



Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council Liaison Meeting held at the Council Chamber -  
Town Hall  
on 20 January 2010

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor David Over (Chairman)  
Andy Totten, Bainton & Ashton Parish Council  
June Woollard, Barnack Parish Council  
Roy Pettitt, Peakirk Parish Council  
Denis Batty, Glinton Parish Council  
Martin Greaves, Werrington Neighbourhood Council  
David Hedges, Werrington Neighbourhood Council  
Pam Winslade, Orton Longville Parish Council  
Pat Murphy, Thorney Parish Council  
David J Buddle, Thorney Parish Council  
John Bartlett, Thorney Parish Council  
Andy Goodsell, Eye Parish Council  
Richard Clarke, Wansford Parish Council

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Councillor David Harrington, Newborough Ward Councillor

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Emma Black, Head of Legal Litigation  
Paul Phillipson, Executive Director of Operations  
Adrian Chapman, Head of Neighbourhood Services  
Leonie McCarthy, Neighbourhood Manager  
Alex Daynes, Senior Governance Officer  
Alana Hair, Governance Officer  
John Harrison, Executive Director - Strategic Resources  
Steven Pilsworth, Head of Corporate Services  
Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received Geoff Smith (Werrington), Henry Clark (Peakirk), Angela Hawkins (Peakirk), Richard Tindall (Northborough), Marian Brown (Ufford), and Frieda Gosling (Ufford).

**2. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 November 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2009 were approved as a true and accurate record.

The Chairman advised Members that the budget item would be discussed as the next item on the agenda.

**3. Budget for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Executive Director of Strategic Resources gave a presentation on the draft Council Budget for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Director gave an overview of

the proposed expenditure, explaining that funds amounting to about 6 per cent of the total council tax bill were clawed back by central government from government grants, putting pressure on the council to identify savings through efficiencies wherever possible.

Other key points included:

- £15 million of efficiency savings needed to be identified
- £25,000 had been allocated to each Neighbourhood Council
- The Community Leadership Fund was still operating and £10,000 per ward remains in the budget
- Savings through shared back office functions between other local authorities were being investigated
- The 2.5 per cent increase in council tax was one of the lowest nationally when compared with similar councils
- The draft budget 2010/11 and medium term financial plan would be considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2010 and Council on 24 February 2010

Questions were raised and responses given including:

- It was a commercial decision not to continue to subsidise school meals.
- The Council's staffing numbers are going down, for example ICT staffing dropped from 60 to 40 prior to being outsourced.
- The Council is lean, but could be more so. Efficiencies through resource sharing with neighbouring authorities, for example revenues and benefits services, procurement and payroll, was the preferred way of finding savings to any future increase in council tax.

#### **4. Village Design Statements**

The Strategic Planning Manager presented a report on the role of Village Design Statements (VDSs) in the determination of planning applications and appeals following the introduction of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF), which will eventually replace the Peterborough Local Plan 2005.

Key points included:

- By law, VDSs would not hold any weight under the LDF and could not be considered in the determination of planning applications and appeals
- A VDS could be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), however the process for creating this was very regulated and required considerable effort
- The preparation of the LDF and its associated core documents was the priority for the Council

Questions were raised and responses given including:

- The Council would be willing to go down the route of turning village design statements in to supplementary planning documents if resources became available in the future. It was accepted that villages could undertake a lot of the work themselves, but there would still be a burden on the Council.
- Neighbourhood Investment Plans will inform the Community Action Plans which are currently being developed by Neighbourhood Councils, providing important information and capturing the views of local people to shape and influence what happens in the community.
- Parish Councils could get involved by taking part in the development plan consultations, for example the Site Allocations.

The Strategic Planning Manager agreed to make available further information on the process of creating supplementary planning documents.

## **5. Site Allocations DPD**

The Strategic Planning Manager presented a report updating Members on the preparation of (and forthcoming consultation on) the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), and the wider implications for planning and development in village and rural areas.

Questions were raised and responses given including:

- Every site on the Site Allocation Document had been visited and no housing sites were on areas considered to have any flood risk.
- All objections, including those submitted by Parish Councils and developers, would be considered by the Inspector during that stage of the process.

## **6. Neighbourhood Councils**

The Neighbourhood Manager presented a report updating Members on the latest round of Neighbourhood Council meetings held in December 2009 and touching on key issues for each Neighbourhood Council area.

Questions were raised and responses given including:

- A decision to change the name of North West 1 Neighbourhood Council would need to be made at the next Neighbourhood Council meeting.
- The Neighbourhood Councils were intended to support the work done by Parish Councils and a lead officer had been appointed to support this relationship.
- The funding and priorities for Neighbourhood Councils would be discussed openly at public meetings.
- Funding would only be made available to Neighbourhood Councils when the Community Action Plan is endorsed by the Neighbourhood Council and the community.
- The Neighbourhood Council model and boundaries for the Neighbourhood Council areas are constantly being evaluated and the feedback from the Parish Councils is valuable in this process.
- Neighbourhood management teams and other agencies can work across Neighbourhood Council boundaries, with issues being discussed between neighbourhood managers and recommendations brought to the Neighbourhood Councils.

## **7. Parish Question Time**

The Senior Governance Officer provided an update on responses to questions submitted by Mr Ian Dewar, County Executive Officer of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils.

Q: Peterborough City Council is moving to electronic planning documents. How is PCC going to support statutory consultees to migrate away from paper to electronic documents? For example an A1 drawing is useful for a site survey or common scrutiny at a parish council meeting.

A: Parishes have been informed about the ability to view planning applications on the City Council's web site and have been asked to let us know if they wished to switch to electronic consultations instead of hard copy ones. Where Parishes found themselves unable to move

to electronic consultations, they were asked to indicate what would enable them to make the switch. The idea was to encourage Parishes to start thinking about what equipment/facility they might need (eg. Laptop computer and a projector so plans can be put on show at meetings) and what future budget provision might be made to help meet the cost of this. This in turn would enable the City Council to look at what level of support (financial or otherwise) it may have to plan for to help the Parishes make the switch. At the close of the 'reply by' period before Christmas, no Parish identified any equipment/facility need that would enable them to be consulted electronically.

Community groups are going to be contacted on the same matter in the next 2 weeks.

Further questions from Ian Dewar have been passed to relevant officers to provide a response.

## **8. Parish Council Liaison Work programme**

Members considered the current work programme and made the following recommendations:

- Include an update on Neighbourhood Councils on the next agenda.
- Include a discussion on proposed changes to the planning consultation process on the next agenda.
- A 5 – 10 minute presentation on the Code of Conduct from a member of the Standards Committee to be included on the next agenda.
- Responses from parishes on the change of name to the 'Soke and Isle of Peterborough' to be reported at the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN  
8.15pm