

Pendle Three Tier Forum

Note of the Meeting held on Monday, 9th December, 2013 at 6.30 pm in The Rainhall Centre, Rainhall Road, Barnoldswick

Present:

Chair

County Councillor David Whipp

Forum Members

County Councillor Azhar Ali
County Councillor Mohammed Iqbal
County Councillor Dorothy Lord
County Councillor Christian Wakeford
Councillor Tony Beckett
Councillor Ken Hartley
Councillor Graham Roach
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Tony Edwards

Also in attendance

Lisa Kitto, LCC Deputy County Treasurer
Harry Ballantyne, LCC Localities Officer
Chris Mather, LCC Democratic Services
Dave Colbert, LCC Specialist Advisor – Transport Planning
Debbie Thompson, LCC Localities Officer
Philip Mousdale, Pendle Borough Council

1. Appointment of Chair

County Councillor M Iqbal and County Councillor D Whipp were nominated for the position of Chair. Upon being put to the vote, County Councillor Whipp was elected as Chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chair

Councillor Smith was elected as Deputy Chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

3. Membership and Terms of Reference of the Forum

The membership of the Forum was duly noted and members accepted the revised Terms of Reference which included provision for public attendance and speaking at meetings.

The Forum was reminded that the County Council's Cabinet Member had ultimate responsibility for decision making and that the Forum was only able to make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.

4. Questions from members of the public

Borough Councillor Hanif (attended as a member of the public) asked the Forum to support a residents parking scheme on Reedley Road at a cost of £21k with Brierfield and Reedley area committee allocating £6k to the scheme.

Councillor Hanif felt that the scheme would help prevent double parking and problems caused by reversing vehicles particularly at school opening and closing times. County Councillor Wakeford was concerned that the scheme would lead to higher vehicle speeds along the road.

5. 2014/15 Environment Directorate Commissioning Plan for Pendle

This item was brought forward in the agenda so a broader discussion of the Local Priorities Response Fund could take place.

The Forum was presented with a list of priorities identified by members since the last meeting which could be funded from the Local Priorities Response Fund. In order to support the development of the 2014/15 Commissioning Plan, members were asked to consider the schemes using the allocations and information contained within the report presented to the meeting.

There was a lengthy discussion on the list of priorities and the following key points were raised:

- It was noted that the capital programme proper was not yet agreed and that not all county councillor s had attended the commissioning event in August.
- It was suggested that £131,000 from the Local Priorities Response Fund should be disaggregated down to Divisional level as follows:

Division	Cllr	Electorate (number of people)	% of the total electorate	Allocation (£)
West Craven	CC Whipp	13,347	19.71	£25,805.91
Pendle East	CC White	11,026	16.28	£21,315.08
Pendle Central	CC Lord	10,668	15.76	£20,634.25
Nelson South	CC Ali	10,778	15.92	£20,843.74
Pendle West	CC Wakeford	10,943	16.16	£21,157.96
Brierfield and Nelson North	CC Iqbal	10,945	16.17	£21,171.06
		TOTAL: 67,707		TOTAL (13/14): £130,928

Officers would circulate the above information to all members of the Forum.

- It was agreed that all opportunities for match funding for schemes should be explored including funding from area councils, Pendle BC and S106 monies.

- Members were reminded that a final decision on the schemes to be funded from the Local Priorities Response Fund would be taken by the County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.
- A comment was made that the Cabinet Member was happy for members to come up with schemes in their division and submit them to Alan Capstick for costing. Members were reminded that time was of the essence.
- The Forum agreed that scheme number 5 (Birtwistle Avenue/Harrison/Tennyson Drive Nelson) should be recommended for funding through the Neighbourhood Priorities Funding pot and not the Local Priorities Response Fund.
- No other schemes were supported (including the scheme requested by Councillor Hanif under the earlier public questions section).

6. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor P White, Councillor T Cooney and Councillor E Ansar.

7. Note of the meeting held on 24 September 2013

The note of the meeting held on 24 September 2013 was presented and accepted as a true and correct record.

8. Action sheet update from last meeting

Members received an update on the action taken in response to issues raised at the previous meeting held on 24 September 2013.

It was reported that further speed checks were being undertaken on Birtwistle Avenue.

9. Lancashire County Council Budget

Lisa Kitto presented a detailed report regarding the nature of the financial challenge facing the County Council over the next few years and informed the meeting that the County Council was faced with making savings of around £300m over the next four financial years which was the equivalent to almost 40% of its current budget.

It was noted that the County Council was currently focussing on balancing the 2014/15 budget and this would enable time to be devoted to the huge challenge of downsizing the County Council to a new budget level of £640m by 2017/18. Members were informed that this reduction needed to be set within the context that between the years 2010 to 2017, the County Council would have had to make savings of over £0.5b.

It was reported that in response to the increasing financial constraints the County Council had adopted a number of approaches, including a review of planning assumptions and forecasts which had led to a reduction of £17.4m in the level of savings required over the next four years. In addition employees had identified a further saving of £19.1m through a

10% challenge to drive out waste and increase efficiency across the County Council. A number of areas totalling £17.4m had also been identified where the cost of being in business could be reduced, with no impact on the level or quality of services provided by the County Council to communities.

However, given the scale of the overall challenge facing the County Council it was clear that the level of savings required could not be achieved without impacting on services. The County Council was therefore undertaking a consultation exercise on a number of policy options and proposals for reshaping the way in which services would be delivered in the future.

In considering the report the following points were raised by members of the Forum:

- It was clear that the downsizing of the County Council's budget would result in a reduced workforce but the full effect on staffing numbers was not yet known. Officers agreed to circulate details about the number of staff currently employed by the County Council.
- A concern was expressed that young and elderly people would be most affected by the budget reductions. However, it was recognised that the budgets in these areas were larger than most other County Council budgets.
- Concerns were also expressed about the need to protect and indeed improve services for people suffering from dementia.
- A suggestion was made that the County Council should look to have a flatter management structure.
- It was important to keep the public informed about the reshaping of services.
- In view of the unprecedented financial situation over the next few years it was vital that the County and Borough Councils worked together to find viable solutions including shared services. It was felt that some borough councils may not survive and that the financial pressures facing all local authorities could pave the way for an increased number of unitary authorities across Lancashire.

Members were invited to submit any other suggestions to the County Council to help the authority to reshape its services.

10. Draft East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan for consultation purposes

The Forum received a copy of the East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan consultation document.

Members were informed that the closing date for comments was 13 December and it was important that the County Council's plans were evidenced based so that they would be best placed to bid for additional funding which the Government had made available for transport highways and transport schemes.

Members discussed several potential schemes and the possible effects they would have on housing and employment across the borough and East Lancashire in general. The proposed A56 Colne-Foulridge Bypass scheme and M65/M66 improvements, as well as improvements to the rail network were considered to be of particular importance to the area.

11. 2013/14 Quarter 2 Environment Directorate Performance Dashboard

The Forum noted the Quarter 2 "dashboard" performance report.

Officers provided the following updates:

- The fixing of potholes as a result of complaints from members of the public would be included in monitoring reports as from 1 April 2014.
- Progress on highway improvements schemes were all on schedule.
- The outcome of the Nelson to Rawtenstall bus corridor study would be completed and reported in the New Year.
- Officers agreed to look into the problems caused by wagons speeding over road humps on Reedyford Road

12. Themes for Future Meetings

Members of the Forum were asked to submit items for the next Pendle 3 Tier Forum to Harry Ballantyne harry.ballantyne@lancashire.gov.uk. Any suggestions would need to be cleared with the Chair.

A comment was made about health and social care briefings being duplicated across the 3 tiers of local government. In response to a suggestion that the Forum could provide a vehicle to receive joint briefings, it was agreed that the Forum should not look to become a scrutiny body for health and social care matters as this activity was already undertaken by other bodies.

13. Urgent Business

None.

14. Date of Next Forum

It was agreed that the next scheduled meeting of the Forum (7 April 2014) be cancelled and moved to 6.30 p.m. on 1 April 2014 in Brierfield. It was suggested that the meeting could be held in the Community Centre.

Ian Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston

