

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR ALLERDALE

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council Local Committee for Allerdale held on Wednesday 30 June 2010 at 11.15 am at Wigton Market Hall Community and Conference Centre, Church Road, Wigton.

PRESENT

Ms ED Barraclough	Mr G Humes
Mr A Barry	Mr A Kennon
Mr W Cameron	Mr K Little
Mrs B Cannon	Mr EW Nicholson
Mr J Cowell	Mr A Markely
Mr D Fairbairn	Mr E Martin
Mr T Fee	Ms M Rae
Mr J Holliday	

PART I – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Mr A Barry declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 (Combined Grants Panel) in relation to the TS Vanguard Grant due to being on TS Vanguard Management Board.

Mr A Barry, Mrs B Cannon, Mr G Humes, Mr J Holliday, Mr T Fee, Mr D Fairbairn, Mr A Markley and Mr E Nicholson all declared a personal interest in agenda item 16 (Joint Liaison Group minutes) due to being Members of the Allerdale Borough Council. During the course of the meeting, Mr D Fairbairn also declared a personal interest in agenda item 16 due to a reference made to Age UK.

Mr G Humes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 15 (Local Capital Schemes) due to being an employee of the Moorclose Community Centre.

3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting for any items on the Agenda.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions or petitions had been submitted for consideration at the meeting.

5. BETTER HIGHWAYS/SYSTEM THINKING

The Committee received a presentation from the Corporate Director- Environment and the team involved in the Better Highways project on the comprehensive review that had been carried out of the Cumbria's Highway service. The focus of the review had been to determine how best to provide 'a safe and reliable highway for all' and had examined current systems; what mattered to customers; ability to provide a service and system conditions and working practices. As a result of the review a much more streamlined and efficient system had been developed which would result in highways faults being passed directly to the team for that patch carrying out the work rather than via a string of reporting stages. Two man gangs, supported by Area Stewards would find and fix faults in their area with the aim being to enable a 'right first time fix'.

The team referred to the many other benefits of the new model which would include local ownership of crews building pride in the network and cost benefits. Under the new system a job should be completed within 10 days on average, due to the team making 1 visit and the problem being rectified first time, 90% of the time. The new system was currently being piloted in Eden and had been found to be very successful.

During a lengthy the question and answer session which followed the presentation, Members sought assurances that the new system would be successful. The Committee had in the past expressed concerns about the length of time that repairs were taking and the costs associated with this. The Corporate Director – Environment sought to reassure Members that the model would deliver the improvements that Members wanted to see. As to whether the estimated 2-5 years was realistic for the full model to be implemented, it was explained that this was in respect of the whole service, but the aim was to role in "Better Highways" to all areas by the end of the year.

Other points raised and discussed were:-

- The role of the Area Engineer who would oversee the service in that area, ensure delivery and solve issues which were getting in the way

- The importance of the highways teams being properly skilled for the wide range of tasks involved in the new way of working
- Better information systems needed for the public to track progress with reference numbers /less computer more person to person contact
- Whether the number of Highway Stewards would need to be increased

A member commented that as previous standards had been unacceptable and a better system had now been generated then this should be introduced as soon as possible. Other Members welcomed the scheme and hoped it would be successful.

The Corporate Director - Environment stated that there would be further opportunities for Members to discuss the progress of the project at a later stage.

6. CUMBRIA TRANSPORT PLAN 3 (2011-2026) DRAFT CORE STRATEGY

Members considered a report by the Corporate Director – Environment seeking views on the Draft Core Strategy of the 3rd Local Transport Plan for Cumbria (2011-2026). The Core Strategy was the first of the three key parts of the Plan to be developed; the thematic Policy section and Implementation Plan would follow later this year. Public and Stakeholder engagement on the Draft Core Strategy was taking place between 30 June and 3 September 2010 using a web based approach via the Council’s website.

Member’s views were being sought on the strategy document as a whole and in particular on key questions which focussed around options for where and how investment should be prioritised in transport.

The Transport Policy Manager responded to a number of questions from members one of which was whether the strategy was over ambitious in the current financial climate. The Transport Policy Manager explained that part of the aim of the Core Strategy was to set out the “transport vision” for the County of Cumbria. Due to the prospect of cuts in local government funding it was unlikely that the major schemes would be funded, perhaps for a number of years but it was nevertheless vital for these to be listed in the Strategy should funding become available.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the Draft Core Strategy of the 3rd Local Transport Plan for Cumbria Strategy be noted;
- (2) any further views on the Strategy be made to the Transport Policy team within two weeks of the meeting and a feedback response be provided to the next Local Committee.

7. CUMBRIA CARE HOMES AT RISK OF FLOODING – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS

Members considered a report by the Corporate Director – Adult and Local Services which advised of the decision by Cabinet to consult on the future of Ravensfield Cumbria Care Residential care home in Keswick, a home that continues to be at risk of flooding. A three month formal consultation was planned to commence on 28 June 2010 through to 28 September 2010. The home had not been re-opened following the flood event of November 2009 and new demand has been met through supporting people at home or through alternatives.

A copy of the recently published consultation document published on 28 June was tabled at the meeting. There was a lengthy discussion around the proposal. As to whether Ravensfield could be made less susceptible to flooding, the Assistant Director, Older Adults explained that the proposal was not solely a result of the flood problems although this was significant due to the risk to residents. In addition the home did not meet modern standards. There were also the wider issues of the decreasing demand for residential care, an increase in people choosing to utilise home care provision to remain living independently at home, and an increase in adequate alternative residential care provision which also had to be taken into account by the County Council.

A Member had some concerns that the consultation had not been sufficiently focused on the future of Ravensfield as it was also seeking views on the wider issues around the strategy for residential care services in Cumbria. In response, it was explained that part of the consultation was to gather people's views on what they want to see regarding social care in the community. It was not just about "the bricks and mortar" but it was hoped to get the best information from the community about what they wanted for the future.

Questions were also answered in respect of how the residents of Ravensfield were currently being provided for and what their wishes were in respect of moving back to the home.

A Member raised some issues regarding the process leading to the consultation commenting that this was a matter which should have come to the Local Committee first prior to being considered by Cabinet. Mention was also made of why Scrutiny had been asked to carry out work in respect of the consultation process for proposals regarding the Barrow residential homes but this had not been the case for Ravensfield.

Following further discussion it was

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report setting out the continued flood risks to Ravensfield residential care home and the proposal to consult on the future of Ravensfield from 28 June 2010 be noted;

- (2) the Local Committee be provided with Scrutiny's consideration of the consultation processes regarding the Barrow residential homes and its recommendation to Cabinet.

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9. PROGRESS ON ACTION ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Members considered a report by the Area Support Manager which covered matters arising from previous meetings and actions taken. Updates were provided on various issues:-

(a) Managing Radioactive Partnerships Group – Use of Substitutes

It was clarified that the Managing Radioactive Partnerships Group (MWRS) Constitution permitted a nominated member from each of the relevant Local Committees and a substitute member from each. The Committee were advised that to provide consistency, the Vice-Chair of the Allerdale Local Committee would continue on the MWRS Partnership as the nominated member and that the Chair would act as substitute.

(b) Early Years Grants

The Area Support Manager advised that the additional information requested in respect of Barnardos Family Place, Wigton grant application would be presented by Children's Services to the next meeting of the Combined Grants Panel.

(c) Cumbria Youth Services

Members commented that they still wished to receive a performance report setting out detailed information on youth service provision in the electoral divisions. The Area Support Manager advised that this could be further discussed at the first meeting of the new Allerdale Children and Young People's Working Group scheduled for the coming week. However, there was some uncertainty as to whether this meeting would go ahead.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report be noted;

- (2) should the scheduled meeting of the Allerdale Children and Young People Working Group be cancelled, then the Cumbria Youth Service be instructed to report the detailed information on youth service provision in Electoral Divisions to the meeting of the Local Committee in September.

10. LOCAL COMMITTEE DEVOLVED BUDGET 2010/11

(1) Communities Budget

The Committee considered a report by the Corporate Director - Resources on the actual expenditure and commitments recorded against the Local Committee's Communities Budgets as at 31 May 2010.

The Finance Manager advised that since the report was written, Council had determined that any unallocated community balances at 31 March 2010, with the exception of Early Years, would not be permitted to be carried forward. Members pointed out that much of the underspend of the Committee's Communities budget had been due to the necessary deferment of community activities, such as the Neighbourhood Forums, due to the focus on flood recovery. The broad estimate was that around £55,000 had not been spent due to the staff priority of flood recovery work and had subsequently been lost from the Local Committee's budget. It was anticipated that the South Lakeland Local Committee will have been similarly affected. It was agreed that a case must be presented for Cabinet to reconsider re-claiming unspent community monies in these circumstances.

It was, therefore

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the budget allocations for 2010-11 and the commitments and expenditure recorded to date be noted;
- (2) the unallocated resources in the Communities Revenue budgets of £362,468 of which £86,694 is unallocated balances brought forward from prior years be noted;
- (3) the unallocated resources in the Local member Capital budgets of £230,000 of which £38,000 is unallocated balances brought forward from prior years be noted;
- (4) the Chair, Vice-Chair and Area Support Manager examine what funds remain unspent in the Local Committee's budget as a result of the focus on the flood recovery work and present a case to Cabinet to reconsider the decision for re-claiming unspent community monies in the case of Allerdale Local Committee (and other Local Committees affected)

(2) Highways Budget

A report by the Corporate Director – Resources was submitted which set out the actual expenditure and commitments recorded against the Local Committee's Highways Revenue and Capital Budgets as at 31st May 2010. The report showed projected overspends in the revenue and capital budgets which had been directly related to the November 2009 flood related costs. Members were advised, however, that the position had now changed in that it was understood that the Emergency Bellwin claim had now been approved which would result in flooding costs being reimbursed and result in large unallocated balances in the highways budget for 2010-11. Members recognised that the Area Engineer would try to commit as much expenditure as possible from these budgets but agreed that the Committee would not have the capacity to commit all the reimbursed resources in the current year under current contracts and an assurance needed to be sought from Cabinet that these monies could be ring-fenced for an extra 12 months.

The Area Engineer confirmed that he would report back on the reasons for overspend in the Highways Stewards budget.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the budget allocations for 2010-11 and the expenditure recorded to date be noted;
- (2) it be noted that the Revenue budget currently has a projected overspent balance of £167,881 which includes flood costs brought forward from 2009/10 of £342,099. Should flooding costs be reimbursed in full there would be an unallocated balance of £174,218;
- (3) it be noted that the Highways Stewards Budget has a projected overspend of £5,951;
- (4) it be noted that the NPRN budget is showing a projected overspend of £159,538, which includes flood costs of £792,451. Should flooding costs be reimbursed in full there would be an unallocated balance of £632,913;
- (5) it be noted that the APM is showing a projected unallocated balance of £15,898;
- (6) it be **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that Local Committees affected by the flooding and receiving refunded monies in 2009/10 be permitted to ring-fence the monies for 12 months to allow a realistic timescale for the unallocated funds to be utilised.

11. OPERATIONAL AGREEMENTS 2010/11 – ACCOUNTANCY SUPPORT SLA

A report by the Corporate Director – Resources was considered which sought to renew the Service Level Agreement between Allerdale Local Committee and the Resources Directorate for the provision of Accountancy Services to the Local Committee. The report provided additional information on the proposed SLA following a request made by the Local Committee at its meeting of 8 April 2010.

The paper advised that the current actual cost of providing the service was significantly higher than the costs recovered, which were based on the original historical value. Over the years as the range of activities covered by Local Committees has increased the associated workload has also increased. The additional cost was being absorbed into the overall Finance budget. The paper also referred to the Accountancy attendance at meetings. Whilst this was not regarded as absolutely necessary, there had been occasions when issues had emerged unpredictably at meetings and required clear financial advice although the risk associated with non-attendance is relatively low. However, reducing attendance would not significantly alter costs.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the proposed Service Level Agreement with Finance – Resources Directorate for the provision of accountancy support for the 2010-11 financial year at a cost of £6,180 be agreed;
- (2) funding for the proposed SLA should come from the General Provisions budget.

12. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT WORKING GROUP – 10 JUNE 2010

The Committee considered the minutes of the Highways and Transport Working Group meeting held on 10 June 2010

On minute 60 – Proposed Closure of U229, the local member spoke of her concern about the proposed closure of this section of road and whether there had been sufficient consultation with the landowner and others. The Area Engineer agreed that this was a difficult problem as the road had public access at both ends but action was required as the road was not stable. However, the options would be revisited and a report made back to the next meeting.

On minute 63 – Speeding on the A595 and A596 Thursby parish, the local member referred to the continuing driver speeds and resulting accidents on this stretch of road and queried what the position was regarding the A and B road speed survey currently under way. The Area Engineer advised that although the A and B road speed limit survey had been suspended last year, work relating to the roads referred to by the local member had been finalised and results would be available in the next few weeks.

On minute 62 – Flood Recovery, Workington – Naming of temporary roads/ Footbridges

Some members felt that it was not appropriate at the moment to be naming the temporary road/temporary bridge structures without ensuring the engagement of the community. The view was also expressed that there it would be more appropriate to have more lasting monuments to Councillor Buchanan and PC Barker.

On minute 61 – Draft Protocol for Street Entertainers it was noted that the protocol for street entertainers would now be presented to Cabinet.

RESOLVED, that the minutes Highways and Transport Working Group meeting held on 10 June 2010 be received.

13. COMBINED GRANTS PANEL – 9 JUNE 2010

Members considered a report by the Chief Executive which sought approval of the recommendations made by the Combined Grants Panel at its meeting on 9 June 2010 which had been the Panel's first meeting of the 2010/11 financial year.

The Area Support Manager provided additional information in respect of the application from "Safety Net Advice and Support" explaining that this group was dealing with the type of referrals that would normally have been managed by the NSPCC's Wedgewood Centre prior to its closure.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) £12,000 be vired from General Provision in order to establish the 2010/11 general grants budget;
- (2) Members agree the Panel's spending recommendations in respect of Children's activities 6-12 age range, four grants totalling £13,400; Youth, five grants totalling £4,000; Social Care, two grants totalling £8,000; and General grants, 2 grants totalling £8,900; as set out in the Appendix to the report

14. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

A report by the Chief Executive updated Members on Neighbourhood Forum and related engagement activity between early April and the end of June 2010.

The Area Support Manager responded to questions from a member regarding the current working arrangements for local community unit staff and part-time staff.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

15. LOCAL CAPITAL SCHEMES

(Mr G Humes left the meeting for this item having declared a personal and prejudicial interest)

A report by the Chief Executive was presented which detailed two proposals from members for minor capital schemes in their Electoral Division, to be funded from the Committee's Local Capital Schemes budget 2009/10.

The local member for St John's expressed concern that there had still been no progress regarding his proposal for the capital scheme that he had put forward the previous year for surface dressing work at Ellerbeck Lane Workington. The Area Support Manager spoke of his attempts to progress a further report to the Committee and the issues that were preventing a definitive resolution. The Committee agreed that a report covering any outstanding issues regarding this bid should be made to their next meeting.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) in respect of the Bowness, Thursby & Caldbeck ED; Members agree to a capital grant of up to £12,000 for the provision of Cattlegrids, provided by the Caldbeck Commoners Association, as set out in the report subject to Cumbria Highways detailed approvals;
- (2) in respect of Moorclose ED; Members agree to a capital grant of up to £12,000 to the management committee of Moorclose Community Centre for 2010/11 capital minor works as set out in report;
- (3) a report be made by the Corporate Director – Environment to the next meeting of the Local Committee in respect of the capital bid for work at Ellerbeck Road in the St John's Electoral Division.

16. JOINT MEETING OF THE ALLERDALE LOCAL COMMITTEE/ALLERDALE BOROUGH

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2010.

On minute 6 – Reconfiguration of the Joint Liaison Group – members considered the proposals made by the Joint Liaison Group for its re-configuration as the Allerdale Project Board to oversee the work of the Allerdale Project.

With regard to taking forward any recommendations from the Allerdale Project Board should this be established, the Committee was advised that it would be able to approve recommendations from the Allerdale Project Board which fell within its

delegated powers but recommendations affecting Cumbria County Council which did not fall within the Local Committee's delegated powers would need to be referred to the relevant decision-maker, for example, a corporate director or Cabinet.

A member proposed that consideration of the proposal to reconfigure the Joint Liaison Group should be deferred until the report from the County Council's Working group on Devolution became available and the governance structure in localities was known. Following discussion on the proposal other Members supported this approach but wished to see the Joint Liaison Group continuing with its meetings for the time being.

On minute 7 – LSP Update it was clarified that no decisions had been taken at the meeting in respect of the proposals put forward by the Borough for the establishment of an Allerdale LSP and that County Council members had requested a further report on the proposals.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the minutes of the Joint Liaison Group meeting held on 18 June be received;
- (2) a decision on the proposed re-configuration of the Joint Liaison Group be deferred until the report of the County Council Devolution Working Group is available and the Joint Liaison Group continue in its present form until then;
- (3) the date for the next meeting of the Joint Liaison Group be confirmed as 30 July at 9.30 am.

17. APPOINTMENT OF LEA GOVERNORS OF NURSERY, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Committee considered a report by the Corporate Director – Children's Services seeking approval of nominated County Council Governors of nursery, primary and secondary schools.

RESOLVED, that the following appointments be made:-

School	Representative
Community Nursery and Primary	
Derwent Vale Primary	Mr J Holliday 12 Northumberland Street Workington CA13 3HA

Lorton

Mr D Ward
2 Vale Cottage
Low Lorton
Cockermouth CA13 9UR

Victoria Junior

Mr K Rollason
37 Douglas Street
Workington CA14 2QY

Voluntary Aided Catholic

St Mary's Catholic Primary,
Harrington

Mr W Reville
3 Walker Road
Salterbeck
Workington CA14 5EX

Foundation

Bowness-on-Solway Primary

Mr S Hinks
Meadowside
Field View
Port Carlisle
Wigton CA7 5DA

18. FLOOD RECOVERY UPDATE

The Area Engineer provided a brief summary of recent flood recovery work in the Allerdale area.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 20 September 2010 at St Michael's Church, Workington.

The meeting closed at 16.45 pm