

Minutes of Parish Councils Liaison

Meeting Date: Thursday, 9 November 2023, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Parish Councillor D Peat (Chairman)

Councillors:

D Birtwhistle	D Brocklehurst
K Horkin	S Cowman
S O'Rourke	C McFall
R Walsh	M Peplow
K Barnsley	N Stubbs

Parish Representatives:

S Shorthouse	Balderstone
T Austin	Billington and Langho
A Yates	Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley
R Veitch	Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley
A Schofield	Clayton le Dale
K Thompson	Clayton le Dale
J Hargreaves	Dutton
P Atkinson	Grindleton
R Thornber	Newton in Bowland
S Rostron	Paythorne and Newsholme
S Greenhough	Read
G Mason	Ribchester
J Hampson	Simonstone
J Threlfall	Whalley
S Houghton	Wiswell

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Strategic Planning and Housing and the Partnership Officer.

Also in attendance: Councillor D O'Rourke

Parish Councillor David Peat was appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

484 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor G Scott

Apologies were also received from M Highton of Whalley Parish Council

485 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

486 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

487 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

488 LITTLE GREEN BUS COMPANY

Adrian Clarke, the Manager of the Little Green Bus organisation, gave a short presentation on the services and support that they offer within the community. The services include:

- Dial a ride which provides a door-to-door service for people who are unable to use, or do not have any regular bus services.
- Volunteer buses, mainly used for shopping trips.
- Group hire services which provide transport to qualifying groups such as schools and charities.
- Community cars which is a service provided by volunteer drivers using their own cars, mainly taking customers to medical appointments.
- Day trips which allow people to go to destinations such as local markets or the seaside.

Mr Clarke answered questions from the Committee and confirmed that the service generally runs between 9am – 4pm and he provided an overview of costs for passengers. It was noted that the fees that passengers pay are minimal in comparison with the organisation's overall expenditure, with the bulk of the money coming from grants.

Committee showed enthusiasm and support for the organisation but were keen to find out further data, such as how they are funded, any hotspot areas and how the service is promoted. There was also a suggestion as to whether there would be scope for a paid driver and more scheduled services, if funding permitted.

The Chief Executive impressed on Mr Clarke the importance of applying for funding generally. Applications for funding from Ribble Valley Borough Council needs to be made to by January 2024.

The Partnership Officer, Sarah Wells, advised Committee that a meeting to discuss transport issues would be taking place on Friday 26 January 2024 (venue to be confirmed) with various organisations including Lancashire County Council transport and the Little Green bus organisation. Parish Councils are invited to attend, along with residents who struggle to access transport. Discussions will take place in relation to improving transport links into service centres, how better to promote the Little Green Bus organisation and how to increase their number of volunteers.

489 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Julia Hannaford from East Lancashire Citizen's Advice gave a presentation updating Committee on the services that continue to be offered since the office was closed in Clitheroe earlier in 2023.

Committee was advised that in July 2023, Citizens Advice Rossendale, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley merged with Burnley and Pendle Citizens Advice to create Citizens

Advice East Lancashire. Citizens Advice East Lancashire continue to deliver a range of services from various locations across the area and this includes:

- Face to Face appointments currently at:
 - o St Paul's Church, Longridge (1st and 3rd Friday) 11.00am-1.00pm
 - o Trinity Methodist, Clitheroe (2nd and 3rd Friday) 10.00am-12.30pm
- Adviceline which is open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm - 0808 278 7975
- Website - www.cael.org.uk which is a self help tool and links into the national online advice pages.
- The digital Whatsapp service is due to be launched shortly.

Committee were provided with some statistics as to the positive impact that the service has had on the community up until September 2023. 54 customers had been seen at drop-ins and community events, and 176 customers had been dealt with over the phone. £82,500 of income has been generated into local households through all channels and the £5000 provided by Ribble Valley Council for face-face advice generated £32,000 back into the local economy in the first 6 months through benefit gains and grants.

It was also noted that Clitheroe, Longridge, Billington and Langho, and Chipping were the top four parishes for demand. 57% of the service users had a long-term illness or disability and the highest proportion were in the 55-59 age range.

Ms Hannaford then answered questions from Committee and outlined that one of the biggest difficulties the service faced was the fact that they do not have a postal address in the Ribble Valley.

Discussion took place around funding for the service, and concerns were raised as to the amount provided by Ribble Valley Borough Council. It was noted that in previous years, a much higher amount has been given, but there had been concerns as to the level of service that was actually being delivered. At one point, the service was nearly entirely funded by the Local Authority.

The Chief Executive commented that East Lancashire Citizen's Advice offering face to face meetings was very important to the Council. He reminded the CAB that if they need financial support an application would have to be made to the Council for further funding.

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MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD BY PARISH COUNCILS AND OFFICERS

ECONOMIC PLANNING

Jacqueline Hampson of Simonstone Parish Council queried whether, now the Northern leg of the HS2 plans have been abandoned, would funding be reallocated for other projects, and if so, could Parish Councils have details of these. She also asked about future projects following adoption of the Economic Plan and the Head of Strategic Planning and Housing advised that she considered Parish Councils to be stakeholders so would seek input from them on relevant projects.

CLITHEROE TO HELLIFIELD RAILWAY LINE

The Chief Executive advised Committee that, with the Northern leg of HS2 not proceeding, there is more chance that the railway line between Clitheroe and Hellifield will be restored. This would improve links between Lancashire and Yorkshire.

The Leader, Councillor S Atkinson will be attending a meeting in London to discuss this further.

HARP

The Head of Strategic Planning and Housing advised Committee as to the update from United Utilities. They are in the process of appointing a contractor to undertake the programme of works but this could take up to 12 months. United Utilities have indicated that they do not expect to start construction until 2025.

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman informed the committee that the next meeting would be on Thursday 1 February 2024 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Jenny Martin jenny.martin@ribblevalley.gov.uk.