

HEDNESFORD TOWN
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD AT 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2015
AT THE PYE GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE, HEDNESFORD

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs D Grice (Chairman of the Town Council)
Mr P Harrison (Town Council Manager/Clerk)
Members of the Town Council, District Council and County Council a
representative of Staffordshire Police and 7 Members of the Public

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies for absence from Cllr A Pearson

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last Annual Town Meeting held on 15 April 2014 were approved

3. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Vicky Rowley (Commissioning Manager, Dementia), Kat Horner (Regional lead for Dementia Action Alliance) and Jan Matthews (Support Staffordshire Cannock Chase) gave a presentation on dementia friendly communities and stressed the importance of raising awareness of this condition as widely as possible

It was noted that the Town Council had agreed to be the lead organisation for coordination of this matter and that Hednesford was likely to be recognised as the first community friendly town in the area

4. REPORTS OF TOWN ORGANISATIONS

Reports were received in respect of the Heart of Hednesford Restoration Project and Hednesford in Partnership. Information was also reported by Staffordshire Police relating to crime in the area

5. HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr Mrs D Grice reported on the activities of the Town Council over the last year and indicated the plans that the Council had for the future.

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

- a) Car Park at the rear of the Co-op
A local resident complained about the congestion on the car park as a result of long term parking by railway commuters and the fact that there were no car parking spaces for locals shopping in that part of town. She considered that a strict time limit should be enforced and that parking charges could be introduced to meet the cost involved

However, the majority of those present at the meeting considered that free parking was essential to help boost the economy of the town and was a unique selling point to attract visitors

It was noted that at the present time on street parking spaces had reduced due to the ongoing works being undertaken by SSWC in Market Street and that this may have contributed to an increase in use of the Co-op car park

b) Mill Green Designer Outlet Village

A local resident indicated that the development of a designer outlet village at Mill Green could have an adverse impact on the Town centre

In its favour was the creation of 800 local jobs and an undertaking by the developers that the outlet would not be in direct competition with stores in the existing town centres. In addition there were opportunities to attract the many thousands of people who would travel to the designer village to also visit other attractions and town centres in the vicinity (including Hednesford)

c) Bus Services

A question was raised as to why there was no bus service operating from Hednesford to Cannock Chase. It was noted that since deregulation of bus services it was now a commercial decision for operating companies as to the routes provided. Although the County Council subsidised some services, due to lack of funds, these could only be provided in the areas of greatest need

It was noted that there was now a regular bus service from Hednesford to the Orbital Retail Park and it was anticipated that, in due course, a similar service would run to the Mill Green Designer Outlet Village

d) Hedgeford Lodge

Reference was made to the recent opening by J D Wetherspoon of Hedgeford Lodge (formerly Anglesey Lodge). It was considered that the building had been converted to a high standard and that the establishment would enhance the economy of the town. Regarding item 6 a) above the only concern was that the site had no off street parking

e) Hednesford Library

It was reported that the long term future of the library was still in doubt due cuts being proposed by the County Council. It was considered that the library was a key service within the Town and it was noted that the Town Council was pursuing a number of avenues with a view to ensuring that the library remained open

The meeting ended at 8:25 pm