

**PARISH LIAISON  
TUESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2011**

**Present:-**

Councillor G. Smith (in the Chair);

**Also in attendance:-**

Councillor J. Burton	Borough and Anston Parish Council
Mr. M. Gazur	Anston Parish Council
Mr. C. Jepson	Anston Parish Council
Mr. S. Thornton	Anston Parish Council
Mr. C. Robinson	Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council
Ms. S. Smith	Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council
Councillor A. Buckley	Borough and Brinsworth Parish Council
Mr. P. Wilkinson	Brinsworth Parish Council
Mr. J. Williams	Brinsworth Parish Council
Mr. J. S. Blencow	Catcliffe Parish Council
Mr. B. Jolley	Catcliffe Parish Council
Mrs. S. Lewis	Dalton and Whiston Parish Councils
Councillor D. Pickering	Borough and Dalton Parish Council
Councillor S. Tweed	Borough and Dinnington Town Council
Mr. T. Stanley	Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council
Councillor J. Andrews	Borough and Maltby Town Council
Councillor C. Beaumont	Borough and Maltby Town Council
Mr. K. Stringer	Borough and Maltby Town Council
Mr. D. Rowley	Ravenfield Parish Council
Mr. A. Scholes	Ravenfield Parish Council
Mr. D. Bates	Thrybergh Parish Council
Mr. G. L. Trickett	Thrybergh Parish Council
Mr. A. West	Thurcroft Parish Council
Mr. P. Hubbard	Ulley Parish Council
Mr. J. Daley	Wentworth Parish Council
Mr. I. Lomas	Wentworth Parish Council
Mr. E. Shaw	Whiston Parish Council
Mr. S. Charmak	Wickersley Parish Council
Mr. G. Pacey	Wickersley Parish Council
Ms. K. Clark	Woodsetts Parish Council
Mrs. C. Cockayne	Woodsetts Parish Council
Mr. K. Ward	Woodsetts Parish Council
Mr. R. Woodhead	Woodsetts Parish Council

**Officers in attendance:-**

Mr. K. Battersby	Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services
Mr. D. Burton	Director of Streetpride
Mr. A. Duncan	Principal Officer, Forward Planning

**Apologies for Absence:-**

Mr. E. Kelsey	Hellaby Parish Council
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**10. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME**

The Chairman introduced those present and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7TH APRIL, 2011**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 were considered and whilst the majority of those present considered them to be a correct record, representatives from Brinsworth Parish Council disagreed on the grounds that whilst Grounds Maintenance featured on the agenda, there was some confusion about whether this related to general grounds maintenance or the maintenance of bowling greens owned by Parish Councils.

The Director of Streetpride pointed out that both Grounds Maintenance and the Bowling Green Consultation/Maintenance were presented to the previous meeting and were debated separately. An undertaking was also given at that meeting that should any Parish Council wish for further information then officers would go out and discuss with the Parish Councils any concerns.

In addition, all those Parish Councils that had land that the Council maintained were written to in June and September, 2011 with the offer for officers to visit Parish Councils to discuss matters in more detail. All but two Parish Councils had so far been visited – Ulley and Bramley and if any Parish Council felt that they had been missed or that they needed this clarifying, then they should contact the Director of Streetpride for arrangements to be made.

Reference was also made to Minute No. 4 (Grounds Maintenance) and particularly bullet point two where it stated “The Council would have to commence withdrawing support for street cleansing and grounds maintenance ...” and questions asked if this was also to pass to Parish Councils.

The Director of Streetpride confirmed the Council had a statutory duty to undertake street cleansing and had no plans to withdraw any support.

**12. LDF NEXT STEPS**

Andy, Duncan, Principal Officer from Forward Planning, gave an update presentation on the Local Development Framework which explained why this process was being done, what was being done and how this affected Parish Councils.

The presentation focused on:-

- Changes since 2009.
- LDF Growth Strategy.
- Consultation Plan.
- Consultation Delivery.
- Example of the LDF Site Options 2011.
- 2011 Consultation Attendance.
- 2011 Consultation Responses.

- Key Issues raised by the Consultation.
- Myths that had been dispelled.
- Next Steps.

Karl Battersby, Strategic Director for Environment and Development Services, pointed out that consultation around the core strategy and the further work that was required on the individual sites would be what the general public would be most interested in.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Parish Councils could, as identified in the proposed Localism Bill, produce neighbourhood plans, but if the sites proposed were differed to those in the Local Development Framework, which plan would take priority.
- Whether or not the Unitary Development Plan was still the development plan until the Local Development Framework was approved.
- Development on sites within the Local Development Framework before the policy was finalised.
- Identification in the Local Development Framework for sites earmarked for specific uses, i.e. schools.

Agreed:- (1) That Andy Duncan be thanked for his informative presentation.

(2) That the contents of the presentation be noted.

### **13. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

Further to Minute No. 4 of the meeting of the Parish Liaison held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, David Burton, Director of Streetpride, gave an update on the present situation regarding the proposals to cease grounds maintenance on behalf of Parish Councils and CISWO on land owned by them.

The presentation at the meeting of this forum in April, 2011, was followed up by two letters to Parish Councils dated 17<sup>th</sup> June and 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 to set up meetings to discuss a range of information and indicative costs.

Any Parish Councils who had not been visited by relevant officers should inform the Department immediately and this would be investigated as there may be some parcels of land unaccounted for.

Discussions have to take place in order to gauge the level of work required, which specialist equipment would be needed and suitable working arrangements. It was noted that indicative figures charged for playing pitches etc. by Parish Councils varied and consideration may have to be given to their own charging policies.

Responses by Parish Councils were requested by the 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 to allow orders to be placed for equipment. Any delay to this deadline could potentially jeopardise services being provided on time for the start of the

maintenance season.

Copies of a joint statement prepared by fifteen representatives of Parish Councils were circulated, which objected to the decision by the Council to start charging from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2012 for grounds maintenance. The statement pointed out that this was a change in the policy and contrary to the Joint Working Charter. Parish Councils felt that there had not been a reasonable consultation period on issues that affected Parish Councils nor had they been provided with the opportunity to pass comment before a final decision was made.

The Director of Streetpride again referred to the previous Parish Liaison meeting and the two letters that had been circulated to Parish Councils and stressed the urgency for Parish Councils to contact the Council to arrange meetings.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services highlighted the budget pressures and challenges facing the Council and stressed the need for Parish Councils to get in contact for continue maintenance or to make their own alternative arrangements.

Brinsworth Parish Council representing those involved in the joint statement pointed out that the letter dated 17h June, 2011 was the first indication of the change in policy and were concerned that no formal consultation had been undertaken. They believed the timescale for setting precepts was compounded by the notice being issued during the summer when some Parish Councils did not hold meetings. A formal request was, therefore, made for more time to properly consider the implications and ensure best value to residents and a request was made for this to be considered by the Cabinet.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Developments Services did not disagree with the information put forward, but pointed out that a decision had been made and it was now about how to manage the impact of that decision. This was only one of many difficult budget decisions the Council would have to make, but the transition had to be managed appropriately.

The Chair, whilst making no promises, agreed he would discuss the joint statement with the Leader and Chief Executive and make known the Parish Councils concerns.

It was also suggested that minutes of this meeting be circulated at the earliest opportunity and continue to be published on the Council's website.

Discussion ensued on leasing arrangements and if this would also be subject to the maintenance changes, the progress of arrangements with CISWO and suggestions that in order to manage their resources Parish Councils look at their charging arrangements.

Agreed:- (1) That the joint statement be submitted to the Leader and the Chief Executive for further consideration.

(2) That communications take place with the relevant Parish Councils.

(3) That further information be provided to Parish Councils in due course.

**14. ITEMS REQUESTED BY PARISH COUNCILS**

The following items were submitted by Parish Councils prior to the meeting:-

**(a) Traffic Calming Measures – Woodsetts Village**

A representative from Woodsetts Parish Council drew attention to the recent traffic calming measures in the village and in particular the height of the road table that had been constructed and whilst the traffic speeds had reduced slightly, the difference was not as had been expected with the traffic measures that had been implemented.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services referred to a recent traffic survey which had been undertaken on the 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2011, which gave an indication of average traffic speeds of 30 mph towards Worksop and 29 mph towards Rotherham.

It was uncertain if there were set heights for the speed tables, but this would be investigated further. There were no further traffic calming measures proposed for Woodsetts at this stage. A further traffic survey could be undertaken if it was felt necessary.

**(b) Grounds Maintenance**

This item formed part of the wider discussion on grounds maintenance.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS****(a) A representative from Thrybergh Parish Council asked about weed treatment and general repairs, particularly around the Wootton Court Old People's Home area.**

This was an issue across the borough and another Parish Council had contacted the call centre to request weed treatment only to be told to contact the Parish Council as they were unfamiliar with borough layout.

The Director of Streetpride referred to the maps which he believed were 97% accurate. He gave an update on the current process regarding weed treatment and the additional resources that had been employed recently across the borough due to a number of complaints. It was also planned that weed treatment would commence earlier next year at the start of the growing season.

A representative from Ulley Parish Council also expressed some concerns about gully cleansing and the kinds of street sweepers being put into operation which were proving to be ineffective due to the types of brushes being deployed and again referred to the timescales/cycles of weed treatment.

The Director of Streetpride thanked Parish Councils for bringing concerns to his attention and would investigate the effective use of street cleansing to ensure the required actions were being carried out.

**16. CLOSING REMARKS**

Councillor Smith thanked the Parish Councils' representatives for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7.30 p.m.