



# **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM**

THURSDAY, 16TH DECEMBER 2004  
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/index.cfm?articleid=4626>

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last Meeting held on 28th September 2004 (Enclosure 1)
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Presentation on the work of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust by Tony Lowry, Director of Operations at BDHT
5. Corporate Plan / Priority Objectives (Enclosure 2)
6. Street Cleaning
7. Customer Service Centre ("One Stop Shop") / Worcestershire Hub  

Representatives of the Parish Councils are reminded that there is a short "roadshow" presentation which commences at 5.45 p.m. in the Conference Room, at The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove.
8. Review of Parish Council representation (*Item placed on the Agenda at the request of the Area Committee of CALC*)
9. Car parking (*Item placed on the Agenda at the request of the Lickey Hills Joint Parishes via Barnt Green Parish Council*)  

"Decriminalisation of parking infringements in the District."
10. Updates
  - (i) Refuse and Recycling Collection Scheme
  - (ii) Parish Charter (Enclosure 3) (*Item also requested by the Area Committee of CALC*)

11. Any other urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Administrative Services prior to the commencement of the Meeting
12. Date of next Meeting(s)
  - (i) Reminder - Tuesday, 5th April 2005; and
  - (ii) Schedule of future Meetings 2005/2006 (Enclosure 4)

V. HARRISON  
Head of Administrative Services

The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

7th December 2004

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM**

Tuesday, 28th September 2004, at 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor D. C. Norton (Chairman)

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Representative(s)</b>
Alvechurch	Mr. D. Waters
Barnt Green	Mrs. D. Warren (Clerk)
Belbroughton	Mr. R. E. Copley (Clerk) Mr. C. R. Scurrall
Beoley	Miss P. Harrison (Clerk) Mr. B. Somner
Catshill and North Marlbrook	Mr. P. J. Baker (Chairman) Mr. P. Masters
Clent	Mrs. P. A. Harris (Clerk) Mr. D. Faraday
Cofton Hackett	Mr. R. J. Deeming (Chairman) Mrs. P. Foxall (Clerk) Mr. B. Bridgewater
Dodford-with-Grafton	Mr. R. J. Oakes (Chairman)
Finstall	Mrs. S. Reynolds (Clerk)
Hagley	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. D. Callaway (Clerk)
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:-

<b>Representative(s)</b>	<b>Parish</b>
Mrs. B. Osborne (Clerk)	Alvechurch
Mrs. E. M. Buckett (Chairman)	Barnt Green
Mr. P. Shotton	Belbroughton
Mrs. J. D. Luck (Chairman)	Beoley
Mrs. S. Willetts (Clerk)	Bournheath / Bentley Pouncefoot
Mr. S. Malek	Clent
Mrs. C. Humphries (Clerk)	Hagley
Mrs. T. Roll (Chairman)	Stoke
Mrs. J. Birmingham	
Mr. D. Keeling	Wythall

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2004**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Councils' Forum held on 22nd June 2004 were submitted. There were no matters arising and it was **AGREED** that the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **PARISH PLANS**

Mr. P. Crysell, Head of Local Plans, addressed the Meeting and explained that the current Local Plan system had been replaced by the introduction of Local Development Frameworks. Parish Plans were part of this framework.

Mr. Crysell stated that Parish Plans would be a means by which parish councils and their parishioners would be able to contribute to the future development of the areas in which they live and that they would be able to address a wide range of issues covering social, economic and environmental concerns. He added that, as a result of local planning authorities now being required by the new legislation to increase the level of consultation carried out with their local communities, the role of Parish Plans is thereby enhanced by the changes to the planning system

Mr. Crysell made it clear to the Meeting that the District Council were prepared to assist and support parishes by way of advice and background help to produce such plans, but pointed out that the Council would not be able to deal with a large number of plans coming through at the same time. Instead, he said that the Council would seek to regulate the adoption of plans to fit in with the other work being carried out within the planning department.

After responding to several questions and comments from the floor, the Chairman thanked Mr. Crysell for his presentation.

(Note: a copy of Mr. Crysell's presentation is attached at Appendix 1)

4. **CONSULTATION EXERCISES**

Mr. V. Harrison, Head of Administrative Services, referred to the report prepared by Mrs. B. Haswell enclosed with the Agenda and stated that the consultation process used for the development of the Council's Community Plan could be used by the parish councils as an example of the exercise. This would be likely to provide the parish councils with ideas of what could be done in respect of, for example, obtaining feedback for the development of Parish Plans.

Mrs. S. Baxter commented on the number of consultation exercises being undertaken by a number of agencies and organisations; such as the District Council, the County Council, the Primary Care Trust, etc.; and felt that this may lead to a public feeling of "consultation overload". In addition, she considered that all the different agencies consultations were being carried out in a disjointed and unconnected way, suggesting that any future consultation exercises could also be used to provide feedback for other relevant issues; for example, parish plans.

It was **AGREED** that this approach would be investigated and considered prior to the undertaking of the next consultation exercise.

5. **PRACTICAL SUPPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS**

Mr. Harrison referred to his report which outlined several areas where practical support to parish councils has already been seen to be possible, together with further feasible suggestions. He added that further suggestions from the parish councils would be welcome for consideration.

This was noted.

6. **LICENSING ACT 2003 - CONSULTATION ON LICENSING POLICY**

Mrs. S. Smith, Principal Licensing Officer, addressed the Meeting and gave a short presentation relating to the implementation and objectives of the Licensing Act 2003, together with details of the Council's consultation exercise relating to its Licensing Policy. She stated that the policy document would be adopted by the Council to take effect prior to the commencement of a transitional period, from February to November 2005, allowing for existing licences to be converted in accordance with the legislation.

Mrs. Smith also briefly outlined the administrative processes involved in dealing with applications for the licences which would be issued and the timescales within which it was envisaged that applications could be handled. After answering a number of questions from the floor, the Chairman thanked Mrs. Smith for her presentation and reassured those present that the Council would keep the parish councils up-to-date with the implementation of the new licensing requirements.

This was noted.

(Note: A copy of Mrs. Smith's presentation is attached at Appendix 2(a), and a copy of the "New Licensing Laws" information booklet is attached at Appendix 2(b).)

7. **VOLUNTARY ENGAGEMENT - UPDATE**

Ms. S. Nixon, Chief Executive of the District Council, addressed the Meeting and reported on developments since the Council formally applied for voluntary engagement earlier in the year. She stated that the appointed "Lead Official", Mr. W. S. Baldwin, together with his assistant, Mr. P. Stratford, had submitted their report to Mr. P. Hope MP, at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), on the Council's current position. As a result, the ODPM had responded by saying that the Government was willing to voluntarily engage with the Council and set a two-month period for the Council to produce a recovery plan.

Ms. Nixon continued by saying that Members, officers, employees organisations, the Customer Panel, etc., were all involved in the development of the recovery plan, to be approved by the Council at a special meeting, prior to being forwarded to the ODPM before the deadline of 29th October 2004.

Ms. Nixon then responded to several questions from the floor. The Chairman added that the Council as a whole had recognised that voluntary engagement was the correct way to proceed. It was also confirmed that the draft recovery plan would be made available to the public towards the end of October.

This was noted.

8. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFUSE AND RECYCLABLES COLLECTION SCHEME - UPDATE**

Ms. L. Waller, Corporate Director (Services), informed the Meeting that the "roll-out" of the new scheme had been postponed after the third phase due to the overwhelming "take-up" of the recyclables element by the public, but it was anticipated that the remaining rounds would be implemented on a four-week basis commencing from the beginning of November. Ms. Waller also stated that, whilst many teething problems and errors were still being ironed out, there would have to be a review of the allocation of "assisted collections" due to the higher than expected number of dispensations permitted.

Mr. S. Bedford, Acting Head of Depot Services then addressed the Meeting and referred to the nature of the problems with the collection of recyclables. He added that further trials were being carried out with different types of vehicle to cope with the volume of the materials collected and to speed up the time taken to complete each collection round. (A copy of the collection figures distributed to the Meeting is attached at Appendix 3).

Both Ms. Waller and Mr. Bedford answered a number of questions from the floor. Ms. Waller acknowledged that the wholesale change to the new refuse/recyclables collection service was a lot to ask of residents, but she was of the opinion that it was better than an incremental approach to the replacement of bins/containers. Mr. Bedford stated that review meetings with the refuse crews, contractors and FAUN (the manufacturer of the refuse vehicles) were ongoing with a view to ensuring a more efficient service as the next phases were "rolled-out".

It was felt that, where a round encountered problems, it would be helpful for the parish councils to be made aware of this in order that their parishioners may be kept informed. Mr. Bedford said that he would endeavour to do this as and when required.

This was noted and the Chairman thanked the Meeting for the feedback.

9. **PARISH CHARTER - UPDATE**

Mr. Harrison referred to the comments received from the parish councils to the draft version of the Parish Charter for the Bromsgrove District, together with the Working Group which was established following the last Meeting of the Forum. He stated that the Working Group had reviewed the comments and produced a revised draft of the Charter, as attached to the Agenda/Report, albeit without the inclusion of provisions relating to financial arrangements which, he said, would be developed separately. Mr. Harrison added that, in its present form, if the Meeting was satisfied with the draft Charter, it would be considered by the Council's Executive Cabinet in order to formally approve and adopt the document.

Questions from the floor were raised concern over the status of the County Council's proposed Parish Charter for Worcestershire which Mr. Harrison understood was unlikely to prove successful. Furthermore, he believed that a number of other district authorities in the County had started to pursue their own specific parish charter documents.

Mr. Harrison concluded by asking the parish councils if they felt that the document was acceptable in its present form without the financial provisions. It was **AGREED** that the document be accepted for the time being and, when approved by the District Council, an offer be made to the parish councils to formally adopt the Parish Charter.

This was noted.

10. **CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS - UPDATE**

Ms. J. Pickering, Corporate Finance Manager, presented the Report on behalf of Mr. K. Dicks, Corporate Director (Resources), and informed the Meeting of the Council's current position in respect of Concurrent Functions. She stated that financial information from the parish councils, which would need to be included within the Council's 2005/2006 budget, would be required by November 2004.

Where parish councils may not be in a position to give detailed financial information by this date, Ms. Pickering indicated that an estimate would be acceptable, but added that it would be helpful to communicate the exact details as soon as they are known.

This was noted.

The Meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

Chairman

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM**

16TH DECEMBER 2004

1. **CORPORATE PLAN - PRIORITY OBJECTIVES**

At its Meeting on 10th November 2004, the Executive Cabinet resolved to inform "staff, stakeholders and partners" of the new Corporate Objectives as part of the Council's Recovery Plan. The following details the six priority objectives:-

(1) **TO PROVIDE A CLEAN, SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

Within the context of this objective the Council's priorities will be to continue to improve community safety through CCTV, better footpath lighting and the use of ASBO's.

To develop and publish service standards related to the local environment, including street cleansing, grass cutting and grounds maintenance, against which performance can be measured.

Continued investment in the development of the refuse collection and recycling service.

To take measures against fly posting, chewing gum and dog fouling.

Improving the environment through AGENDA 21, e.g., energy saving and monitoring air and noise pollution.

(2) **TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Priorities associated with this objective will be the protection of the Green Belt, the redevelopment of the Town Centre and the development and improvement of the District's rural communities, protection and maintenance of the built environment and enforcement policies.

(3) **TO DEVELOP A CARING, SOCIALLY AWARE SOCIETY**

Priorities within this objective will be to support the elderly and the vulnerable and will include such items as lifeline, concessionary fares, the development of a Housing Improvement Agency, prevention/intervention for children and other sections of the community. Issues associated with rural communities and their access to services including Rural Rides and affordable housing. Also included are CAB, Shopmobility and facilities for youth.

(4) **TO DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN A STRONG AND EXPANDING ECONOMY**

Priorities include the continued development of the technology park, small businesses development and the development of business skills, attracting inward investment and sustaining and growing the economic impact of visitors to the District in the maintenance of the Market and good car parking.

(5) **TO PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE CULTURE AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES**

Priorities include ensuring that there is a suitable mix of cultural and leisure facilities and opportunities that are accessible to all sections of the community including arts,

heritage and sports facilities and opportunities, play areas, parks and open spaces and opportunities and facilities for young people. The specifics would include the Artrix, the Dolphin Centre, Woodrush and Haybridge High Schools, the Bromsgrove Festival, the Bandstand, the Spadesbourne Suite and football pitches.

(6) **TO BE AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL**

The Council is committed to supporting the work of the LSP and will seek to improve services through partnerships where possible.

Will promote equality of opportunity and access to lifelong learning for all.

Will seek to invest in employee and Member training and development to ensure we become a learning organisation.

Will satisfy all mandatory requirements and services we are committed to.

Will seek to improve customer services through IT and electronic services.

Will ensure that the Council raises its performance in line with the Recovery Plan on a continual basis to enable the Council to become a top performing Council over the coming years.

It is anticipated that, at the next Meeting of the Forum, there will be a Report relating to the Local Strategic Partnership and how this corresponds to the Council's Corporate Objectives and Recovery Plan.

S. NIXON  
Chief Executive

The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

7th December 2004

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PARISH COUNCILS' FORUM**

16TH DECEMBER 2004

1. **PARISH CHARTER - UPDATE**

Following circulation of the Parish Charter for Bromsgrove after the last meeting of the Forum, the following responses have been received from Parish Councils:-

Barnt Green

Consideration deferred.

Beoley

Do not support the Charter - would prefer a 3-tier one involving the County Council as well as the District Council and Parish Council.

Hunnington

Consideration deferred - seeking views of other PCs via CALC.

Lickey and Blackwell

Consideration of the Charter is unjustified until financial arrangements are put forward. Something about the wording of the Charter looks like imposition - gives the feeling that the District Council is sitting in judgement on the Parishes. Prefer a Charter based on the County framework applying to all Councils across Worcestershire. Several detailed comments about wording.

Tutnall and Cobley

No objections to the Charter

Wythall

Do not support the Charter - would prefer a 3-tier one involving the County Council as well as the District Council and Parish Council.

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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THURSDAY, 16TH DECEMBER 2004

1. **SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

At the Meeting of the Forum on 17th February 2004, a schedule of dates for Meetings of the Forum was agreed based upon the timing of Meetings of the Area Committee of CALC.

One of the agreed dates - Tuesday, 29th March 2005 - falls on the Tuesday following the Easter Bank Holiday when the Council House will be closed and, therefore, it is suggested that this Meeting will now take place on Tuesday, 5th April 2005.

Furthermore, looking forward to 2005, it may be helpful to agree a schedule of dates for the next 12 months. On the basis that, again, Meetings of the Area Committee of CALC take place in the first week of June, September, December and March, and that items for discussion at the Forum will often emerge from CALC meetings, the following dates are suggested for Meetings of the Forum:-

- Tuesday, 21st June 2005
- Tuesday, 27th September 2005
- Tuesday, 13th December 2005
- Tuesday, 11th April 2006

The views of the Forum are sought.

V. HARRISON  
Head of Administrative Services

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