directly attributed to the running of the Committee. Councillors receive a Members allowance. Independent Members also are entitled to a small allowance of £256 per annum for their work on the Standards Committee.</p>
<p>9. I have heard that there is no more Area Funding? Can you please inform me if there is going to be a replacement funding source and if so what will it be called and when we will be able to apply? I work as a Police Community Volunteer and help the community complete bids. It would be unfortunate if this valuable source came to an end.</p>	<p>Area Forum Manager</p>	<p>The Council is currently undertaking a review of the Area Forums and the remit of Forum Funding will be included in the review process.</p> <p>The outcome of the review is expected to be completed by December 2009</p>

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