

Minutes of Parish Councils' Liaison Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 30 January 2014, starting at 6.30pm
Present: P Young (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	I Sayers
I Brown	G Scott
P Dowson	R Swarbrick
R Hargreaves	D Taylor
R Newmark	NC Walsh
C Ross	

Also in attendance: Councillor EMH Ranson.

Parish Representatives:

B Barnes	Bashall Eaves & Great Mitton
J Porter	Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley
F Havard	Billington & Langho
C Parkinson	Bowland Forest (Higher)
A Schofield	Clayton-le-Dale
B Redhead	Clayton-le-Dale
K Horkin	Clitheroe
R Assheton	Downham
S Hopwood	Dutton
F Priest	Longridge
A Steer	Osbaldeston
A Davies	Read
R Whittaker	Rimington & Middop
A Haworth	Sabden
J Shorter	Sabden
A Duckworth	Simonstone
D Peat	Simonstone
HD Parker	Waddington
K Jackson	Waddington
MJ Highton	Whalley
T Gaffney	Wilpshire
A Wright	Wiswell

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Engineering Services and Head of Regeneration and Housing.

Also in attendance: Inspector Hassan Khan and Sgt Craig Jarret for agenda item 4 only and Andy Ashcroft, Public Realm Manager, LCC for agenda item 5 only.

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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Borough Councillors L Rimmer and M Robinson and from the following Parish Representatives:

B Dowles	Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley
A Yearling	Clitheroe

L Bateman	Hothersall
S Rawstron	Newsholme & Paythorne
A Ormand	Ribchester
G Melloy	Simonstone
J Bremner	Wilpshire

586 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

587 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

588 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 721 – Request for Highway Schemes

The representative from Read asked for an update on this matter. The Public Realm Manager indicated that he would address this matter under item 5 on the agenda.

(b) Minute 722(a) – Satnav Problems

The Community Development Officer read out a reply from Wilpshire Parish Council in relation to difficulties with Satnav in the Hollowhead Lane area of Wilpshire.

589 POLICING IN THE RIBBLE VALLEY

The Chairman introduced Inspector Hassan Khan who gave Committee details of proposed closures of Whalley and Mellor Brook Police Stations. He also referred to imminent changes in how and where response officers would book on for duty as from April 2014 and finally gave details of two extra Community Beat Managers who would be employed in the Ribble Valley.

He also highlighted a relatively high volume of thefts from motor vehicles and sought Parish Councils' help with reporting and preventing this from happening. He did state that over 70% of the incidents were as a result of insecure vehicles.

Inspector Khan then answered a number of questions from Committee.

County Councillor Schofield raised concerns about the proposal to close Mellor Brook Police Station and indicated that he would be meeting with Inspector Khan to discuss this matter further.

Inspector Khan reassured Committee that neighbourhood policing would not be adversely affected by the proposed changes and explained how the new system would work in practice. He also answered questions about staff being seconded to Blackburn, parking arrangements at Clitheroe Police Station, extra night-time surveillance on the A59, frequency of PACT meetings in some parishes and recent operations aimed at disrupting and apprehending travelling criminals.

RESOLVED: That Inspector Khan be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

590 PUBLIC REALM MANAGER

The Chairman introduced Andy Ashcroft, Public Realm Manager for the Ribble Valley who gave a comprehensive overview of Lancashire County Council and its budget shortfall. He gave some indication of how the County Council needed to reconfigure its service delivery over the next 4 of 5 years. He stated that around 2,500 staff would be lost as a result of the need to make substantial savings and he impressed on Committee how this would impact on services across the board not only in his own section of Public Realm.

He referred to the difficulty in balancing budgets with the public's expectation and referred specifically to highway schemes which had been requested and put forward by Parish Councils. 25 schemes had been received within the relevant timescale but these had been reduced to only 2 which would definitely be undertaken in 2014/15. He briefly explained the formula which the County Council used to filter these schemes.

He then answered a number of questions in relation to the Ribble Valley's share of the County Council's budget, the state of Clitheroe's footpaths and extra funding which had been triggered for certain schemes which would help them to happen in the future.

Councillor Scott raised the specific issue of the lack of engagement by Lancashire County Council staff over a car parking issue in Chatburn. The Public Realm Manager explained what had happened in this instance and apologised for the breakdown in communications. He also stressed that in future it would be even more important to foster good communications and relations between Parish Council's the Borough Council and County Council, especially through the 3 tier forum.

RESOLVED: That Andy Ashcroft be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

591 UPDATE ON REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICE

The Head of Engineering Services gave an update for Committee on changes and developments to the refuse and recycling collection service. He reminded Committee that the contact for the green wheeled bin initiative which had exchanged the standard 140ltr bins with a larger 240ltr bin and provided a 140ltr green wheeled bin to non-garden properties had been completed on Friday, 6 December 2013. Householders were offered the choice to opt out of the scheme and the current take-up rate for the larger green wheeled bins was approximately 60% of the original 13,500 properties. It was anticipated that demand would continue and these requests could be satisfied from the stockpile of wheeled bins.

He commented that larger green bins were still available to householders in replacement for the small bin and Members of the Committee were requested to raise awareness in their respective areas and include this offer within any parish correspondence that they produce.

He then referred to the collection of paper and cardboard and to changes to the collection date which would now be moved to coincide with either green bin or blue bin collection dates.

Details of the cost of the provision of paper and cardboard collection were provide for Committee and it was pointed out that it was important to increase the number of people using this particular service on a cost basis primarily. Again Members were asked to raise awareness of the proposed changes of the collection service and encourage their residents to participate in the provision of separated paper and cardboard by contacting the Council for white paper collection sacks.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

592 PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES

The Chief Executive referred to his report which informed Members of proposals being consulted on by Lancashire County Council in relation to the proposal to withdraw certain subsidised bus services. The report pointed out that Lancashire County Council currently subsidise a number of financially unviable services across Lancashire at a cost of £8,000,000 each year. As a result of recent Government announcements on funding, the County Council were now looking at a number of measures to make further budget savings, one of those proposals was around reducing the amount of money spent supporting bus services.

In December 2013, the County Council announced a proposal to withdraw funding from subsidised bus services during evenings and on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The deadline for this consultation was Friday, 17 January 2014 and with the approval of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee a response had been submitted to the County Council within the timescale. This response basically objected to the proposals pointing out a number of problems with it for rural villages.

Members then expressed their concern at these proposals and raised issues such as teenagers wishing to travel into and out of villages in the evenings, hospital transport and rural isolation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted with concern.

593 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman reminded Committee that the next meeting of this Committee would be held on Thursday, 27 March 2014.

The meeting closed at 7.59pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Colin Hirst (414503).