

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 20th November, 2014 at Maghull Town Hall

PRESENT:

Cllrs M.Coles (Chair, Formby), G.Downey (Aintree Village), W.Honeyman (Aintree Village), G.Gaskin (Formby), T.Asbury (Hightown), D.Warren (Hightown), A.Ibbs (Little Altcar), M.Byrne (Maghull), B.Draper (Sefton), C.White (Sefton)

APOLOGIES:

Cllrs R.Baker (Melling), A.Carr (Melling), I.Cowell (Clerk, Ince Blundell)

The Chair welcomed all present and opened the meeting. Due to the cancellation by Guest Speaker Christina Jones of SMBC, a discussion took place about the Local Plan, Parish Charter, Area Committees and financial matters. The Chair went through the written update which Christina had kindly provided, and used the session to tie up loose ends and also to consider the future. Various other Guest Speakers including Steve Matthews of SMBC and Peel Holdings were pursued without success.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Parish Charter

The Parish Charter has now been formally accepted by Cabinet. When Trish Hardy presented the Charter, the point was made that there may be times when our requirements cannot be fulfilled and we have to adapt and find alternative ways of working. SMBC are committed to making the Charter work, and will disseminate it to their staff at Management and Team Meetings, and also promote it on their website and at the Area Committee Meeting on 8/1/15.

Trish Hardy has posed the question, "How do Parish and Town Clerks operate within the Charter?" The consensus is that direct links with Parish and Town Councils should continue, and they must not be bypassed by SMBC solely communicating with this group. The Chair suggested that SMBC sends a letter to the Clerks advising them that the Charter has now been accepted and is in operation.

The group congratulated the Chair on his hard work and perseverance in getting the Charter updated and adopted.

1.2 Working Relationship with Area Committee

The working relationship with the Area Committee has improved. The Chair met with John Kelly, Chair of the Sefton East Area Committee on Monday 17/11/14 and discussed common issues, i.e. SSP – the company that has taken over many of our Surgeries. John agreed to find answers to questions about Coastal Erosion and S.106 monies that we have previously raised and to report back to the group.

1.2.1 DOCTORS' SURGERIES

Since SSP have taken over the running of Surgeries including Freshfield, Hightown and Melling, there has been a distinct reduction in the opening hours. This could also have an impact on surrounding areas too. Local residents have also raised concerns that many Practises and out of hour's services are being run by Locums.

Councillor Byrne will pursue Fiona Clark the Chair of the South Sefton CCG as a Speaker for January's meeting to discuss the proposed Localisation of Care Delivery.

The Chair met recently with Bill Esterson about this matter, and has asked the Secretary to circulate the notes he made in relation to this meeting.

1.2.2 EFFICIENCY OF NEIGHBOURHOODS FUNCTION

A serious question was posed regarding the past efficiency of the Neighbourhoods function. Sadly the working relationship the group has with the Neighbourhoods Team has dwindled since the departure of Steph Prewett. The various levels of management within the Neighbourhood Team were queried, and similarly their roles and purpose. References were made to apparent 'blockages' within the Neighbourhood Team. It is felt that Graham Bayliss and Andrea Watts need reminding that there is significant work still to be done. The Chair will contact Graham Bayliss to 'voice' our concerns about service standards which seem to vary widely across our Parishes, and also to request that we are made aware of any proposed service reductions as a matter of priority.

1.3 Local Plan

On 22/1/15 the Local Plan will be signed off subject to a final review being conducted. As the Local Plan could still change, this is somewhat hindering the progress of Neighbourhood Plans.

Melling PC report that their Plan is progressing and it will not be affected by Boundary Changes within Maghull.

Maghull TC report that they are in the process of putting a Plan together, and they have exchanged 2 pieces of land with Melling.

Formby PC report that they are now in possession of a 50-page draft Plan which contains many detailed Plans and adheres to the Local Plan. Admittedly there is still a lot of work to be completed, and the results of 500 questionnaires that were recently completed will be fed into the draft Plan. The Formby Village Improvement Plan also features in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

1.4 Libraries

Libraries are likely to come under threat again due to further proposed Budget cuts. The Chair is aware that a meeting hosted by Steve Deakin was held yesterday with Library Staff about future cuts to the Libraries. It was suggested that Parish and Town Councils might contribute in future towards Libraries. On a more positive note it was reported that the Aintree Library will re-open on 6/12/14 in part of the Youth Centre. Cllr Byrne requested that more information be sought about possible future changes to the Library Service.

1.5 Budgets

It was queried what will actually be left when further cuts come into effect? The Budget is so low now that possibly only essential services will be provided in future. Aintree Village PC lost their Christmas tree last year, and Melling PC has paid £2000 out of their own funds for illuminated Christmas trees on their lampposts in the Village.

Member Councils were made aware of a possible £1500 funding/Council that may still be available for the provision of Christmas decorations, and were urged to contact Alex Spencer in the Neighbourhoods Team about this. Formby PC reported that they successfully secured this funding, £300 of which they have put towards their nativity, and the remainder towards Christmas lights for the Village.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (11/9/14)

The previous meeting took place on **11/9/14** and not 10/7/14 as printed. The Secretary did admit to her deliberate error!

Apologies to Councillors G.Lee and M.Byrne who were present at the last meeting but omitted from the Minutes in error.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true and accurate record by Cllr G.Lee and seconded by Cllr M.Coles. The group was in agreement.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Any Matters Arising were covered elsewhere in the Minutes.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

- * Paul Nolan, Mersey Forest - 6/10/14
- Newsletter
- * Cllr Mike Coles, Chair - 9/10/14
- Email stating the Parish Charter had been approved by Cabinet that morning.
- * Steve Matthews, SMBC - 24/10/14
- Email declining invite to attend meeting on 20/11/14 due to busy schedu
- * Richard Knight, Peel Holdings - 28/10/14
- Various emails declining various dates to meet with group, and also 30/10/14
declined to send a substitute in his place
- * Carol Bonnici, SMBC (Community Outreach Worker) - 31/10/14
- Email advertising a new project, 'Work Routes Merseyside' – a free service, which delivers quality training courses, based opposite Bootle Strand Shopping Centre. Their website is www.seftonatwork.net. They have asked for assistance with displaying posters on community notice boards.
- * Cllr Mike Coles, Chair - 31/10/14
- Notes from meeting with Bill Esterson
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk to Sefton Parish Council - 5/11/14
- Introduction & contact details.

*Coachman's Lodge, Glebe End, Sefton Village, Merseyside, L29 6YB.
(0151) 531 8829 / seftonparishcouncil@outlook.com*
- * Cllr Mike Coles, Chair - 5/11/14
- Suggestion to invite Christina Jones, SMBC to meeting on 20/11/14 to update on the Parish Charter
- * Noel James, Historic Towns Forum - 6/11/14
- Invitation to the Annual Conference on 25/11/14 in the Chapter House at Chester Cathedral
- * Matt Young, Grantscape - 11/11/14
- Advising that the 1st stage of the online survey regarding the Burbo Bank Extension Community Fund is now complete, and that Further local public exhibitions will take place early 2015.
- * Steve Matthews, SMBC - 7/11/14
- Email stating he was available to attend a meeting with the group

w/c 8/12/14 to provide an Update on the Local Plan

- * Christina Jones, SMBC - 14/11/14
- Apologies for meeting on 20/11/14

Various confirmations of attendance have been received to-date for the Special Meeting on 11/12/14.

5. FUTURE SPEAKERS

- * Representative of Peel Holdings
- The Secretary will continue to pursue Richard Knight for a date in January 2015
- * Fiona Clark, Chair of South Sefton CCG
- Cllr Maurice Byrne to make arrangements for meeting on 15/1/15.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Website Problems

The Hosting fee of £113.00 has now been re-imbursed to Paul Hodson.

We are not currently able to update the website as the software is outdated and can no longer be upgraded. It was agreed that the Secretary would ask her husband to cost out a variety of options, and it was stressed that we need to select the option, which will be most sustainable in the long run. It could be that we have to purchase new software at an additional cost, and that the website will have to be set up again from scratch. The group were in agreement about the benefits of the website, and the Secretary spoke of its' cost effectiveness given we are no longer continually paying out for photocopying and postage. It is also a means of promoting the group since information about the group is readily accessible on the internet.

6.2 Bank Account

The Treasurer has successfully closed the old Building Society account due to accessibility issues following the resignation of Signatory Terry Baldwin, and the subsequent closure of the local Branch. The closing balance of the account was **£1036.42**, which has been deposited in the Treasurer's own bank account as a temporary measure until a new account can be opened. Following reimbursement of monies due to the Secretary for her fee and the internet subscription, the balance now stands at **£723.42**. Due to new legislation regarding banking, it might not be as straight forward as first thought to open a new account. It was agreed that a main high street bank should be selected, and the need for multiple Signatories to avoid a recurrence of this situation was raised, as was whether a debit card could be requested for the account to allow easier access to the funds for the Treasurer so that he does not always have to go into a Branch. The Chair suggested that he might be able to open a new account with Natwest where he is a current customer, and also stated that he had an appointment with Lloyds Bank tomorrow to see what they can offer us. The Treasurer is currently in possession of 2 donation cheques, which he cannot deposit in the absence of an account bearing the group's name.

6.3 Annual Event with SMBC 2015

It was agreed that the group should host an Annual Event in 2015 with SMBC, and that the Secretary should look for a suitable date in March 2015 for this. Cllr Warren agreed to arrange the Agenda and to oversee the preparations.

6.4 Meeting Dates 2015

The Secretary reports that she is still awaiting confirmation of Meeting Dates for the group for 2015, which she has submitted to the staff at Maghull Town Hall

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

A Special Meeting of the group will take place with Steve Matthews of SMBC's Planning Department on **Thursday 11th December, 2014** in the Council Chamber at Maghull Town Hall commencing at 11am to discuss the Local Plan.

The next ordinary meeting of the group will take place on **Thursday 15th January, 2015** in the Council Chamber at Maghull Town Hall commencing at 7.30pm.