

Parish Council Liaison Forum

A meeting of Parish Council Liaison Forum was held on Monday, 16th June, 2008.

Present: Cllr Terry Laing (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Miss Barbara Inman, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: J. Grant, M. Jones (LD), S. Edwards, R. Young, L. Edwards, J. Dixon (DNS), N. Russell (CESC).

Also in attendance: Parish/Town Councils: J. Walker (Egglescliffe & Eaglescliffe Parish Council), V. Roddam (Elton Parish Council), G. Rees (Grindon Parish Council), B. Feldon, I. Machin (Ingleby Barwick Town Council), T. Hampton (Kirklevington Parish Council), J. Rosser, N. Rosser (Long Newton Parish Council), K. Borer, J. Wills (Stillington & Whitton Parish Council), E. Ludgate, B. Wren (Wolviston Parish Council). The Worshipful the Mayor of Stockton-on-Tees, Councillor Mr J Fletcher.

Apologies: Cllr Kevin Faulks, Preston Parish Council, Thornaby Town Council.

PCL 1/08 Appointment of Chairman

Cllr Laing noted that it had been practice that the Parish Council Liaison Forum had been chaired by the Cabinet member with responsibility for Parish liaison. At the time of the meeting this responsibility laid with Cllr Laing, Cabinet Member for Corporate & Social Inclusion however Cabinet Portfolios were undergoing a review and could be changed by Council in July. Therefore Cllr Laing suggested that he Chair this meeting and the Chairman for 2008/9 be appointed at the next meeting, following confirmation of portfolio responsibilities.

AGREED that Cllr Laing would chair the meeting.

PCL 2/08 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

PCL 3/08 Minutes of the Meeting Held 25th March 2008

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2008.

It was noted that item 7, Technical Services Update, the revenue schemes noted should state 'carriageway' not 'cycleway'

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held 25th March 2008 be agreed as a correct record.

PCL 4/08 Local Assessment Update

The Head of Legal Services presented an update on Local Assessment Framework. The Head of Legal Services informed that she acted as the deputy Monitoring Officer, and in the absence of the Director of Law and Democracy, who was the Monitoring Officer, she could be contacted.

It was explained that since the meeting in March 2008, the Local Assessment Regulations (the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008) were laid before Parliament and came into force on 8 May 2008. Under the new Regulations, the responsibility for considering complaints that a Member (a Stockton-on-Tees Borough Councillor or any member of a Town/Parish Council

in Stockton's area) may have breached the Code of Conduct and moved to Stockton's Standards Committee. Any such complaint had to be sent to the Standards Committee's Assessment Sub-Committee, via the Director of Law and Democracy, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees. The Sub-Committee will consider the following options:

1. Refer the complaint to the Standards Board.
2. Decide not to take any action on the complaint.
3. Refer the complaint for investigation.

It was queried whether there was a timeframe for complaints to be dealt with. The Head of Legal Services informed that the Sub-Committee must make a decision on what action would be taken within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint, however there was no timeframe for the resulting action. The timeframe for an investigation was dependent on how complicated the complaint was as evidence needed to be gathered and any witnesses interviewed. Most investigations would be concluded within 3 months.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**PCL
5/08** **Affordable Home Ownership Register**

The Forum noted a report regarding the Affordable Home Ownership Register. If further information was required the Affordable Homeownership Team had offered to attend Parish/Town Council meetings.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**PCL
6/08** **Mapping Arrangements Guidance for Town, Parish and Community Councils**

The Forum noted a report on Mapping Arrangements Guidance for Town, Parish and Community Councils.

AGREED that the GIS/IT Management Officer would be invited to the next meeting.

**PCL
7/08** **Section 106 Contributions to Open Space**

The Environmental Development Officer gave a Power Point presentation regarding Section 106 Contributions to Open Space.

It was explained that the Planning Obligation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in May 2008 and had set out the Borough's framework for future Open Space Section 106 Agreements. Town/Parish Councils with land management or ownership responsibilities could benefit from section 106 agreement's, however there were legal parameters that dictated what could and could not be included and how the contribution was to be managed.

The agreements were between the developer and the Local Planning Authority

(LPA), and therefore the LPA would oversee adherence to and compliance with the section 106 agreement. Parish/Town Councils would be contacted by Officers to inform them about possible plans for open space provision and consult with the council to ensure their involvement.

It was noted that any outstanding capital monies (with interest) that were not spent within the timeframe set by the developer could be clawed back by them. The Officer clarified that the timeframe would only begin once the funds had been received, as there could be a large period between the agreement being signed and the money being received. The Officer also noted that in some cases there could be several planning applications submitted and approved for one site, and the application that would be commenced on site may not be the application that would have a 106 agreement attached to it.

It was queried whether the funding that would be received from a developer would accumulate interest in line with inflation if not spent within a short time period, and the Officer confirm that this would be the case. The Officer added that inflation would be added to the funding from the agreement being signed to the receipt of the funding.

The size of development that Section 106 Agreement applied to was discussed. There was no minimum site size and each individual case was looked at separately. High density sites with a small amount of amenity space would be more likely to require an agreement for an 'off site contribution'.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**PCL
8/08**

Planning the future of Villages in Stockton-on-Tees Borough Consultation

The Forum was presented with a report which outlined the consultation process for the preparation of a Village Study as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF).

It was explained that in order to establish the levels of facilities available within the Borough's rural villages, an audit was carried out and a consultation exercise on the audit was undertaken early 2008. It was evident from the feedback received that there was not a fair representation of responses from all villages and that further consultation would be beneficial.

Following the initial consultation further analysis of the villages had been undertaken to look at sustainability issues. It had been decided to carry out further consultation in each individual village in order to gain a better understanding of residents' views and opinions on the future planning context of the villages. This research was intended to inform emerging policy as part of the Local Development Framework.

Drop-in-sessions would take place in all of the fifteen villages covered in the study, which would allow an opportunity for one to one discussions with residents in a more informal and relaxed manner where there can be clear dialogue. A feedback questionnaire would be made available so that residents could put their views forward, and Officers from the Spatial Planning Section would be available to explain and clarify issues throughout the sessions.

It was noted that the results of the consultation process would be published in September 2008, and will be brought back to the Forum.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**PCL
9/08** **Draft Leisure Strategy**

The Leisure & Sports Development Manager informed the Forum that a Draft Leisure Strategy was approved in 2007. However since this document's approval there had been several new policies published by the Government and Government Bodies which would impact on the strategy. In addition Sport England had requested that the LA carried out a Leisure Assessment. Therefore the Strategy would be revised as it was no longer fit for purpose and the Officer requested the Parish/Town Councils involvement in shaping the strategy.

The Leisure & Sports Development Manager was informed that there was a Yarm and Eaglescliffe Action Plan in place which noted a need for recreation facilities in those parishes. It was also noted that there were several school playing fields which were not being utilised.

AGREED that Parish/Town Councils would contact the Officer with their views and suggestions.

**PCL
10/08** **Issues Raised by Parish/Town Councils**

The Forum discussed the best use of the meeting, and the type of items that Parish/Town Councils wished to see on the agenda. It was agreed that issues raised by Parish/Town Councils should be those that applied to several, or all, areas rather than issues that related to one area, which could be raised with relevant cabinet members, officers or via consultation processes.

The Forum requested Building Schools for the Future to be an agenda item, but this to be from the perspective of transport issues for rural communities. It was requested that the transport issues for Momentum also be brought to the meeting.

The responses to questions raised, which were circulated prior to the meeting, were noted.

AGREED that Building Schools for the Future and Momentum would be agenda items at future meetings.