

# Public Document Pack

## PARISH COUNCIL FORUM

Monday, 18th July, 2016

<b>Present:-</b>	Councillor Bert Proctor – in the Chair
Councillors	Rout and Welsh
Parish Councillors	Adamczuk, Bibby, Davies, Webb
Parish Clerks	Mrs Hassall, Mrs Simpson, Mrs Sudlow, Mrs Withington
Also in Attendance	Councillor Trevor Hambleton
Officers	Guy Benson, Geoff Durham, Simon Long, Trevor Nicoll and John Sellgren
Apologies	Apologies were received from Councillor Owen (Newcastle Borough Council), Chair of Audley Parish Council and Loggerheads Parish Council.

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Chair and Clerk of Loggerheads Parish Council and the Chair of Audley Parish Council.

### 2. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 9 March, 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

### 3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.**

At the previous meeting, Members had requested that a meeting be arranged between the Parish Council Forum and officers and Members of the Licensing Committee.

**Resolved:** That a meeting be arranged before the next meeting of the Parish Council Forum.

### 4. **BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL'S - WORKING TOGETHER.**

Apologies had been received from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Shenton who had requested to attend along with the Chief Executive, Mr John Sellgren.

Members were advised that the Parish Council Forum had been set up three years ago as a means of discussing any issues with officers and Members of the Borough Council. That commitment was still there and there were three areas to concentrate on: environment; economy and safer communities.

The Chief Executive highlighted Britain in Bloom, Fair Trade activity and local projects and asked the Members where the Borough Council could do more and how we could get more people involved.

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The Chair of Silverdale Parish Council – Parish Councillor Henryk Adamczuk asked what was happening with the list of ‘important’ buildings in the Borough that the Planning Department had been working on and how do we ‘cherish’ those buildings. The Council’s Head of Planning, Mr Guy Benson advised Members that it was a non-statutory list and did not offer a building any more protection but it was a factor that would be taken into account.

The question was asked whether Newcastle Borough Council was in ‘ascension or decline’. The Chief Executive referred Members to the Borough Council’s Performance Indicators. Although resources had reduced over the last five years, there had been no reduction in front line services and there was no decline in performance. Therefore, to sustain the services with reduced resources was, in itself, an achievement.

The Chief Executive stated that both he and the Leader of the Council would be happy to attend further meetings to pick up on further points.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for the update.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

## 5. **RECYCLING SERVICE**

The Council’s Head of Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services, Trevor Nicoll updated Members on the current position of the new recycling service. During the first two weeks, there had been a twenty to twenty five percent increase in the amount of material collected.

Some issues had arisen regarding the size of the vehicles and the width of some lanes/streets but these were being looked into for a resolution. A smaller vehicle was being used to access the more difficult areas.

People were requesting additional lids and boxes and these were being taken out on a daily basis.

Members were advised that the ‘assisted collection’ service had not changed and that it was available to a household where nobody was able to do it for themselves.

A suggestion was made to issue stickers to place on the boxes to indicate what to put in them. Mr Nicoll advised that, over time, the content of the boxes would change but something may be put onto the website for residents to print off.

The Chair thanked Mr Nicoll and his team for their hard work in implementing the new system.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

## 6. **UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS IN THE BOROUGH.**

Consideration was given to a report regarding neighbourhood plans – which were brought in by the Localism Act, 2011.

Last year, plans were received from Whitmore and Aston and Maer. Loggerheads would be submitting theirs by the end of the week.

Members were advised that the neighbourhood plans were closely linked to the Joint Local Plan and that Keele, Betley and Kidsgrove would also be submitting one.

The completed draft Neighbourhood Plan would be out for consultation by next year. The Joint Local Plan is due out at the end of 2018.

Members stated that a number of Parishes were not going down the neighbourhood plan route and asked what the advantages were of just doing the Joint Local Plan – would it be the same result or would a neighbourhood plan be in more detail?

The Council's Head of Planning, Mr Guy Benson stated that previously, if a Parish was surrounded by Green Belt land they were quite safe from development. However, the Policy was now treated as out of date because of the five year housing land supply issues and Green Belt land was no longer a complete blocker for restricting development although it does still carry considerable weight.

**Resolved:** That the information be received.

## 7. **CLARITY ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY WARDENS IN THE BOROUGH**

The Council's Community Development Officer, Mr Simon Long briefed Members on the role of Community Wardens in the Borough.

They give front line delivery of community development programmes and help others in running community events.

Mr Long handed out leaflets 'Growing Together' which outlined various activities, such as allotments and Britain in Bloom.

In addition, more events involving the community and schools were being carried out.

Members were informed about a portfolio entitled 'Newcastle in Bloom 2016', which is a publication produced for the judges of Britain in Bloom. A request was made for an electronic version of the document to be sent to the Clerks of the Parish Councils.

Members raised concerns regarding the alleyway which ran from the Midway (next to the Roebuck Centre loading/unloading area) up to the High Street stating that it was dirty and not a good welcome for people leaving the car park and using that route to enter the town. This matter would be passed on to the relevant people. Councillor Amelia Rout asked to be copied into any correspondence as it came within her portfolio.

Members felt that as the role of the Community Warden had changed, Maybe the job title should also change.

The Chair thanked Mr Long for advising the Forum.

**Resolved:** (i) That the information be received and the comments noted.

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- (ii) That an electronic version of the 'Newcastle in Bloom 2016' Portfolio be sent to the Parish Clerks.
- (iii) That the condition of the alleyway connecting the High Street and the Midway be reported.

## **8. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

The Council's Head of Planning, Mr Guy Benson, gave a presentation to Members in regard to Planning Enforcement cases.

Incoming cases had remained fairly constant with 199 in 2013/14, 220 in 2014/15 and 212 in 2015/16.

Members were advised that there had been an increase in open enforcement cases but this had now stabilised. The Planning Committee are regularly advised what the profile of the open case backlog is and are advised of targets which have been set for the next year.

Members were shown the figures of how Newcastle was doing in terms of its own policy for goals set and complainants informed within the required timescale. In the last year, getting back to people quicker had achieved 77.8%.

Mr Benson explained that not all of the complaints received turn out to be about planning control and that some have no substance so they are then left with the ones that do have a breach of planning control. Therefore there will be some with no action being taken.

If a breach of planning control is identified, it has to be decided whether to invite a planning application or to take enforcement action.

Members enquired as to what the position was regarding the Senior Enforcement Officer's post. The post would have to be assessed by the Council to agree what salary grade it should be set at before it could be advertised.

**Resolved:** That the information be received.

## **9. UPDATE ON LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES**

The Chair of the Licensing Committee, Councillor Trevor Hambleton had been invited to the meeting to advise Members on the procedure for Licensing Sub-Committees.

Members were informed that an applicant would submit a completed application form to the Licensing section, with copies being sent to the Police, Planning Department, Environmental Health, Fire and Rescue Service and the Health Authority for representations.

Upon receipt of an application it is advertised in the local paper and a notice is placed at or near to the premises.

One objection will trigger the requirement for a Licensing Sub-Committee. Three Councillors, chosen from the Council's Licensing Committee will be asked to attend the meeting along with a legal adviser.

An application has to meet four criteria:  
(i) Prevention of Crime and Disorder.  
(ii) Public Safety/ Fire Safety.  
(iii) Prevention of Public Nuisance.  
(iv) Protecting Children from Harm.

Councillor Hambleton then explained Temporary Event Notices (TENs). These have to give a minimum of ten working days' notice and can only be objected to by the Police and Environmental Health.

Members raised issues in respect of one application that had encountered problems. There had been no information relating to it on the Council's website and the application had had to be withdrawn and resubmitted. Members stated that the publicity of such events should be advertised on an easily accessible page on the website.

Councillor Hambleton stated that each application is different so they are looked at separately. Recommendations have to be awaited before it is advertised and some applications are more bulky than others.

The Chair thanked Councillor Hambleton for his attendance.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

#### 10. **RURAL POLICING IN THE BOROUGH**

This item was deferred as there was no one in attendance from the Police.

A request was made to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner to the next meeting to discuss rural policing.

**Resolved:** That the Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to the next meeting.

#### 11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**Chair**

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