

West Lancashire Three Tier Forum

Note of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 15th April, 2014 at 7.00 pm in Cabinet and Committee room, West Lancashire Borough Council Offices, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk

Present:

Chair

Councillor Ian Grant

Forum Members

County Councillor Terry Aldridge
County Councillor Malcolm Barron
County Councillor Cynthia Dereli
County Councillor John Fillis
County Councillor Nikki Hennessy
County Councillor David O'Toole
County Councillor David Westley
Councillor Rob Bailey
Councillor Roger Bell
Councillor Mrs May Blake
Councillor Neil Furey
Councillor Edward Pope
Councillor Margaret Sumner

Also in Attendance

G Concannon, Assistant Director Street Scene, West Lancashire Borough Council
Sarah Palmer, Localities Officer, Lancashire County Council
Janet Mulligan, Democratic Services, Lancashire County Council

1. Terms of Reference and Public Participation

The Terms of Reference including the protocol on public speaking were presented for information.

It was agreed that a time limit of 'no longer than five minutes' and 'at the discretion of the Chair' for each member of the public to speak be explicit in the protocol.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of County Councillor Julie Gibson and Councillor Iain Ashcroft.

3. Note of the meeting held on 25 November 2013

The note of the meeting held on 25 November 2013 was presented and agreed.

4. Action sheet update from last meeting

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

The following points were made:

Unadopted Roads - progress in addressing this issue was welcomed. It was acknowledged that the delay in the adoption of highways had become a national issue and that Rachel Crompton, Development Support Manager at Lancashire County Council was the nominated representative on a national working group.

Ormskirk Town Centre – County Councillor Fillis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, explained that progress had been delayed owing to the need to re-word some of the questions in the planned consultation. It was expected that the consultation would begin in approximately six weeks but funds were still allocated for the work.

Ormskirk Bus Station Refurbishment – The Interim Director for Environment at the County Council had been asked to write to the Managing Director (People and Places) at the Borough Council to progress discussions. It was acknowledged that this would be a large, long term investment which needed to be carefully considered and managed. The Chair undertook to raise this directly with the Managing Director.

Halsall Parish Council – It was noted that some remedial work had been carried out on the highway, however the county councillor for that area was concerned that he had not been kept informed of planned works. Sarah Palmer undertook to remind colleagues of the importance of keeping councillors informed of works in their division/ward.

Parbold Parish Council – Concerns were raised about the lack of action regarding the enforcement of double yellow lines on Mill Lane.

There was ongoing concern about dangerous parking on Lancaster Lane and the apparent lack of action by the police and/or parking attendants. It was suggested that specific concerns be reported to Andrew Burrows, Public Realm Manager.

Regarding speeding through the 20mph area, there was some discussion about the effectiveness of SPIDs (Speed Indicator Devices). Some parishes had bought their own. A discussion ensued around the practical issues relating to their installation and maintenance.

5. Review of the 3 Tier Forums

It was reported that the majority of Forums had opened up to the public and that two, Lancaster and Chorley, were developing under the 3 Tier Forum 'banner' in a different way; Lancaster was looking at some devolved decision making powers; Chorley was proposing seats for all 22 of its parish councillors and also the Chairs of Neighbourhood Forums.

The review of the Three Tier Forums was now being taking forward as part of a wider governance review. Regular updates would be provided.

Regarding future publicity for this Forum, which was now open to the public, it was suggested that the county council approach 'The Advertiser' and 'The Champion' as a means of informing the public that they can attend meetings and of the Forum's terms of reference.

6. 2013/14 Quarter 3 Environment Directorate Performance Dashboard

The Environment Directorate's "dashboard" performance for the third quarter of 2013/14 was presented.

In presenting the 'dashboard' the following updates were reported:

Blaguegate Lane / Ormskirk Road from Hollands Lane to Railway Road – work on this scheme had been delayed owing to utilities work. Completion was now expected by the end of April.

Roundabout on Pippin Street – Progress on the installation of the roundabout was requested. Sarah Palmer undertook to email an update to members.

Pothole Repair – It was noted that there had been a slight decline in the pothole repair rate. In response it was explained that there had been a change in the way repairs were carried out; the surrounding road surface, rather than just the hole, was now being repaired to prevent further damage owing to water seepage from smaller, nearby holes. This slowed the repair rate but reduced the need to return for further repairs.

County Councillor Fillis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport reported that he was shortly to be taking a decision about a consultation on the Transport Asset Management Plan; it would include a new approach to highways maintenance which he was confident would be well received.

Highway Works – There was some concern that businesses affected by the recent temporary closure of Lathom Hall Road had only been given short notice of the work. It was acknowledged that it was not always possible to give notice if the works were urgent and unplanned, however if works were planned, businesses should be notified well in advance. Sarah Palmer undertook to report back.

7. 2014/15 Environment Capital Programme

The 2014/15 Capital Programme for West Lancashire was presented. The Chairman undertook to email the list to all Borough councillors.

8. Items raised by members of the Forum

8a Moss Roads and Weight Restrictions

There had been consensus at the previous meeting that moss roads were increasingly coming under pressure due to the size and weight of vehicles now using them and the lack of enforcement relating to weight and speeding restrictions.

It was suggested that moss road surfaces were not just damaged by vehicles; rain and frost were significant contributory factors also and it was important therefore to manage surrounding land and the environment to reduce damage caused by floodwater.

It was agreed that a joint working group, taking views from the local community, be established to determine the best way forward. Parish Councillor Sumner agreed to formally write to County Councillor Fillis requesting a working group. Learning and good practice could be shared with other areas in Lancashire where moss roads exist.

Concerns were again raised about routes, including signage, into Round Hill Quarry. It was reported that officers had received few complaints and councillors and the public were encouraged to report issues to the county council in order to provide sufficient evidence against which to carry out appropriate checks.

8b West Lancashire Masterplan Update

County Councillor Fillis reported that there had been few changes to the information provided at the consultation stage. He specifically referred to:

Ormskirk Bypass - there had been a range of diverse views, but no great opposition to removing the bypass option

Derby Street Bridge – An announcement about this would be made after the elections in May. A suggestion was made to consider a single traffic light from Station Approach because of the poor visibility for drivers pulling out onto Derby Street, although it was acknowledged that improvements in that area could increase sight lines in the vicinity.

Electrification of the Burscough to Preston railway line – there was a strong argument for developing the service from West Lancashire to Central Lancashire. The scheme would require the agreement of Merseytravel and Network Rail; in terms of timescales, the next major agreements were expected to be reached in 2019. Support was continued for the electrification of the line from Ormskirk to Burscough as well the importance of the Burscough curves

Green Lane link – it was confirmed that this scheme had been retained in the master plan

Cycleways – the growing need for safer cycling routes was recognised and a figure-of-eight cycle route in the West Lancashire area was planned. Statistics relating to cyclists KSI (killed and seriously injured) would be circulated to members for information.

Themes for Future Meetings

Members of the Forum were asked to submit any further suggested items for the next South Ribble Three Tier Forum to Sarah Palmer sarah.palmer@lancashire.gov.uk. Any suggestions would need to be cleared with the Chair.

9. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

10. Date of Next Forum

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held at 7.00pm on Monday 15 September 2014 at the Borough Council Offices, Ormskirk.

As this was Councillor Grant's last meeting before standing down at the forthcoming elections, County Councillor David Westley, thanked him, on behalf of the Forum members, for his effective chairmanship.

In return, Councillor Grant thanked members and officers for what he believed had been a most useful series of meetings.

Ian Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston