

LOCAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LEADERSHIP

Minutes of a Meeting of the Local Committee Chairs and Leadership held on Monday, 8 July 2019 at 10.00 am at Conference Room A and B, Cumbria House, Carlisle

PRESENT:

Mr SF Young (Chair)

Mr GD Cook
Ms D Earl
Mr KR Hamilton
Mr K Hitchen
Mr W McEwan

Mr AJ Markley
Mr P Thornton
Mr C Weber
Mr D Whipp

Also in Attendance:-

Mrs L Davis	-	Democratic Services Officer
Ms G Elliott	-	Area Manager - Copeland
Ms K Fairclough	-	Chief Executive
Mr S Hall	-	Acting Assistant Director - Economy & Environment
Ms T Ingham	-	Area Manager - Barrow
Mrs K Johnson	-	Area Manager - South Lakeland
Mrs A Meadows	-	Community Development Officer
Mr P Musgrave	-	Area Manager (Carlisle)
Ms L Shaw	-	Area Manager - Allerdale
Ms S Turnbull	-	Communications Manager
Mr N Wright	-	Area Manager - Eden

7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Barry, Mr N Cotton, Mr P Dew and Mr D Wilson.

8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 April 2019 be agreed as an accurate record.

9 BICYCLE MAYOR OF CUMBRIA

The Chair introduced and welcomed Mr Richard Ingham to the meeting who had been elected Bicycle Mayor of Cumbria for a voluntary two year appointment. Mr Ingham gave the background to the appointment which had come about after he had attended an Amsterdam University course on planning the cycling city. The Cumbrian initiative had the support of all six Cumbria MPs.

Mr Ingham explained that the role was to act as an ambassador to work with decision makers across the county to raise the profile of cycling as a means of transport for shorter journeys and outlined the benefits to such a change - improvement in health and wellbeing, better air quality, reduced congestion, less need for car parking and a smaller carbon footprint.

Following a survey carried out in Carlisle, Mr Ingham highlighted that only 2% of the workforce cycled to work, although the majority lived within a 6 mile radius of their workplace. Mr Ingham suggested that this would not change unless there was much more investment in protected cycle infrastructure in parallel with better cycle parking provision in streets, supermarkets, employment sites and service providers.

To conclude, Mr Ingham expressed the hope for joint working with the County Council to secure investment for a safer infrastructure and encourage cycling as a means of transport.

The Chair thanked Mr Ingham for his attendance and suggested members invite him to their local committee meetings or highways transport working groups to receive a tailored area presentation.

During the course of the discussion, schemes already in place in Cumbria were highlighted such as the Cumbria Cycling Strategy and the Loan to Buy Scheme. Members discussed projects in their individual areas and the barriers to be overcome to encourage cycling. It was recognised that alternative sources of funding needed to be identified to invest in the infrastructure and cycling facilities needed to be improved. Safety concerns for cyclists, especially parents allowing their children to cycle to school, were also discussed.

The Deputy Leader suggested liaison with Sustrans, an organisation established to make it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle. It was further suggested that safer cycling routes be incorporated into developer contributions when considering planning applications.

The Assistant Director – Economy and Environment agreed to investigate the lack of use of a designated cycle lane on London Road/Eastern Way in Carlisle and informed members that an officer working group had been established. It was explained that as part of the Group's remit, officers would be updating the County Council's website for cyclists.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health welcomed the initiative as it linked in with the public health agenda.

The Chair thanked Mr Ingham for his update and invited him to remain for the rest of the meeting as items on the agenda correlated with this issue.

10 UPDATE ON PARKING INCOME

The Assistant Director – Economy and Environment presented a briefing note that provided an overview of the financial position of the Council’s Parking Services team at the end of 2018/19. Members were asked to consider options and make recommendations for apportioning and utilising the service underspend of £138,685 from the 2018/19 financial year.

The briefing note also sought a response to a referral from Carlisle Local Committee who had requested that the underspend also be used for access improvement issues ie dropped kerbs as well as enforcement lines and signs. Members were presented with three options for consideration.

Following a detailed discussion the majority of members were in agreement of option 1 – ‘the allocation of £130,000 to address outstanding enforcement related lines and signs defects with the apportionment to each area based on the estimated cost of work’. It was explained that the backlog of work on the lines and signs would then be completed and a further discussion could take place on using the income for wider highways and transport measures. The Assistant Director – Economy and Environment informed members, that on completion, the maintenance of the enforceable measures would be in the region of £8k-£10k per annum.

Following the agreement of option 1, the Chair suggested that this year’s £8k surplus be used to refresh the Cycling Strategy and this was further agreed by members.

11 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The Deputy Leader invited members to discuss safe routes to schools, as this was a devolved responsibility to local committees and it was the Council’s ambition to enable children to walk or cycle to school. The Deputy Leader outlined the main reasons for raising this issue, to reduce congestion and improve safety around schools, to negate the effects of climate change and air pollution, to help regulate traffic around school areas and assist with tackling the issue of childhood obesity.

In answer to a question on how to progress safe routes to schools with infrastructure planning, the Deputy Leader outlined a proposed scheme in Kendal to allow parents to park for free in the council car park and walk their children the short distance to the school. It was acknowledged, particularly in the rural areas, that schemes could be difficult and costly to implement.

The Chief Executive welcomed the initial discussion and encouraged local committees to take the lead on this by developing community and school partnership working as it linked into the broader aspect of the health and wellbeing agendas of local committees.

The Chair informed members that it was an integral part of area planning and local committees were in the best position to understand local requirements and develop schemes for implementation.

During the course of discussion, it was suggested that any surplus from the school crossing patrol funding, devolved to local committees, be used to create school safety schemes.

It was agreed that this issue be raised at local committees as part of area planning. The Deputy Leader also agreed to discuss if any central support was necessary.

12 INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLANS

The Assistant Director – Economy and Environment gave a presentation on Local Plans and Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP) which incorporated the Infrastructure Funding Gap analysis.

The presentation covered the responsibility of Local Planning Authorities to produce a Local Plan and supporting IDPs that considered infrastructure, cumulative impacts and future growth. The role of the County Council to cooperate with the development of those Plans and to deliver some of the necessary infrastructure was outlined. Members noted that a joint Statement of Intent had been produced setting out how both councils worked together to identify, prioritise and fund the infrastructure necessary to support development proposed in the Local Plans.

Members noted that the funding required to deliver the infrastructure in the Local Plans was not included in the County Council's core budget and, although developer contributions helped meet some of the "funding gaps", it was essential that the district councils work with others to ensure all funding sources, as detailed in the presentation, were exploited.

To conclude the officer asked local committees to refresh the funding gap analysis for each Local Plan IDP, include an estimate of health costs, focus on school places/education and review joint infrastructure forums/groups.

The Chair emphasised the size of the funding gap and explained district councils were being encouraged to support development whilst highlighting the funding was not in place to support the necessary changes in infrastructure. Members were asked to challenge district councils and identify joint ways of working to secure funding. It was explained that the IDPs had to reflect that communities were being built, not just houses.

Members gave examples of difficulties encountered in their areas caused by additional development and the pressures this had placed on local infrastructures. The one bridge crossing and limited health services on Walney Island was commented on and the lack of an up to date Copeland Local Plan to support the case for investment was discussed. The Assistant Director – Economy and Environment agreed to investigate what sanctions were in place for councils not having Local Plans.

The Chief Executive concluded the discussion by stating the joint Statement of Intent was a fresh opportunity for closer partnership working. It was agreed that an item would be submitted to the next joint Chief Executives' meeting and the Cumbria Leaders' Board. The Chair and Chief Executive, when meeting with Copeland Local Committee members, would raise the issue of the lack of an up to date Local Plan for Copeland.

13 CASE STUDY OF AREA WORKING - EGERTON COURT, BARROW

Members received a presentation from Alison Meadows, Community Development Officer, Barrow on a community development project and a wellbeing hub in Egerton Court, Barrow Island. The officer explained that Egerton Court was a Ward within 3% of the most deprived nationally and in 2017/2018 there had been four drug deaths within four months.

In 2016, with the support of Barrow Local Committee, a multi-agency partnership group had been established, which included representation from the Police, Fire Service, landlords and the Borough Council. The Group had used intelligence, data and community concerns to understand tenant issues and what was needed to improve the lives of the residents in that area.

A number of measures were introduced and the wellbeing hub concept conceived. The funding for the hub and hub partners were detailed in the presentation. The hub was situated in a flat on the complex for ease of access for tenants and had opened on 31 January 2019. A number of facilities, schemes, assistance and support were available to allow targeted intervention; two positive case studies from the hub which had made a difference to lives, were highlighted. Members noted to date that relationships were being built and the measures put in place had resulted in reduced demand on police, fire and rescue and ambulance services.

To conclude, the officer informed members that the project had gained national recognition as a model of working by the College of Policing and Public Health, England and Sheffield University. The Peer Review had also been very complimentary about the project.

Members expressed their appreciation and admiration to the Officer for all the work achieved to date. It was noted that it was a fantastic example of community working and members were encouraged to take key issues from the project to replicate work in their own areas.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Friday 15 November at 10.00 am at County Offices, Kendal.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm