

MINUTES OF CHORLEY LIAISON

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 21 October 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Gordon France (Eastern Parishes) (Chair), Councillor Kim Snape (Chorley Rural East Division, Lancashire County Council) (Vice-Chair),
Chorley Borough Councillors: Alistair Morwood (Chorley Town East), Alan Whittaker (Southern Parishes) and Matthew Lynch (Euxton, Astley and Buckshaw)
Town and Parish Councillors: Stephen Higgins (Adlington Town Council), Ian Horsfield (Anderton Parish Councillor), Laura Lennox (Astley Village Parish Councillor), Kate Brown (Eccleston Parish Councillor), Katrina Reed (Euxton Parish Councillor) and Malcolm Allen (Heapey Parish Councillor)

OFFICERS: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Rebecca Huddleston (Head of Policy and Communications), Anthony Valentine (Court and Welfare Officer) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

APOLOGIES: Lancashire County Councillors: Mark Perks (Chorley North Division, Lancashire County Council) and County Councillor Cynthia Dereli (Lancashire County Council - Champion for Parishes) Chorley Borough Councillors: Eric Bell (Clayton and Whittle) and Alistair Bradley (Chorley Town) Town and Parish Councillors: John Taylor (Charnock Richard Parish Councillor), Ann Woodhouse (Cuerden Parish Councillor), Marel Urry (Hoghton Parish Councillor), John Dalton (Ulnes Walton Parish Councillor) and Tina Newall (Whittle-le-Woods Parish Councillor)

PUBLIC: None.

15.47 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

15.48 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 July 2015 of Chorley Liaison

The minutes were confirmed as a correct record.

15.49 Updated Terms of Reference

The updated terms of reference were noted, with the addition of "There are four meetings per year".

15.50 Item from the work programme: Welfare Reform

Anthony Valentine, Court and Welfare Officer, gave a short presentation, which can be accessed <https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s58435/Chorley%20Welfare%20Reform%20October%202015.pdf> here:

Several queries were raised, including

- Exemptions from the reforms
- Support for Mortgage Interest to change to loan
- Residents affected by the Spare Room Subsidy
- Sanctions affecting other benefits
- Private landlords
- A shortage of smaller properties

Further information about residents who would be affected by the changes can be found on the above link. Anthony noted that there would be challenges going forward.

If there are any queries please contact Anthony on anthony.valentine@chorley.gov.uk

15.51 Item from Chorley Council: Consultation on the Council's Strategic Priorities

Rebecca Huddleston, Head of Policy and Communications, presented the report, which outlined the refresh process undertaken for the corporate strategy.

Consultation and resident satisfaction were considered and it was noted that the results of these could be broken down by ward for detailed analysis. The existing key projects and performance measures were outlined.

Several queries were raised, including

- Projects in rural areas
- Community action plans
- The youth zone and transport issues

The refreshed corporate strategy would be considered by Council on 24 November.

15.52 Item from Chorley Council: Update on Community Action Plans

Gary Hall, Chief Executive, outlined the proposals for Community Actions Plans. The Plans would be a pilot in four areas: Astley Village, Clayton Brook, Chorley East and rural. They would build on the neighbourhood preferred projects with a focus on social fabric issues and based on hard and soft data.

The plans would be agreed in December and reviewed after a year. If the plans resulted in better outcomes there was potential for them to be developed in other areas. There would be different approaches in the different areas.

The boundaries of the areas were:

Astley Village Community Action Plan Area

This is the boundary of the existing Astley Village Parish Council.

Clayton Community Action Plan

This is the area bounded by Preston Road (A6), Westwood Road and Clayton Brook Road (including Brown Hey, Gough Lane and Barn Meadow).

Chorley East Community Action Plan

This is the area bounded by the Chorley East Ward.

Rural Community Action Plan

This includes the wards:

- Brindle and Hoghton
- Chisnall
- Eccleston and Mawdesley
- Heath Charnock and Rivington
- Lostock
- Pennine
- Wheelton and Withnell

The four key themes will be health and social inclusion; digital access, transport provision and employment opportunity.

15.53 Item from Chorley Council: In Bloom update

Gary Hall, Chief Executive, advised that the North West in Bloom awards ceremony would be held on 30 October in Southport and the Council would find out the results then. The Judges could choose to put the Council through a small city category to represent the North West or might choose a different category.

The In Bloom Group was becoming more established, taking on more community work and working closer local businesses. The group was now set up as an entity with a chair person, officers and a bank account. The group were already looking at projects to develop to improve areas and work with communities. They would be happy to consider requests from different areas in Chorley Borough to see if they could assist, although the competition only included the town centre.

The Council were undertaking further work in the town centre and planters and floral displays were being considered as part of this work. Additional verge planting of wild flowers had been approved by LCC and this had been very well received with a large number of compliments, particularly on Blackburn Road.

Streetscene had contacted all Parishes offering advice and guidance on areas that could be changed to wildflower verges. A number of Parishes had replied and been given advice, including costs and options that were being considered. If the Parishes come back asking for the areas to be planted Streetscene would work with LCC to get approval and assist in any other way. Streetscene would also quote to carry out the

work for the Parishes and the offer to pass on Streetscene knowledge to the Parishes continued.

Other areas that the Council have provided full support for our overall 'In Bloom' entry included the first Chorley Flower Show in 2015. The Show was a success and planning was already underway to build on this for 2016.

15.54 Item requested by the Chair: Empty properties within the Borough

Gary Hall, Chief Executive, advised that the Council had an allocated officer to deal with empty properties. There had been some success in the reduction in the number of empty properties, but there were those which were challenging. There were various reasons for this, including probate.

The potential to use empty buildings for people who were sleeping rough through the winter was discussed.

If members were aware of any empty properties Gary requested they contact Steve McDowall on steve.mcdowall@chorley.gov.uk

15.55 Questions from Members of the Forum and the public

There were no questions.

15.56 Items for Future Meetings

Future meetings were scheduled for 20 January and 16 March. An email would be sent to clerks to request items in advance of the meeting.

Chair

Date