

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON AND SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council** held in the Community Room at Concordia Leisure Centre, Forum Way, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6YB on Wednesday, 28 June 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor C Dunbar (Chair in the Chair)

MEMBERS

W Crosby
W Daley
S E Dungworth
B M Flux
J D Foster
B Pidcock

M E Richards
M Robinson
M D Swinburn
I C F Swithenbank
R J Wallace

OFFICERS

M Carle
G Gavin
I Hedley
D Lally
K Norris
J Roll
P Simpson
N Walsh

R Wealleans

D Wood

Highways Delivery Area Manager
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Community Regeneration Officer
Interim Chief Executive
Democratic Services Officer
Democratic Services Manager
Public Health Protection Manager
Service Manager - Culture, Heritage
and Libraries
Neighbourhood Services, Area
Manager
Neighbourhood Services, Service
Manager

ALSO PRESENT

Z Bottrell - Culture Creative
18 members of the public

Chair's initials

Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council - 28 June 2017

01. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked members to note the membership and committee's terms of reference.

RESOLVED that the Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council's membership and terms of reference, as agreed by Council on 24 May 2017, be noted.

02. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hepple.

03. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Area Committee - South held on Wednesday, 15 March 2017, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair subject to the addition of Councillor Foster's apologies.

04. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Swinburn declared an interest in item no. 6 (ii) regarding the petition requesting a roundabout at the Westmorland Way/Forum Way/Mellington Road junction in Cramlington. He stated that he was unable to discuss the petition as a Councillor as he was lead petitioner but would answer questions if need be.

05. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Brian Oliver, Bedlington

Mr Oliver stated that the working hours of Community Support Officers had recently changed and they now finished at 10:00 pm instead of midnight. In addition he had heard that Bedlington Police Station was to close between 8:00 pm and 8:00 am. He felt this would have a huge impact, was a backward step and was being done as a cost cutting exercise. In response the Chair said she would raise the issue at the next meeting of the Community Hub. It was noted that Ian Lavery, MP was looking into the matter and the local member had written to the Chief Superintendent and Inspector.

Councillors Dungworth and Pidcock entered the meeting at 6:07 pm.

Russell Hogg, Bedlington

Mr Hogg raised the issue of the junction at St Benet Biscop Academy and traffic congestion on the B331 which had been on-going for a considerable length of time. He referred to an accident on 9 June when a school child had been knocked

down by a car resulting in a broken arm and had waited for 45 minutes for an ambulance. He had heard that a toucan crossing was to be installed but questioned if that would make the situation worse. He queried if the Council had a long term strategy in place as the situation would be exacerbated by new housing developments and was at breaking point.

In response the local member said he had liaised with highways safety officers and there was to be a puffin crossing installed with alterations to the B1331. The school entrance (on the exist side) would be widened and a speed survey had been proposed on the same section of road. There was now a West Bedlington Safety Group, consisting of councillors and officers, which had been set up to look at specific problems on the road. However, he had not seen any evidence of a long term solution and was also very concerned about the length of time the ambulance had taken to arrive. All matters were being considered at Chief Executive level.

Keith Dalton, Bedlington

Mr Dalton queried if the new administration was committed to the devolution programme. In response the Deputy Leader confirmed that it was and Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland were in the process of creating a combined authority for the North of Tyne authorities.

Mr Dalton then asked for clarification regarding the company Arch and if there were to be any changes.

The Deputy Leader reported that there was currently a review of Arch underway and that he had been appointed as a director the previous week. The Interim Chief Executive added that a review of Arch was clearly needed due to the change in administration and a number of issues would be looked at, such as how services were delivered and value for money. Once that review had been undertaken recommendations would be made. However, some of the schemes currently underway had been looked at quickly and were recommended for continuation.

In response to a further question it was confirmed that a review of Active Northumberland was also underway.

Alex Wallace, East Bedlington Parish Council

Mr Wallace said Arch had purchased the Tesco Site in Bedlington. He understood the need for commercial confidentiality but felt it was particularly pertinent for the residents of Bedlington to know if they were actively seeking a retailer or if the site had been put on hold. In response the Deputy Leader agreed there was an issue of commercial confidentiality and, as such, suggested that a meeting be set up between East Bedlington Parish Council and Richard Wearmouth, the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development to discuss the issue away from the public forum. Christine Taylor, West Bedlington Town Council, requested that they also be included in the meeting.

Mr Wallace then referred to the need for Parish/Town Councils to receive planning training. The Leader of the Council had spoken to NALC and suggested a way forward but they had been unable to get a response from the Head of Planning Services. He queried when a response would be forthcoming.

The Interim Chief Executive apologised for the delay and said she had met with Stephen Rickett, NALC, the previous week and had assured him that arrangements would be put in place. Training would be arranged as a matter of priority.

Mary Pidcock, Seaton Valley

Mrs Pidcock said that, previous to the current administration, Seaton Valley had been promised a new High School and First School and asked if that could still be guaranteed.

The Deputy Leader said that consultation was currently underway and Mrs Pidcock would be provided with a written response.

Adam Hogg, Bedlington

Mr Hogg asked if the new administration was committed to the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne rail project. The Deputy Leader confirmed that it was.

Due to arriving slightly late Councillor Pidcock had been unable to comment on the terms of reference and the Chair allowed him to speak on the matter at this point.

Councillor Pidcock congratulated the Chair and her colleagues on being elected but expressed concern about the original title of the committee which had not included Seaton Valley. He questioned the effectiveness of Area Committees in the past and said initially he had welcomed a reform. However, he was unhappy about the terms of reference, stating that it was an all encompassing agenda which was unworkable and he questioned the corporate vision of the administration. He suggested that a motion be taken to Council regarding the terms of reference - there was no seconder.

In response a member stated that members of the public had gained a lot from Area Committees in the past and disagreed with comments made.

The Chair stated that there would be a scrutiny review of Local Area Councils in six months. She added that the meetings brought issues closer to communities instead of being isolated.

06. PETITIONS

a) Receive any new petitions

No new petitions were received.

b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

i) Concerns that Cramlington village is suffering from non residential and commercial parking in the Old Village of Cramlington

The Chair referred to the above report, a copy of which is attached to the official Minutes as Appendix A.

Following a meeting with the Town Council recommended actions had been agreed as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

ii) Request for a roundabout at the Westmorland Way/Forum Way/Melling Road junction in Cramlington and to propose the next steps.

The Chair referred to the above report, a copy of which is attached to the official Minutes as Appendix B.

Further discussions were to be held with Arch and then the Council would consider the appropriate options for the improvement of the junction, including a potential roundabout solution, in consultation with the local member and the Town Council.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

(c) Receive any updates on petitions previously considered

None received.

07. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

No issues were raised.

08. TOUR OF BRITAIN

Nigel Walsh, Service Manager - Culture, Heritage & Libraries and Zoe Bottrell of Culture Creative provided a power point presentation (a copy of which is filed with the signed minutes).

Mr Walsh said the Council was delighted that the second stage of the tour would take place in Northumberland on Monday, 4 September 2017. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the county and for residents to enjoy a major event and see world class riders such as Bradley Wiggins and Mark Calvert. Times were difficult for local government across the country but investment in such events had many associated benefits. An independent survey of the Tour of Britain carried out in 2015 showed that it had raised £2.5m for Northumberland's economy, it had been watched live by over 300,000 people and received coverage in 129 countries and territories. The estimated economic impact for 2017 was £3m and the entire

tour would be televised on ITV 4 and Eurosport. He emphasised the importance of tourism stating that in 2015, 23% of attendees had come from outside of the region.

Zoe Bottrell said that Stage 2 was the longest stage of the tour and they had worked closely with Sweetspot and the Tour of Britain team to devise the best route for the cyclists taking in as much of the county as possible. The race was scheduled to start at 10.15 am at Kielder dam and the route would follow Bellingham - Otterburn - Elsdon - Rothbury - Alnwick - Eglingham - Chatton - Belford - Bamburgh - Seahouses - Beadnell - Embleton - Lesbury - Warkworth - Amble - Widdrington - Widdrington Station - Ulgham - Morpeth - Bedlington - Blyth - Seaton Sluice - Seaton Delaval then conclude in Blyth at an estimated finish time of 3.30pm.

It was hoped to involve as many communities as possible and work with them to ensure the route was dressed in the best possible way for maximum benefit through television coverage. In terms of local information, work was being carried out with highways to provide up to date information regarding precise times and road closures. For the majority of Blyth and Seaton Valley, there would be a degree of disruption which would be defined to as narrow a time period as possible. Other areas would be subject to rolling road closures and parking would be reduced to allow members of the public to get as close as possible to the race.

Flags would be provided, an example of which was shown.

In summary it was stated that it was a fantastic opportunity to show off every part of the county and it was hoped that all communities along the route would get involved.

The Chair thanked Mr Walsh and Ms Bottrell for their presentation and said it was excellent that the tour was again coming to Northumberland.

Members of the committee agreed. In response to questions the following information was provided:

- The route had been devised for the benefit of international cyclists.
- At his request, a copy of the economic impact assessment from 2015 would be forwarded to Councillor Robinson.
- 4 September was a teacher training day so there would be an opportunity for school children to watch the event without missing school.
- Information would be disseminated to all schools offering a safe place for their children to stand if required.
- Work would be carried out with organised youth clubs, uniformed or otherwise.
- In 2015, 25% of the flags had been given out after requests had been made, however, a number of them had perished due to weather conditions. Local members were invited to forward any requests to Mr Walsh.
- The Tour of Britain Website was now live and would continue to be developed with content until 1 August 2017. Information regarding parking, road closures etc would be provided.

- Toilet facilities would be provided at the start and finish locations and where there were 'all day' events.
- Meetings had taken place with Town and Parish Councils.
- In response to comments that parking information was misleading for Seaton Delaval, it was confirmed that it would be reviewed and information would be correct 2 to 3 weeks before the event.
- Members should use the contact form on the website to request any amendments.
- Information would be sent to Stephen Ricket at NALC to be forwarded to all Parish/Town Councils.
- The Council could not influence what was reported by the television crews but may have some influence on the script of helicopter crews.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and

- (i) Councillor Robinson be provided with an Economic Impact Assessment of the 2015 Tour of Britain.
- (ii) Stephen Ricket of NALC be provided with information to be forwarded to all Parish/Town Councils.

09. GREEN DOG WALKERS' RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Peter Simpson, Public Health Protection Manager, was in attendance to speak about the above campaign which was to be launched on Monday, 3 July.

The purpose of the campaign was to help improve the environmental quality and the safety of public spaces through promoting responsible dog ownership. The campaign reflected the overall approach by the Council to tackling the problem and used the three 'E's - education, enforcement and engagement. Green Dog Walkers was a public engagement initiative encouraging responsible dog walkers to sign the Green Dog Walkers Pledge and use a friendly non-confrontational approach to help promote responsible dog ownership across Northumberland. It was intended to be volunteer driven and the aim was to try and change public attitudes so that it would become increasingly socially unacceptable to fail to clean up after your dog which could ultimately result in a reduction in dog fouling across the area.

The scheme was originally developed by Falkirk Council in 2009 who sold licences to use their developed publicity materials in other council areas. Currently 8 councils in the UK were running Green Dog Walker schemes, one of which was Durham County Council who had reported the scheme as having a positive impact on responsible dog ownership.

At the core of the scheme was the Green Dog Walker pledge, details of which were provided. Those who signed up were provided with Green Dog Walker armbands, pledge leaflets, free doggie bags and other campaign materials. Reference was also made to the Green Dog Walker guide book which contained

ideas for volunteer groups to self organise green dog walker events. From 3 July there would be a Green Dog Walkers web page hosted through the Council's website which would include key information and contact details. Supplies of free dog poop bags would be handed out with pledge forms at libraries and council information centres across the County.

The campaign would also seek to raise awareness among dog owners about their responsibility to ensure their dog was under control in the interest of public safety and also in areas where there may be farm animals or vulnerable wildlife present.

In response to a request for support from Parish and Town Councils, 19 had been in contact so far and had agreed to support Green Dog Walkers. These included Cramlington Town Council, Seaton Valley Parish Council and East Bedlington Parish Council. A number of partners had also agreed to support Green Dog Walkers, as well as a number of Vets across Northumberland.

During the launch there would be press releases and information on the Council's facebook page then ongoing publicity would be undertaken. Educational visits by animal welfare officers had been arranged to five schools across Northumberland to provide responsible dog ownership education and promote the Green Dog Walker scheme asking children to take the pledge leaflets home for their parents and other family members. There would also be a joint launch event with the coast care partnership at Warkworth.

In summary it was emphasised that the Green Dog Walkers was not a short term scheme, it was intended that it would run for years to build up the numbers of Green Dog Walkers across Northumberland. Ultimately success would be measured by an improvement in environmental quality and in that context the scheme would be assessed after a period of 12 months.

The Chair thanked Mr Simpson for his presentation and said the Campaign was much needed in the area. A Member thanked the Chair for requesting the item be on the agenda and said it was an issue which affected all areas. He hoped that Mr Simpson would come back with an update in 12 months after a review had taken place.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

10. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members considered a list of appointments to outside bodies for 2017/18 (attached to signed Minutes as Appendix C). Following this it was:

RESOLVED that the following list of appointments be confirmed:

- Astley Park Management Committee - B Pidcock
- Beaconhill Community Association - B Flux

- Children Centre's Board for Central Locality - A query has arisen which required further clarification.
- Cramlington Community Association - M Swinburn
- Cramlington Learning Village - Sports Hall Management Committee - C Dunbar
- Cramlington Voluntary Youth Project - B Flux
- East Hartford (and District) Community Association - B Flux & A Hepple
- New Hartley Community Association - S Dungworth
- Northburn Sports & Community Association Management Committee - W Daley
- Stakeford/Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre - J Foster (& D Ledger)

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

11. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix D).

The Chair invited members to request agenda items and said the work programme was work in progress.

A member queried if the committee had the scope to discuss an item such as domestic violence under (d) of the terms of reference which included matters of community safety, anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. Discussion ensued as to whether it was an item for Scrutiny or Local Area Councils and this would be clarified.

In response to a query it was confirmed that if any planning applications were to be discussed members would be informed in advance and the time of the meeting would be made clear.

In response to concerns that the discussion of planning applications would over-run it was pointed out that if any major applications were to be discussed, or if there were a large number, advance notice would be given and the meeting could be brought forward.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

A member of the public raised concerns about the venue being used on a regular basis due to a time limit on permitted parking in the vicinity. He queried what would happen if the meeting lasted longer than 4 hours. Discussion ensued about that and difficulties in accessing the venue for those who did not drive.

RESOLVED that the Democratic Services Officer provide clarification about the parking situation on the next agenda.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____