

Notes of the Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group held on Monday 22 June 2015

Attendance: Robin Hooper, Eden District Council (Chair)
Neil Buck, Eden District Council
Simon Rowley, South Lakeland District Council
Kevin Crawley, Cumbria County Council Highways
Roly Earl, Cumbria Constabulary
Elaine Lomas, Eden District Council
Terry Bathgate, Cumbria Constabulary
Billy Welch, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Lisa Tremble, Eden District Council
Paul Dodson, Cumbria County Council

Apologies: Barry Cooper, Eden District Council
Bill Lloyd, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Steve Sharrock, Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
Sean Robinson, Cumbria Constabulary

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2015 were agreed as a true record.

2. Minutes from the Meetings held during the Fair

These were agreed as a correct record. It was noted that in relation to the Officers from Highway Services who had been involved in doing all the roadside work including erecting of posts, signs and dealing with any quick fixes that were required to be undertaken during the Fair, their names were Mick, Gordon and Willy. Robin Hooper said that he would arrange for some form of thank you to be sent to them once he had full details of their names.

3. Draft Evaluation Report 2015

Consideration was given to the draft Evaluation Report for the 2015 Fair. All agencies were requested to complete any amendments to the report and in particular, providing any figures and other content which they would wish to be included as part of the evaluation. All agencies were requested to reply to Louise Fawcett by 13 July with any comments that they had so that an amended draft could be produced for circulation at the MASCG meeting on 20 July.

4. Caravan Counts

Elaine Lomas reported that she had undertaken caravan counts on various sites prior to and during the Fair. In terms of the comparable numbers from 2014 to 2015, there were a similar number of caravans and bow tops between the two years on the formal camping fields. In this respect, there were 1,297 motorised caravans in 2015 and 202 horse drawn. It was noted that on sites outside of Appleby, there were approximately 20% additional in number that were motorised and 17% that were horse drawn of people that did not attend the Fair.

Elaine Lomas confirmed that the counts which she had undertaken prior to the Fair had shown that there were 150 caravans less in 2015 than in the previous year. This was evidence of the Gypsy and Traveller community coming later to the Fair which had been a positive response to the messages which had been issued. There were 66 locations where caravans had been encamped prior to the Fair which was a similar number to previous years.

In relation to activity on the A685, on 8 May the first caravan had arrived and by 22 May, seven of the caravans were parked in that location and six were at Powis Lane.

In relation to market stalls, there were 241 in total at the Fair in 2015 and of those, 236 were on Jimmy Winter's field.

5. Jimmy Winter's Bow Top Field

Elaine Lomas reported that complaints had been received from some of the horse drawn bow top owners of the number of motorised caravans which were parking on this field. The field should in accordance with the planning permission, predominately used for bow tops but this year, there were 44 motorised caravans and only 12 bow tops. There was breach of planning as well as the caravan site licence conditions on this field. Elaine Lomas would pursue this with Jimmy Winter. She also reported that there were broken bottles on the field which was considered to be a danger for horses. She would share that information with them as well. It was noted that a group of Irish Gypsy and Travellers had gone onto that field and it may be appropriate for Jimmy Winter to make separate provision available for the Irish Gypsy and Travellers for 2016.

Billy Welch reported that he had received an approach from representatives from the horse drawn bow tops who had requested that they relocate to Fair Hill for 2016. He was making arrangements in order to facilitate that.

6. Speed Limits on the A685

Robin Hooper reported that emergency measures were used in 2015 to control the speed of traffic on the A685. It was considered that this was a matter which should now be dealt with through Road Traffic Regulation Orders. Kevin Crawley reported that he would be picking that up as part of his overall report.

7. Signage

Robin Hooper reported that a request for better warning signs for bow tops to be introduced on various roads and through the debate, it was noted that the A686 and A683 as well both ends of Melmerby village could benefit from having appropriate signage being introduced. Kevin Crawley said that he would look into this and report back at the next meeting.

8. Bus Services

Reference was made to the operation of bus services and the concern that people had that they had to walk a distance from the bus stops which were outside of Appleby for the duration of the Fair into Appleby rather than having the opportunity to get on a bus within Appleby. It was noted that the bus company had favoured using the A66 due to the importance of keeping to timetables and as a consequence of so many people being within Appleby, going through Appleby to pick up and drop off passengers would be very time consuming. Roly Earl had already been in touch with Enterprise Mouchell to speak to the bus company direct to see what, if any, measures could be put in place in order to assist members of the public.

Paul Dodson said that this was something which could be looked at with the bus operators and he would do that and report back in due course.

9. Public Feedback

Robin Hooper reported that a number of feedback forms and emails had been received subsequent to the Fair on the various activities which had taken place and the issues which the public wished to raise for MASCG to consider. A number of these comments had been passed on to the Police, County Council and representatives of the Gypsy and Travellers in order that they could respond as appropriate to those issues which needed to be dealt with. The essence of the points which were raised was as follows:

- a) Street Cleansing/Public Toilets - It was noted that a comment had been received about rubbish being on Fair Hill and the surrounding areas. However, it was noted that that was cleared prior to the end of the Fair and roads generally were cleaned and litter removed prior to the end of the Fair and subsequently.

Reference was made to the condition of cleansing of toilets and it was believed that they should be clean more regularly. Reference was made as part of the consideration of that, to the fact that on the Saturday it was not possible to clean some of the toilets at Salt Tip Corner due to Police resources being required elsewhere. It was agreed that on Saturday's in future, the cleansing of toilets at Salt Tip Corner and elsewhere would be between 3-4pm rather than during the middle of the day. Reference was also made to litter in the river which was predominately on the edge of the river from litter which had fallen down the banks. It was noted that this had been cleared by the cleansing team immediately at the conclusion of the Fair following the excellent work that the RSPCA had undertaken prior to and during the Fair.

- b) Reference was made to Police presence in different locations at different stages. There were mixed views about whether this was this excellent or whether more policing was required. Generally, it was noted that more Police Officers were on duty in various locations and the assignment of Police Officers to locations had been based on the demand which was wanted by residents and feedback from previous Fairs. In particular, it was noted that at Long Marton Road and Battlebarrow, there was a wish for more Police even though the number of policing had already increased and it was unlikely that there would be any more Officers than those which had been provided at those locations. One member of the public had commented that there were too many Police at the Fair and it may be better for those policing resources to be spread out and made available at other times of the year.
- c) In relation to traffic, there were comments about whether more policing should be in place to regulate and control activity and speed of traffic on the A66 when horse drawn vehicles were on the A66. It was noted that this was outside the resources that would be available for the Police and therefore, was unlikely to be done and the Gypsy and Traveller community would need to put in place their own measures in order to safeguard the caravans if they use the routes.

Reference was made to various "no waiting" signs and signage generally to car parks. It was considered that there could be some improvements made to some of these in order to facilitate ease of movement of traffic in the general area.

Reference was made to the use of the railway and whilst it was noted that there were increased carriages on some of the routes, the numbers of people that

were using them was not a great as could be and perhaps greater publicity could be given to the availability of the trains in future.

Reference was made to an older couple who lived on The Sands that had certain disabilities and therefore means of access to and from their property during the road closure period on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday was a problem. Consideration should be given in order to assist that couple to gain access and egress from their property if necessary. This would be an issue that would be picked up with the individual residents as appropriate.

- d) Animal Welfare - It was noted that the RSPCA was dealing with more roadside tethering and horses which were becoming loose. It was not possible to issue a breathalyser test for people that were leaving public houses but riding horses. In relation to the RSPCA, it was noted that they were doing an excellent job within the resources they had available.
- e) Public Transport - Reference had already been made to the railway network and the benefit of encouraging more people to use the railways as well as seeking to encourage people to use the buses where there was ease of access from the bus stops.
- f) Caravan Encampments - Reference was made to the caravan encampments at Powis Lane and the concern that generally followed from the number of Travellers in that location being over 60 caravans. This was a concern to local people and gaining access to and from the area was considered to be important and would be a matter which would be pursued in terms of changing arrangements and planning for 2016.

Response from the Gypsy and Traveller community was that they had had a good time, they felt that the agencies had done a brilliant job and that the approach generally to the Fair was one of continual improvement which was well received.

Robin Hooper referred reported information in relation to horses on Kirkby Stephen high street and it was noted that the numbers should be checked to see whether or not they were correct and also it should be validated whether or not the land at the rear of the public house was actually used for that purpose. There was reference to one potential bare knuckle fight on The Sands which did not take place due to appropriate intervention by the Police.

10. Planning for Any Changes for 2016 Fair

It was agreed that consideration should be given for improvements which could be made in relation to the following areas:

- i) Encampments from Powis Lane
- ii) Royal Oak Public House and how to stop flashing and horses generally in that area
- iii) The use of wanton and furious 1837 Orders
- iv) The horse rope on The Sands to be erected on the Friday morning rather than being available on Thursday
- v) Highway issues would need to be looked at

11. Eden Parish Forum

Elaine Lomas reported that there had been no formal parish meetings since the Fair but it was noted that some comments were starting to be received. In relation to that, at Soulby it was considered to be better this year than it had been in 2014. At Appleby Golf Club, whilst some Gypsy and Travellers did go there they were quickly dealt with and that had resolved itself. On the A685, the actions which had been introduced had reduced the problems generally in that area and the numbers were similar to 2014 albeit there were less there in the initial phases. This was considered to be a win win for everyone.

Elaine Lomas reported that in September 2015, she would have a meeting with the Parish Councils along the A685 route and would engage with the Police, Highways Agency and others as appropriate at that meeting.

It was noted that in relation to Powis Lane, there were claims that one of the land owners may be renting out verges in order to encourage people to utilise the area. Whether that was true, was being validated. At Flakenbridge, there had been a small encampment of 11 caravans which caused a few problems this year. In particular, it was noted following inspection of photographs that a number of trees had had the bark stripped from them. Billy Welch confirmed that from his perspective, he felt that that would have been undertaken by someone from the settled community rather than one from the Gypsy and Traveller community. It was noted that at Cotemoor, whilst normally there would be 150-200 caravans there before the Fair, this year there were only 2-4 caravans.

12. Licensing Issues

Lisa Tremble reported that Steven Holmes had said there were not many issues which had been raised from this year's Fair. At the Hare and Hound it was understood that glasses were originally being used, then they changed to plastic glasses instead in accordance with the Charter. At the New Inn beer garden, one night it had not opened which had caused a major queue in the pub but that was changed for the following day and the outside bar was also open in order to help with that. It was understood that the Midland Hotel had served beyond that 11.00pm threshold and the licensee was told that was a breach of the Charter and they put it right as a consequence.

It was reported that at the New Inn at Brampton, someone had taken a horse into the pub again which had given serious concern to the licensee and as a consequence, he was unlikely to open in 2016.

13. Communications

Everyone present congratulated Barry Cooper for the excellent work he had undertaken during the year and in particular, prior to and during the Fair. Unanimously, everyone asked that he continue to undertake the role of communications lead for the 2016 Fair.

14. Highways

Kevin Crawley reported the following:

Lead in period - Approximately 3500 posts were erected on highway verges deemed to be unsuitable for travellers to use for overnight stopping in the up to the Fair the work starting at the beginning of May as has been the case with previous year's. New arrangements were put in place on A685 for protection of travellers and traveling public along with requests through social media for travellers not to

turn up early for the Fair. On the whole these were successful with fewer numbers of encampments observed on the A685 leading up to the Fair than in previous years. For the third year in succession, the Police were obliged to introduce a 40mph speed limit on the A685 between Kirkby Stephen and Brough. Although this year the limit was only in place for the last 24 hours as the Travellers departed for Appleby which is less than in previous years. They do this under their exceptional circumstances powers but as they have invoked these for three years it is felt that we can no longer regard this as being exceptional. Again further consideration on how to address this will be considered by the Traffic Management group with further recommendations being brought to a subsequent MASCG meeting. Changes to the Traffic Regulation Order also allowed posts to be erected by Appleby Golf Club along the verge across the golf course and a small additional length of verge was added to the Highway Authority's commitment at Whiteacres Top. Only one complaint was raised regarding the number and extent of posts erected.

Fair Week - Changes to access arrangements with the addition of a second gate to the camping/trade field to the Fair resulted in less congestion than in previous years. Permanent signing erected this year seems to have worked well. There were some concerns on Saturday regarding traffic backing up towards the A66 and there are some proposals for the traffic group to look at for next year to help to manage this. There were issues with traffic on the Long Marton Road and an incident at the Royal Oak on the Friday. As a result of these, additional traffic calming was introduced by means of traffic cones along the centre line of each length of road. Whilst this was successful, further consideration of what sort of traffic management measures in the form of a traffic management tool box are likely to be considered for next year's Fair by the traffic group. Car park management was still an issue at times with the Police having to take action to manage access to car parks at peak times. Further work is required to establish a car park protocol which it is hoped would be agreed by the car park operators to ensure that traffic can access and leave the car parks without un-necessarily impeding traffic flows. Improved car park signing could be part of this protocol.

Flashing Lane - Amendments to the traffic regulation order to manage pedestrian movements on Long Marton road whilst flashing is ongoing have not been very successful. There is still potential for conflict between the horse traders and members of the public who are there to "spectate". Further consideration needs to take place on how best to manage this and it is proposed that a one off Flashing Lane sub group be set up to look at this in more detail to develop a workable management plan for this area to be introduced for next year's fair. The MASCG is requested to endorse this proposal.

Traffic Data - Traffic data has been collected from the same sites as last year for comparative purposes. We were unable to place the counters before the fair but they were in place during and for the week following the Fair to give us fair traffic and background traffic data. We have not yet been able to analyse this data but will provide detailed figure for the next MASCG meeting in July.

MASCG supported the setting up of the sub-group referred to which would comprise Kevin Crawley, Roly Earl, Jimmy Winter and Billy Welch.

15. South Lakes Working Group

Simon Rowley reported that there had been no formal feedback from the parishes since the Fair. The Respect Group would be meeting in September and more

information would be available which could then be shared with MASCG at that time. Prior to and during the Fair, there had been a drop-in centre at Kirkby Lonsdale and Sedbergh but only seven people in total came forward during those drop-in sessions. Such was the work that was being done where the public did not feel the need to attend which is evidence of some of the excellent work which is taking place and has been taking place in South Lakeland during this period.

In terms of issues which had been raised through those drop-in sessions, one series of comments related to slow moving vehicles which was understandable reflecting some of them were horse drawn bow tops, the second related to an unauthorised encampment issue which arose which was dealt with in negotiation with the Gypsy and Travellers and they moved to a more appropriate site. At Scroggs Bank, due to earlier heavy rainfall, that did create a challenge for gaining access and egress into the field. However, someone delivered some wood chippings to the site which adequately dealt with the heavy ground conditions in that location.

Generally, there were fewer in number Gypsy and Travellers within South Lakeland this year than in previous years. Therefore, the communications message which had been given had worked and fewer had arrived early.

16. Ambulance Service

Robin Hooper reported that there had been a number of incidents reported for people being hurt in connection with horses. The feedback that had been received and recorded in the minutes during the MASCG meetings whilst the Fair was in progress, all said that the people who were injured were from the Gypsy and Traveller community.

17. Dealing with Litter

Neil Buck reported that there was a reduction in the number of tonnes of litter this year from 43 tonnes to 29 tonnes. In terms of fixed penalty notices, this wasn't something that the Council would normally deal with where it was possible to encourage the people to pick up their litter and take it home with them. It was only on occasions when people did not pick up the litter and take it home would a fixed penalty notice be issued.

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 20 July 2015 at 2.00pm in the Whelpdale Room, Mansion House.

The public meeting would take place later that day at 7.00pm in Appleby.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm.