

West Lancashire Three Tier Forum

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

Present:

Chair

Councillor Edward Pope

Forum Members

County Councillor Terry Aldridge
County Councillor Malcolm Barron
County Councillor Cynthia Dereli
County Councillor John Fillis
County Councillor Julie Gibson
County Councillor Nikki Hennessy
County Councillor David Westley
Councillor Iain Ashcroft
Councillor Rob Bailey
Councillor Roger Bell
Councillor Mrs May Blake
Councillor Carolyn Evans
Councillor Neil Furey
Councillor Paul Greenall

The following officers were also in attendance:

S Palmer, Localities Officer, Lancashire County Council
C Mather, Democratic Services, Lancashire County Council
G Concannon, Assistant Director Street Scene, West Lancashire Borough Council

1. Appointment of Chair

Councillor E Pope and County Councillor N Hennessy were nominated for the position of Chair. Upon being put to the vote, Councillor Pope was elected as Chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chair

Councillor P Greenall and County Councillor N Hennessy were nominated for the position of Deputy Chair. Upon being put to the vote, Councillor Greenall was elected as Deputy Chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

3. Questions from members of the public (limited to 30 minutes)

i. Bus services

Concerns were expressed about the withdrawal of bus service 300 from Haskayne and Shirdley Hill.

It was reported that Arriva had decided to withdraw its service despite being offered a subsidy from the County Council. The County Council recognised the difficulties which the withdrawal of the service had caused and it was noted that similar problems were being experienced across Lancashire. Whilst the County Council was unable to provide a replacement non-commercial service, consideration was being given to a number of measures to improve bus service provision in the area and across rural areas in general. These included exploring:

- Quality Contract Bus Services whereby the local authority takes over route planning, ticketing and using revenue from profitable routes to subsidise the operation of unprofitable but socially necessary rural services. The services would operate in a loop system and would focus on areas of isolation.
- A model whereby the County Council would look to work more closely with Parish Councils.
- Extending services provided by Dial-a-Ride type organisations.
- The operation of a pilot 'rural' bus services project in West Lancashire that would seek to address social isolation and issues of employment, as well as access to medical care and leisure facilities.
- It was noted that a review of the bus service network formed part of the part of the County Council's 2014/15 budget.

The Forum welcomed the proposals and it was agreed that Parish Councils would have a key role to play in the development of an improved rural bus network. The County Council was urged to commence discussions with Parish Councils as soon as possible.

It was agreed that a further progress report would be presented to the next meeting of the Forum.

It was also agreed that a briefing note supplied by Lancashire County Council to Halsall Parish Council regarding the 300 service would be circulated with the note of the meeting.

ii. Effect of new development on roads in Halsall

A concern was expressed about the possible adverse effects which the new development would have on local roads in the Halsall area. It was estimated that the new development would increase the number of vehicles using the roads by 40,000 and it was felt that the roads would not be able to cope with the size of vehicles using the roads and the increased volume of traffic.

It was noted that a report on Moss Roads appeared later in the agenda. Officers agreed to look into the points raised and circulate further information to members of the Forum.

4. Apologies

None.

5. Membership and Terms of Reference

The Forum's membership and terms of reference were noted.

6. Note of the meeting held on 15 April 2014

The note of the meeting held on 15 April 2014 was presented and agreed.

Regarding the short notice in relation to the closure of Lathom Hall Lane, Sarah Palmer reported that members concerns were fed back following the meeting.

Councillor Greenall requested an update in relation to his suggestion to improve vehicle movements at the traffic lights on Derby Street. Officers agreed to look into this matter.

7. Update on review of Three Tier Forums

It was reported that a review of the Three Tier Forums had been completed and that the County Council's Cabinet in May 2014 had agreed to develop two different test models in Lancaster and Chorley. The Lancaster model involved some devolved decision making powers and the Chorley model involved the participation of all 22 of its parish councils. It was also reported that 9 of the 12 Forums were now open to the public.

The Forum noted that any further developments would be considered as part of the County Council's wider governance review.

8. 2014/15 Quarter 1 Environment Directorate Performance Dashboard

The Environment Directorate's 'dashboard' performance for the first quarter of 2014/15 was presented:

The following comments were made:

- 12 out of 13 capital schemes had been completed.
- The road and street maintenance section now included highway defects identified by highways safety inspections and those reported by the public.
- It was confirmed that the Ormskirk bus station refurbishment works would be undertaken in 2014/15.
- Concerns were expressed about the repair works on Dark Lane/Blythe Lane, Ormskirk, and on Lindley Drive, Parbold being inadequate. Officers agreed to look into this and report back.
- It was disappointing that the additional train on the Preston to Ormskirk line had not resulted in the operation of a more regular timetable particularly for those people wishing to travel to and from work. Officers agreed to circulate a copy of the new timetable for information.

- The work of Trading Standards in relation to the seizure of dangerous e-cigarettes and liquid nicotine was welcomed.

9. Events on the Highway, Policy and Procedures for Highways Management: Consultation Document

The Forum considered a draft protocol and outline for the management of road closures for events, parades and other activities that affect the highway.

Members were informed that the protocol had been produced in response to Lancashire Constabulary's adoption of national guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers. The Constabulary's decision meant that the police would not undertake any traffic management for an event on the highway other than those events that were deemed to be of national importance e.g. a Remembrance Day parade.

Members' attention was drawn to a flow chart which outlined the suggested role of the county and district councils and the police in the future management of road closures for events etc.

The Forum agreed that Lancashire Constabulary's decision was extremely disappointing. Whilst the protocol appeared to be a way forward, it was felt that the police had a responsibility to cover events on the highway. Members felt that the constabulary should, at the very least, allow special constables to support and help manage low level events.

10. Action sheet update from last meeting

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

11. Transport Asset Management Plan 2015-2030

The Forum considered the County Council's approved Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and investment strategy which identified key strategic priorities for the highway authority during the period 2015-2030.

The TAMP represented a fundamental change in approach with the authority moving away from tackling what was perceived as the worst areas first towards one aligned to the Department for Transport's philosophy that, 'prevention is better than cure' with resources being used to reduce key maintenance backlogs through preventative methods.

It was reported that analysis indicated the County Council required approximately £35m per annum to maintain all of its transport assets at their 2013 levels. However, the direct allocation likely to be received from central government, via the Department for Transport would only be £25m per annum and so the resulting shortfall provided a real challenge to do more, or even the same, with less.

Preventative intervention works, involving treatments that were generally carried out at an earlier critical stage in an asset's life-cycle and are usually less expensive and less intrusive, were proposed to reduce maintenance backlogs. Key maintenance backlogs

would be reduced over a ten to fifteen year period which would mean that the level of available funding broadly matched the amount needed to maintain all assets.

It was noted that a phased approach, based on the county council's priorities and affordability, would be adopted in relation to works and that investment in A, B and C roads and the footway network would be prioritised. Members were assured that notwithstanding the new approach any roads that became unsafe would continue to be repaired immediately.

Members welcomed the TAMP and stressed the need for an improvement in the condition of C roads and rural unclassified roads across the borough.

12. Items raised by members of the Forum

i. Moss Roads in West Lancashire (County Councillor J Fillis)

It was reported that the County Council proposed to deal with the repair and maintenance of Moss Road in a different way than other conventional roads. The authority was looking to identify those Moss Roads with a high volume of traffic and in greatest need of repair to enable a pilot project to be undertaken in West Lancashire. This information would be gathered through discussions with parish councils, traffic recording equipment and staff 'on the ground' investigations.

ii. Ageing Well in West Lancashire (County Councillor T Aldridge)

There was a discussion on Ageing Well involvement and activities across the county and particularly in West Lancashire. Details of the people aged 50 and 65 and over by wards in West Lancashire were circulated for information and use by members of the Form as they felt appropriate. The accuracy of some of the information was questioned and it was agreed that clarification would be sent to members.

Reference was made to a recently launched campaign to request the Government to appoint a minister for the elderly. It was hoped that district councils and their older people's champions would support the campaign. It was agreed that further information about the campaign would be circulated to members of the Forum within the next few days.

The Forum's attention was also drawn to Silver Line, a free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people. It was noted that telephone number (0800 4 70 80) was open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

There was a discussion on the role and work of Ageing Well West Lancashire, including the need for improved marketing and parish council representation on the group. The development of a charter for older people was also mentioned.

iii. Bus Subsidies (County Councillor J Fillis)

It was felt that this matter had been covered earlier in the agenda.

iv. West Lancashire Children's Trust (County Councillor N Hennessy)

It was agreed that a briefing note revised Children's Trust arrangements would be circulated outside of the meeting.

- v. West Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Partnership (County Councillor N Hennessy)

It was agreed that an update would be presented to the next meeting of the Forum.

13. Themes for Future Meetings

Concerns were expressed about the lack of communication with Parish Councils prior to works being undertaken by or on behalf of the County Council.

It was agreed that a report should be presented to the next meeting on the effects and implications of large scale housing developments on transport and health services.

It was also agreed that an update should be presented on the work of the West Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

14. Urgent Business

None.

15. Date of Next Forum

To be confirmed.

I Young
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston