

Carlisle Parish Councils Association

Minutes of the joint meeting between Carlisle City Council and Carlisle Parish Councils Association

Monday 15 June 2009, Houghton Village Hall

Present – 27 representing 15 parish councils, 13 representing Carlisle City Council, 2 representing Cumbria County Council and 2 representing CALC.

Part 1 – Joint Business Meeting

1. **Welcome & Introductions.** J Holland, CPCA chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from I Howatt, Farlam PC; C Ridley, Brampton PC; J Mallinson, Carlisle City Council.
3. **Minutes of last joint meeting** held on 8 December 2008 (previously circulated) were agreed as a true record.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes –**
 - 1) Item 4:
 - i. Carlisle City Council representative be invited to joint meetings with the County Council. Action taken – M Bowman, rural portfolio holder, is now included on invitation list for all CPCA meetings.
 - ii. Carlisle District Parish Charter – CALC are looking at standardising the progress reporting process across the county to ensure that any charter compliance issues at all levels of local government (i.e. parish, district and county council) are captured and actioned. The CPCA and Carlisle City Council will be meeting to discuss this process.
 - 2) Item 5: The Action Plan mentioned in the minutes is not yet available. M Battersby (Carlisle CC) advised that a copy of the Community Support Review is available on their website. A group within the City Council are currently looking at how to take this forward. The CPCA will be invited for discussions in the next few weeks.
5. **Housing Needs Surveys in Rural Areas.** J Holland (CPCA) summarised the CPCA concern regarding the effectiveness of housing needs surveys being carried out at district level rather than at individual parish level, particularly with regard to affordable housing. She also questioned City Council policy in view of the fact that Longtown have recently had a housing needs survey carried out for their area.

C Hardman (Carlisle CC) explained the need to have a consistent approach to identifying housing needs and aim to use both a district wide approach and at a local level. The City Council target is to have 30% affordable housing. A district wide approach is good for identifying need at top level and therefore a good driver for future actions. The best way to identify a local need is by a local housing needs survey, however this is only effective if there is a good response rate and the last Cumbria wide local needs survey only achieved a 16% return rate.

J Holland (CPCA) stated that some communities had identified in their parish plans the need for a local housing needs survey and asked if they could approach the City Council direct if they felt this was required. C Hardman (Carlisle CC) advised that they would be happy to assist communities but that they would have to prioritise any requests. The analysis resulting from a housing needs survey has a 5 year life.

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6. **Affordable Housing in Rural Communities.** C Hardman (Carlisle CC) gave an update on this issue. Last September the City Council adopted the Carlisle District Local Plan for 2001-2016. They use 2 planning policies for affordable housing:-

- 1) Threshold. It is early days yet in the Carlisle district with no schemes having yet been built. There are some funding issues and planners will need to look at the profiles of houses being built. They will also need to work through the planning application process with developers.
- 2) Exception Sites. This is used where permission wouldn't be granted for normal housing, i.e. all of the housing built on an exception site would be affordable. There are guidelines that need to be followed and there is currently a focus on local service centre areas.

L Auld (Dalston PC) asked if there was any way in which funding received from rural housing developments could be kept in the same parish rather than being used in a wider area. C Hardman (Carlisle CC) advised that it depends on the percentage coming in from that parish and who has the higher priority need. Records are kept of where the need is and where contributions have come from so it would eventually come back.

J Holland (CPCA) asked how parish councils can work with the City Council on the issue of Affordable Housing to try and keep communities vibrant and sustainable. C Hardman (Carlisle CC) agreed that there is a need to facilitate a mechanism to identify housing need and bring forward planning issues identified in parish and community plans and to work closely with communities.

R Auld (Dalston PC) referred to the recommendation in the Matthew Taylor Review that Affordable Housing should be 'Community Led' but planners are currently not consulting early enough with a community to determine what is good and what is bad for them. C Hardman (Carlisle CC) advised that the City Council are encouraging developers to have early discussions with communities, as in the current Banks Developments Wind Farm Proposal consultations. He acknowledged that as the planning process only takes 8 weeks once an application is registered it is essential that parish councils are involved right at the start of the process.

J Holland (CPCA) advised any parish council writing or revising their parish plan to talk to the City Council early on about planning and development issues, particularly with regards to affordable housing issues..

Further details on the City Council Affordable Housing Planning Policy are at P.75 of the Carlisle District Local Plan which can be accessed at the following link - <http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/docs/Local%20Plan%20final%20text.doc>.

In his review Matthew Taylor challenges some of the current planning policies applied to affordable housing, including widening the focus from local service centre areas to villages. However there have not yet been any changes to Government policy. The Matthew Taylor Review can be downloaded at [Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing - Planning, building and the environment - Communities and Local Government](#).

7. **Community Empowerment.** No update on the Longtown pilot was available from the City Council.

J Holland (CPCA) gave some background to a CPCA organised meeting held on 1 June for Carlisle district parish council chairmen to discuss the implications of the Government White Paper on Community Empowerment. The meeting was very well attended and a lively discussion took place. G Richardson from CALC was also present and produced a summary paper after the meeting (copy attached) which contained a proposal that the CPCA seek CIEP funding for 2 'start-up' events as follows:

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- 1) A Carlisle parish councils' workshop (externally facilitated) to identify priority topics for greater community influence and to gauge the appetite and opportunities for service delegation. The CPCA would wish the City Council and the County Council to be represented at this workshop.
- 2) A conference, with nationally invited speakers, to brief the urban communities within Carlisle City on the potential contribution Community (Parish) Councils can make to community empowerment. (Possible joint event with the Harraby pilot).

M Mooney (Carlisle CC) asked that Harraby be spoken to first about the proposed conference. J Holland (CPCA) had already offered to provide a speaker through CALC. R Bloxham (Carlisle CC) suggested that the CPCA attend urban Neighbourhood Forums to explain about parishing. M Mitchelson (Carlisle CC) asked for further clarification on 'issue based' grouping. G Richardson (CALC) explained that the aim of the first workshop would be to provide this. J Holland (CPCA) advised that one common issue of concern to parish councils was footpath maintenance. M Mitchelson (Carlisle CC) acknowledged that there should be the opportunity to sit round the table to discuss devolving footpath maintenance and funding to parish councils.

8. Transformation Programme.

- 1) Restructuring within Carlisle City Council. M Mooney advised that the City Council is embarking on a restructure of the senior management teams. The new structure will be linked to the review of the Council's priorities. The Council has to save £1M by the 2010/2011 financial year and the savings made by reducing senior management posts will be about £650K.

M Mooney went on to say that in addition to making savings, the reduced senior management team will need to act more strategically and to emphasise the Council's commitment to working with local communities.

The timescale for the restructure is shaped by the political process, beginning with a report to the Executive on the 16th June and a meeting of full Council on the 14th July. If the proposals are approved, the actual process of restructuring will be triggered and this will include possible voluntary and compulsory redundancies as well as assimilating and recruiting staff into the new posts. M Mooney will keep the CPCA informed and a full update will be given at the joint meeting on 30th November.

- 2) Reviewing Priorities. J Gooding (Carlisle CC) summarised the documents circulated before the meeting for consultation (copies attached). 2 clear priority areas have been identified - the Environment (looking at the services provided by the City Council in the area in which you live) and the Economy (the influence that the City Council exerts). The City Council Executive will consider CPCA feedback at their meeting on 16 June with final adoption at Full Council on 29 June. Expansion of the 2 themes will then take place with further consultation opportunities. Ultimately the work will feed in to production of a new Corporate Plan for the next financial year.

Clarification was requested on the following items in Appendix 1:-

- i. What area is covered by 'Carlisle South'? A. This is a specific area of southern urban Carlisle
- ii. How much notice has been taken of existing parish plans and issues identified in them? A. As this is at the initial ideas stage very little notice but as it develops consultations will take place with parish councils, including looking at existing parish/ community plans.

J Holland (CPCA) pointed out that parish councils would need to have the opportunity to discuss some of the issues at their own meetings before joint discussions could take place at the CPCA AGM on the 6 October.

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ACTION: J Gooding to contact secretary to agree a timetable for future consultations with parish councils.

9. **Tourism Review and proposed Tourism Partnership.** D Beaty (Carlisle CC) summarised a report (copy attached) on the proposed Tourism Partnership. The aim of the partnership is to pool resources to jointly promote tourism in the Carlisle and North Cumbria.

10. **Brampton Area Economic Action Plan.** D Beaty (Carlisle CC) summarised the report on the Brampton Economic Action Plan (copy attached). J Holland (CPCA) asked if similar activities will be carried out in other areas. D Beaty (Carlisle CC) advised that they are based around identified service centres. J Pattinson (Brampton PC) said that it had been hard work producing the plan but that it had resulted in a worthwhile consultation document.

11. Any Other Business.

- 1) J Holland (CPCA) asked for clarification on which councillor is the Portfolio Holder for Community Empowerment. M Mitchelson (Carlisle CC) advised that this is Olwyn Luckley as Health and Community Development Portfolio Holder but that Marilyn Bowman should also be involved as the Rural Portfolio Holder.
- 2) J Pattinson (Brampton PC) referred to sites in Brampton and Warwick Bridge that have been bought by developers but that are currently not under development and are an eyesore. C Hardman (Carlisle CC) advised that he will approach the developers who have a responsibility to keep the site safe and secure.
- 3) J Pattinson (Brampton PC) referred to the problem with parking in Brampton. R Bloxham (Carlisle CC) stated that if land were found for parking sites he would be happy to discuss the issue.
- 4) R Auld (Dalston PC) expressed concern over the proposal by the City Council to do away with planning site visits and use videos instead. G Richardson (CALC) has been in correspondence with A Eales (Carlisle CC) over issues with the consultation process for planning applications. He will be following these up and will include the site visit issue.
R Bloxham (Carlisle CC) advised that the video system was currently on trial but that it was intended to cut down on unnecessary time consuming site visits and also give more people an opportunity to see the details of a site. He also stated that on many occasions it was difficult to get a sufficient number of district councillors to attend site visits, sometimes there have only been 2. If the committee don't think that the video shows enough they can still arrange a site visit. Parish councils do have the right to speak.
- 5) J Pattinson (Brampton PC) asked for some background on how the Friends of Talkin Tarn scheme was set up. R Bloxham (Carlisle CC) explained that it was a similar scheme to elsewhere in the district where those with an interest could become more involved and would receive a regular newsletter.

12. **Next joint CPCA/Carlisle City Council meeting** – Monday 30 November 2009 at the Civic Centre, Carlisle to be hosted by Carlisle City Council.

Part 2 – CPCA business meeting chaired by J Holland, CPCA chairman.

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1. **Minutes** of the last meeting held on 10 March 2009 (previously circulated). D Sheard (Cumbria CC) asked that they be kept as draft minutes at the moment as he had not previously read them.
2. **Matters Arising** – D Sheard was reminded of his outstanding actions to supply the CPCA with a written summary of the role of the Carlisle Area Committee with details of funding for 2009/10 and a summary of the different types of grant funding available through the County Council.
3. **Any other business** – none.
4. **Next meeting** – CPCA AGM at 1900 on Tuesday 6 October 2009 at Hethersgill Parish Hall.

The meeting closed at 2100.

Carlisle Tourism Partnership

- **What is being proposed?**

The intention is to create a single team to support and develop the visitor economy in Carlisle and north Cumbria. The team will bring together budgets and people from the City Council, Cumbria Tourism and Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd. working together under the leadership of a Tourism Partnership Director who will be employed by Cumbria Tourism.

- **Who will be involved in the partnership?**

The team will work to a Partnership Board drawn that is intended to represent the various sectors and organisations that have a stake in the development of Tourism in Carlisle. The representation on the Partnership will include;

Carlisle City Council
Cumbria CC
Hadrian's Wall Heritage
Cumbria Tourism
University of Cumbria

Cumbria Vision
Carlisle Renaissance
Carlisle Conference Group
Cultural Sector
Independent/Private sector
businesses (3)

The Chair of the Partnership will be drawn from the independent private sector representatives.

- **Why is the Partnership needed?**

The challenge for the partnership team is to develop a co-ordinated approach that will improve the Tourism offer in Carlisle and the opportunity for the Partnership Board is to champion the sector and provide leadership. The need for the Partnership arises from the following circumstances;

- Carlisle has an under-performing visitor economy
- There are opportunities now to drive change
- There is a supportive policy and funding environment

- **What will the Partnership do?**

The work of the Tourism Partnership will need to be carefully co-ordinated with other bodies. The table below outlines the broad areas of responsibility

alongside the priorities of the Carlisle Renaissance Board and the emerging City Centre Partnership.

Carlisle Renaissance will lead on.....
Public Realm improvements
Improving the City Centre Retail offer
Historic Core strategy development [Cathedral, Tullie House, Castle and area]
City Centre Partnership will lead on.....
City Centre Management – areas of activity to be determined
Carlisle & North Cumbria Tourism Partnership will lead on.....
Development of visitor experience and enhancement of attractions
Strategic Tourism Marketing, brand development and awareness and PR activity
Accommodation sector improvements, quality & accreditation programme
Tourism sector business engagement, representation, sector 'voice' and local delivery
Visitor information, orientation, research and intelligence
Conference and Business Tourism – product improvement & marketing
Development & support for thematic and area based business clusters
Selective Tourism Events; - development, marketing and programming [but not delivery] of events.

- **What happens next**

The recruitment of the Tourism Partnership Director is underway. The recruitment of representatives to the Partnership Board has also begun. The intention is to have the Partnership in place for September. The new Director will be charged with the preparation of an action plan that will be signed off by the Partnership Board and key funding partners. This will then be the template for the Partnership's work over the next three years.

David Beaty
Head of Economy, Property & Tourism
Carlisle City Council
June 1st 2009

BRAMPTON ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Background

The Growing Carlisle Local Economy Strategy identifies the need to focus on the development of Brampton and Longtown as rural service centres.

To date, work has focussed on Brampton and this paper sets out the actions undertaken, the current position and the work to be undertaken.

The Brampton Economic Action Group

To prepare an economic plan for Brampton, it was decided to bring together a group of existing organisations, under a set of terms of reference which, from the outset had this as a task and finish exercise.

The objectives of the group were to identify the economic priorities for Brampton and to recommend a vehicle through which the economic plan could be taken forward. The expectation is that once the task is complete, the group as presently constituted would disband.

In order to facilitate the discussions, an impartial chairman was recruited. This was Bill Smith of the South Lakes Development Trust.

Brampton Economic Action Group is made up of Brampton Community Association, Brampton Chamber of Trade, Brampton Parish Council (representing Brampton Parish Planning Group), Carlisle City Council, Hadrian's Wall Heritage, National Farmers' Union, Rural Women's Network, a representative of the tourism sector and Sustainable Brampton.

Over the past 10 months the group has met regularly and has agreed an action plan, with four main headings.

- Enhancing Brampton's Role as a 21st Century Market Town
- Improving the Brampton area experience
- Relationship between town and rural area
- Sustaining new and existing businesses.

The plan is presently out for consultation amongst the local community who are being asked to prioritise the actions proposed under these four headings and to also to comment on the plan as a whole and to make suggestions of alternative priorities.

The next stage will be for Brampton Economic Action Group to meet on 17th June 2009, to consider the outcomes of the consultation, discuss/agree a prioritised action plan and to recommend how the plan should be taken forward.

Conclusion

The exercise in Brampton is very much work in progress. The key to success is to find a way in which the objectives of the Brampton Economic Action Plan can be taken forward in a way that can be sustained in the long term.

The current proposal is for the establishment of a locally based Brampton Economic Partnership which is linked to the Carlisle Partnership, which ultimately owns the Growing Carlisle Strategy.

Sitting under these are a series of local delivery partnerships made up of existing organisations and the proposed community development trust.