

SEFTON AREA PARTNERSHIP OF LOCAL COUNCILS
Aintree Village-Formby-Hightown-Ince Blundell-Little Altcar
Lydiate-Maghull-Melling-Sefton-Thornton

Minutes of the Meeting of the Area Partnership held on Thursday 5th June, 2014 at Maghull Town Hall

PRESENT:

Cllrs M.Coles (Chair, Formby), G.Downey (Aintree Village), G.Gaskin (Formby), T.Asbury (Hightown), D.Warren (Hightown), Ian Cowell (Clerk, Ince Blundell), P.Crilly (Clerk, Melling), G.Lee (Melling), C.White (Sefton), K.Houndsell (Thornton), D.Miles (Thornton)

APOLOGIES:

Cllrs J.Colbert (Aintree Village), W.Honeyman (Aintree Village), A.Ibbs (Little Altcar), M.Byrne (Maghull), R.Baker (Melling), T.Carr (Melling) & Mark Long (SMBC)

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, and expressed his disappointment that Mark Long had cancelled at short notice due to illness. He explained that Mark Long is the Liaison Officer between SMBC and the Liverpool City Region Body, and as such he has been involved with preparing documents associated with this, and also with its' amalgamation.

Furthermore the Chair is surprised that the Liverpool City Region Plan is a relatively thin document; considering the work involved in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. He is also concerned there is very little available in print about this in the general domain, and expressed concerns about possible vested interests and bureaucracy. The Chair is keen to know the consequences of the Consultation on this.

Given the lack of Guest Speaker, the Chair decided to make best use of the Meeting by discussing recent amendments made to the Parish Charter.

1. PARISH CHARTER REVIEW

The Chair thanked Councillors Asbury, Lee and Warren for their help with reviewing the Charter, and also Ian Cowell, the Clerk of Ince Blundell Parish Council who had gone through the document in detail.

In making reference to Version 4.1, the most up-to-date version of the Parish Charter the following comments were made:-

Page 1

Broadly speaking pretty good, although there are some areas of duplication which need removing.

Paragraph 30 – 'Neighbourhood Planning'

This seems to be in accordance with SMBC's protocol, and is set out in a legal format.

'Consultation'

(Paragraph 36)

This reads,

Sefton Council will:-

“Allow a minimum of four weeks for Parish/Town Councils to respond to consultation (unless there is a specified statutory period). If this is not possible, the Parish/Town Council will be given an explanation”.

This needs to build in the fact that there is a duty to consult, and that Parish and Town Councils should be consulted. Interestingly there was a change in the law in 2007; which meant that SMBC are no longer obligated to consult with Parish and Town Councils as Statutory Consultees. However, Cllr Gaskin conformed that he had received an email from SMBC’s Legal department which, states we are Statutory Consultees under the Licensing Act. A sentence needs to be included here to that effect.

The question was raised whether local Councils would have to formally apply in writing for information on any local planning applications? Concerns were also raised about how to object when applications are granted retrospective planning permission. Reference also needs to be made to Section 106 monies in this section.

(Paragraph 38)

This reads,

Sefton Council will:-

“In relation to Sefton Council meetings:-

- * Parish and Town Councils have a duty to sign up to receive alerts for specific Council Committees <http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>
- * Reports containing confidential or exempt information will not be made available.

In view of the recent ‘David Pluck Betting Office’ situation in Formby, this paragraph raises concerns about Licensing. It was suggested that the word ‘Licensing’ should be included here. The Chair also raised concerns about the inclusion of webpage links which, quickly become outdated.

General Comments

- * Service Level Agreement & Memorandum of Understanding documents seem to correlate with the revised Parish Charter.
- * It’s important we set out our expectations of SMBC and what we’d like to do.
- * The numbering needs updating, and particular paragraphs and errors need removing/ amending.

The Chair intends presenting the revised Parish Charter to the Cabinet by the end of June/ Beginning of July 2014 once final modifications have been made to it.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (20/03/14)

Ian Cowell proposed that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the previous Meeting and Cllr Coles seconded this. The group was in agreement.

The Chair commented on the interesting talk from Inspector Phillip Hatton, and queried whether any of our member Councils had noticed any visible improvements since the last meeting? Cllr Lee said there had been no improvement with regards policing in the Melling area. More positively it was reported that Hightown Parish Council has had a police presence at their Parish Council meetings since the Police Commissioner attended and spoke to this group, and they also

now have a list of Officers' contact details. Cllr Asbury even reported that he'd received a phone call from Inspector Jim Atherton, who was just calling for a chat!

3. MATTERS ARISING

Raised as point 5, "Correspondence" on the previous Minutes, the Chair commented that the trip to the Veolia Gillmoss Recycling Facility was very interesting, and that the new brown recycling bins are now in operation.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

- * Andy Brown, Ludus Leisure - 20/3/14
(A play, sports & recreation equipment manufacturer with experience of consultation, design, the planning process & delivery of schemes in and around parks & open spaces. Also experienced in allotment provision, cemeteries, public events & working with friends groups)

(*) Copy of letter passed to interested member Council

- * Cllr Mike Coles (Chair), Formby Parish Council - 4/4/14
- Letter to John Kelly, Chair of CSAC
- * Cllr Geoff Gaskin, Formby Parish Councils - 14/4/14
- Contact details for David Oakes, Farming Liaison Officer (Drainage)
West Lancs NFU
- * Christine Sobieski, DONG Energy - 15/4/14
- Burbo Bank Offshore Wind Farm VIP Invitation, "Meet the Buyer" Event

7/5/14 = 1200-1600, "The Beaches Hotel", Denbighshire
8/5/14 = 1200-1600, "Floral Pavillion", New Brighton
- * Graham Lymbery, SMBC - 28/4/14
- Acceptance to attend meeting on 10/7/14 as Guest Speaker
- * Paul Nolan, Mersey Forest - 1/5/14
- Summer Events in the Mersey Forest
- * Christina Jones, SMBC - 15/5/14
- Names of 3 representative requested for Initial Assessment, Review & Hearing Sub-Committees

(*) As per point 6.2 of the previous Minutes, the 3 names put forward were – Cllrs Jack Colbert, David Warren & Gerry Lee.
- * Cllr Mike Coles (Chair), Formby Parish Council - 16/5/14
- Sefton's Monthly Tracker, April 2014
- * Pam Crilly – New Clerk, Melling Parish Council - 20/5/14
- Pam's telephone number is:- 07541 382220
- * Lesley Smith, SMBC – Strategic Support Assistant - 23/5/14
- Sefton Health & Well Being Event : Friday 18/7/14, 1-4pm, Bootle Town Hall
- * Steve Pearce, SMBC Democratic Services Manager - 29/5/14
- Request for contact details for Cllrs Jack Colbert, Gerry Lee & David Warren

(*) Email addresses supplied

- * Cllr Mike Coles (Chair), Formby Parish Council - 30/5/14
- 10 Parishes Meeting on 5/6/14 same date as CSAC Meeting

- * Cllr Maurice Byrne, Maghull Town Council - 2/6/14
- Number of representatives per Council on 10 Parishes Committee queried.

(* Officially it's 2 representatives per Council, but we have an 'Open Door' policy, so extras will not be refused. However Deputies cannot participate.

- * Pam Crilly, Clerk – Melling Parish Council - 3/6/14
- Provision of details of new Chairman

*Mrs Dawn Beaumont
29 Willsford Avenue
Melling
L31 1JN*

- * Mark Long, Liverpool City Region Liaison Officer SMBC - 4/6/14
- Tendering his apologies for tonight's meeting due to illness.

5. FUTURE SPEAKERS

- * Andrea Watts, SMBC - 19/6/14
(Parish Charter)
- * Graham Lymberry, SMBC - 10/7/14
David Oakes, Farming Liaison Officer (Drainage) West Lancs NFU
Matthew Connor, Environment Agency
(Changes to Drainage Management on Flood Plain)
- * Mark Long, SMBC Economics Officer - To be rearranged
(Handling Liverpool City Region Work)
- * Ken Clearey, Chair of NALC
(General local issues)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Old Thornton Garage Site

In November 2011, Thornton Garage closed and a developer applied for Planning Permission to alter the site to include a Veterinary Practice, Retail and Office use. The Parish Council notified local residents by letter of the proposals, and in March 2012 the application was approved. The developer was apparently unable to sell the site, and a further planning application was submitted with a view to making the site more desirable to prospective purchasers. This latter application for a change of Use from Car Showroom to Retail/Office was approved on 15th May 2013. The end user of the site in both applications was unknown.

In late 2013 work commenced on the site, but still the end user was not identified although various rumours circulated in the area. Shortly prior to completion of the premises, a promotional letter was sent to local residents by Tesco identifying they were the new owners of the site which would be a 'Tesco Express'. This caused uproar in the area, due to the close proximity of the premises to 25, Edge Lane, and because of the noise generated by delivery vehicles etc. and the general effect it would have on the area.

The Parish Council took up the case and letters were sent to the Chief Executive of Tesco, Phillip Clark, whose response was insulting, and also the Minister for Communities, Eric Pickles, who, to-date, has failed to respond. Recently Tesco have applied to extend the opening hours from 07.00/23.00hrs to 06.00/23.00hrs. The Parish Council has obtained 189 signatures in support of its' letter of objection to the application.

Notably the granting of planning permission to a developer without the end user being identified is entirely within the law. Thornton Parish Council believes that the law should be changed so that no-one person finds his/herself in this position. There is also evidence to suggest that the Traffic Plan agreed for the site is not being complied with. Thornton Parish Councils intends to pursue this matter to the highest level, enlisting the support of MP Bill Esterson to assist them.

It was suggested that Thornton Parish Council should write to Tesco's Company Secretary clearly listing their complaints. Should they have no success with doing this, then perhaps they could go to the Press. The matter should also be raised through the Area Committee.

6.2 The Crescent, Thornton

In September 2010, Thornton Parish Councillors met with Ward Councillors, and Sefton Council Officers to discuss a scheme for the 'refurbishment' of The Crescent at Thornton. A sum of money from various sources including Section 106 money from Aldi, Thornton Parish Council, Crosby Area Committee and Neighbourhoods totalling approximately £14,000 was initially available. It was agreed to spend some of this money on a feasibility study which was subsequently carried out by Capita Symonds at a cost of £1,300. This study identified 2 possible schemes; one costing £38,000 and the other £68,000. There were insufficient funds available at the time but the Parish Council took the view that there was no reason why we should replace the current planters with new ones. No progress was forthcoming.

In September 2012, Thornton Parish Councillors met with Ward Councillors McGinnity and Roberts, Steve Johnson from Highways and Mark Catherall from Neighbourhoods at Bootle Town Hall to discuss the project. Cllr McGinnity informed the Parish Councillors that he would not support any progress on the scheme until the contract between Capita Symonds and Sefton Council ended. The projected date for this was October 2013.

In November 2013, Parish Cllr Hounsell contacted the Neighbourhoods Division and spoke to Alex Spencer, Mark Catherall's replacement, about progress on the scheme, and was told that a meeting had taken place between Neighbourhoods, Leisure and the Ward Councillors. The Parish Council was not informed or invited to that meeting. Consequently Cllr Hounsell made his views on this apparent omission known. It was suggested that a further meeting be arranged but that failed to materialize. Various excuses have since been given by Alex Spencer as to why; the final excuse being that responsibility for Section 106 monies had passed to Mandy Biaggetti in Planning. Cllr Hounsell then spoke to Mandy who kindly clarified the issue about the money, and advised him in an email dated 15th April 2014 that Alex Spencer was to arrange a meeting to progress the matter.

On 6/5/14 Cllr Hounsell sent an email to Alex Spencer asking why the meeting had not been arranged, and enclosed Mandy Biaggetti's email. Cllr Hounsell received neither an acknowledgement nor a reply, so sent him a further email on 28/5/14 which to-date has been ignored also. Cllr Hounsell will therefore be writing to SMBC Chief Executive, Margaret Carney about the matter.

The Chair expressed his willingness to raise this with Margaret Carney on Cllr Hounsell's behalf if necessary, and also stated that he'd already appraised John Kelly, Chair of the Area Committee of the situation since he covers that Ward. Cllr Lee has also experienced similar problems with Alex Spencer dealing with and responding to issues he has raised.

6.3 Formby Neighbourhood Plan

There will be a Drop In Event at the Formby Guild Hall between 3-8pm on Wednesday 18th June, 2014 to launch the Formby Neighbourhood Plan which consists of about 80 pages, and also incorporates the Little Altcar area. This will be an ideal opportunity to see what a Neighbourhood Plan looks like, and to find out what's involved in developing such a Plan. All are welcome to attend, although numbers would be appreciated in advance to assist with the provision of refreshments. The Event has been promoted through advertisements in local newspapers and on local radio and the web, and also through the erection of banners. Numerous questionnaires will be completed together with verbal consultation. In order for the Plan to be adopted 50% of the casting votes must be in favour and those proposing the Plan must be able to prove they've fully consulted those affected by it.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Special Meeting of the group with Andrea Watts of SMBC will now be held on **MONDAY 21th July, 2014** in the Council Chamber at Maghull Town Hall commencing at 7pm to discuss the Parish Charter Review, the management structure and responsibilities of the Sefton Neighbourhood Team and other community issues.

The next ordinary meeting will take place on **Thursday 10th July, 2014** in the Council Chamber at Maghull Town Hall commencing at 7.30pm.