

MINUTES OF CHORLEY LIAISON

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 24 January 2024

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,
Mark Clifford and Alan Cullens
Chorley Borough Councillors (Chairs of Neighbourhood
Area Meetings): Alistair Bradley, Aaron Beaver,
Danny Gee and Jenny Whiffen
Town and Parish Councillors/Clerks: Nina Buckley,
Ian Horsfield, Tim Blackburn, Gillian Sharples,
Craig Ainsworth, Alan Cornwell, Caroline Turner,
Ken McCrea, Katrina Reed, Debra Platt, Alan Platt,
Graham Ashworth, Christine Bailey and Colin Evans

OFFICERS: Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic Services Team Leader)

APOLOGIES: Lancashire County Councillors: Julia Berry and Aidy Riggott

21 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

22 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 18 October 2023 of Chorley Liaison

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

23 Cost of Living Action Plan - Update

The Director of Communities, Jennifer Mullin, presented the report which provided an update on the delivery of the cost of living action plan.

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent financial pressures impacting upon an increasingly wide proportion of the population, the Communities team recognised the necessity to provide cost of living support to residents, and work was done to formalise this approach by creating a comprehensive Cost of Living Action Plan 2022. Delivery of the cost of living action plan was then added as a Corporate Priority for 2023/24.

The work included distributing Household Support Grant, communicating the support available, Holiday Activity and Food programme, Food Club network, Affordable Warmth Grant, Uniform Swap scheme and much more.

The Liaison congratulated the council on their work in this area.

Members noted that future collaboration could take place with partners such as Lancashire Adult Learning. The funding for the initiatives had come from the DWP via LCC. Any funding in the pot would be spent.

The report was noted.

24 Time Credits Overview

The Director of Communities, Jennifer Mullin, presented the report which provided an update on the delivery of the Tempo Time Credits contract.

2023 marks 10 years of Time Credits in Chorley, with the social currency scheme developing from a 'thankyou' to volunteers into a mechanism for addressing social inequalities by lowering barriers and providing low risk opportunities for residents to engage with health and wellbeing enhancing activity, strengthen communities by presenting routes to explore local, community embedded businesses and activities and promote the benefits of high-quality volunteering experiences.

Covid saw the scheme develop to support isolated communities and individuals by transitioning from physical tokens to an online platform, and introduce bespoke online offers. However, Covid also saw businesses and organisations reprioritising and adopting new ways of working, which consequentially led to a reduction in recognition (spend) partners available in the network.

The meeting noted the wide range of recognition partners included within the Tempo programme, and the positive use of the scheme for community initiatives, such as litter picking.

The report was noted.

25 Item submitted by Heath Charnock Parish Council

Heath Charnock Parish Council submitted an item regarding the length of time Parish Council representatives can speak at Planning Committee. This was currently three minutes and the request was to increase this to five minutes, in line with Borough Councils.

Members noted that Parish Councils were a statutory consultee and information could be emailed to the Planning Department. There was a need to balance democracy and representation.

The information would be passed to the Executive Member (Planning and Development) who would consider this, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice of Planning and relevant officers. The outcome would be reported to a future meeting.

26 Questions from Members of the Liaison and the public

An item was raised by Whittle-le-Woods Parish Council before the meeting requesting an update on the Central Lancashire Local Plan.

The following update was given - the Head of Spatial Planning, Zoe Whiteside would attend the meeting in March to give a more comprehensive update and answer any questions.

Officers across the three Councils have been working together to develop a revised programme for the preparation of the new Local Plan, which was required to be submitted to the Government by no later than 30 June 2025.

The Secretary of State would then appoint a Planning Inspector to 'test' the local plan against key criteria which were published in national policy. This in part would include a public enquiry which will be around late 2025/early 2026.

The Local Plan was a development plan which sets out the locations where development was expected to take place over the next 15 years and was very important for providing certainty to local communities about where and how much development will happen.

It was also important for enabling investment and jobs to come to the borough whilst at the same time protecting greenbelt, our play and designated open spaces and enhancing biodiversity. It required a significant amount of supporting evidence and must include certain things prescribed in national policy including proposals for housing and employment allocations and policies which set out how planning applications will be assessed.

To meet the June 2025 deadline, the council must work hard to conclude the detailed site assessment work, develop policies and work with partners including LCC, National Highways and the Environment Agency, to ensure we have considered the Infrastructure that would be needed to support the future development of Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble, including looking at issues such as schools, transport, and flood defences.

A new programme or timetable called the Local Development Scheme would be presented to the Joint Advisory Committee in February and thereafter approved for publication by each of the three Councils. This set out key actions and dates for plan making including details of the next planned consultation of the Local Plan and an update would be provide this meeting with on this in March. The consultation as in previous rounds, will include a series of local drop in events to ensure people have a chance to have their say.

An item was raised by Anderton Parish Council relating to bus stops and accessibility. There were two pieces of work ongoing, one by LCC regarding the relocation of certain bus stops at the request of the operators and a second regarding the refurbishment of bus stops by Chorley Council. Councillor Kim Snape undertook to review the particular case raised by Parish Councillor Horsfield. Officers would

investigate if the information could be circulated with the Town and Parish Councillors.

Members discussed a proposal from LCC to install parking meters in certain areas. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bradley, advised that, in his view, these were not required in Chorley and noted this was due to be considered at the meeting of Lancashire Leaders the following day.

An item was raised by Croston Parish Council regarding flooding on Grape Lane. It was suggested that United Utilities be invited to a future meeting to update on plans for flood water storage tanks in the Borough.

Another item was raised by Croston Parish Council regarding some garages. It was requested that further information be emailed to democratic services to enable further investigation.

27 Items for Future Meetings

Potential items for the next meeting on 20 March included an update on the Local Plan, information about community energy funding and Chorley Bus Station.

Chair

Date