

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

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Area Partnership held on Thursday 26th September, 2013 at Maghull Town Hall

1. PRESENT

Cllrs M.Coles (Chair, Formby), G.Gaskin (Formby), T.Asbury (Hightown), D.Warren (Hightown), A.Carr (Melling), G.Lee (Melling), Ian Cowell (Clerk, Ince Blundell), Steve Matthews (SMBC Planning Department), Muriel Hopley (Observer – Maghull Town Council)

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr G.Downey (Aintree Village), M.Byrne (Maghull), J.Jarvis (Maghull), R.Baker (Melling)

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM (18/09/12)

Cllr Asbury proposed that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the previous AGM, and Cllr Lee seconded this. The Committee were in agreement.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS AGM

There were no matters arising.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair spoke of a busy year in which the group had held more meetings than in previous years to discuss serious matters affecting us all. The group has focussed on the following issues:-

- Local Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Environmental Issues (including Wind Farms)
- Changes in Local Governance

Our Guest Speakers have included Cllr Dowd, and Jane Gowing, Ingrid Berry and Steve Matthews of SMBC. We also had representation from Merseyside Police who provided an Update on Local Policing, and also touched upon the effect of recent Cutbacks for the Force. MP Bill Esterson has also remained supportive of the work of the group, unlike many members of the Sefton Cabinet who fail to see the relevance of the group.

In reflecting upon the Annual Event held at Altcar in November 2012 with SMBC, the Chair commented upon a really successful Event, which was the best and most constructive yet. The underlying theme of this Event was about finding a better way of serving the parished communities we represent, in conjunction with SMBC. Pressure was put on Margaret Carney and Steph Prewett to improve our communities. Since then there have been many changes within the Management of SMBC, and greater responsibility has been placed on communities and Elected Representatives. Notably work in our Town and Village Centres is now more heavily dependant on the work of our respective Councils; bringing with it risks and obligations.

In speaking about changes in the political landscape, the Chair commented that in some ways these changes have been positive. He stressed the need to ensure the areas we represent do not get lost in political issues, and also the importance of supporting our local politicians in an effort to gain their support for the group. The new Area Committee Structure however is a major area of concern, since decisions are often taken without due care and little reference of a duty to consult. There has clearly been backward steps taken here with regards progress; hence the reason why Cllr Coles has not pursued being co-opted onto the Area Committee, and also why he feels he has not been as successful as Chair this year.

In conclusion the Chair thanked the Vice Chair David Warren, the Secretary Vicki, and others whose counsel he's valued for their support throughout the year. He spoke of his pleasure of being elected Chair for a fifth year; which he will undertake with the increased support of Cllr David Warren given his recent re-election as Deputy Chairman to Formby Parish Council and in view of 2 major community projects they are concerned with. In future he predicts the approach of the Partnership will change, and he will endeavour to press on to refine the Constitution if necessary and to ensure the role of the group is allowed to develop.

The group expressed their thanks to Cllr Coles for his patience, thanks and ability and comment was made that this is an excellent Forum in which to participate and communicate over common issues, with some big issues having been tackled by the group this year.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

No report was provided in the Treasurer's absence. Report to follow at a future meeting. The Secretary reported that several Donation Cheques had been received, and requested that any outstanding Cheques are sent to her as a matter of urgency.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The decision was taken to re-appoint the same Elected Members as last year:-

- **Chair** - Cllr Mike Coles, Formby Parish Council
- **Vice Chair** - Cllr David Warren, Hightown Parish Council
- **Treasurer** - Cllr Godfrey Downey, Aintree Village Parish Council
- **Co-Signatory** - Cllr Terry Baldwin, Aintree Village Parish Council
- **Auditor** - Cllr Geoff Gaskin, Formby Parish Council
- **Audit & Governance Committee Representatives**
 - Cllr Terry Baldwin, Aintree Village Parish Council
 - Cllr Geoff Gaskin, Formby Parish Council
 - Cllr David Warren, Hightown Parish Council

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items of any other business were raised.

