



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM

TUESDAY, 13TH DECEMBER 2005
AT 6.30 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

A G E N D A

Copies of the Parish Councils' Forum Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on the Council's web-site at <http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/pcf>

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last Meeting held on 27th September 2005 (Enclosure 1)
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Consultations with Parish Councils
5. Parish Charter
6. Concurrent Functions and Street Lighting
7. Arrangements for Future Meetings

Suggested dates:-

- Tuesday, 11th April 2006 (already agreed)
- Tuesday, 27th June 2006
- Tuesday, 19th September 2006
- Thursday, 14th December 2006 (so as to avoid Christmas week and allow time to prepare Agenda following CALC Area Committee meeting on 6th December 2006)

S. NIXON
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

5th December 2005

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM

Tuesday, 27th September 2005, at 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor D. C. Norton (Chairman)

Parish	Representative(s)
Alvechurch	Mrs. Y. Goode (Clerk) Mr. P. Sanders
Barnt Green	Mrs. E. M. Buckett (Chairman) Mr. R. Westbury (Clerk)
Belbroughton	Mr. R. Copley (Clerk) Mr. C. R. Scurrell
Beoley	Miss P. Harrison (Clerk) Mr. B. J. Somner
Bournheath	Mrs. J. Pelham (Clerk)
Catshill and North Marlbrook	Mr. P. J. Baker (Chairman)
Clent	Mrs. P. A. Harris (Clerk)
Cofton Hackett	Mrs. P. Foxall (Clerk) Mr. B. Bridgewater
Dodford with Grafton	Mr. R. J. Oakes (Chairman) Mrs. C. Limm (Clerk)
Finstall	Mrs. S. Reynolds (Clerk)
Hagley	Mrs. C. Humphries (Clerk) Mr. A. G. Lewis
Hunnington	Mrs. L. Teese (Clerk)
Lickey and Blackwell	Mr. R. Brown (Chairman) Mrs. J. A. Casey (Clerk)
Romsley	Mr. I. A. Hodgetts (Chairman) Mrs. P. L. Taylor (Clerk)
Stoke	Mr. P. Callaway (Clerk) Mrs. J. Birmingham
Tutnall and Cobley	Mrs. S. Reynolds (Clerk)
Wythall	Mrs. S. J. Baxter (Chairman) Miss P. Harrison (Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Parish	Representative
Belbroughton	Mr. P. Shotton
Clent	Mr. S. Malek
Hunnington	Mr. J. Peeney
Stoke	Mrs. T. Roll (Chairman)

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21ST JUNE 2005. AND MATTERS ARISING**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Councils' Forum held on 21st June 2005 were submitted.

There were no matters arising and it was, therefore, **AGREED** that the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **AMENDMENTS TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS - CONSULTATION WITH PARISH COUNCILS**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. D. Hammond, Development Control Manager, addressed the Meeting and outlined the consultation procedures undertaken by his Development Control Officers upon the receipt of every application for planning permission. He clarified the situation in respect of the targets imposed by the Government on local planning authorities relating to the issue of decisions within statutory time limits and how this affects funding via the Planning Delivery Grant.

Mr. Hammond responded to several questions in respect of consultation on amendments to applications for planning permission received after the initial application had been recorded; amendments which would otherwise alter a parish councils comments, as a consultee, on the application as a whole. He stated that, in the first instance, a subjective judgement would have to be made as to whether an amendment could be considered "substantial" and, in any event, the constraints upon his Development Control Team to keep re-issuing consultations would have an adverse effect on the service provided and associated targets. Mr. Hammond added that, even with the receipt of such amendments, the time limit within which a decision was required to be issued would still apply in accordance with the date the application was initially received and registered.

Consideration was given to a number of possible solutions whereby notification of an amendment to an application for planning permission could be communicated to the parish councils; whether, for example, sent direct to the respective parish council or via the relevant Ward Member. It was also felt that guidelines as to what constitutes a "substantial amendment" would assist parish councils so that they can be made aware of, and if necessary comment on, changes to proposed developments.

Mr. Hammond stated that, following the Meeting, he would consider what may need to be done in order to address these problems (for example, asking his Development Control Officers to bear in mind whether the respective parish council should be informed in the event of such an amendment being received), but he admitted that, due to the nature of the subject, a consistent approach for all applications received may, in practice, be difficult to achieve.

In conclusion, the Chairman reported that the matter would be given further consideration with a view to presenting a report to the next Meeting of the Forum. He added that, in the meantime, the Council would attempt to produce useful information/guidance for the parish councils in an attempt to address the problems in the immediate future.

4. **REVIEW OF SHELTERED HOUSING - SERVICES FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE**

Mr. Tony Lowry, Director of Operations at Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT), addressed the Meeting and gave a presentation about its review of sheltered housing within the District. He gave brief details regarding the background of the sheltered housing situation and outlined the challenges which the housing trust perceived it would have to deal with in the future.

Mr. Lowry stated that the findings of the review were reasonably favourable and that they gave an indication of the further scope available to the housing trust to provide extra care and support. After answering several questions, the Chairman thanked Mr. Lowry for his presentation.

This was noted.

(The presentation "slides" used during this item are attached at Appendix 1).

5. **CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS**

Miss J. Pickering, Head of Financial Services, gave a brief presentation on the Council's Concurrent Functions scheme. She outlined how the scheme accords with Quality Parish Council / Parish Charter issues, and the 'best practice' advice from the ODPM, thereby avoiding "double taxation" problems.

Miss Pickering explained how parish councils within the District would be able to apply for Concurrent Function grants for the 2006/2007 budget year, and she clarified the timetable for the receipt of applications and the related administrative processes. She then responded to a number of questions from Forum members; following which, the Chairman thanked Miss Pickering for her presentation.

This was noted.

(The presentation "slides" used during this item are attached at Appendix 2).

6. **DISTRICT / COUNTY PARISH CHARTER**

The Meeting was informed that the on-going work relating to Parish Charter matters had been delayed due to the current management/departmental re-structuring taking place at the Council. The former Head of Administrative Services - Mr. V. Harrison - had handed over the relevant work concerning the development of a parish charter to, previously, uninvolved colleagues and, as a result, officers had not been able to give sufficient time to fully consider the implications of the differences between the County Parish Charter and the proposed District Parish Charter.

In terms of feedback from the Meeting, it was reported that all other Councils within the County, with the exception of this Council and Wychavon District Council, had "signed-up" to the County Charter. It was felt that a separate District Parish Charter would be unnecessary, and that the Council should re-consider its position in order to make progress on the issue.

This was noted.

7. **INTER-PARISH BEST KEPT FRONTAGE COMPETITION**

Miss P. Harrison stated that Wythall Parish Council promote an annual "Best Kept Frontage" Competition, similar to a competition staged by the District Council several years ago. Whilst expressing disappointment that the District Council's annual competitions had ceased, she stated that the 2005 event in Wythall had also involved several other parish councils.

Miss Harrison added that, in previous years, she had extended the invitation to other parish councils within the District to join in and form an "Inter-Parish Best Kept Frontage" which, in terms of the 2005 competition, proved to be very successful. As Wythall Parish Council were intending to promote a similar competition in 2006, she reiterated the invitation to the other parish council representatives present at the Meeting, and to contact her if they wished to join in.

This was noted.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman referred to the date of the next Meeting, which was scheduled for 13th December 2005.

The Meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman

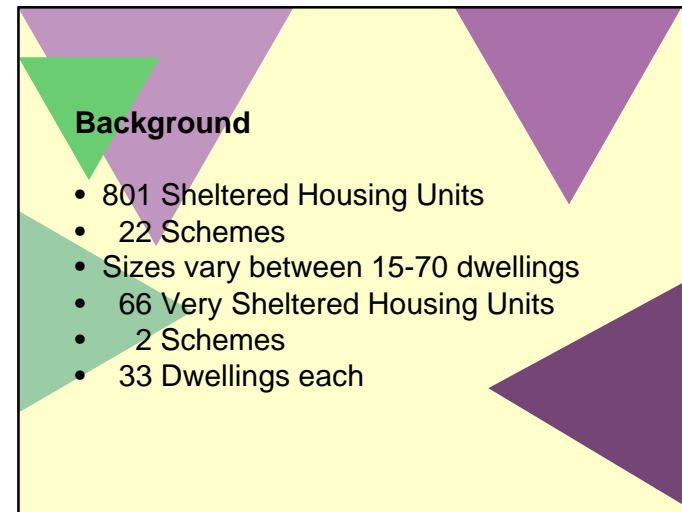
Appendix 1 - Review of Sheltered Housing



The slide features a yellow background with purple and green geometric shapes. At the top left, there is a small photo of two men in a meeting. At the top center is the BDHT logo, which consists of three green triangles forming a larger triangle, with the text 'bdht' and 'BROMSGROVE DISTRICT HOUSING TRUST' below it. At the top right is another small photo of a group of people sitting around a table. The main title 'Review of Sheltered Housing' is centered in a large, bold, black font. At the bottom, a dark purple banner contains the slogan 'your home, always your choice' in white lowercase letters.

Review of Sheltered Housing

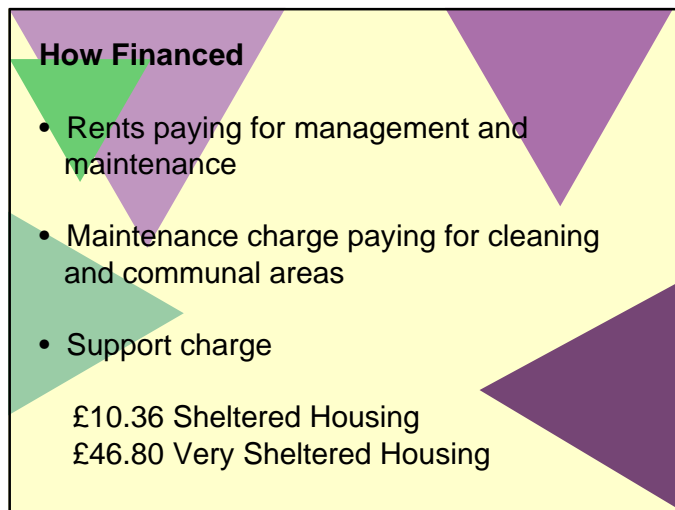
your home, always your choice



The slide has a yellow background with purple and green geometric shapes. The title 'Background' is in a bold black font. Below it is a bulleted list of statistics.

Background

- 801 Sheltered Housing Units
- 22 Schemes
- Sizes vary between 15-70 dwellings
- 66 Very Sheltered Housing Units
- 2 Schemes
- 33 Dwellings each

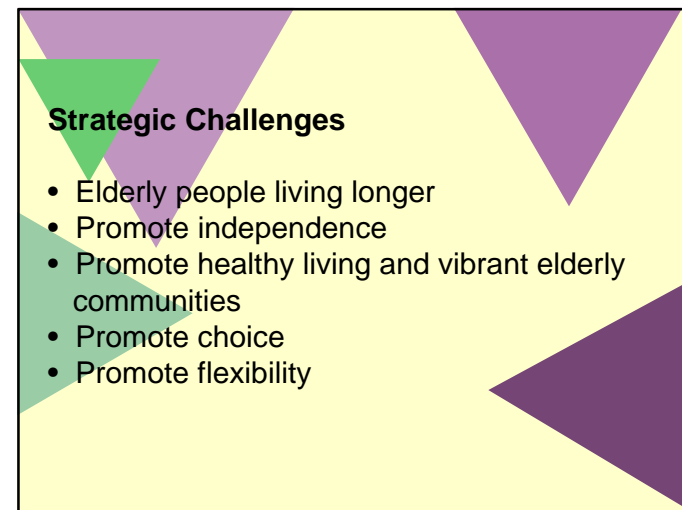


The slide has a yellow background with purple and green geometric shapes. The title 'How Financed' is in a bold black font. Below it is a bulleted list of financing details, followed by two lines of text.

How Financed

- Rents paying for management and maintenance
- Maintenance charge paying for cleaning and communal areas
- Support charge

£10.36 Sheltered Housing
£46.80 Very Sheltered Housing



The slide has a yellow background with purple and green geometric shapes. The title 'Strategic Challenges' is in a bold black font. Below it is a bulleted list of five challenges.

Strategic Challenges

- Elderly people living longer
- Promote independence
- Promote healthy living and vibrant elderly communities
- Promote choice
- Promote flexibility

Appendix 1 - Review of Sheltered Housing

Why Review

- To meet strategic challenges
- Sheltered Housing stock was 30 years old
- Significant levels of dissatisfaction


Key Findings of the Review

- From “scheme” based working, to community based working
- Much better communication with elderly customers.
- Clear standards.
- Create a consistent standard
- Promote provision of food to all areas
- Reduce charges to customers in Very Sheltered housing
- Significant “added” value investment

Possibility of Extra Care

- Less reliance on residential care
- Care and support integrated
- Rising expectations
- Widening choice
- Maintaining independence in a safe, secure environment

Appendix 2 - Concurrent Functions




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CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS

PARISH COUNCILS FORUM

JAYNE PICKERING
HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

27TH SEPTEMBER 2005




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INTRODUCTION

We will look at ---

- What are Concurrent Functions
- Why should the District Council provide grant aid
- How will the District Council provide grant aid
- How will Parish Councils apply for grant
- What is the timetable for claims and payments



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WHAT ARE CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS

- Services provided by two tiers of Local Government
- Concerns over 'Double' taxation
- What does the District Council provide for in non-parished areas




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FULL LIST OF CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS

Allotments	Museums
Boating pools	Open spaces
Bus shelters	Parks
Car parking (off street)	Playgrounds
CCTV	Play schemes
Cemeteries and burial grounds	Public clocks
Christmas lights and trees	Public conveniences
Closed cemeteries/churchyards	Public seats adjoining highways
Commons and common pasture	Recreation grounds
Community centres	Sports pitches
Crematoria	Street cleansing
Entertainments and the arts	Subsidies for uneconomic post or telecommunication services
Footway lighting	Taxi fare concessions
Grants to bus operators	Tourism promotion
Grass cutting	Traffic calming
Information services (transport, tourism)	Village greens
Highways maintenance	Village halls
Leisure facilities	War memorials
Litter and dog waste bins	


Appendix 2 - Concurrent Functions



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WHY SHOULD THE DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANT AID?


- To avoid 'Double' taxation
- Quality parishes and Parish Charter
 - ❖ Fairness in provision of services
 - ❖ Simplicity
 - ❖ Transparency
 - ❖ Democratic control and accountability
 - ❖ Finance following function



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HOW CAN THE DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANT AID?


- Special expenses
- Grant Payments
- Agency Agreements
- Support in Goods or Kind



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HOW WILL PARISH COUNCILS APPLY FOR GRANT?

- Advance claim form
- Explanatory notes on eligible expenditure
- Final claim after year end



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WHAT IS THE TIMETABLE FOR 2006-07?

- November 2005 - Advance claim form
 - ❖ Explanatory notes on eligible expenditure
- January 2006 – Notification of advance payment
- April 2006 – First advance payment with precept
- October 2006 – Second advance payment with precept
- August 2006 - Final claim after accounts are closed