

**TRIPARTITE MEETING BETWEEN CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL, COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR CARLISLE, AND CARLISLE PARISH COUNCILS**

TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2015 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Carlisle City Council:

Councillor Dr L Tickner (Chairman)
Mr D Crossley
Mr P Mason
Mr C Hardman

Cumbria County Council

Councillor C Weber
Mr T Thwaites
Mr I Harker
Mr N Raymond

Parishes

Councillor K Bowron	-	Beaumont Parish Council
Mrs M E McKenna	-	Beaumont Parish Council
Mr P Ditch	-	Burgh by Sands Parish Council
Councillor J Stonebridge	-	Burgh by Sands Parish Council
Mrs V Sealby	-	Burgh by Sands Parish Council
Councillor T Allison	-	Cummersdale Parish Council
Councillor K McIntosh	-	Cummersdale Parish Council
Councillor R Auld	-	Dalston Parish Council
Councillor A Byers	-	Dalston Parish Council
Councillor B Craig	-	Dalston Parish Council
Councillor M Cork	-	Great Orton Parish Council
Councillor W Little	-	Great Orton Parish Council
Ms G Kartach	-	Hayton Parish Council
Councillor R Tinnion	-	Hayton Parish Council
Councillor M Ridley	-	Irthington Parish Council
Councillor W Bundred	-	Kirkandrews on Esk Parish Council
Councillor M Jack	-	Kirklington Parish Council
Councillor J Harper	-	Rockcliffe Parish Council
Mrs A McCallum	-	Rockcliffe / St Cuthbert Without Parish Councils
Councillor M Fox	-	Stanwix Rural Parish Council
Councillor B Earp	-	Wetheral Parish Council
Councillor M Higginbotham	-	Wetheral Parish Council
Councillor C Nicholson	-	CPCA
Mrs C Rankin	-	CALC
Ms S Bagshaw	-	CALC

ALSO PRESENT:

Ms D Turner	- National Grid
Mr S Radford-Hancock	- National Grid
Mrs J McKenna	- Cumbria County Council
Ms R Davies	- Cumbria County Council

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the tripartite meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Glover, Mrs Martlew, Mrs Bradley, Ms Quilter and Mrs Riddle; the Chief Executive, Director of Governance, Director of Economic Development and Director of Local Environment (Carlisle City Council); and representatives of Bewcastle Parish Council.

3. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the Tripartite Meeting held on 9 March 2015 were received and agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. NATIONAL GRID NORTH WEST CONNECTIONS PROJECT

The Chairman welcomed Ms Deborah Turner and Mr Stephen Radford-Hancock (National Grid) to the meeting.

Ms Turner confirmed that they were in attendance to provide a short presentation on the North West Coast Connections Project to connect and export the electricity which would be generated by Moorside (the proposed new nuclear power station near Sellafield in West Cumbria).

Ms Turner began by summarising the project background, commenting that in 2008 Moorside had been identified as one location to build a new nuclear reactor. National Grid's involvement commenced in 2009, with initial work and studies looking at ways in which new electricity generators in the North West could connect into their existing network.

Work had taken place on various different route options and on 17 June 2015 National Grid announced, and went out to consultation on, their chosen route corridor:

- a route north from Moorside to Harker substation, near Carlisle; and
- a route south from Moorside across the Furness peninsula then under Morecambe Bay to connect in at Middleton substation near Heysham

Ms Turner then outlined in some detail the next steps, including the draft route alignment; continued work with local authorities, landowners, Parish Councils, special interest groups and Electricity North West, together with the various considerations which required to be

borne in mind; specific design considerations; work being undertaken with local communities; and the draft route alignment.

In conclusion, Ms Turner reported that it was anticipated that formal public consultation on the detailed proposal would take place in spring / summer 2016.

Copies of the presentation were tabled at the meeting.

The Chairman questioned the timeline for conclusion of the consultation process / commencement of the actual physical work. Ms Turner advised that a submission would be made to the Planning Inspectorate in April 2017 and, if all went well, they were looking to build by 2018/19. The project required to be concluded by 2024.

Councillor Little sought clarification as regards the design of the pylons and timescales involved, and when Parish Councils would know whether existing pylon lines needed to come down. Ms Turner replied that temporary lines would be required, and the position would become clearer in spring / summer next year. She explained that National Grid's standard tower was typically 46-50 m in height. However, smaller towers were also available for use in certain locations e.g. hillsides to reduce the visible impact.

Councillor Allison indicated that he had attended an excellent presentation at Morton, adding that examples of pylons were already in situ. In response, Ms Turner advised that the traditional type of pylon could be viewed at the Harker Sub-Station. Details could also be provided upon request.

A representative questioned how long it would take to complete the project following determination of the final approach, and the total cost thereof. Ms Turner reiterated that building would commence around the end of 2018/19, the hope being that would conclude by 2024. Mr Radford-Hancock said that it was difficult to comment upon cost until the project went out to tender. A ballpark figure would, however, be in the region of £2bn.

Ms Bagshaw sought information on any packages which may be put in place to offset problems experienced by affected communities. Mr Radford-Hancock explained that National Grid did not operate in the same way as a private contractor (e.g. NuGen Ltd), adding that all of National Grid's spend required to be approved by a legislator. Further information on that aspect may be available next year during the consultation phase.

A representative concluded that there was therefore no real benefit for an affected Parish Council to put power lines on their land. Mr Radford-Hancock replied that there may be some opportunities for recompense, for example charitable donations. Ongoing dialogue would take place.

Councillor Earp asked whether a line would be built through South West Scotland at the same time as the North West Coast Connections Project. Ms Turner advised that was not a National Grid project.

Councillor Nicholson referenced the tunnel under Morecambe Bay and questioned the possibility of routing offshore similar to the Solway Firth, which may prove more economic. In response, Mr Radford-Hancock summarised the decision making process in terms of the proposed route corridor. He added that consideration had not been given to a route through the Solway Firth. However, National Grid was looking to consult further with communities next year.

A representative asked why power was being conveyed north when power was coming south from Scotland. Ms Turner reiterated that National Grid was tasked with ensuring that new generators connected to the system. If all power was directed south that would require two lines of large pylons situated side by side, which was unacceptable. Importantly, the chosen route corridor would provide a more secure electricity supply thus keeping the lights on.

The Chairman thanked Ms Turner and Mr Radford-Hancock for their attendance and most interesting and informative presentation.

RESOLVED – That the position be noted.

5. FOOTWAY LIGHTING

Mr Thwaites reminded Members that he had addressed the group on the issue of street lighting at the last meeting, and circulated a short briefing paper thereafter. He then introduced Mr Ian Harker and Mr Nick Raymond who were directly responsible for the service.

Mr Harker reported that the initial objective this evening was to outline lighting provision within the Carlisle District and the level of service required going forward. He explained that currently there were in the region of 1500 footway lights administered by the City Council. The County Council provided an ad-hoc reactive maintenance service and would therefore respond and make repairs. Three repair crews operated in the Carlisle District.

Several issues required consideration, including the quantity of assets being maintained; a structure for maintenance and the provision of a managed service going forward (which was compliant with statutory requirements); and whether the service was delivered via Carlisle City or, alternatively, a direct service (by the County Council or a contractor nominated by the Parishes).

Mr Crossley indicated that he had received a briefing on the matter from the City Engineer. Arrangements with the County Council were beneficial in terms of maintenance and economies of scale. Nevertheless it was felt that an overview of the standard of lighting was required. It was not anticipated that the Parish Councils would be asked to fund planned maintenance. However, as a consequence of the budgetary constraints faced by local authorities, the City Council would require to look at recovery costs for the service. In addition, for new housing developments in the rural area the expectation was that those would be adopted by the County Council.

A representative sought clarification of the difference in terminology between street, footway and highway lighting. In response, Mr Harker summarised the definitions as set out within Section 270 (Transfer of Lighting Systems) of the Highways Act 1980, together with the associated statutory obligations.

Councillor Auld was aware that the situation differed from district to district and that a variety of potential costs to be borne by Parishes had been suggested over time. He emphasised that Parish Councils expected consultation / information on lighting (including LED lighting), together with consequences of transfer and funding implications. Parishes required the County Council to liaise with them and outline liabilities for repairs, maintenance and new developments in the future.

Mr Harker explained that the responsibility for street lighting lay with the authority with responsibility for the road that the street lighting was placed in. In Cumbria that meant that the street light may fall under the responsibility of the Highways Agency, Carlisle City Council or Cumbria County Council. Footway lighting could be a District Council or Parish Council responsibility. There was therefore no consistency in terms of how footway lighting was administered throughout the county. He emphasised that the County Council did not apply standards, nor did they have the necessary funding to maintain footway lighting.

On successful completion of a new development the County Council would adopt the road, which would not be a burden on the Parish Council in question. In situations where a development was not subject to an agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 the County Council would liaise with developers on arrangements for ongoing maintenance.

Councillor Auld said that Eden District Council had agreed a 10 year work programme to address footway lighting provision in rural areas, which included upgrading some footway lighting at a projected cost of £1m. He asked whether the City Council might adopt a similar approach. Clarification of the position was required since Parish Councils were about to enter their budget process for the coming year.

Councillor Allison stated that, having compiled a "worst case scenario" he too was concerned about potential costs to the Parishes.

Mr Crossley replied that the City Council did indeed take its ongoing responsibilities for footway lighting seriously and was working to meet those responsibilities within the available budget. The Council was not, however, in a position whereby additional funding would be made available to supplement lighting provision.

The aspect which was not yet in place related to significant dialogue with Parishes or a clear understanding of funding opportunities (e.g. invest to save). If budgetary pressures were of concern then discussions could take place out with this meeting to address the matter.

Councillor Craig felt that there had been an element of scaremongering as regards costs to Parishes associated with the transfer of lighting. One area of concern to him was whether people living in the rural area may end up paying twice (i.e. for lighting in the urban area via their Council Tax and also for lighting which fell under the responsibility of the Parish). He also sought clarification regarding the manner by which lighting locations were logged.

The Chairman did not believe that the scenario alluded to above would arise, but invited the Councillor to discuss that aspect following the meeting. Mr Thwaites clarified the position from the County Council's point of view. In so doing he emphasised the need for the authority to recover a larger percentage of maintenance costs due to the current challenging financial circumstances.

On the latter point Mr Harker said that the County Council did not possess an inventory of all footway lighting, the service provided being purely maintenance as opposed to a management system.

Mr Crossley commented that, although the City Council had an inventory of the 1500 lights referred to above, there were others where clarification was required. Officers would do their best to clarify responsibility for those lights.

Mrs McCallum reported that her Parish was unique in that the Parish owned and maintained their own street lights. She questioned whether the City Council was willing to negotiate with the Parish Council on taking over responsibility for those lights.

In response, Mr Crossley stated that the Council would not find comfort in taking over additional lighting / costs for the reasons referred to above. If greater detail was provided, Officers would be willing to discuss potential economies of scale.

RESOLVED – That the current arrangements for the installation and maintenance of lighting schemes be noted.

6. FLY TIPPING

The Chairman reported that the Director of Local Environment (Carlisle City Council) had prepared a briefing note on Fly Tipping, copies of which were tabled.

Mr Crossley presented the paper, commenting that the item had been suggested for inclusion on the Agenda by the Parishes as a matter of general interest.

He explained that, in the last financial year, Carlisle City Council had received 347 complaints of fly tipping; the cost for removal being £16,227. Of the 347 complaints, approximately 84 incidents of fly tipping had occurred in rural hot spots, including areas such as Longtown, Brampton, Dalston and Wreay. Those were not, however, the only areas and fly tipping appeared to be occurring on the roads leading to many of those rural locations.

Proposals to tackle the issue could include surveillance by using cameras, as well as providing signage as a preventative measure. Site visits would be carried out to determine the most appropriate action that could be taken. It may also be an option for parishes to be contacted on an individual basis to discuss their requirements. Costings may differ depending on the requirements and problems identified.

217 of the complaints alluded to had been investigated by Officers. A majority of the waste was household waste and determined to be a small van load or less. A lot of household waste is unidentifiable since it usually consisted of mattresses, sofas etc. A breakdown of the locations and types of waste was also provided.

Following investigation, Enforcement Officers would take action where evidence existed on who fly tipped. Recent action included a successful prosecution in the Magistrates Court with a fine being imposed totalling £620. In addition, 5 prosecutions for fly tipping were pending.

Mr Crossley further reported that the City Council had successfully launched its new website. The website included a specific page whereby the public could report problems with fly tipping. A point of note was that, in so doing, their details would remain confidential. Accordingly he urged people to report such incidents and, if they were aware of particular hot spots, to inform the Council.

Councillor Byers found the waste collection service in her area to be very good. She did, however, comment upon problems which had arisen as a result of the restricted recycling service provided to a new development in the area. She suggested that consideration could be given to whether such costs should be borne by developers.

In response, Mr Crossley outlined the various recycling options available, including Bring Sites. The authority was understanding of the issues involved and was currently undertaking a review of the collection service, the aim of which was to improve efficiency of the dry recycling collections and to potentially enable the extension of the full kerbside service to new housing. The issue of re-thinking waste may well be a subject for future discussion with Parish Councils.

Councillor Craig was somewhat surprised to learn that the cost for removal of fly tipping during the last financial year was only £16,227. He highlighted the large amount of fly tipping occurring in Peter Lane, together with the need to gain an understanding of why that was happening. Councillor Craig also questioned whether the free bulky waste collection service was still provided and whether consideration had been given to a collection service for trade waste.

Mr Crossley summarised the service provided by recycling centres, together with the bulky waste collection service. Greater detail on the costs involved could be provided should the Councillor so wish. Importantly, however, the Council could no longer provide a free of charge service.

Councillor Little was of the opinion that the level of fine imposed following a successful prosecution was insufficient and provided little in the way of deterrent. He considered fly tipping to be costly, unsightly and vandalism of the countryside.

The Chairman indicated that one of the greatest challenges was around obtaining the necessary proof to support a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Mr Crossley added that the maximum fine was up to £50,000 or a short custodial sentence.

A representative of Burgh-by-Sands Parish Council asked why permits were not issued to enable members of the public to dispose of waste in vans.

In response, Mr Crossley advised that was a County Council service and there were costs associated with its delivery. Mr Thwaites undertook to pass the suggestion on to colleagues in Waste Services.

RESOLVED – That the briefing paper prepared by the Director of Local Environment, and comments raised as detailed above, be noted.

7. CUMBRIA DEAL

Councillor Auld introduced this item of business, commenting that the Cumbria Leaders Board and Chief Executives' Group had been actively engaged over the summer in the preparation of a collaborative approach to devolution.

A letter (enclosing the "Cumbria Deal" proposition) had been submitted to the Secretary of State expressing interest in commencing discussions with government about the potential for a Devolution Deal for Cumbria.

Councillor Auld outlined the background to the offer, emphasising that the economic growth prospects for Cumbria were significantly going to contribute to the Northern Powerhouse and National Economy. In particular, providing significant and sustainable security of energy supply which would be a major contribution to the national low carbon targets. He added that Cumbria was a fantastic place for business and the visitor economy.

Approximately £25 billion of private sector investment was proposed in Cumbria and the Cumbria Leadership Board, working collaboratively with the private sector led LEP, believed that they could make an outstanding offer to government in return for a package of Devolution measures.

Areas covered included economic growth; transport and infrastructure; learning, skills and employment; housing; health and social care; public safety and resilience; and management of the public estate.

Councillor Auld advised that discussions were ongoing and he had, the day before, received a key milestone document for comment. He added that the Cumbria Leadership Group was committed to ensuring that Cumbria did not miss out on the opportunity.

RESOLVED – That the update be received.

8. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance at what had been a most constructive Tripartite meeting.

(The meeting ended at 8.25 pm)