



Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council Liaison Meeting held at the Bourges/Viersen Room - Town Hall on 27 July 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillor Dawn Magnus, Eye Parish Council
Councillor James Hayes, Bretton Parish Council
Councillor Keith Lievesley, Sutton Parish Council
Councillor David Over, Barnack Parish Council
Councillor Catherine Franks, Bainton and Ashton Parish Council
Councillor Margaret Long, Thorney Parish Council
Ian Dewar, CAPALC
Councillor Ed Murphy, Peterborough City Council
Councillor Joseph Dobson, Helpston Parish Council
Councillor Ian Allin, Orton Longueville Parish Council
Councillor Olive Leonard, Hampton Parish Council
Councillor Henry Clark, Peakirk Parish Council
Councillor Bob Randall, Glinton Parish Council
Councillor Denis Batty, Glinton Parish Council
Councillor John Haste, Glinton Parish Council
Councillor Vivien Thorley, Wansford Parish Council
Councillor Geoffrey Smith, Werrington Neighbourhood Council
Councillor Martin Greaves, Werrington Neighbourhood Council
Councillor Richard Perkins, Ailsworth Parish Council

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Kim Sawyer, Director of Governance
Cate Harding, Community Capacity Manager
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Sylvester, Councillor Murphy was in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also received for Parish Councillors Bartlett, Phil Thompson and Jane Hill.

2. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16 March 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3. Devolution

Kim Sawyer, Governance Director presented this item.

Key points raised:

- Devolved powers and funding delegated by the Government for local areas;
- Progress so far;

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution deal;
- Directly Elected Mayor and Combined Authority; and
- Consultation and deadline date for Parish Councils to feed in – 23 August 2013.

Discussions, comments and responses were as follows:

- The LEP was an acronym for - Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Parish Councillors were encouraged to promote the submission of individual comments for the consultation;
- Parish Councils could call an extraordinary Parish Council meeting in order to communicate and go through the Devolution proposals although Peterborough City Council (PCC) would encourage individual responses if this was not possible;
- The support for education funding through the Devolution deal would concentrate on the provision of 16-19 and 19 plus age group as Local Authorities would retain their sovereignty in regards to primary and secondary school education;
- If the authorities wanted to combine the education function on a local level with neighbouring authorities such as Leicestershire, it would be up to the authority to pursue, such as for the development of specialist music centres;
- There had been a considerable amount of media coverage in particular television, where some of the views around the elected Mayor had been controversial;
- According to a Government Minister, the East Anglia bid had been the 'best deal in the country';
- All existing Councils would retain their political sovereignty and continue with Local Authority business;
- The devolved deal could explore issues such as poor broadband across rural areas;
- The Disability Forum would receive a presentation on the Devolution proposals;
- Brian Tyler, member of the Disability Forum had also hosted a talk on his radio show about Devolution;
- Should devolution be approved, an election would be held in 2017 to appoint an elected Mayor for the Combined Authority and the rest of the membership would include one representative from each respective authority (currently the leader);
- The Elected Mayor would Chair the Combined Authority business meetings, which would hold responsibility for areas such as the Key Route Network, transport budget;
- The elected Mayor's budget would require agreement from the Combined Authority
- A non statutory planning framework plan would also be developed and required unanimous approval from the Combined Authority. This would not override any Local Plan as it was non-statutory.
- The Combined Authority would decide how the devolved budget would be spent on areas such as infrastructure to encourage growth;
- Members raised concern over the use of the title Mayor, as this was a Civic function; Members stated that consideration should be given to the use of the title Chairman of the Combined Authority in order for the general public to understand the purpose of the responsibility; and
- The title of Elected Mayor was enshrined in legislation however, the point raised would be fed through the consultation.

AGREED ACTION

- The Democratic Services Officer would send a copy of the presentation to Parish Councils;
- The Director of Governance would feedback to Peterborough City Council's Education team in regards to comments made by Members about encouragement previously provided by Cambridgeshire for stronger support for primary and secondary schools; and
- Bretton Parish Council would contact the Director of Governance in order to cover the concerns raised over effective Devolution consultation with the disabled community.

4. Code of Conduct for Members Interests

The Director of Governance presented this item.

Key points highlighted:

- The Council had recently adopted the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) model in order to make clear the responsibilities of disclosable pecuniary and non disclosable interests.

Discussions, comments and responses were as follows:

- Peterborough Council's recent review and adoption of the code was something to consider in a Parish Council environment in order to promote good behaviours in Parish Council meetings.

5. Roles and Training Requirements for Parish Councillors

Ian Dewar from CAPALC presented this item, which outlined ideas on assisting Parish Councils to focus on what support they required in order to deliver community objectives.

Discussions, comments and responses were as follows:

- It would be advantageous for Parish Councils to compare how they carry out functions and promote public interest for the voluntary duties required within communities;
- Parish Councils required templates in order to identify how to capture their communities objectives and identify what skills and support they require going forward;
- Some Parish Councillors were overwhelmed by the immense amount of information available on how to become an expert on Parish Councils and setting community objectives had been an enormous task to undertake in order to move Parish Councils forward; and
- There had been very little time for PCs and clerks to complete community duties on a voluntary basis. There had been a need for communication and support from a forum such as the Parish Council Liaison Working Group to discuss the issues raised to formulate plans and Job Descriptions in order to meet community objectives.

AGREED ACTION

It was agreed that the Parish Council Liaison Group would:

- Draft a questionnaire for circulation to Parish Councils in order to encourage feedback on how they operate currently, the role of the Parish Councillor and what improvements or development Parish Council's required in order to provide effective support to their community; and
- The Parish Council Liaison Working Group to work with the Finance department over budget plans in particular to any proposed changes to grants provided by Peterborough City Council for Parish initiatives, with the aim to provide them with at least 3 years notice of any proposed changes.

6. The Role Of the Scrutiny Commission For Rural Communities

Councillor Over, Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities introduced this item.

Key points raised:

- The Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities was introduced to the LA in 2000. Issues that were discussed included road maintenance, public services, traffic, policing, health and the fix it van for rural areas;
- The Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities (SCRC) had recommended to policy, rural agreements and contracts in the past, including the development of the Rural Strategy;
- The key achievement of the SCRC had influenced a change to the 20 miles per hour speed limits in rural areas, which had been subsequently taken up by urban areas;
- There was a reliance on Parish Council Liaison (PCL) and the SCRC to be the voice for rural communities;
- The PCL Co-opted members had provided valuable advice at the SCRC meetings;
- The management of voluntary duties in rural communities required development by Parish Councils to take on tasks previously undertaken by the fix it van and provide a top up to grounds maintenance;
- The PCLs advice was being sought on how to introduce voluntary community schemes, such as a rural enterprise;
- Stamford, Sawtry, and Stilton Parish Councils were keen to provide guidance to Peterborough Parish Councils over the creation of parish enterprises; and
- There had been a wider aspect for the rural commission to join city based initiatives.

Discussions, comments and responses were as follows:

- Discussion on Parish Council enterprises could be conducted initially at the Parish Council Liaison Working Group;
- The SCRC meetings were productive to attend as a Coopted member. Attendance had provided a good opportunity to influence and comment on policies and strategies from a rural perspective before they were agreed by the Cabinet or Council meetings; and
- It was important for the Parish Councils to feed into the work of the SCRC.

ACTION AGREED

That the standing four members would remain as the Parish Council co-opted members for SCRC:

- Cllr PJ Nutall;
- Cllr K Lievesley;
- Cllr J Dobson; and
- Cllr Henry Clark.

CHAIRMAN
6.30-8.04 PM