

MINUTES OF CHORLEY LIAISON

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 16 March 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Gordon France (Eastern Parishes) (Chair), Councillor Kim Snape (Chorley Rural East Division, Lancashire County Council) (Vice-Chair),
Lancashire County Councillors: Steve Holgate (Chorley West Division, Lancashire County Council),
Chorley Borough Councillors: Alistair Morwood (Chorley Town East), Anthony Gee (Chorley Town West), Eric Bell (Clayton and Whittle), Doreen Dickinson (Western Parishes), Alistair Bradley (Chorley Town) and Matthew Lynch (Euxton, Astley and Buckshaw)
Town and Parish Councillors: Alison Evans (Adlington Town Councillor), Ian Horsfield (Anderton Parish Councillor), Laura Lennox (Astley Village Parish Councillor), Anne Peet (Croston Parish Councillor), Malcolm Allen (Heapey Parish Councillor), Terry Dickenson (Wheelton Parish Councillor), Tina Newall (Whittle-le-Woods Parish Councillor) and Steven Perry (Withnell Parish Councillor)

OFFICERS: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Jamie Carson (Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community), Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer), Lindsey Blackstock (Parks and Open Spaces Officer), Paul Bond (FCRM Advisor - Flood Resilience, Environment Agency) and Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods)

APOLOGIES: Lancashire County Councillors: Chorley Borough Councillors: Alan Whittaker (Southern Parishes) Town and Parish Councillors: John Taylor (Charnock Richard Parish Councillor), Alan Cullens (Clayton-le-woods Parish Councillor), Kate Brown (Eccleston Parish Councillor), Katrina Reed (Euxton Parish Councillor), Graham Ashworth (Heath Charnock Parish Councillor) and Marel Urry (Hoghton Parish Councillor)

OTHER: Councillors Julia Berry (Chorley East), Charlie Bromilow (Clayton-le-Woods North) and Jean Cronshaw (Clayton-le-Woods North)

16.68 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

16.69 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 20 January 2016 of Chorley Liaison

The minutes were confirmed as a correct record.

16.70 Item from the work programme: Play areas

Lindsey Blackstock, Parks and Open Spaces Officer, presented the item. A copy of the play area improvement strategy was enclosed with the agenda.

Lindsey requested input about aspirations for play areas, match funding, timeframes and consultation within the Parishes. This included possible new sites where there were deficits of play areas and potential external funding pots.

Anne Peet, Croston, explained that Croston Parish Council had a plan for their area and would be interested in any CIL and Section 106 monies. Jamie Carson, Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community, noted that Chorley Council produced an annual letter, around Christmas, which forecasted the amount of CIL and Section 106 monies that Town and Parish Councils would receive.

It was noted that work would start shortly on the Osborne Drive, Clayton-le-Woods. Letters had been sent out with regards to the Clayton Brook MUGA and it was hoped that work would commence in August, subject to the approval of the required planning permission.

Terry Dickenson, Wheelton, requested some information on the fencing and climbing frame at the Meadow Street, Wheelton, play area. *Update from Chorley Council: This was forwarded in May.*

Lindsey explained that the Council worked with Housing Associations to provide facilities, subject to funding. Laura Lennox, Astley Village, suggested a new play area in conjunction with the Westway Playing Pitch Scheme, Astley Village. This would be a new play area.

If there were any further queries or suggestions for new play areas please contact Lindsey on lindsey.blackstock@chorley.gov.uk

The Chair thanked Lindsey for the update.

16.71 Item from Chorley Council: West Pennine Moors SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)

Lindsey Blackstock, Parks and Open Spaces Officer, presented the item.

It had been proposed to designate the West Pennine Moors, including part of Chorley as a SSSI for many years. 30 sites had been selected as possible SSSIs across the

country, but only three have been selected to take this status forward, one of which was West Pennine Moors.

The next steps were for Natural England to take forward this notification, the gathered evidence would be presented to the Secretary of State and once at this stage, the land was protected. There would then be a four month consultation period where people could raise objections. Subject to no fundamental objections, the land would be designated, which would mean a slight change in procedure for planning and building control. A formal announcement was due to be released shortly.

Jamie Carson, Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community, undertook to forward the consultation to all Town and Parish Councils when it was received to enable their feedback to be included in the consultation. *Update from Chorley Council: the Council are awaiting this information from Natural England.*

Councillor Kim Snape, Vice-Chair, noted that this was a positive step forward. Steve Perry, Withnell, highlighted that this designation would mean a higher level of scrutiny in relation to future planning applications.

The Chair thanked Lindsey for the update.

16.72 Item from Chorley Council: Local Emergency Planning

Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods) and Paul Bond (Environment Agency) presented the item.

The recent Christmas floods had highlighted the value of good emergency planning and a coordinated local response. In particular, at times of emergency, normal resources could be stretched and were inevitably targeted and prioritised to areas of greatest need.

Simon Clark reported that around 400 properties had been flooded over the Christmas period. There had been a good take up of the Flood Relief grant of £500, but the Council were proactively encouraging people to take up the Property Level Resilience (PLR) grant. The Council had instructed chartered surveyors to assist with this. Steve Perry, Withnell, noted that it might be possible for a group of residents to get together and negotiate a discount on door seals.

Paul Bond gave a presentation which outlined how to set up local emergency response volunteer groups and what the Council and EA could provide in a flood response situation. The presentation could be found here: <https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/b15933/Information%2016th-Mar-2016%2018.30%20Chorley%20Liaison.pdf?T=9>

Terry Dickenson, Wheelton, noted the need to ensure that Lancashire County Council (LCC) maintaining the surface gullies. Gary Hall, Chief Executive Chorley Council, advised that LCC had been requested for the maintenance schedules and undertook

to forward these to Town and Parish Councils once received. *Update from Chorley Council: This information is awaited.*

Kim Snape, Vice-Chair, noted that discussions were ongoing with United Utilities about the management of the reservoir levels to better manage overflow which impacted on areas downstream.

Doreen Dickinson, Western Parishes, noted the importance of private land owners fulfilling their responsibilities with respect of ditches and dikes.

If you would like further information please contact:

Paul Bond, M.Eng MCIWEM, FCRM Advisor - Flood Resilience, Environment Agency
paul.bond@environment-agency.gov.uk

Simon Clark, Head of Health, Environment and Communities,
simon.clark@chorley.gov.uk

There was also lots of information available on the Council's website:
<http://chorley.gov.uk/Pages/AtoZ/Flood-Support.aspx>

The Chair thanked Simon and Paul for the update.

16.73 Item the work programme: Empty Homes Strategy

Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods) presented the item.

Simon Clark explained that the Council had a strategy for dealing with this issue, which could blight an area. In Chorley there were around 400 properties empty at any one time, with around 200 considered long term empty (two years or more). Around 50 to 60 of these were the subject of complaints.

The strategy set out the remit of the Council to take action. The use of regulatory powers was a last resort and where the property was in probate the Council had no powers. The Council had recently implemented a policy whereby empty properties were the subject of an increased Council Tax premium. Funding had been secured to employ an empty properties officer to tackle this issue.

If there were any long term empty properties Town and Parish Councillors were aware of Simon requested details via contact@chorley.gov.uk

The Chair thanked Simon for the update.

16.74 Item from Chorley Council: Community Assets

Jamie Carson, Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community, presented the item.

Following recent budget announcements by Lancashire County Council, Chorley Council had been contacted by a number of different groups concerning the registration of properties owned by LCC as Community Assets.

In order to register a Community Asset the nominating group must qualify under the legislation and must demonstrate to the satisfaction of Chorley Council that the asset had community value. Parish Councils were a qualifying community group. The registration lasted for a period of five years from the date of the council decision. The effect of the registration was that the owner of the property was not able to sell it without first providing the opportunity to the nominating community group to raise funds to purchase.

Chorley Council was already in discussions with LCC over the impact of their decisions on the Borough. The Council would, therefore, encourage engagement with the property owner prior to making an application for registration. This was not required and would not prevent a nomination from being considered but it might provide reassurance as to the intentions for the site in question. If you have any concerns regarding particular assets please contact your ward councillor or county councillor.

The Chair thanked Jamie for the update.

16.75 Items requested by Adlington Town Council

1. Is there a register of defibrillator locations in Chorley District available through any local source or can one be compiled?

Alison Evans, Adlington, advised that the Town Council had now met with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and had started to raise funds for a defibrillator.

2. How are the needs of vulnerable individuals and the likelihood of increased social isolation going to be addressed following the withdrawal of community transport facilities?

Kim Snape, Vice-Chair, noted that LCC had now agreed a budget for a number of services. Alistair Bradley, Chorley Town, noted that Chorley Council were working with partners to deliver services and address social isolation. Discussions were ongoing in relation to bus services, although decisions were anticipated in the summer relating to LCC buildings. The Council were in discussions with LCC about this and Alistair encouraged Town and Parish Councils to discuss any concerns or issues with the Council. Any solutions would be need to be sustainable.

Terry Dickenson, Wheelton, thanked Alistair Bradley and Chorley Council for their assistance with the bus services.

Response from Lancashire County Council

Although LCC have had to reduce funding available for tendered bus services, we are keen to work with Parish Councils and other organisations to see what opportunities

may exist for new transport solutions driven from within local communities. An example of which may be the Parish Bus Scheme that Adlington PC will be aware of.

3. As funding is being withdrawn from many local community groups and volunteers are being expected to take over, what is being done to prepare for this and to provide volunteers with the support and resilience to continue with the provision of services?

Simon Clark noted that Chorley Council could provide information on the SPICE time credits system to encourage volunteering and undertook to suggest that the VCFS network co-ordinate a volunteering event to encourage participation.

Update: A response from Lancashire County Council will be sent directly.

16.76 Questions from Members of the Liaison and the public

Terry Dickenson, Wheelton, advised that Wheelton Post Office had been temporarily closed for over a year. He suggested that a mobile Post Office would be an ideal solution. The Chair undertook to write to the Post Office to suggest this on behalf of the Liaison group.

Update from Chorley Council

A query has been sent to the Post Office and a response has been received: <https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s65160/Letter%20from%20the%20Post%20Office.pdf>

16.77 Update on events

Jamie Carson, Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community, gave an update on the events that the Council was organising over the next few months, including Chorley Grand Prix on 26 March, What's Your Story, Chorley? on 23 April, Picnic in the Park on 26 June and Chorley Flower Show on 30 July.

16.78 Items for Future Meetings

Future meetings were scheduled for 20 July, 19 October, 18 January and 15 March. An email would be sent to clerks to request items in advance of the meetings.

Chair

Date