

Parish Liaison Meetings

Minutes

Monday, 14 September 2015 at 19:00

Present:

Councillor Plant (in the Chair), Councillors Carpenter, B Coleman, C Smith and Thirtle

Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Mr G Buck (Group Manager Environment), Mr R Hodds (Cabinet Secretary) and Mr P Shucksmith (Senior Environment Ranger)

Mr C Skinner and Mr D Miller (NPLAW also attended)

Representatives from the Parish Council's of Caister on Sea, Mautby , Hemsby, Ormesby St Margaret with Scratby, Somerton, Repps with Bastwick, Bradwell and Martham.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hanton and from Rollesby Parish Council.

3 MINUTES 16 MARCH 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2015 were confirmed.

4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5 BYELAWS IN GREAT YARMOUTH

The Parish Liaison Meeting was reminded that at its meeting in September 2014 the implementation of byelaws to assist Parish Councils in controlling Common, Open

and public land for certain purposes had been discussed. Specifically Martham Parish Council had expressed the need for a byelaw which would prevent people from driving or parking on the village green or common land without the permission of the land owner.

Being generally supporting of this motion, the Council instructed NPLAW to investigate the administrative and legal procedure for the implementation of such byelaws.

Accordingly the meeting now considered a report from NPLAW which detailed the discussions that had been held with DEFRA for the purpose of implementing a desired bylaw. Detailed consultation that had been carried out with Parish Councils was also reported and the conclusion that NPLAW had drawn from the responses was that Parish Councils do not share a sufficiently common goal for the implementation of a byelaw based on the DEFRA model particularly as the DEFRA model contains no provision for driving and parking on village greens and common land. NPLAW had therefore explored a Public Space Protection Order as a viable alternative to exercising control over Village Greens and Common land. The meeting was advised that Public Space Protection Orders are issued and enforced by the local authority and therefore the viability of individual orders would be a matter of consideration for the Council and each individual case would be dependent upon the specific facts and circumstances.

As a result, NPLAW had included that there was not a general problem of misuse of common and public land in the borough and it would not therefore be appropriate to bring a byelaw applicable to all such land. Driving on a Common, being a specific problem raised by Martham Parish Council, could be dealt with by a Public Space Protection Order, however, there would be some restrictions on what could be controlled.

The Parish Liaison Committee agreed that NPLAW should write direct to Martham Parish Council advising on the outcome of their investigations into this matter.

6 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER - DOG CONTROL

The Parish Liaison Meeting considered a presentation from the Senior Environmental Ranger with regard to the introduction of a Public space Protection Order concerning dog control issues. The Senior Environmental Ranger gave an overview of the process that would be carried out under the Public Space Protection Order in respect of Dog Control Measures. He reported that details had been sent to all Parish Council and that a full public consultation exercise would be carried out before any order was introduced. He also explained that sites that could be covered by an order must have the consent of the land owners.

In discussing this item the representatives from Bradwell Parish Council expressed their concern about the enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders.

The Senior Environmental Ranger reported that he would provide information to Parish Councils about the number of enforcements that had taken place in respect of Dog Control Issues.

7 Report It GY

The Director of Customer Services updated Parish Councils on the "Report It GY" application. Parish Councils were reminded that this particular application gave the public the ability to report items quickly to the Borough Council electronically

8 ISSUES RAISED BY PARISH COUNCILS

(a) Bradwell Parish Council

Bradwell Parish Council asked for an update with regard to the proposed changes in respect of concurrent functions grants and precept payments.

The Director of Customer Services reported that an email had been sent out in July advising all Parish Councils of the Borough Councils Cabinet decision to amend the the current Concurrent Function Grant Scheme. She reminded Parish Councils that the amendments mostly referred to the element in connection with the parish clerks salary.

The Deputy Leader of the Borough Council reminded Parish Councils that Great Yarmouth Borough Council was the only Local Authority in Norfolk that has a concurrent functions grant scheme. The Deputy Leader also clarified the position in respect of bus shelters.

The Director of Customer Services confirmed that the powerpoint presentation made on concurrent functions grants to the last parish liaison meeting would be circulated electronically to all Parish Councils.

(b) Caister on Sea Parish Council

Caister on Sea Parish Council asked the Borough Council to detail their plans regarding the common practice by householders and developers alike of filling in the ancient dikes and ditches that keep Caister on Sea free from flooding so as to claim usable land.

The Parish Liaison meeting was advised that the Norfolk Water Management Partnership was formed in 2009 to bring together officers from approximately 36 organisations to inform and respond to the proposed implementation of the then Flood and Water Management Bill. The partnership currently meets quarterly to develop appropriate responses to the continued commencement of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and to share best practice. The Borough Councillors work with Norfolk County Council who are the lead local Flood Authority matters that fall under the Flood and Water Management Act. Surface water flooding can be caused by excessive rain fall, river overflowing or ground water. The control or prevention of the surface water flooding can be delivered using multiple interventions or flow paths. The ownership of these assets can also be diverse with many in private ownership. The Director of Customer Services advised the Parish Councils that a plan was available which showed the land drainage maintained by the Broads Internal Drainage Board. Some of the land drains are connected but others may be stored ditches and are stand alone. If there is any evidence that any ordinary water course has been altered then it should be reported to the appropriate authority, be it the Borough Council, County Council, the Internal Drainage Board or Environment Agency where it would be investigated.

The Parish Liaison meeting agreed that the map as referred to as above should be sent to Caister Parish Council.

(c) Martham Parish Council

Martham Parish Council had raised the production and circulation of the minutes of Parish Liaison meetings, and the Cabinet Secretary confirmed that these would be circulated to all Parish Council's once finalised.

The Parish Council also expressed their concern with regard to the occupation of the leases of light industrial units at Fairfields, Hemsby Road, Martham.

The meeting was advised that four of the units had been vacant following the unfortunate failure of two businesses. All of the units had been marketed and a new lease was completed on the 1 September 2015 on Unit 1F. Units 1A, 1C and 1D are currently under offer with references currently being taken up. Unit 1E was handed back to the Council on the 8th September 2015 with a viewing on a potential business happening the same day. The meeting was advised that there has been a recent issue with general maintenance contractor which has now been addressed. A boundary fence was also recently vandalised and an order has been placed for this to be completely replaced. All of the units are offered on easy in easy out terms of a 3 year term lease with tenants break options on 3 months notice. Rents are comparable with similar quality small light industrial units. The Parish Liaison meeting agreed that a representatives from the Borough Councils Property Section should meet with Martham Parish Council representatives to discuss the issue of the Fairfields industrial units.

The Parish Council also asked for an update with regard to toilets in the Northern Parishes. The Director of Customer Services reported that an update on the current position had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting last week on the Northern Parishes Toilets. She also reported on worthwhile discussions that had taken place with Parishes on identifying savings so that toilets could be kept open where possible. The Deputy Leader reported that it was the Borough Councils intention to negotiate with Parish Councils on a one to one basis to come to the best solution for toilets and to keep them open where possible.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Parish Liaison Meetings future dates:-

The meeting agreed that all Parish Councils would be surveyed to determine when would be the best day of the week for Parish Liaison meetings to take place.

The meeting ended at: 20:20