

Carlisle Parish Councils Association

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

Monday 10th June 2013, Cummersdale Village Hall

Present – 21 representing 16 Parish Councils, 10 representing Carlisle City Council and 1 representing CALC.

1. Welcome and Introductions. R Auld, CPCA chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He reported with great sadness the death of Cllr Joe Hendry, Leader of Carlisle City Council. Joe had been the Rural Champion for Parish Councils and had shown his support for rural areas through his focus on rural poverty. He was also instrumental in the adoption of the revised Parish Charter.

R Auld also thanked Cummersdale Village Hall for their hospitality this evening.

2. Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Anne Quilter, Cllr Les Tickner, Cllr Jessica Riddle all Carlisle City Council, Harry Kay, Hethersgill PC, John Evans, Walton PC, David Johnson and Richard Workman, St Cuthberts Without PC.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 5th December 2012 were approved as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

C Rankin reported that the Planning section of the Parish Charter is currently out for consultation with the Parish Councils. Parishes were encouraged to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 2nd August 2013.

Also the Locality Working proposals which have been developed jointly between the Rural Support Group and the Carlisle Parish Councils Association are out for consultation with the Parish Councils. The deadline for responses is 30th June 2013.

A Culleton reported, as a follow up from the last meeting, that £56,000 is spent annually on Botchergate cleansing and over the last 18 months the service has been modernised resulting in a marked improvement in street cleanliness. It was also reported that fly tipping was not a growing problem and a number of prosecutions have been made due to the increased focus on this area by the new team. The need for solid evidence and intelligence was stressed in order that prosecutions can take place. An update will be given at the next meeting on the number of prosecutions which have taken place in the rural area.

R Auld gave a brief update on the broadband programme. A broadband conference will be held at Rheged on 21st June when a programme of activity will be released. The programme aims to deliver superfast broadband to 93% of Cumbria. It is envisaged that some of the 7% not covered by the programme will fall within the Carlisle district. Digital Carlisle which is specifically looking at broadband solutions for Carlisle district will consider areas of the district not covered by the County broadband programme.

5. Recycling Bring Sites

A Culleton reported that a review is being carried out on the provision of recycling bring sites in the district with the aim of ensuring best value for money. The review has included benchmarking the service against other districts in Cumbria. The review found that Carlisle district had 3 times more bring sites than any other district in the County with a total of 151

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sites. This resulted in Carlisle district having the most expensive service in the County. This was partly due to the fact that the bring site provision was implemented before the kerbside collection service. The proposal is to reduce the number of sites to 90 this year, as it was found that a small number of sites account for the majority of the recycling collection.

There were a number of issues raised from the Parish Councils where anomalies will occur where a bring site is due for removal which served an area where the kerbside collection is not available. Reassurance was given that capacity of collection rounds was continually being reviewed with the aim to bring more properties onto the kerbside collection.

There was also a concern as to the length of the consultation period on the proposals. The consultation period was 6 weeks which often did not allow enough time for the Parish Council cycle particularly for the smaller parishes who only met every 2 months.

A Culleton stressed that the recycling collection contract was due for renewal in 2015 when all capacities of collection rounds would be examined. Any sites earmarked for closure would be written to with a full explanation of the reason for closure.

6. Local Plan Preferred Options

J Meek outlined the Local Plan development process which involves producing both planning policies and site specific information. The Preferred Local Plan options will begin the public consultation period on 29th July until the end of September. The aim is to publish the Local Plan by February 2014. Many parishes have already undertaken baseline work through the rural masterplanning project.

It is essential that Parish Councils engage in the Local Plan process in order to influence development in the district. The preferred options consultation will be a lengthy document and hard copies will be sent to Parish Councils as well as an electronic copy. Officers from Carlisle City Council are also able to attend Parish Council meetings to explain the preferred options.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is applied to new development and is payable by the developer to be used by the community to fund community infrastructure projects. The CIL offers a much more predictable system to fund community infrastructure projects rather than relying on section 106 agreements.

The CIL will form part of the Examination in Public which will be part of the Local Plan process and will take place in Summer 2014. The City Council will not implement a CIL scheme until the Local Plan has been adopted. The level of CIL payable to the local community is dependent upon whether a Neighbourhood Plan is in place within that community.

The New Homes bonus is a payment made from Central Government to Local Planning Authorities. It is envisaged that in Carlisle district the new homes bonus will be used to offset the savings that need to be made to the City Council budget.

There were a number of queries raised from parishes regarding the suitability of undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that if the local Plan process is robust and addresses local needs there may be no need to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan which can

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be a lengthy and costly process. Dalston is currently in the early stages of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and has applied for a £7,000 grant to facilitate the process. CALC is supporting the Neighbourhood Plan process and has produced a very useful document and held a number of training sessions. In addition Zoe Sutton and Jilly Hale from the City Council are available to come out and speak to parishes regarding Neighbourhood Planning.

8. Communication

R Auld introduced this item and explained that there was a feeling that in the age of digital communication, not all Parish Councillors are seeing, reading or responding to consultation and other documents. It was urged that where reports are due to be sent digitally for consultation that the report structure is carefully considered and that hyperlinks are included. A plea was made for the City Council to monitor reports produced by consultants to minimise the use of colour and illustrations in documents.

B Craig gave an overview of the paper free committee system trial which the City Council has undertaken. The report from the trial is not yet published but it was recognised that considerable printing and postage costs could be saved by adopting a paper free system. Consideration should also be given to whether Parish Councils could use a paper free system for planning applications. A query was raised as to whether some grant money could be made available to Parish Councils to purchase a projector and screen to assist with this process.

9. Any Other Business

None recorded.

Cllr Colin Glover, Deputy Leader, Carlisle City Council closed the meeting by re-iterating the City Councils commitment to the whole district of Carlisle including the rural areas. The City Council Executive welcomes the opportunity to engage with the Parish Councils and to drive forward the vision set out by the late Joe Hendry. Cllr Glover stressed the need for feedback from the Parish Councils on rural issues in order to recognise and respond to the special rural needs within the district.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

Next joint meeting with City Council: - 3rd December 2013, 7 p.m. at Carlisle Civic Centre, to be hosted by Carlisle City Council

Next CPCA Meeting – Annual General Meeting and joint meeting with County Council, 3rd October 2013, 7.00 p.m, venue to be confirmed by County Council.