

**JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES  
FROM THE PARISH COUNCILS**

**MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 2013 AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT: Councillor C W Glover (Chairman) (Carlisle City Council)  
Councillor Mrs E B Martlew (Carlisle City Council)  
Councillor Mrs H Bradley (Carlisle City Council)  
Councillor Mrs J Riddle (Carlisle City Council)  
Councillor Dr L Tickner (Carlisle City Council)

Mr D Sheard (Cumbria County Council)

Councillor R Auld (Chairman, Carlisle Parish Councils  
Association)  
Ms C Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)  
Councillor E Williamson (Beaumont Parish Council)  
Mrs M E McKenna (Beaumont Parish Council)  
Councillor K McIntosh (Cummersdale Parish Council)  
Councillor C Byers (Dalston Parish Council)  
Councillor O Rickerby (Dalston Parish Council)  
Councillor M Ridley (Irthington Parish Council)  
Councillor W Bundred (Kirkandrews on Esk Parish Council)  
Ms P MacDonald (Orton Parish Council)  
Councillor W Little (Orton Parish Council)  
Councillor J Harper (Rockcliffe Parish Council)  
Mr D E Johnson (St Cuthbert Without Parish Council)  
Mrs A McCallum (Stanwix Rural Parish Council)  
Councillor C Nicholson (Stanwix Rural Parish Council)  
Councillor Ms J Holland (Wetheral Parish Council)

ALSO PRESENT :

Mr D Crossley (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Mr M Lambert (Director of Governance)  
Mr P Mason (Director of Resources)  
Mrs J Meek (Director of Economic Development) - until 7.25 pm  
Ms A Culleton (Director of Local Environment) - until 7.25 pm  
Mrs M Durham (Lead Committee Clerk)

**1. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the joint meeting.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Ms A Quilter (Carlisle City Council)  
Dr J Gooding (Chief Executive)  
Ms E Dixon (Carlisle Partnership Manager)  
Councillor B Craig (Carlisle Parish Councils Association)  
Ms S Kyle (Clerk to Walton, Scaleby and Hethersgill Parish Council)  
Councillor I Yates (Wetheral Parish Council)

## **3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting between the City Council's Executive and Representatives from the Parish Councils held on 10 June 2013 were circulated.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be received and agreed as a true record of the meeting.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Councillor Auld indicated that the issue of Recycling Bring Sites had been discussed in detail at the last joint meeting. The Director of Local Environment was in attendance tonight to respond to any further questions on the issue, however, no questions were forthcoming.

## **5. CARLISLE LOCAL PLAN 2015 – 2030 UPDATE ON PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Director of Economic Development gave a presentation updating the meeting on the Preferred Options Consultation undertaken between August – September 2013.

The Director reported that the exercise involved a variety of meetings, events and drop in sessions; together with information in the local newspapers and social media. Officers had attended Parish meetings at Irthington, Brampton and Rockcliffe; continued to push the consultation to be digital where possible and would make the document as accessible for as many people as possible. She accepted the difficulties associated with the presentation of what was a lengthy and technical document for public consultation, but would continue to seek ways to improve the position. A healthy response had been received to the consultation.

An independent Inspector had visited and, following analysis, had given an excellent report.

Feedback had focussed on housing sites; consisted of a mixture of support and alternatives, together with a healthy batch of objections –

- 196 respondents with 1137 comments
- 423 objections, 243 in support
- 43 new housing sites being put forward

Each response had been acknowledged and the Local Plan was now being prepared to reflect the responses to the consultation.

The Director summarised the following key messages:

- The Housing Need and Demand Study set the target (665 new houses per year) – previously the Local Plan had set a flexible target of between 550 and 650. The target was challenging and there was a need to consult on those new sites
- A viability study had been commissioned and was now underway. Comments expressed a feeling that the Local Plan needed a more robust evidence base to consider viability of future policies
- Increased flexibility for Carlisle South to allow the Masterplan / future plans to come forward sooner in the Plan period if growth was stalled and growth needed to come forward sooner
- Meetings were ongoing with the County Council regarding education and highways, which would feed into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan that would sit alongside the Local Plan.
- Discussions were also ongoing with housing colleagues as to whether there was a need to allocate a future site for gypsy and travellers
- The county wide 'Cumulative Impact of Vertical Structures Study' which would help determine the impact of wind turbines on the landscape was awaited
- Officers were also working with the University of Cumbria on the issue of accommodation

The Director further explained what was happening now in terms of the City Centre Masterplan; additional sites; Gypsy and Traveller provision; Infrastructure; Viability Study and 2011 Census. All of that work would contribute towards making the City vibrant and viable. Continued dialogue was taking place with the County Council and other infrastructure providers to ensure deliverability of sites.

In terms of the next steps, the Director advised that there would be an additional consultation stage (lasting 4 weeks). She outlined the programme timetable, adding that Officers were working really hard and good progress was being made.

Councillor Nicholson sought clarification as to who had set the housing target of 665 new houses per year.

In response, the Director of Economic Development stated that the figure emanated from a variety of consultation responses.

Councillor Holland noted that the additional consultation would span a period of 4 weeks and asked whether that would give Parish Councils a reasonable opportunity to respond.

The Director considered that the statutory consultation period was reasonable, and emphasised the need to keep the momentum moving forward.

Councillor Harper highlighted the issue of infrastructure, commenting that residents in Rockcliffe had a bus service which may not be provided in future. He questioned how that would be taken into account.

The Director of Economic Development replied that the City Council would work with the Highway Authority to ensure that any development was sustainable and accessible. She recognised that the timescale was tight and, if Parish Councils required help, that would be provided as far as possible. The Director further thanked the Parishes for their support.

The Chairman added that he sat on the Local Plan Working Group, and that all comments received were extremely valuable and very welcome.

RESOLVED – That the presentation on the Carlisle Local Plan 2015 – 2030 be received.

## **6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Chairman reported that the Director of Community Engagement had recently left the City Council. He invited the Deputy Chief Executive to update the meeting on the current position.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that, given the current circumstances within Local Government, the Council had taken the opportunity presented by the departure of the Director of Community Engagement to look at the reallocation of responsibilities.

The services provided by the former Directorate would now be allocated as follows:

**Housing** - to temporarily transfer in its entirety (except Welfare Advice) to the Director of Economic Development.

**Customer Services** - the Chief Executive would take the lead. That would help to give an overall corporate focus to the service.

**Contracts and Community Services & Partnership Manager** - those functions would report to the Deputy Chief Executive. The Contracts and Community Services Manager would head up the Team.

**Revenues and Benefits** - the service would transfer to the Director of Resources.

**Property Services and Freedom of Information** – would transfer to the Director of Governance

RESOLVED – That the position be noted.

## **7. PARISH CHARTER – PLANNING AGREEMENT**

The Deputy Chief Executive introduced this item of business, commenting that arrangements had been reviewed and officially signed off by the Leader of the Council on 8 April 2013.

At that time it was agreed that the Planning Agreement would remain in its current form, but would be subject to an ongoing review process due to the large number of significant changes as a result of both legislation and locally (such as the agreement of a Local Plan).

The Planning Agreement had subsequently been through the Parish Council system, in addition to which consultations had taken place in the City Council.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the Council was not in a position to say that the Planning Agreement could be completed tonight. Rather the proposal was that interested parties should discuss the matter with the Director of Economic Development and the Development Manager, and respond to Councillor Nicholson as soon as possible.

The Deputy Chief Executive apologised that it was not possible to sign the matter off tonight.

Councillor Auld indicated that it would be remiss of him not to place on record disappointment at the position. He had understood that the Planning Agreement would be resolved this evening, emphasising that it had been ongoing for some three years. The Parish Councils were disappointed and very anxious to conclude the matter as soon as possible.

Whilst echoing the feeling of disappointment, Councillor Nicholson considered it prudent to ensure that the Planning Agreement was done properly.

Councillor Nicholson felt confident that if the Development Manager (Mr Hardman) was leading on the issue it would be done well. He added that the Development Manager had been very helpful and wished to place on record thanks to Mr Hardman for his contribution.

The Chairman recognised the feeling of frustration, but emphasised the importance of getting the Planning Agreement right. He added that it would be brought forward as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That the current position with regard to the Parish Charter Planning Agreement be noted; and every effort made to resolve the matter as soon as possible.

## **8. DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Councillor Auld outlined the background to the issue commenting that, some time ago, the Council's Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel had requested that a Task Group be set up to look into saving paper within the democratic process. The Task Group had reported back on their findings and made several recommendations, including a recommendation to undertake a pilot of using tablet technology in Committee meetings. He added that, at the last joint meeting, Councillor Craig had given an overview of the trial of paper free working within the Committee System

During 2013 the CPCA Executive Committee had discussed changes to the Carlisle City Council Planning Portal, and the willingness or otherwise of Parish Councils to use modern technology for the handling and display of planning consultations.

A number of Parish Councils of differing sizes had expressed an interest and enthusiasm in the use of digital equipment to display plans, photographs, etc. to assist with planning consultations.

In response, the CPCA Executive had agreed that they could offer a small grant to Parish Councils to assist with the purchase of digital equipment (such as a digital projector, projector stand or ceiling fixing and a screen). The CPCA had therefore made a request to Carlisle City Council to consider match funding any CPCA grant, which request was currently under consideration.

Councillor Auld added that the CPCA was offering a grant of £150 per Parish Council for up to 5 Councils (on a first come, first served basis) that may wish to participate in a pilot scheme.

Parish Councils, which wished to register an interest, were asked to complete a form (copies of which were circulated) for return to Claire Rankin, with a completion date of 31 January 2014.

Mrs McCallum felt that the allocation of grant on a first come, first served basis was not fair.

In response Councillor Auld explained that resources were simply not available to fund the provision of equipment for all Parish Councils. The CPCA Executive was keen to get things moving, commencing with the pilot scheme.

The Chairman stated that Councillor Craig had been involved in the Saving Paper Task Group referred to. Digital communications constituted a very sensible opportunity, which should be explored further. There was a distinct possibility that it would be progressed as an 'invest to save' project.

The Chairman added that it was prudent to undertake a pilot scheme to determine the likely level of success prior to spending a great deal of money on it. The sharing of equipment between Parishes may, for example, be another option. He added that the matter would be considered seriously in terms of how it could be taken forward.

Councillor Auld said that the CPCA Executive was very conscious that Parish Councils had differing ways of dealing with the display of planning consultations that. They were keen to work with the City Council on the matter. Some Parish Councils may already have digital equipment and, in conjunction with Planning Services, could start using that equipment.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that consideration was being given to the Council's web provision, and the Planning Portal would be included in that tranche of work. The Digital and Information Services staff were looking at the matter now. It could perhaps be the subject of an agenda item at a future joint meeting.

RESOLVED – (1) That the update on Digital Communications be received.

(2) That Parish Councils interested in applying for the grant, as outlined above, be requested to register their interest as soon as possible and in any event by 31 January 2014.

## **9. LOCALITY WORKING – POSSIBLE PROJECTS**

Councillor Auld reported that, following on from consultations on locality working, it had been agreed by the CPCA Executive that a meeting take place with Wetheral Parish Council to explore ideas as part of consultations to run a pilot in the Wetheral area. A number of ideas, including the difficulties being experienced on the A69 and the de-trunking of that road, had come forward as part of those discussions which were very welcome.

Councillor Auld added that Rory Stewart MP had requested that he look at the matter as an independent person. He had consulted with the County and City Councils, Parish Councillors and the Parish Councils affected on the A69 and A689.

The matter had been ongoing for a considerable time and it was unlikely that Warwick Bridge would get a by-pass in the near future. It was essential that all the Parish Councils involved considered the issue very carefully.

Councillor Auld advised that it had been agreed that a meeting would take place with the County Council to give consideration to what processes could be put in place, and he wished to take the initiative to try to move it forward under locality working.

The main projects which could arise from locality working were:

- Looking into the possibility of a Fuel Co-operative along the lines for the Northern Fells Group
- Information sharing between Parish Councils
- Contract work

The latter project concerned work previously carried out in parish areas by the County / City Councils and which was not being done due to budget cuts (e.g. weeding). The CPCA was looking to act as a 'lynch pin' with contractors in order that Parish Councils could call on particular contractors as part of the Scheme. Claire Rankin would be compiling a list of contractors in the New Year.

RESOLVED – That the update on Locality Working be received.

## **10. CYCLING CHAMPION**

Councillor Auld introduced this item of business commenting that, for many people in the parish areas, cycling was an important means of transport into and out of the City. That was not easy and issues, such as cars parking on designated cycle ways, were problematic. Councillor Holland had therefore suggested that the City Council might nominate a cycling champion to work with Parishes on cycling issues. Ongoing maintenance of cycle ways was also an issue.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive stated that the Community Development Officer - Sport Development (Paul Frampton) was working with British Cycling and, in particular, with volunteers locally to take them through a scheme to become cycle leaders; and to increase the numbers of women cyclists. It was recognised that cyclists faced issues, particularly on the busy 'A' roads out with the City.

The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that Paul Frampton could act as a point of contact from a sporting and safety perspective, and his contact details could be circulated.

Councillor Holland emphasised the need for a change in ethos with regard to cycling. The ATAG, which provided a forum for consideration of cycling issues, was no longer in existence. It was therefore difficult for Parish Councils to have discussions on transport issues. She requested that cycling be placed up there on the agenda i.e. that there should be a change in approach and awareness of cycling related issues.

Councillor Mrs Bradley replied that cycling came under the auspices of Cumbria County Council; which authority employed a Cycling Officer (Mark Brierley) whose contact details could be supplied. She emphasised that the issue was taken seriously within the City Council, as evidenced by a variety of City Council documentation and the development of cycling paths in the City.

Councillor Mrs Bradley added that the City Council was trying to do more, but clearly cycling could not be prioritised over other matters.

Councillor Holland added that she was aware of the problems associated with funding the Petteril / Dalston cycle paths, and was just asking for the matter to be put on the radar.

The Chairman stated that the Joint Transport Working Group could discuss any cycling related issues, although it must be recognised that no vast sums of more were available to address the matters highlighted.

**RESOLVED** – That the contact details of the Officers referred to above be circulated to Parish Councils.

[CONTACT DETAILS –

Paul Frampton - Telephone: 01228 817581  
Mark Brierley – Telephone: 01228 226740]

## **11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** – That arrangements be made for the joint meetings between the Executive and Parish Councils Association in 2014 [June (to be hosted by Carlisle Parish Councils Association) and December (to be hosted by the City Council)].

## **12. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and expressed the hope that fruitful discussions would continue throughout the year.

The Chairman further extended compliments of the season and invited everybody to join him for refreshments.

(The meeting ended at 8.05 pm)