

RAINOW PARISH PLAN

SERVICES FOCAL GROUP

Meeting no.: 1

Date: 23rd February 2005

Location: The Rising Sun

Present: Gerry Burton; Judy Wilkinson; Ken Butler.

Purpose of the meeting:

To agree a set of initial proposals for inclusion in the Questionnaire relating to Public Services.

1. **Communications**- This is a common problem, which is cropping up in other Focal Groups. The problem is one of inclusive information about matters both arising from within the village and issues which affect it arising from actions outside of the village e.g. Macc. Borough Council, Cheshire County Council etc.

There is a suggestion that a properly edited monthly village Newsletter could do the job of the Parish Magazine and the Parish Council Newsletter plus act as an information source for other activities. We would need to check whether this is acceptable to the Vicar and Parish Council.

The question of successful distribution would still remain, a problem, which seems to one of visibility.

There is also the issue of the village web-site, it was thought that this could be made more 'villager friendly' and serve a more useful purpose to those within the village as well as to those from the outside seeking information.

2. **Local bussing/car share/community taxi**. Cheshire CC is in the process of letting a new bus contract. It is said that this will be an improvement on the current service. We will watch this carefully.

With the availability of 'Dial a ride' it was thought that most people would be able to deal with an emergency. We were not sure about the conditions for use of this service and so will be checking this.

There are restrictions on the use of the school bus i.e. it is only available to people if they live more than 3 miles from the school. This has resulted in some absurd situations with buses stopping to pick other children up outside a person's house that has had to drive her children to school. We need to get a more sensible approach to this. It was not thought that there was a need for a community taxi service (depending on the enquiry into the 'Dial a ride' service).

Refuse removal- There is a problem with regularity of collection particularly at the eastern end of the village. We should consider how this could be improved. Provision of dog litterbins could also be improved. There is a proposal to change to 'wheelie bins' later this year or early next. This would need to be carefully considered, as many of the houses in the village would not be suited to their use.

Street repair/maintenance – This is generally of a very low standard particularly Sugar Lane, we need to press for a higher level of maintenance and establish a priority list and timetable for the work. Many areas become flooded during heavy rain and much of this can be put down to the lack of regular gully cleaning.

Pavement cleaning verge grass cutting- This is done on an irregular basis and not very well. Cuttings are left as they lie and give the public areas a very untidy appearance. Is there a possibility of the Parish employing someone to do this and other general tidiness issues? Possibly as before, sharing with another parish. More awareness of dog fouling and facilities for disposal would help this situation.

Parking- This a serious problem in Rainow, in some parts causing friction and bad feeling between neighbours. We need to look into the availability of 'spare land' for the use of the community. Suggested locations were the UU car park at the Lamaload pumping station (this is said to still be in use, but this is very infrequent and therefore could be made available). Wasteland by the side of the Church car park, retention of the passing places built for temporary use on the Lamaload road.

Community policing – It was felt that this would be to the benefit of the community as the police have said they do not have the resources to carry

out foot patrols. The costs could be on a shared basis with other villages. This has been done successfully in other villages. It would need the sanction and help of the police with some training being given. It is expected that their powers would be limited but the sight of patrolling uniformed people, it was thought would go some way to curb growing vandalism and anti- social behaviour.

We should also revive the Neighbourhood Watch scheme with a view to making it more structured and ensuring continuity. A published list of names of existing local co-ordinators would also help to revive the scheme.

Library service- Although this seems quite regular at the east end of the village (twice per week) there is little evidence at the west end. We will check with the Library what their timing and locations are.

Local clinic- As District Nurses do carry out home visits it was thought that this was not necessary and probably wouldn't be supported. Nevertheless we should perhaps put it into the questionnaire to see whether there are any community requirements for this.

Community learning- It was thought that there are a lot of skills within the village, which could be used to advance the learning levels within the community. E.g. IT skills, languages, basic bookkeeping and so on. If this could be organised locally with some support from MBC or CCC it would help the community generally and save the travelling to and from Macclesfield.

Child care- There are already groups doing this, is everybody aware of who they are (communications?) Newcomers to the village, how are they made aware?

Care of the elderly- Again there are already groups who 'share' a number of elderly people between them. We weren't sure how inclusive this was. We will investigate this.

Public rights of way- The condition of many of these and associated stiles are unsatisfactory. They are the responsibility of the Cheshire County Council. The Parish Council does have a Footpaths sub-committee, which is currently in the process of reviewing these, and following complaints some action will be taken by CCC. The Ramblers Association has issued their report on the conditions of the various footpaths and this is with the PC.

We should press for greater attention to be paid to maintenance of these.

This is also an area, which the KRIV project has included in its HLF grant bid.

Public telephones, are there sufficient, are they maintained properly.

It was thought that there were sufficient and although members of the group hadn't used them recently were thought to be in good condition. This needs checking.

Speed Limits- The reduction of the speed limit to 30 mph was thought highly desirable and that this should be extended for the full length of the village at least until the Highwayman pub.

The Parish Council have been trying to achieve this for some time and have been told it was going to be reviewed but nothing has happened. One of the problems is said to be policing this limit, the cost of a fixed camera was said to be some £35,000. Why this is any more difficult than the current 40mph limit is not clear.

Affordable housing/availability of rental homes- This is an issue on which the Peak Planning Authority has published some guidance. It was not thought that we should try and influence this unless it was proposed to release greenbelt land. The market place would judge what was affordable or not.

MBC has placed a moratorium on new house building as it has already reached its target for these.

According to the 2001 census 90% of the households in Rainow are owner occupied.