

# meeting notes

**Title:** Long Eaton and South Community Forum

**Date:** 7pm Monday 25 July 2016

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Long Eaton Town Hall.

No.	Subject	Action / Lead Officer
1	<p><b>Welcome from the Chair and matters arising</b></p> <p>The Chair, Rachel Fernandez, EBC Performance and Communities Manager, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if there were any matters arising from the meeting notes of the previous meeting held on 18 February 2016, none were identified.</p>	
2	<p><b>Your Forum, Your Future</b></p> <p>The Chair introduced the single main topic for the meeting outlining that the council is seeking to ensure their forums meet the needs of residents and the council.</p> <p>The forum was asked for their thoughts about how to attract more young people to the forum.</p> <p>It was suggested promoting the forum at schools and “on the street”.</p> <p>It was also felt that previous forums were better as they were attended by managers and were more meaningful and interesting. Consequently, it was felt EBC officers should present on topics.</p> <p>The format and presentation of the forums was discussed such as using presentations with question and answer sessions or using another format. Question and answer sessions were liked but it was suggested that questions need to be tabled in advance in order for a response to be available at the forum.</p> <p>The forum was advised of EBC’s current online facility which allows questions to be asked at any time and not just at community forums. It was mentioned that forums were better attended in the past as there were more of them and they were specific to local areas. It was felt there maybe a feeling of “crossing a border” to be here/attend a forum. While local matters were felt to be important, there was uncertainty about how to overcome the issue.</p>	

Flexibility regarding busy agendas was felt to be important and it was suggested that more than one meeting is needed as single item meetings reduce the time for question and answers.

Evening meetings were generally felt to be okay as it allows for access by all age groups.

Long Eaton 50 plus group was cited as a success as their meetings are always very well attended and it was asked how they achieve this? It was felt that EBC's community forums are not publicised well enough, however, no suggestions were provided from the forum on how to address this.

The forum asked if the council are certain they understand resident's interests, adding that the topics need to be of interest and relevant to residents, such as local issues. This will then encourage residents to attend.

Four first time attendees commented they were here out of interest and spoke in positive terms about the council in general. They had been made aware of the forum via posters at their GP.

Overall, it was felt more publicity is needed and advertising on the back of buses was suggested.

The forum was asked to clarify why they felt more meetings were needed and it was suggested it would help keep residents better informed about issues in their area. Meeting dates need to be set in advance and promoted.

The forum was asked how many regularly use the internet and approximately one third indicated they did so.

An EBC Councillor advocated the positive impact of using social media and gave the example of their NHW scheme. After promoting the scheme via Facebook, the membership had increased and therefore, the forums could be promoted this way.

The Police representatives advised the forum that all Safer Neighbourhood Teams now use Twitter and Facebook and have stopped holding panel meetings due to low attendance. The forum was also advised Derbyshire Police have an online question facility.

It was generally felt that finding a topic that matters is vitally important and forums must be planned in advance, but not too far ahead or be over publicised, and use bullet points of information. The current format was felt to be amateurish. Earlier forums which dealt with environment and waste were felt to have been successful.

Erewash CCG and forthcoming changes in health care was felt would be an interesting topic, i.e. subject specific forums would be worth trying but ensure organisations are able to answer questions at the forum.

It was suggested to the forum that they are often used for single person/personal questions which is not really what the forums are for. Written questions can be asked elsewhere, such as the council online question facility mentioned previously. Earlier forums held workshops/opportunities to meet with partners before the start of the forum, which was felt to have been useful.

	<p>The DCC representative advised the forum that many community forums in Derbyshire are struggling to attract attendees and also with their structure and formality. For example, Derbyshire Dales use a smaller format which includes a number of tables of Councillors and residents sitting and discussing issues together and also using a live Twitter feed during forums.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Questions submitted prior to the meeting</b></p> <p>Verbal replies were provided to questions on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grass cutting by EBC in West Park and Long Eaton;</li> <li>• Repairs to the gate posts and paving slabs neat to Long Eaton library;</li> <li>• Installation of no cycling signs on public footpaths;</li> <li>• Trimming of overhanging branches in public car parks;</li> <li>• Overhanging branches obscuring school warning lights;</li> <li>• Cancellation of Long Eaton carnival due to poor weather.</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>Questions for officers/submitted at the forum</b></p> <p>Verbal replies were provided to questions on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern regarding cars parking on paved areas;</li> <li>• Increased car parking charges and the impact on revenue generated;</li> <li>• Speeding traffic and speed checks on 30 mph roads;</li> <li>• Installation of a dog waste bin on a public footpath.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Close of meeting</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked the residents and partners for attending and closed the meeting at 845pm.</p>	
5	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b></p> <p>To be confirmed following the completion of the council's review of their community forums.</p>	