

North Chichester County Local Committee

26 June 2014 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 7pm at Lurgashall Village Hall.

Present: Mr Michael Brown (Chairman), Mrs Janet Duncton, Ms Sandra James.

Apologies were received from Mr McAra

Welcome and Introductions

1. Wendy Saunders, Democratic Services Officer, welcomed the public to the meeting; the Committee members introduced themselves.

Election of a Chairman

2. Mrs Duncton nominated Mr Brown for Chairman of the Committee for 2014-15, this was seconded by Mr Brown.

3. Resolved – That Mr Brown be appointed Chairman of the North Chichester County Local Committee for 2014-15.

Declarations of Interest

4. There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

5. A representative of Fittleworth Parish Council suggested that minute 92 did not accurately reflect what had been discussed at the meeting of 19 March 2014. His impression was the members of the CLC had agreed to partially fund the Fittleworth Parish Council Community Initiative Funding application rather than decline it, and re-direct them to apply in full to the bus shelter grant scheme as was recorded.

6. Members requested clarification regarding the current position in relation to the proposed bus shelter. The Parish Council indicated that, since the CLC meeting, they had made an application to the bus shelter grant scheme for £3,000 and were waiting for this to be determined.

7. The Committee agreed that the signing of the minutes be deferred until the situation was resolved.

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service – Public Consultation

8. The Committee received a presentation from Lee Neale, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, on Phase 2 of the redesign of the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (copy appended to the signed minutes).

9. The following points were raised in discussion:

- A member of the public asked about the level of demand for the service in Petworth. *Mr Neale indicated that the first engine had been used 200 times*

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over the last year. There were a low number of incidents which required deployment of the second vehicle and, along with the fact that Petworth is an area of predominantly low risk the proposal is to remove the second engine. The 4x4 vehicle was a more flexible resource as it could be crewed with fewer people and its capacity to go off-road meant it could travel over uneven terrain. This meant it could be used in fighting fires in locations with difficult access, such as on common land, that a standard Fire Engine couldn't easily get to.

- A member of the public queried how incidents located in West Sussex, but close to the border with Surrey and Hampshire, would be managed. *Mr Neale confirmed that, due to local agreements between the services, it was always the Fire and Rescue service based closest to an incident that were mobilised to attend. Therefore if it was quicker for an engine to get to an incident in West Sussex from the Haslemere station then the Surrey Fire and Rescue service would be deployed. The question was raised whether the Surrey or Hampshire service were likely to be affected by spending cuts which could alter this relationship. Mr Neale indicated that having liaised with Surrey they were not intending to change the response from the Haslemere station. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service had not yet published their proposals in relation to the Petersfield station.*
- A member of the public requested clarification regarding whether the proposed merger between the East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service was likely to be reconsidered. *Mr Neale indicated that there were not any current plans to reconsider the merger due to a number of factors including the council tax equalisation issue; however if there were opportunities to collaborate with East Sussex to realise additional savings without merging these would be explored.*
- A member of the public queried if there was any consideration being given to privatising the service. *Mr Neale explained that the local authority had a statutory responsibility to provide the service; the Fire Minister had recently stated his view that Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services were best placed to deliver the service and there were no plans for privatisation.*

10. Resolved that: the proposals be noted.

Prevention and Wellbeing Grants 2014/15

11. The Committee considered a report by Director of Public Health, Commissioning for Health and Social Care (copy appended to the signed minutes) outlining the prevention and wellbeing applications for the North Chichester area.

12. Resolved that:

(a) The following applications be approved:

- Coastal West Sussex Mind, Midhurst (ref DN016) - £3152
- Cruse West Sussex (ref JP005)- £100
- Fernhurst Good Companions (ref DN004) - £670.50
- Fernhurst Parish Luncheon Club (ref DN030) - £600
- Loxwood Friendship Club (ref DN029) - £360
- Petworth Lunch Club (ref DN036) - £600
- Rother Valley Together (ref DN035) - £2000
- SASBAH (ref TB01) - £350
- The Life Centre (ref JP025) - £100

(b) The following applications be declined:

- Alzheimer's Society (ref JP001) – as the Committee had limited funds and it was felt that other applications which supported those with dementia would provide greater benefits for the wider North Chichester community
- Chi Info Shop for Young People (ref DN021) – as it was not obvious that there would be clear benefits for the North Chichester community.
- Chichester Choir (ref DN028) - as it was not obvious that there would be clear benefits for the North Chichester community.
- Chichester Lymphoedema Group (ref DN024) - as it was not obvious that there would be clear benefits for the North Chichester community.
- Guidedogs for the Blind (ref DC011) – as it was felt that this is a well-funded national organisation with good levels of income.
- In Safe and Caring Hands (ref TB30) – as this duplicated services already commissioned by the County Council
- Pallant House Gallery (ref DN026) – as this is a large organisation with a good level of reserves that receives funding from Chichester District Council
- Sage (ref TL028) - as it was not obvious that there would be clear benefits for the North Chichester community.

Progress Statement

13. The Committee considered a report which provided updates on matters arising from previous meetings of the Committee (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Principal Community Officer (PCO) introduced the report.

- **Raising awareness of flood management measures** – The option to hold a flood fair in Midhurst was being investigated. The PCO also highlighted that the County Council had committed additional funds to Operation Watershed and so interested parties were encouraged to submit new applications.
- **Proposed improvement to Byway Open to All Traffic in Rogate** – It was proposed that the Payback team would be utilised to carry out this work which was anticipated to take place in the coming months.

14. Resolved – that the progress statement be noted.

North Chichester Community Initiative Funding (CIF)

15. The Committee considered a report by the Head of Law and Governance, which sought decisions on applications received under the CIF scheme (copy appended to the signed minutes).

16. Resolved -

1) That the following applications and amounts be approved: -

381/NC, Elsted and Treyford Parish Council, £787.11, towards purchase of a defibrillator and all-weather cabinet.

388/NC Cocking Parish Council, £210 towards the costs of creating a memorial for fallen heroes.

2) That the following application be declined:

347/NC, Community Hub and Networking Group (CHANGE), £10,000, to purchase shelving, develop website and pay marketing costs as the application did not meet the criteria of the Community Initiative Fund.

17. A representative of Elsted and Treyford Parish Council thanked the Committee for the funding awarded. He indicated that the intention was for the defibrillator to be available for use by anyone who was passing through the village that needed it, rather than just the residents of the village.

Appointment of Authority School Governors

18. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities Commissioning which set out proposed nominations to school governing bodies and the criteria for their appointment (copy appended to the signed minutes).

19. Resolved that: the North Chichester County Local Committee make the following appointments, re-appointment and nomination

- (1) The following appointments be approved:
Mr Edward Wright to Hollycombe Primary School for a four year term
Miss Susan Phillips to Stedham Primary School for a three year term
- (2) The following re-appointment be approved:
Mr G Hughes to Bury CE Primary School for a four year term
- (3) The following nomination be approved:
Mrs Marie Bracey to Lavington Park Federation for a four year term

Talk With Us

20. The Chairman invited questions from members of the public. Questions were asked to which responses were given, including those set out below: -

- A representative of Rogate Parish Council thanked the County Council for the funding they had received to commission a feasibility study looking at a shared space scheme in the village. They asked how to progress the proposals. *The PCO agreed to request that a highway engineer contact the Parish Council to start discussions about how proposals will be taken forward.*
- Mrs Duncton highlighted concerns about tractors, reportedly often in convoy, which were causing traffic delays travelling between Petworth and Chichester transporting salad crops. *The Chairman agreed to write to the company involved requesting that they were considerate to other drivers and pulled over to let traffic past when a queue built up behind them.*
- A representative of Rogate Parish Council (PC) expressed frustration that, despite having met with 3 different engineers from Balfour Beatty and their subcontractors, it had not been possible to obtain a plan of work to progress a scheme the PC had obtained Operation Watershed funding for. *Sandra James advised that the Parish Council could ask their Local Member to escalate this issue on their behalf and raise their disappointment with Balfour Beatty. The PCO advised that the PC could also consider using an alternative contractor with the appropriate qualifications to carry out the work. The Parish Council indicated that the County Council should take more*

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responsibility in arranging Operation Watershed works as they had the necessary skills and technical expertise which the Parishes lacked. *The Chairman explained that the Localism Act had provided an opportunity for Parishes to proactively commission improvements works in their area without relying on the County Council, and the Operation Watershed scheme had been one example of a way to facilitate this.*

- A representative of Elsted and Treyford Parish Council queried whether it was appropriate to use Operation Watershed funds to clear ditches in private ownership which the landowner had neglected to maintain. *The Chairman highlighted the potential prohibitive court costs and lengthy process that would result should the County Council attempt to pursue a landowner through the courts for neglecting to maintain a ditch which flooded the highway. The PCO emphasised that this ditch clearance would only be done as a one-off, with the agreement of the landowner, and with the understanding that the private landowner would be responsible for all future maintenance. In addition the intention to hold a water fair in the Midhurst area would be a way of raising publicity with landowners about the responsibilities associated with riparian ownership.*
- A representative of Lodsworth Parish Council (PC) reported their lack of success in engaging with a local landowner whose failure to open sluice gates had led to road flooding in the area. *Ms James suggested that the PC contact the Environment Agency to obtain support and assistance with this issue. The PC requested an update regarding the proposed 20mph limit and the intention to impose vehicle weight restrictions in the village. The PCO indicated that the scheme had local member support, and would be prioritised as and when funding becomes available*
- A representative of Midhurst Town Council raised concern about the proposed management restructure at the County Council and the associated potential loss of knowledge and expertise. She queried why no public consultation had occurred relating to these propositions. *The Chairman explained that, where proposals directly affected the public, such as those for the Fire and Rescue Service, there would be consultation with the communities affected, but not for this type of managerial change which did not directly affect the public. He suggested that the resident address her concerns in writing about the management restructure to her local member.*
- A representative of Lodsworth Parish Council raised concern about an instance where it had not been possible to enter the Police Station and report an incident at Midhurst during their published opening hours. *The Chairman explained that this was not within the remit of the County Local Committee and the resident should highlight their concerns to the Police and Crime Commissioner. The PCO added that her colleague would be attending a meeting of the Joint Action Group in the near future, which included Police representation, and would report the matter.*

Dates of Future Meetings

21. It was confirmed that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would take place on 7 October 2014, Duncton Village Hall, Duncton, Petworth, GU28 OGY.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN