



AGENDA

For a meeting of the
ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

to be held on

FRIDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2006

at

12.30 PM

in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 3, COUNCIL OFFICES, ST PETER'S HILL,
GRANTHAM**

Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive

Panel Members:	Councillor Conboy, Councillor Mrs Gaffigan, Councillor Nadarajah (Vice-Chairman), Councillor N Radley, Councillor Shorrock, Councillor M Taylor (Chairman), Councillor Webster and Councillor Mrs Williams
Scrutiny Officer:	Paul Morrison 01476 406512 p.morrison@southkesteven.gov.uk
Scrutiny Support Officer:	Rebecca Chadwick 01476 406297 r.chadwick@southkesteven.gov.uk

Members of the panel are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed below.

1. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To receive comments or views from members of the public at the panel's discretion.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The panel to be notified of any substitute members.

3. APOLOGIES

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.

5. ACTION NOTES

The notes of the meetings held on 21st September 2006 and 18th October 2006 are attached for information.

(Enclosure)

6. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

7. UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING

8. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

Feedback from the Democratic Review Working Group to be reported at the meeting.

Notes from the Access and Modernisation Working Group.

(Enclosure)

9. LOCAL FORUMS: A TOWN COUNCIL FOR GRANTHAM

This item has been requested by the Grantham Local Forum. Background report attached.

The notes of the last round of all local forums are attached.

(Enclosures)

10. TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

Report by the Service Manager for Performance Management and Engagement.

(To follow)

11. UPDATE REPORT - FRONTFACING TELEPHONY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Report number CSV46 by the BMS Partnership Project Officer.

(Enclosure)

12. SERVICE PLANS: GATEWAY REVIEW 2

The panel to undertake the second gateway review of the following service plans:

- Customer Services
- Business Transformation and Information Management
- Democracy
- Human Resources and Diversity

Copies of the relevant service plans will be distributed to members of the panel as background papers. Additional copies will be available on request to the Scrutiny Support Officer.

13. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP

Notes of the Equalities and Diversity Steering Group for information.

(Enclosure)

14. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

(Enclosure)

15. WORK PROGRAMME

(Enclosure)

16. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Representatives on outside bodies to give update reports.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT.

WORKING STYLE OF SCRUTINY

The Role Of Scrutiny

- To provide a “critical friend” challenge to the Executive as well as external authorities and agencies
- To reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
- Scrutiny Members should take the lead and own the Scrutiny Process on behalf of the public
- Scrutiny should make an impact on the delivery of public services

Remember...

- Scrutiny should be member led
- Any conclusions must be backed up by evidence
- Meetings should adopt an inquisitorial rather than adversarial style of traditional local government committees



MEETING OF THE ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2006 2.30 PM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Conboy
Councillor Nadarajah (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor M Taylor (Chairman)

Councillor Webster
Councillor Wilks
Councillor Mrs Williams

OFFICERS

Scrutiny Officer
Strategic Director x 2
Training Manager
Customer Services Manager
Scrutiny Support Officer

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Cartwright

98. MEMBERSHIP

The panel was informed that Councillor Craft had been replaced by Councillor Webster until the next annual general meeting.

99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

100. ACTION NOTES

Noted.

101. UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING

The Scrutiny officer reported that in relation to action 91, the chief executive had referred this recommendation to the customer services manager, who had been invited to the attend during the meeting to update on this. Further to action 96, a portable closed loop induction system was being trialled and a demonstration would be made to some members shortly.

102. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The portfolio holder for access and engagement asked if he could provide

feedback throughout the meeting. This was agreed.

103. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS - ACCESS AND MODERNISATION

The scrutiny support officer highlighted the two recommendations from the working group. The portfolio holder for access and engagement explained that given the degree of change throughout the authority, it was logical to provide staff and councillors an area for rest and that this shared area would encourage engagement between the two. The portfolio holder was asked how staff would be able to access the customer service centre during their lunch break. The portfolio holder replied that this was an operational issue and would be referred to the relevant service manager.

Conclusion:

To support the recommendations from the Access and Modernisation Working Group.

104. UPDATE REPORT – FRONTFACING TELEPHONY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

The business management services project officer presented report CSV44, which had been appended to the agenda, and circulated a further update on frontfacing telephony statistics for August. Further statistics were also provided on numbers of telephone calls, appointments, emails and letters received. This information was available on the internet. She explained that August was a quiet month with September/October being much busier. Service managers, when embedded in the new posts, would also get information to be able to monitor their service. Work was underway to raise the profile of standards and customer service.

A member of the panel asked why the standards were inferior for August, if it was a quieter month. The officer explained that this being a traditional holiday month, staff levels were often reduced during this month.

The panel was concerned that too many calls were not being answered. The officer was asked about how staff dealt with transferring calls. She answered that transferring calls was not set-up as a matter of course because some offices worked better on a group pick-up system. Voicemail was a good final solution to reduce the numbers of unanswered calls, but some service managers, for various reasons, had been avoiding using voicemail.

The portfolio holder explained that he whilst there was significant improvement to be had, 100% calls could only be answered by using an automated call-queuing system. He considered this latter approach to be poor customer service.

The strategic director spoke to the panel about the 'talk to me' protocol, which was currently being finalised. Refresher sessions for managers on using the

telephones, followed up with core briefings and team meetings, was considered a better solution to encouraging better use of the telephones than to just email a policy to all staff. Ways to advise customers on when our busy and quiet periods are was also underway.

The panel was very satisfied to learn that the call centre and switchboard service standard statistics were still very high.

Conclusion:

- (1) To accept the report and suggest that the use of voicemail, as a final option to reduce missed calls, be encouraged.**
- (2) To continue to be apprised with monitoring results.**

105. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS - DEMOCRATIC REVIEW

In the absence of members of the working group, the scrutiny support officer presented the recommendations of the democratic review working group. The chairman explained that it was not his intention to finalise the panel's view of each recommendation at this meeting, as he considered that some needed further clarification from the group. Each was discussed in turn by the panel:

Recommendation 1: An example of the proposed publication was distributed. The panel discussed how this would be distributed.

Conclusion:

To support this recommendation in principle but would consider the circulated document and evaluate for the next meeting of the panel.

Recommendation 2: The scrutiny support officer explained that the first online jury had been a pilot and considered the council's priorities. The working group was suggesting that this should be an annual process. The initial funding from the Department of Constitutional Affairs was provided until March 2007. The portfolio holder explained that the council may have a good case to apply for further funding if the project was successful in engaging with the public.

Conclusion:

To support this recommendation.

Recommendation 3: The working group had been comprised of a number of members of the public and this had worked successfully. The working group considered that this should be encouraged for other working groups. The scrutiny officer explained that the constitution already allowed for this. The panel therefore supported this recommendation but emphasised that were members of the public to be invited to join working groups, the council must be able to show that it will seriously consider their recommendations.

Conclusion:

To support this recommendation and encourage DSP Chairmen to welcome members of the public onto scrutiny working groups.

Recommendation 4: Members of the panel were concerned about the financial implications of this recommendation. They considered the potential implications of exclusion and the current policy for councillors. They accepted the principle of the recommendation but made a slight amendment as noted below.

Conclusion:

To support the principle of this recommendation but amend the last sentence to read: "This would cover agreed expenses".

Recommendation 5: The scrutiny support officer explained that a lot of further work could be done by the council on local democracy week. It was intended that the next online citizens jury, which was intended to be held in a local school, would coincide with local democracy week. The portfolio holder added that he had done a lot of work on identifying what people expected from their councillors; this was to be respectable citizens in the community. He was therefore not a supported of the "I am a councillor get me out of here" element of local democracy week. The panel agreed with the principle of the recommendation and the thoughts of the portfolio holder that citizens engagement projects should be light hearted with not a silly extreme.

Conclusion:

To support the recommendation, subject to the removal of "I am a Councillor Get Me Out of Here and"

Recommendation 6: The panel considered that this recommendation provided a good method of engagement.

Conclusion:

To support this recommendation.

Recommendation 7: The panel was concerned about the potential cost implications with this recommendation, although it was noted that the first part had no cost implications. The training manager, who had organised previous youth events, emphasises that this must not be just a Grantham approach. All ages and all areas in the district should be engaged. The success of the Bourne Youth Council and their input into the Bourne Local Forum was noted, and this was encouraging.

The strategic director explained that the Lincolnshire Youth Service had met with her to discuss support for setting up a youth council in Grantham. This was welcomed by the panel. Although the support requested was minimal, the training manager explained that some projects could be very resource intensive

but they had been very beneficial and well-participated.

Conclusion:

- (1) To support the recommendation from the working group but amended to read: “Local youth councils should be informed and encouraged to join the local forums and the six-monthly youth area forums are held, jointly facilitated by the council and the youth service”.**
- (2) To monitor progress with the establishment of a youth council in Grantham**
- (3) To receive feedback from Councillor Conboy at a future meeting on the church organisation youth drop-in centre in Stamford.**

Recommendation 8: The chairman stipulated that the constitution did not provide for this recommendation and that when co-option to the council had been attempted in the past, it had been unsuccessful.

Conclusion:

To not support the recommendation.

Recommendation 9: The issues raised by the panel with this recommendation were: 1) as this involved working with children, what were the CRB requirements and who was going to pay for this; 2) who was going to pay for the training; 3) are teaching staff prepared to accept councillors to teach their curriculum; 4) what assurance was there that councillors would remain politically neutral? The panel did agree that the council needed to engage with youth on how the political system works, but it should be done carefully.

Conclusion:

To ask the working group to investigate the issues raised by the panel and report back at the next meeting.

Recommendation 10: A similar recommendation had been considered several years ago although nothing had developed. The panel considered this to be a good idea, especially as the students on the working group had explained that standard work experience placements had not fully engaged them in the political process. This element could therefore be improved.

Conclusion:

To support the recommendation.

Recommendation 11: The panel required further elaboration on this recommendation, especially concerning any financial implications.

Conclusion:

To ask the working group to provide further clarification on this recommendation for the next meeting of the panel.

Recommendation 12: The panel disagreed with this recommendation because of the financial implications and the conflict with the established method of reviewing the council's priorities.

Conclusion:

To not support this recommendation.

Recommendation 13: The panel considered that this was, and should be, already carried out by the political parties and not the council. The scrutiny support officer advised that the electoral team was working on sending a birthday card to 18 year olds informing them on their right to vote.

Conclusion:

To not support this recommendation.

Recommendation 14: The panel considered this recommendation to be excessive.

Conclusion:

To not support this recommendation.

Recommendation 15: The panel considered this recommendation to be ambivalent.

Conclusion:

To not support this recommendation.

Recommendations 16: The panel considered this recommendation to conflict with the work of local politicians.

Conclusion:

To not support this recommendation.

Recommendations 17 – 21: The panel considered these recommendations appeared to be the personal agenda of the lead member of the working group.

Conclusion:

To not support these recommendations.

106. SCRUTINY OF COUNCIL DECISION - MEMBER TRAINING

The panel scrutinised the decision made by council on 23rd June 2005 in relation to member training by reviewing the relevant paperwork associated with the decision and questioning the strategic directors, training manager and the portfolio holder for organisational development.

The chairman explained that this scrutiny exercise had been referred to the panel from the scrutiny coordinating group. He considered that this decision, which essentially required cabinet and panel members to undergo compulsory training, was not legally binding. The panel scrutinised the wording of the decision and concluded that it did make member training for panel and cabinet members compulsory.

The panel members expressed their initial views of the decision. There was concern that it prevented the democratic right of members to represent their wards on the cabinet and panels and that it was the role of voters to decide the competency of whom they elected to the council. The alternative view was that a councillor might not be able to effectively represent their people if they were not adequately equipped with knowledge and skills.

The organisational development portfolio holder explained that in light of value for money and use of resources assessments, member and officer time was a valuable commodity and should therefore not be wasted by councillors who did not understand the fundamental elements of cabinet or scrutiny work. She later referred to statistics that some members present at the meeting had only attended one training module since their election. The training manager expressed a similar view in that there was a certain knowledge that councillors needed because recommendations and decisions should be made from an informed position. One of the strategic directors observed that legal advice had been sought for the initial recommendation to council. Barrister's advice had been that provision could be made within the constitution and the code of conduct to require cabinet and panel members to attend certain training within twelve months of their appointment. This, however, was disputed by some members of the panel as it was a 'grey area'. Another strategic director explained that in terms of members' responsibility for good governance it may be advisable to require members to attend certain training. The director cautioned against undermining the best intentions of council's decision to raise members' standards.

Some panel members considered that council's decision ignored the value of hands-on training, but a strategic director explained that the fact that the training would have to be undertaken within 12 months demonstrated an understanding of experience as well as training. A member, whose profession was an estate agent, explained that his profession was often criticised for not having compulsory standards. The council was open to similar criticism if it did not require certain training.

In concluding the scrutiny of this decision, it was apparent that there was no consensus on the issue. The majority of members supported the original

decision of council, whilst a minority were of strong opinion that the decision was undemocratic and could not be supported legally.

The chairman advised that panel that he would not lead the next scrutiny exercise.

Conclusion:

- (1) *To support the decision of the council taken on 23rd June 2005 in relation to member training.***
- (2) *To note that this was a majority view of the panel, the minority view being recorded in the note above.***

107. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The scrutiny officer reported that he had recently received statistics for August and these showed no material change to those circulated with the agenda.

The panel questioned the decline in the %PR outputs to the media that were actually published. It was assumed that this was because they were not considered newsworthy. Officers explained that this was not necessarily the case: the more outputs produced would make it harder to have 100% published and some releases were 'bad news' stories and so was of no detriment to the council that they were not published.

Conclusion:

That the performance indicator relating to %PR outputs to the media that were actually published (SK74) be changed to a meaningful statistic.

108. WORK PROGRAMME

This was noted and a few updates made.

109. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 16.48.



MEETING OF THE ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2006 1.00 PM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Conboy
Councillor Nadarajah (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor M Taylor (Chairman)

Councillor Webster
Councillor Mrs Williams
Councillor Wood

OFFICERS

Scrutiny Officer
Service Manager, Customer Services (note 110-114)
Service Manager, Business Transformation and
Information Management (note 110-114)
Service Manager, Democracy (note 110-115)
Service Manager, HR and Diversity (note 110-116)
Scrutiny Support Officer

In honour of the late Councillor Wilks, the panel observed a minute's silence at the start of the meeting.

110. MEMBERSHIP

The panel was informed that Councillor Wood would be arriving later in the meeting to replace the late Councillor Wilks, for this meeting only.

111. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shorrock.

112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

113. GATEWAY REVIEW 1: CUSTOMER SERVICES

As an introduction to this and the following item, it was explained to the panel that the current service plans were titled "Access and Customer Services" and "ICT Services" whereas the 2007/08 service plans would be for "Customer Services" and "Business Transformation and Information Management", as a result of the management restructure.

The Customer Services Manager then proceeded to give a presentation on the Customer Services plan.

- The telephony centre had been set up in August 2005 and customer relationship management (CRM) software was in use for a range of services and already proving its value. Other services were also dealt with by the telephony centre but were awaiting business process re-engineering (BPR) to enable delivery via the CRM.
- The introduction of Allpay had reduced cash handling and the banking hall function as planned.
- The customer service centre would be opening in November 2006.
- Further work to be carried out included the transfer of remaining services from the back office, delivery of equal service in the area offices, fully embedded customer service standards throughout the authority, increased training with the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) and improved rates of telephone calls being dealt with at first point of contact.
- To achieve this the service needed to carry out ongoing BPR, with work on Revenues and Benefits starting in November 2006, an ongoing review of services already delivered via the customer service and telephony centres, a recruitment drive for ICS training and awareness raising throughout the authority.
- In relation to Gershon savings, efficiencies had been achieved through BPR and transfer of staff from back offices but specific figures were not yet known.
- Spend was currently matching budget but an increased salary budget would be required for 2007/08 to reflect the integration of customer-facing back office staff.
- Three areas had been identified to reduce risk: smooth transition to the customer service centre, multi-skilling of advisors across all services and realisation of self service aspirations.

Members discussed the presentation with the officer and made the following points.

- Information on Gershon targets needed expanding. The panel was concerned that anticipated progress was not sufficient.
- Some members of the panel did not like the word “weaknesses” in the SWOT analysis section of the plan. The officer was asked to explain what was being done to address the ‘problems’ and threats highlighted in the service plan. He therefore outlined: developing skills set with staff (our biggest strength), significant training, multi-skilling and communication. This would be reflected in the new service plan.
- In relation to the service’s mission statement, the officer was asked how rural areas were being addressed. The officer replied that targets within the current year included working towards the same quality of service within area offices. This would be continued in the future plan including work towards increasing community access points, improved web access and face to face. BPR had enabled front line staff to access customer information thereby increasing the quality of service overall.
- In relation to the performance indicator to answering letters, some members

considered the target to not be challenging enough, although others thought that the quality of response needed weighing up alongside this target. The officer explained that it was cheapest for the council to do business by telephone, then face to face and then letter. The customer service centre was designed to answer customer queries at the first point of contact.

- The telephone response target was for corporate customer-facing telephones, not the switchboard or telephony centre. The latter was operating at very high standards and the former lower standards were being addressed through a telephone protocol.

In relation to the “Access” element of this service plan, the Service Manager for Business Transformation and Information Management made a presentation, as this now fell under his remit.

- The CRM in the customer service centre had been a key piece of architecture for various projects. A lot of work had been done on integration with back office systems so that back offices did not have to duplicate work from the customer service centre.
- BPR skills had been developed in house rather than using consultants.
- Further work needed to be done to achieve full BPR in back offices, all services to be delivered by CRM, target of telephone calls of 80% to be received by the customer service centre and further work on the electronic document records management systems (EDRMS).
- To achieve this, BPR of revenues and benefits would start in November 2006 (this would ensure that all information from customers was captured first time), EDRMS across all areas, continued transfer of services to the customer service centre, realising of efficiency savings via BPR.
- Gershon savings would be achieved from BPR , transfer of services and improved customer service.
- Spend was matching budget and for 2007/08, the access budget would be combined with ICT.
- In relation to risk, there was a need to ensure that there was a return on investment of BPR activities, adapter capability for back office systems, retention of skills and a smooth integration process.

In response to members’ questions, the officer clarified various points:

- Financial information reflecting that the service was within budget would be available at the next gateway review.
- There was little benchmarking information for this service. A balance scorecard in the plan did reflect the value for money of the service.
- Community portals might be transferred to the council’s main website and problems experienced with accessing planning information online should be resolved.

Conclusions:

- (1) Gershon savings for Customer Services (including the “access” element of this plan) to date to be calculated and reported at Gateway Review 2.***

(2) Finance information of budgets and spending to be presented at Gateway Review 2.

114. GATEWAY REVIEW 1: BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The Service Manager for Business Transformation and Information Management gave a presentation on the current ICT service plan, which would be covered by the 2007/08 plan for his service.

- Current work involved delivering IT infrastructure, identifying improvements, helpdesk support, system and server admin, security and resilience of data.
- Future work would include monitoring system down time (should be 95% availability) and more proactive work to resolve problems. This would required implementation of active directory, consolidating servers, which release maintenance and purchase costs, implementation of corporate ledgers, completing the LLPG long term strategy for every system to use the unique identification number. Progress had been made with enabling remote working. Building control used tablet PCs to enable them to dial in to council systems without coming back to the council offices. EHS were also looking to do this.
- In relation to Gershon savings, the egov agenda had led to investment to website, servers etc. which would result in savings over time. Fixed price extended contracts would also provide savings but these were only used when the section was comfortable with product.
- Spend was matching budget. The merging of access and ICT should not have any significant financial impact.
- There was a risk in any potential loss of knowledge and skills and the integration of the modernisation team may bring about some risks.

This was discussed by the panel.

- A member expressed his concern about the lack of a corporate wide forward plan for corporate systems – a weakness identified in the ICT service plan. The officer explained that historically, the council had not identified how and in what order systems would be replaced. The management restructure and three-year service planning should help to enable better planning.
- The weakness about being “too helpful” had been identified because the service had not been properly prioritising and sometimes taking on too much work.
- The panel considered that the service had come a long way was on track for the future.

Conclusion:

Further information on the Gershon savings were required for Gateway Review 2.

115. GATEWAY REVIEW 1: DEMOCRACY

The Democracy Service Manager presented the current Administrative Services plan. This would become the Democracy Services plan.

- The plan covered committee support, elections, electoral registration and the courier service. It was fundamental to supporting category A priorities. The print room had been transferred to assets and facilities.
- The electoral manager and assistant could not make it to the gateway review as they were training canvassers for electoral registration, as new legislation required two personal visits to every non-responding household. This was indicative of new statutory roles for the electoral registration officer to undertake more proactive work. Further legislation was anticipated in the near future. Gateway review 2 would provide more information on this.
- Proactive work had also been required in other areas of the service following modernisation in 2001. Committee support was no longer responsive minute-taking but underpinned corporate governance and required highly specialised skills. The service was delivered by a very small team. Members' concerns about this were valid; the risks had been addressed by developing the team with multi-skilling but at the second gateway review, the officer would be asking for additional resources in light of this issue.
- Initial results from the recent scrutiny satisfaction survey were circulated.
- The officer explained progress with the service action plan. All action points had been achieved with further achievements, all within existing resources, made in the accreditation of Investors in People, development of local forums, the pioneering of the online citizens jury, the Lincolnshire Scrutiny Officer Network established by this authority, increased number of committee and working group meetings supported, the forthcoming parish council conference and the submitted bid for a parish/town council project worker.
- Members focussed on the risk highlighted in the plan on members' reluctance to give up paper agendas. The officer explained that it currently cost £18,000 per year for printing agendas. The scrutiny support officer added that the access and modernisation working group would be making a recommendation early in 2007 on significantly reducing paper agendas, to take effect from May 2007.
- Performance indicators were being developed for the service, particularly for the scrutiny and electoral elements.
- The Gershon savings were on target and additional savings had been achieved through the absorption of responsibilities and removal of costing of the former Corporate Manager of Democratic & Legal Services. Savings had mostly been achieved from changes to civic arrangements. The service was being delivered within the reduced budget at a very satisfactory quality.

Conclusion:

The panel was satisfied with gateway review 1 of this service.

116. GATEWAY REVIEW 1: HUMAN RESOURCES AND DIVERSITY

The Service Manager for Human Resources and Diversity, who had been in post for eight days, made a presentation on the current service plan. She was comfortable with the general remit of the plan but explained that there had originally been expectations of employment budget devolution in April 2006 but this was now scheduled for April 2007. In presenting the plan, members asked questions throughout.

- In addition to the key drivers for the service, the management restructure, customer services and the council's pension policy were key factors to be included in the plan.
- The plan highlighted a number of areas where information was lacking on whether customer expectations had been met. The officer explained that there was still a lot of work to do with stakeholder engagement, because time had been taken on other projects. The panel considered it commendable that the plan had been honest in this area and that the service manager was looking to work closer with other managers and staff.
- The key achievements and outcomes in the plan were highlighted. In addition to these, notable success had been achieved in the reduction of sickness levels. The best value performance indicator was excellent and the council currently had sickness levels below the private sector average. It was anticipated that sickness would rise during the winter months. A benchmarking club had been joined to monitor achievements. However, only 41% personal development review forms had been returned for the year.
- The 'SWOT' analysis had been compiled by the team and therefore covered a broad range of aspects of the service. Most of the 'opportunities' identified had been achieved.
- The action plan had been very ambitious and therefore a number of items had to be delayed. Some objectives could only be completed when the management restructure was in place. Amongst those completed was the achievement of level 2 of the equalities standard.
- Gershon savings had been very focused on reduced sickness levels and further work was needed to identify whether target savings would be achieved.
- The officer provided further information on the major procurement for the current year. The employee assistance programme had been very successful with about 5% employees using the service. The medical scheme was dwindling because the occupational health service was better.
- Risk association with workload exceeding capacity had been addressed through tighter work planning and some interim staff measures. The service manager explained that it would not be in the best interests of the service to permanently increase staffing levels because current time-intensive work involved temporary projects such as the management restructure.

There was concern amongst the panel that small teams were being overburdened with work. It was explained that non-category-A priorities, would lose out financially and that staffing was lean throughout the authority. The panel agreed to keep this under review.

Conclusion:

Gershon savings to date to be calculated and reported at Gateway Review 2.

117. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 4.15p.m.

Agenda Item 8

ACCESS AND MODERNISATION WORKING GROUP

Notes of meeting: Wednesday 27th September 2006

Members present: Councillor John Kirkman
Councillor Mano Nadarajah
Councillor John Wilks

Officers present: Ian Pick
Marion Fox
Andy Nix
Paul Morrison

Apologies: Councillor Mike Williams and Ray Davidson

1. NOTES FROM LAST MEETING

These were approved.

2. BROADBAND FOR MEMBERS

This was progressing well, about 2 councillors per week were receiving broadband, there were 10 or 11 members now outstanding, but some of these were not taking up the option anyway.

Action point: To note the progress of this project with satisfaction.

3. COUNCIL DECISION DATABASE

Councillor Kirkman reported that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Group had accepted the status quo for the time being. Much of the problem with background papers was that they were stored on different servers and pcs throughout the Council offices. These would be very time consuming to store all in one place, much documentation would have to be scanned in individually.

Councillor Kirkman advised that scrutiny should, as part of its role, be examining decisions made 12 or 18 months ago and the use of background papers was vital to this process, but at the moment there was no central place where these documents were stored. This issue would assume greater importance in future but at the moment the resources needed to carry out the work of collation and storage were not there.

Action note: to revisit this issue at a future meeting.

4. CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE UPDATE

The opening of the Centre had now been delayed until November 6th. Recruitment of staff had taken longer than expected and there had not yet been enough dry run testing. Because of the level of activity over the summer months, people were now taking their holidays in October and in addition half term would be in October. It was planned that there would be a reception some weeks after the soft launch on Monday November 3rd. Councillor Kirkman suggested that this should be timed to coincide with the Stakeholder Event (Town and Parish Councils Conference) being planned for December 7th. That way most councillors would be present, as would the press.

Action Note: Suggest to Ray Davidson that the Reception take place on December 7th.

5. GO-LIVE/MODERNISATION PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

Marion Fox reported that this was progressing well, the building works had been completed, signage was on order and the private booths had been installed. With regard to the CSC and back office connection, this was progressing quite well. It was explained that the telephone answering and the meet/greet function were being separated in order to boost performance. The operator function would be at the back of the Customer Service Centre.

6. INFORMATION ON BUDGETS AND MILESTONE PLANNING

Andy Nix circulated a paper which outlined the work activities that the Access and Modernisation Team would be delivering up to the end of March 2007 and beyond. The paper also sought to establish the budgetary requirements for both revenue and capital and assessed this against current budget provisions.

The work activities described in the paper were

- Continued transfer of services to the CSC
- Improvements to service delivery within CSC
- Improvements to the Area offices
- Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) of mail operations
- Improvement to access to services
- Efficiency Savings within back office functions

The current overall requirements for both capital and revenue would be met from existing budgets, therefore no additional funding was being

sought at this stage. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Gateway review process for 2007/08 was now underway.

Action note: to receive an update report on the budget situation at the next meeting.

7. TESTING OF NEW SYSTEMS IN THE CSC

Andy Nix outlined how the testing of new systems in the Customer Service Centre would be carried out. Dry run testing for the meet/greet function and calls to the back office would be carried out in the next few weeks. Meet/greet was considered to be the crucial activity and Mr Nix went through the details of how this would be carried out. There were main desks and private booths for interview, these could be conducted anonymously if required.

As all enquiries were different it would be impossible to estimate the waiting time before a customer would be attended to once they were in the queue. It was confirmed that verification of documents would be a back office function.

The Engagement DSP would visit the CSC approximately six months after it had gone live.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Councillor Kirkman referred to the problems being experienced by Housing Solutions with the ANITE system. Andy Nix explained that Interface between CRM and ANITE would have cost some £40k, therefore this was not done. Scanning could be done but an interface system would be expensive. Housing Solutions had also been denied access to the Council Tax register, this was because the data collected could only be used for the purposes of collecting council tax and no other. There were data protection issues but the question of shared data should be looked at.

Action Point: Ask Councillor Carpenter to investigate the issue of shared data and information across council departments.

(2) Ian Pick asked what would happen if there was a power shortage and no access to telephones in the CSC. Andy Nix confirmed that in that case staff would revert to a paper system. No decision had yet been made on back up power although a report had gone to OMT on this. It was suggested that some alternative energy supply was needed in the event of a power shutdown, such as a generator. In the event of a total shutdown, data would be lost and customers would be delayed or even sent away.

Action point: Express concern to Councillor Carpenter at the present arrangements and ask him to report to the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 3.40pm.

ACCESS AND MODERNISATION WORKING GROUP

Notes of meeting: Wednesday 25th October 2006

Members present: Councillor John Kirkman
Councillor Mano Nadarajah
Councillor Paul Carpenter (observer – UPS item only)

Officers present: Marion Fox
Andy Nix

Apologies: Councillor Mike Williams, Rebecca Chadwick
Ian Pick

1. NOTES FROM LAST MEETING

These were approved.

2. UPS

Cllr Carpenter reported that work has been done on costings and we need to establish which sections of the building need to be covered. (IT, CSC, whole building). Air conditioning will take a lot of power. Generator will need to build up, therefore UPS required initially for hand over. Location for generator has been investigated. Installation will take a lot of work and some down-time. Cllr Carpenter suggested that a risk assessment be undertaken to establish the best/most appropriate solution.

Cllr Kirkman expressed concerns over resilience.

Cllr Nadarajah asked what other councils do to tackle the problem of powercuts.

Action note: Group to recommend that the Engagement DSP requests for a risk assessment to be done to assess the way forward (Rebecca to facilitate)

3. ACCESS AND MODERNISATION BUDGET UPDATE

IT and modernisation are currently being merged and reorganised. Andy working on the service plan for this currently.

Access will be dealt with by the customer services network manager (2006/7 service plan access and modernisation were together).

No issues on 2006/7 budget.

Potentially 2 FTE from IT could be affected should the council's housing stock transfer.

Andy detailed Ray will now be looking after the customer services centre budget and Andy will look after the IT and modernisation budget.

Transfer of funds - £110,00 (Capital programme) into 2007/8 – this is mainly the work on the area offices which may be in the next financial year rather than 2006/7.

Action note: Andy to check reason for transfer of funds and let councillor Kirkman know. - Andy Nix has now confirmed this.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Go live – Planned for 6/11/06. Everything coming along nicely. Reception will be manned by more CSAs than normal. Self serve and planning selfserve will be quite basic for go live.

Official opening: 29th November

Centre to be open for all councillors: 7th December

Action Point: MF to speak to Ray and Ellen to suggest that all invited councillors be treated the same i.e. no partners.

The meeting concluded at 2.30 pm.

**BRIEFING NOTE FOR:
GRANTHAM LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLY**

Subject: “A Town Council for Grantham”

Agenda Item: 8

Date of Meeting: 7th June 2006

Introduction

This briefing paper includes a summary of the status of Parish/Town Councils, the implications of the Local Government Act 1972, background on Grantham's Charter Trustees, the history of attempts to date to instate a Parish/Town Council in Grantham, information on the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the Grantham referendum of 2002 and the powers of a Parish/Town Council. All Parish/Town Councils are funded by precepts that are included in the Council Tax.

Background Parish/Town Councils

The Parish Council is a body of civil government elected by the residents of the area. It has a wide range of statutory powers, which it is free to exercise or not as it wishes. In practice Parish Councils exercise sole responsibility for some matters and share responsibility for others with the District and County Councils. Were Grantham to be awarded Parish Council status, as a Parish Council in an urban area it would be entitled to call itself a Town Council.

Changes to Local Government

Grantham was a chartered borough for more than 500 years before 31st March 1974, when the structure of Local Government was reorganised and District Councils were established under the Local Government Act 1972. Criteria for successor parish councils were established for areas with a population of less than 20,000 residents; Grantham had approximately 30,000 residents and was not eligible. Instead of successor Parish/Town Council, Charter Trustees for Grantham were established. If Grantham was to apply for successor Parish Council status, the town would need to be broken up into smaller parishes.

Grantham's Charter Trustees

The Charter Trustees are the District Councillors for Grantham. The Grantham Charter Trustees were created under Section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 as a body corporate. The Charter Trustees elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Grantham from within the group. The Charter Trustees have no responsibility for the operation or provision of services; their role is to continue civic tradition and to act as a vehicle for civic pride. The Grantham Charter Trustees are funded by a precept for Grantham.

1985 – First discussion of a Town Council for Grantham

Following the creation of District Councils, the first mention of a Town Council for Grantham was in 1985. The local press ran an article asking whether or not Grantham ought to have a Town Council with Parish powers. The matter never came before the District Council and no recommendation was made to the Boundary Commission.

1989 – Do People Want a Town Council for Grantham?

Following a meeting of the Personnel and General Purposes Committee in 1989 when a town council for Grantham was discussed, The Citizen newspaper ran a poll for Grantham residents. At the time the poll was conducted, circulation of The Citizen was 21,000. 86 people responded to the poll; 80 expressed an interest in a town council for Grantham, 6 people were opposed to the idea.

The Local Government and Rating Act 1997

Part 2 of this Act includes new provisions for the establishment and review of Parishes and Parish Councils. The Act would permit the District Council to conduct a review of the whole or any part of its area to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on:

- The constitution of a new parish
- The abolition of a parish
- The alteration of the area of a parish

The constitution of a new parish may result from;

- The establishment as a parish of any area which is not, and is not part of, a parish
- The aggregation of any such area within one or more parishes or parts of parishes
- The aggregation of parts of parishes
- The amalgamation of two or more parishes
- The separation of part of any parish

If the District Council decides to conduct a review, it must publicise its intention as soon as possible. The Council must explain the subject matter of the review and state a period within which representations must be made. In conducting the review, the District Council must take into consideration any representations made to them within that period. After conducting a review, the District Council must prepare recommendations and publicise them along with the period within which representations may be made. It must again take into account any representations made before it decides finally what, if any, recommendations to place before the Secretary of State.

Part II, Section 11 of the Act provides for petitions to be made to the District Council for the constitution of new parishes. The petition would need to be signed by a minimum of 250 local government electors from the area it relates to or 10% of the local government electors for that area, whichever is higher. In Grantham there are just under 25,000 registered local government electors, so the petition would require need to be signed by approximately 2,500 people. The petition may ask for the constitution of any area as a parish and may request the establishment of a Parish Council for that area. The petition could only be signed by registered electors within Grantham; this does not include Londonthorpe (Belmont Ward), if it did, there would need to be a parish review as well as the Grantham Town Council decision.

A District Council who receives such a petition is under an obligation to send it, together with its views about it, to the Secretary of State, within three months. Before sending the petition, the District Council must notify the County Council of the proposals contained in the petition. The County Council then has the opportunity to send its views on the proposals to the District Council or directly to the Secretary of State.

The views of a District or County Council on the issues raised in the petition must show whether they agree with the proposals and must summarise any information the council has about the opinions held by the local government electors in their area about the proposals. The District or County Council may forward any further information or observations to the Secretary of State as they see fit.

The Local Government Commission for England must consider any of the following matters, which the Secretary of State directs it to consider:

- Any recommendation made to the Secretary of State by a District Council for the review of the whole or any part of its area

- Any petition, recommendations of the District Council about the petition and any matters arising from those recommendations forwarded to the Secretary of State by a District Council

The Local Government Commission has to consider the matters upon which they have received a direction and decide what, if any, recommendations to make, after taking into consideration the views of those persons who may be interested, to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State may then, by order, give effect to any recommendations made to him either by the District Council or the Local Government Commission or any petition sent to him (together with any recommendations and any proposals sent to him by the Commission relating to the petition) and do so with or without modification.

The Purpose of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997

The Act would return to District Councils the power to carry out reviews of parishes and Parish Councils whilst preventing District Councils from deciding on the number of Parish Councillors for each Parish. The new provision, which relates to the submission of petitions for the creation for a new parish, is likely to be used to deal with Charter Trustee Towns.

Steps towards a local referendum

At a meeting of the Council on 5th September 2002, notification had been received from the majority of Grantham Councillors, urging the Council to activate the processes for establishing a Grantham Parish (Town) Council. A referendum was held between the 9th and 14th December 2002 asking registered electors in Grantham “*Do you wish to see a Parish/Town Council for Grantham?*”

Total Electorate	24,800
Turnout	644 (2.6% of the electorate)
Answer ‘Yes’	390 (61% of votes cast)
Answer ‘No’	253 (39% of votes cast)
‘Yes’ as a Percentage of electorate	1.6%

While the majority of people who participated in the referendum were in favour of a town council for Grantham, no recommendations were made to the Secretary of State as the referendum did not reflect the views of over 10% of the Local Government electors in Grantham.

What a Town Council could do

A list of all the functions that a Town Council carry out is included as appendix 1 to this briefing note. It would be up to the Councillors elected to a Town Council to decide which services they would undertake, the level of those services and the staff required to undertake them. Where Town Councils powers would duplicate those of the District or County Council, there would need to be an agreement on the extent to which any of these and their relevant premises and equipment might be handed over.

Costing

The referendum could be administered at minimal cost, however there would be set-up costs and ongoing costs to cover the provision of services. For the local referendum in 2002 the only costs incurred were for staff, printing, publicity and room hire. A breakdown of costs has been included as appendix 2 to this briefing note.

Conclusion

Over the past two decades there have been several attempts to establish a Town Council for Grantham, however none of these have met the required level of support from Grantham electors. Presently all powers and duties that are available to Town Councils are being performed by the District and County Councils.

PROPOSALS FOR GRANTHAM TOWN COUNCIL**SERVICE COSTING**

<u>GRANTHAM CHARTER TRUSTEES</u>	<u>NET COST</u>	<u>NET COST</u>
	£	£

Annual Running Costs of Grantham Charter Trustees	54,850
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Costs incurred with running a Town Council may include some set up one-off costs.

GRANTHAM SPECIAL EXPENSE AREA - CURRENTLY CHARGED

Grantham Cemetery	17,830
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Christmas Illuminations	19,000
Christmas Fun Day	3,000
Earlesfield Community Centre	5,000
Environmental Taskgroup	3,000
Play Leadership Grants	7,500
Grantham Carnival	6,000
Management and Administration	<u>7,870</u>
	51,370

Dysart Park	56,244
Queen Elizabeth Park	19,580
Wyndham Park	<u>77,704</u>
	153,528

Arnoldfield Playing Field	9,375
Harrowby Lane Playing Field	<u>12,580</u>
	21,955

South Kesteven Sports Stadium	105,960
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<u><u>350,643</u></u>

Number of Band D Properties	10,349
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Band D Charge	39.18
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OTHER SERVICES THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION

- Public Conveniences
- Tourism
- Markets
- Fairs
- Car Parks
- Bus Station
- Play Areas and open spaces
- Charities
- Street Furniture



STAMFORD LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLY **(STAMFORD LOCAL FORUM)**

Minutes of the MEETING of the STAMFORD LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLY (STAMFORD LOCAL FORUM) held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 14th June 2006 at Stamford Town Hall.

PRESENT:

Councillor Ray Auger
South Kesteven District Council

in the Chair

Lincolnshire County Councillors

Councillor Thomas M Trollope-Bellew
(Stamford Rural)

SKDC Councillors

Councillor Terl Bryant
Councillor Robert Conboy*
Councillor Bob Sandall*
Councillor Tom Webster
* also Stamford Town Councillor

Tenant Compact Representatives

Maurice Bloodworth (Stamford North Compact)
Councillor Ray Lee (Compact South, Stamford & Town Councillor)

**Stamford Vision
Stamford Chamber of Trade
and Commerce**

Catherine Hammant
Egerton Gilman

SKDC Officers

Beverly Agass
Mark Harrison
Mick Start
Paul Morrison
Lucy Bonshor

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Beverly Agass who was one of the new Strategic Directors at the District Council. She would replace John Pell as the lead senior officer at the Stamford LAA, Mr Pell would be retiring from the authority at the end of July and the Chairman wished to place his thanks on record for Mr Pell's help and support of the Stamford LAA.

He then introduced and welcomed two new members to the LAA, Councillor Tom Webster who had recently been elected in the Truesdale by-election and Mr Eg Gilman who was from the Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce. A request had been received from Neil Scholes to become a co-opted member of the LAA and the Chairman informed Mr Scholes that an item concerning co-option would be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colin Helstrip, Chairman of LCC, District Councillor Andrew Moore, Mrs Mary Patrick Vice Chairman of the District Compact and the following Stamford Town Councillors; Michelle Feasey, Mayor of Stamford, Christine Bruff, Alan Loft, John Binder, John Judge, Mike Exton*, Maureen Jalili*, Peter Stean, Brian Sumner+, Maureen Riley and Harrish Bisnauthsing*.

* Also District Councillor

+ Also County Councillor

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2006 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Public Forum

(1) Question from David Barnett

What is South Kesteven District Council's present position following the referendum held and the two very unrelated and confusing questions asked which gave a totally uninformed answer?

The Chairman said he would pass the question on as he was not in a position to answer the question.

Response from John Lawson indicated that the question was not that complicated and residents could give an intelligent answer as it was the only opportunity that the population of Stamford had received to be included in the plans. Perhaps after the work has been completed a further referendum could be held to see what the people of Stamford think to the changes.

(2) Question from Mr Footitt

How much longer have the people of Stamford to wait for a permanent waste disposal site?

The Chairman indicated that talks were on going between the LCC and the owners of the site. County Councillor Trollope-Bellew informed the meeting that planning permission for the site had been granted in February 2005 but talks were on going.

The owner of the site, Mr Gilman responded in his capacity as Director of the Company who owned the site. He said that a meeting had taken place with two senior officials from LCC and the major issue currently was access to the site and it was hoped that with the bypass being put on to the LCC schedule that an answer concerning the site would be known by the end of the year.

(3) Question from Mr Taylor

When will the Council take action to designate a 20mph speed limit outside the Malcolm Sargent School and stop the parking on the grass verges?

The Chairman indicated that both questions were highways matters, however Councillor Trollope-Bellew said that currently LCC was reviewing the whole policy across the county and that included 385 schools which was a very large and long job, plus expensive. Speed limits were advisory not compulsory. In regard to parking on grass verges, was this at school start and home time as this was something that Kevin Brumfield from highways dealt with.

The parking happened when parents were delivering their children to school and collecting them, however by imposing a speed limit of 20mph that would move the problem up the road and more grass verges would be ripped up, the kerbs needed to be replaced.

Unfortunately, the problem was not unique to Empingham Road and legal action to stop people parking on grass verges was expensive.

5. Review of SKDC Priorities

In a presentation to the LAA Beverly Agass referred to the Council's annual review of the Council's priorities and the on going consultation with the community and residents. What were the current views of residents? What direction did the Council go in the future?

In the resident's survey, which was conducted in February of this year, 93% of those who responded endorsed the Council's view in response to the Council's vision. 84% of those who responded felt that the Council was channelling its resources both people and finance in the correct direction.

She then went through the Council's main priorities of Anti Social Behaviour, Street Scene, Recycling, Town Centre Regeneration, Affordable Housing and Communications and highlighted areas of work that had been done in each of these areas. Issues that had been raised during the consultation on priorities indicated that people wanted more opportunity to be involved, 42% felt that views were not taken on board and 25% thought that as providers of a public service we did not have a joined up approach with other providers, as we should. It was hoped that the Council would be able to respond positively to these comments in the next 12 months.

She then mentioned those services which were non priority such as the travel voucher scheme.

In concluding her presentation Mrs Agass indicated where the money from the £105 which was that portion of council tax which South Kesteven District Council received and asked for the LAA's feedback with regard to the priorities did they agree with them, where did they think changes should be made.

A member of the public stated that issues which were priorities for the people of Stamford were not seen as priorities for other areas and felt that the funding from the Council tax should be unique to each area.

Mrs Agass responded by saying that although each town was unique as there was only so much money available and the Council had to look at priorities in general, each ward councillor for the specific areas should promote the views of the town when the priorities were set. The Chairman agreed stating that the priorities were based on an overall assessment throughout the district and there would always be local issues which were unique to the four major towns but unfortunately, the Council had to look at the district as a whole.

One member of the LAA who was also the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Assets highlighted the expenditure associated with the Stamford Arts Centre and the Stamford Leisure Pool which was pro rata twice that per resident of the rest of the district. He reminded the LAA that the council tax for the district was the lowest bar one for the County.

Reference was then made to the leisure facilities in Stamford and the fact that when the funding was available for a new leisure centre the wrong place was chosen and the funds for this project were used elsewhere. It was hoped by the residents of Stamford that in the future the money would be available for Stamford to have a new leisure centre.

The figure concerning internet access was queried to which the response was that of the forms/documents/applications that could be accessed by the internet 99.5% were available.

Other issues raised were the distribution of the SK Today which had suffered distribution problems which had been acknowledged by the Council and a new distributor was being used. If problems were still being experienced with the distribution the Chairman urged people to contact the Council. Grants to outside bodies were also discussed together with the current position on travel vouchers.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Assets indicated that there was a recommendation that value for money and financial controls be made a priority A of the Council.

Questions were asked about the current proposals for the town centre in Stamford to which County Councillor Trollope-Bellew replied that following a site inspection the application had been voted against, however there was nothing to stop a new application from being submitted.

It was requested that any consultation concerning town centre regeneration in Stamford should include those villages that surround Stamford as well as shop keepers in the town.

Reference was then made to the priority anti-social behaviour and couldn't it be changed to anti-social behaviour sports and leisure as sports and leisure played a large part in stopping anti-social behaviour. Mrs Agass responded that sports and leisure were part of the anti-social behaviour strategy.

The issue of Leisure Trusts was mentioned and the Chairman said that this issue was still being looked into by the Council.

When asked if the LAA had any major observations concerning the priorities, none were forthcoming and the Chairman and Mrs Agass thanked the LAA for the comments that they had made.

Conclusion

The LAA was content with the existing SKDC Priorities as they currently stood, but some members of the LAA considered that Crime and Disorder should be "Crime and Disorder and Sports and Leisure" whilst others felt that each of the four major towns should have their own priorities.

6. Items identified by Stamford Town Council as issues for Consideration:

- Licensing – Cumulative Impact Zones**

Councillor Conboy on behalf of the Stamford Town Council referred to the recent legal case in which a Council had lost its appeal against a refusal to extend opening hours. Due to the impact of the extension of opening hours did Stamford qualify especially for the people living in the centre of town?

The Chairman introduced Mick Start to the LAA who referred to the Licensing Act which he had talked to the LAA about at a meeting last year. The Council's Licensing Committee following guidance had decided when they made their licensing policy in December 2004 that they would not include cumulative impact in the policy, that applied to the whole of the district not just Stamford. The Licensing Committee had to bear in mind what the policy said and based on evidence there was no proof that a cumulative impact was required.

He referred to a recent case in which Guilford Council had won against Wetherspoons. One of the reasons for awarding against Wetherspoons was that Gilford had included cumulative impact zones in their licensing policy. It was not just a question of changing the policy, evidence was required and the police figures since the Licensing Act had been in force showed a decrease in alcohol related crime.

Joint visits had been held between the police and members of the Licensing Committee late at night to view the closing of the public houses. The tightening up of the closure at night of the late night refreshment houses had also had an impact on lessening problems. Consultation would soon be starting for the review of the licensing policy and a public meeting would be held on 19th July in Stamford Arts Centre and 12th July

in Grantham to which all licensees of pubs and clubs would be invited to attend to express their views.

- **Parking – Grass Verges**

Councillor Ray Lee had asked for this item to be considered as contact with both Kevin Brumfield and Brian Thompson at the County had not been very helpful. The Community Beat Officers had also been approached but they did not have the enforcement powers. The problem of parking on grass verges had been referred to previously and it was confirmed that due to the lack of a traffic warden in Stamford parking had become very lax, however the issue was for the County Council to address.

- **The Future of Local Government**

As the white paper had been changed to a green paper and the date deferred until October it was agreed to wait until the green paper was published.

- **Allocation of Land for B1 Business Development (area E4 land off Empingham Road)**

Councillor Conboy on behalf of the Stamford Town Council asked who had designated the area as a preferred option. Previously a protest had been successful in stopping any development of the site.

Mark Harrison from Planning Policy at the Council gave a brief presentation on the Local Development Framework (LDF) and how this replaced the Local Plan.

Basically the LDF was a folder which was made up of many documents. The Local Plan had been a very unwieldy document where as the LDF was much smaller and prepared over a number of years.

The first document to go out for consultation was the Issues and Options paper which had been consulted widely and had received a good local response. The Local Development Scheme (Project Plan) had been made in April 2005 and indicated what documents should be prepared by and when.

The Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in April 2006.

The preferred option approach dealt with addressing key issues of the district to 2021. Two documents were involved the Core Strategy and the Housing and Economic Development Plan which put forward preferred options, ones which affect people. Consultation on this document ran from 26th June to 7th August 2006. It was a statutory six week period in which the Council wanted the views of the public, stakeholders and developers.

This particular site had been picked following robust evidence based work on employment studies for the district and the needs to 2021. There was currently a 12% growth in the population above the national average for Stamford and the amount of jobs and the average travel time to work of 16km provides the opportunity to look at areas to generate jobs for the area. Four key areas were being looked at including the area at Empingham Road.

The preferred option document would be available on the Internet on 26th June and would be distributed widely including local libraries. He urged people to make their opinions regarding the sites known to the Council and stressed that this was an early consultation stage. One member of the LAA said that some people did not like writing things down and Mr Harrison replied that they were proposing to hold workshop sessions, one in the north and one in the south of the district for people to attend and these would be publicised accordingly.

The Chairman thanked Mr Harrison for attending.

- **Enforcement/Planning Issues – Specifically premises within the Conservation Area not complying with the shopfront guide**

Deferred until the next meeting.

7. Matters notified to the Chairman by LAA Members

None.

8. Matters that the LAA would like to consider at future meetings

Why did South Kesteven District Council carryout major consultation during the holiday period?

Car Parking Charges for Stamford

(If a report was out concerning car parking in Stamford and the future, the Portfolio Holder responsible, Councillor John Smith be requested to attend the LAA.)

Local Development Framework (LDF)

9. Date, time and venue for next meeting

The next meeting would be held at 7pm in the Town Hall, Stamford on Thursday 2nd November.



RURAL SOUTH LOCAL FORUM

MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2006, 7.00P.M.
EDENHAM VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Chairman:	Councillor Mrs Neal, South Kesteven District Council
Lincolnshire County Councillors:	Councillor Roy Chapman
South Kesteven District Councillors:	Councillor Reg Lovelock MBE
Parish Councillors:	Councillor Ray Biggs (Edenham Parish Council) Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren (North Witham Parish Council) Councillor Hawes (Edenham Parish Council) Councillor Jean Joyce (Edenham Parish Council) Councillor Tony Martin (Edenham Parish Council) Councillor Brian Wilkinson (Aslackby Parish Council) Councillor Hilary Winstanley (Colsterworth Parish Council)
South Kesteven Officers:	Paul Morrison (Scrutiny Officer) Sally Marshall (Corporate Head Finance & Resources) Dawn Temple (Strategic Waste Management Policy Officer) Rebecca Chadwick (Scrutiny Support Officer)
Others:	7 members of the public 1 member of the press
Apologies:	Councillor Hill (LCC), Kirkby Underwood Parish Council (clerk – Mr Fisher and chairman – Councillor Andrews) Councillor Selby (SKDC)

1. Introduction and welcome

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Neal welcomed everyone to the meeting, explaining that the change in name from Local Area Assemblies to Local Forums had been made to avoid confusion with Local Area Agreements. It was the same forum and same type of meeting.

2. Public open forum

There were no questions from the public at this stage in the meeting.



3. Minutes of the last meeting – 30th March 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Update from last meeting

The district council's scrutiny officer reported that in relation to the wind-farms item at the last meeting, Mike Sibthorp had confirmed that there were no significant developments concerning the possible wind-farm addressed at the last meeting.

A member of the forum asked if the training referred to in the item on litter was provided to local wardens. Mrs Temple replied that this training was available for the parish wardens. However, it was provided by DEFRA and required a number of registrations. The district council was therefore providing its own private training and Mrs Temple offered to speak to the member about this after the meeting.

5. Membership

The Leader invited nominations for further representatives. Up to five co-optees were allowed on the forum and there were currently none appointed. As there were no suggestions at the meeting, the Leader suggested that the forum tried harder to find appropriate volunteers for co-option. The scrutiny officer agreed to include a paragraph in his letter for the next meeting encouraging members to think about possible nominations.

6. Twin bin roll out

The district council's strategic waste management policy officer, Mrs Temple, gave a presentation on the household waste twin bin scheme.

About 73% waste was currently being sent to landfill and this could not continue. The government had introduced tight targets for the council to reach and so it was looking at a behavioural change in dealing with waste.

Mrs Temple outlined the council's current performance: in 2001/02 the council was recycling 6.6% of household waste collected. The introduction of the green box scheme in the south of the district and a paper collection in the north saw significant increases in recycling rates. This had resulted in achieving 26.8% following the introduction of a garden waste collection in 2005/06. This latter scheme allowed linking with other authorities and gauging public support for recycling. Recycling rates plateaued at about 27%, which was a great achievement given that the government target was 18%, but the council's target was 30% and looking to increase. The most challenging targets related to the amount of waste sent to landfill. Tough targets had been set on this and financial penalties were in place. Current levels would result in heavy fines should they continue.



The officer explained that the sporadic commitment to recycling had been the fault of the council as well as the public. There were no incentives for people to recycle more so the council planned to introduce positive steps to measure the behaviour of recycling through the twin bin scheme, which would provide all residents with a full recycling collection service. There would be limitations on the capacity of the black wheelie bin to try to encourage recycling and the bins would be tagged to indicate property and weight, time and date of emptying (for service monitoring purposes), not the specific content of rubbish. The information obtained would be used to target positive reinforcement of the recycling message to non-recyclers.

The twin bins were starting to be delivered with information packs. A new branding had been launched with the bins and a helpline and mini website set up.

Mrs Temple was thanked for her presentation. Questions from the forum and the public were invited. In response to these, the officer and district council members explained that:

- The roll-out of the twin bins would be finished in June 2007.
- Recycling banks would remain.
- Household collections would be for one wheelie bin on alternate weeks.
- People not able to manoeuvre the bins would be able to register with an assisted-collection scheme. The collection crew would collect and return the bin from where it was stored.
- When recycling rates were measured at each household, these would be done as a percentage of a household's total waste and so would not disadvantage or advantage larger or smaller households.
- All recyclables were to be put in the one silver bin. Compost waste should be put in a green wheelie bin or a home composter or compost heap. The green bags for garden waste service would be stopped.
- The recycling scheme was very expensive but set up costs had been included in the council's capital programme so would not have an impact on next year's council tax. Ongoing revenue costs did have an impact on council tax but the fortnightly collection had offset this as a weekly collection for both bins would have required significant expenditure.
- No additional land-fill waste would be collected other than the black wheelie bin but if people did have problems, individual visits would be arranged.
- The council had tried to lobby against the over-packaging of products but this was currently under-enforced by government.
- The council did provide education events in schools and a county-wide cashback incentive scheme was in place for the purchase of reusable nappies.

Members of the forum and the public also expressed some negative thoughts on the scheme, mainly that wheelie bins were too large for people with small gardens and not to everyone's taste. The chairman responded by explaining that a large consultation exercise had been carried out on the collection service, including the colour of the bins. 72.7% had indicated a preference for wheeled bins for refuse, the main reason being the ease of moving them, as opposed to carrying sacks. 69.3% respondents had preferred wheeled bins for recycling; again, the main reason given was the ease of moving the waste. The district council's decision was based on this consultation.



Concern was also expressed about the durability of the bins and potential problems with smells from keeping landfill waste for a fortnight before collection. The officer explained that a lot of authorities were moving to fortnightly collections and advice on reducing smells was contained in the information pack. The bins were expected to last between ten and fifteen years and over this time were a cheaper option than providing black sacks. There was no financial gain to the council for recycling because there were no local facilities for high-grade materials recycling. However, recycling was not as costly as sending waste to landfill.

The officer reminded the forum that a letter was sent to residents about one month before wheelie bin delivery. An information pack was delivered with the bins and a mini website and helpline had been set up for further assistance.

7. SKDC parish council conference – December 7th 2006

The scrutiny officer, Mr Morrison, circulated a letter that had been sent to all parish and town councils about a conference to be hosted by the district council later in the year. It had been proposed that five topics would be considered at the event and the letter gave ten suggestions. Mr Morrison asked that if there was anything overlooked, please let him know.

The forum thought this was an excellent idea but as it was to be held during normal working hours, a lot of parish councillors would not be able to attend. This was noted.

8. Matters notified to the chairman by forum members

None had been received. The scrutiny officer commented that the letters sent out before the meetings did invite items from forum members. This was sometimes taken up, but few requests for items came from parish councils.

9. Items for future meetings

There were no requests for items but the scrutiny officer could be contacted at another time for suggestions.

10. Date, time and venue for next meeting

Wednesday 10th January 2007 at 7pm in Colsterworth, subject to the venue being available.

It was noted that Rippingale was a possible location for a future meeting.

11. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 8.30p.m.



BOURNE LOCAL FORUM

MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2006, 7.00P.M.
BOURNE CORN EXCHANGE, ABBEY ROAD, BOURNE, PE10 9EF**

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Bryant, South Kesteven District Council

Lincolnshire County Councillors: Councillor Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Horn

South Kesteven District Councillors: Councillor Mrs Cartwright (Aslackby Parish Council)
Councillor Miss Channell (Greatford Parish Council)
Councillor Fines (Bourne Town Council)
Councillor Kirkman
Councillor Mrs Neal (Bourne Town Council)
Councillor Mrs Smith (Bourne Town Council)

Parish Councillors: Councillor Aylett (Greatford)
Councillor Lack (Morton and Hanthorpe)

Co-opted members: Mr Fuller (Bourne Town Centre Coordinator)
Mr Gillatt
Mrs Lister
Rev Colin Martin

Tenant's Compact: Mr D Glover
Mr T Kelby
Ms G Tresidder

South Kesteven Officers: Beverley Agass (Strategic Director)
Garry Knighton (Contracts Manager)
Mark Harrison (Team Leader, Planning Policy)
Rebecca Chadwick (Scrutiny Support Officer)

Others: Clerk to Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council
Clerk to Greatford Parish Council
1 other member of Bourne Town Council
2 members of the Civic Society
24 members of the public
1 member of the press

Parishes not represented: Careby, Hollywell & Aunby; Carlby; Coundhorpe & Creton;
Haconby & Stainfield; Little Bytham; Thurlby; Toft, Lound and
Manthorpe; Witham on the Hill

1. Introduction, welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded the forum of its purpose and remit. Each member of the forum present was introduced.

Apologies for absence were received from: district Councillors John Smith, Nicholson and Fisher; Haconby & Stainfield parish Councillor Williams; county Councillor Farquharson; co-optee Jonathon Cooke; and Thurlby Parish Council.

2. Public open forum

A member of the public spoke for three minutes on the district council's new wheelie bin scheme. He said:

"Our wheelie bins have not yet been delivered so I have no idea about the rules and regulations, but they amount to four whole pages of what we are and are not allowed to do. I have spoken to a lot of people about these instructions and I share their concern about the restrictions, especially on general refuse. I understand that a vote took place several years ago on the issue of the wheelie bins and the wheelie bins vote lost. Since then, there was another vote about a year ago and I have no knowledge of this and I wonder how many people here had knowledge of this vote. I have lived in the SKDC area for 40 years and have many acquaintances and I do not know a single person who has voted for wheelie bins. What is the true cost of these wheelie bins and the present refuse lorries? Are we going to be faced with the cost of replacing the whole fleet? I understand that no sacks or bags are allowed in the refuse bins. Does that mean we have to empty our bags into the bins? This is very unhygienic and will get very smelly. There may be a system coming from the council that will clean them but for a cost. I can't see how the vulnerable can handle these wheelie bins. There is concern that this is the thin end of the wedge and sooner or later we will be charged for the collection of the rubbish."

Another member of the public, who explained that her late father implemented the first (fortnightly) refuse collection within the area, spoke on this issue:

"I consider that a fortnightly refuse collection is a retrograde step. The chairman and councillors are making a big mistake regarding the proposed fortnightly collection; the weekly collection has worked so well for so many years. What are we supposed to do with the rubbish for a fortnight? Will we be able to purchase another bin at an extra cost and will it be collected? This proposal will severely increase fly tipping and other associated problems. This is a real worry for people like myself who can imagine this problem and will be for those that will come to see. There are other authorities like South Holland District Council who are retaining their weekly refuse collection service. I don't think the fortnightly collection will work and I look forward to telling you so in the near future"

Two further questions were received:

"A week ago I went to the council offices to get more plastic rubbish bags, because I had run out, and I was told that I was getting wheelie bins in November. I live down a little track and I understand that someone came round and assessed the situation to decide who was going to get wheelie bins. There is no way that I am going to wheel a bin 400 yards up a track. Also, if I leave the wheelie bin out by the street, am I going to be responsible for any person tripping over it on the pavement?"

"I have heard that the wheelie bins are a cost-cutting exercise. How long will it take for the wheelie bins to pay for themselves?"

The chairman thanked the members of the public for their comments and explained that as the wheelie bin service would be the subject of a presentation later in the meeting, the officer would respond to these comments during his presentation.

3. Minutes of the last meeting – 19th July 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2006 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and the clerk was to be congratulated on their clarity.

4. Updates from last meeting

Ivan Fuller, the Bourne Town Centre Coordinator, stated that, as reported in local media, the district council's cabinet had agreed to terminate the arrangement with Henry Davidson Development Ltd, who was the preferred developer for the Bourne core area redevelopment project. This had been for a variety of reasons, mainly the changing timescales. The viability of the development proposition from the second preferred developer was being investigated. Mr Fuller explained that developments of this complexity with multiple ownerships can usually take several years to complete and although he hoped that the Bourne project would not take this long, it was judicious to be sensible about the development timescales. He reiterated that the redevelopment of the Bourne core area had the full commitment of the district council.

Mr Fuller was keen for members of the forum and the public to communicate with him. He was contactable on 07799 436246, ivan@ifuller.fsnet.co.uk or by post via the council's bourne area office at Town Hall, North Street, Bourne, Lincs. PE10 9EA.

Councillor Mrs Cartwright, district council portfolio holder for organisational development with a responsibility for housing, updated the forum on large scale voluntary stock transfer (LSVT). The offer document had been delivered to all council tenants with a DVD highlighting the key points. This started the 28 day consultation period. 142 initial feedback forms, which asked for points of further clarification or changes to the document, had been received. The council would shortly be sending out its stage 2 letter, stating that no changes to the offer document had been requested from the feedback, although a few changes to ensure understanding would be made. An extraordinary meeting of the council had been arranged for 12th October 2006 to approve this letter. A ballot of tenants who qualified would follow.

5. Membership

As discussed at the last meeting, the forum was satisfied that it required no further co-optees and so this item would be removed from future agendas until membership required review.

6. Anglian Water / strategic water management

Mark Harrison, the district council's planning policy team leader, explained that Anglian Water, after a request from the forum's last meeting, had been invited to send a representative to this meeting to speak about local water services. Their planning liaison manager had been very keen to attend, but was currently involved in the

Yorkshire regional inquiry. Mr Harrison had spoken with Anglian Water on a number of occasions and so was able to report to some degree on their work:

- Anglian water was working on a strategy for water management in the future.
- Their plans were developed on a five year basis and then submitted to Ofwat for approval.
- The current strategy and plan addressed 2005-2010.
- A summary was available at the meeting and a full version on Anglian Water's website. It covered detailed issues such as the average price of bills to broader issues of maintenance and leakage.
- Anglian Water's objective was to achieve lowest leakage rate in the country.
- Current work was planning ahead to their next strategic plan for 2010-2015, which needed to be prepared by 2009.
- Anglian water, the largest of ten water companies, which covered from the Humber to the Thames – 2.6 million properties within 27,500km² – was liaising with every local authority in its catchment area to supply them with a full indication of planned commitments and future planning allocations. This was so they could incorporate population and non-domestic population growth into their plan.
- The company managed one of the driest regions in the country, receiving about half the average annual rainfall of the country.
- The company was looking to improve its future growth projections and to take a more proactive approach by targeting its investment appropriately: physical resources, water network, sewerage treatments and sewerage networks.

Mr Harrison was thanked for addressing the forum. The member of the public who first raised the issue of water provision at the forum still considered that his question, which related specifically to Bourne, had not been answered.

It was **agreed** that:

Anglian Water be invited to a future meeting of the forum to provide further details on their work and answer any specific questions raised previously at the forum or any forwarded to Rebecca Chadwick or Mark Harrison at the district council.

7. Warners Development, Bourne

The district council's planning policy team leader, Mark Harrison, responded to questions raised at a previous forum about the Warners site in Bourne. The questions had related to planning as well as environmental health issues, and Mr Harrison understood that following the concerns raised at the forum, the district council's portfolio holder, Councillor Smith, had taken it up soon after the meeting with the council's environmental health services. The council had also discussed specific complaints with the company. The complaints concerning fumes had been investigated several times, including unannounced out of hours visits, but no offensive odours had been detected. The Department of Health held information on registered emissions and this was available for inspection by the public. For noise complaints, diary sheets had been sent to complainants to monitor and record the situation. When these were returned to the council offices, noise-monitoring equipment may be installed at the most appropriate time.

Warners did have a permit to operate based on process guidance notes from central government.

In relation to planning issues, the role of the council was to identify appropriate land for relocation, not to force a business to move to a designated industrial section. The council was currently compiling its local development framework (LDF) and significant areas of employment land had been allocated to the periphery of Bourne. If the LDF was adopted, land would be available for business to relocate if they wished. Neither Mr Harrison, nor anyone in the planning section at the council, was aware of any proposals to remove the nearby bungalows.

A member of the forum added that Warners had fitted a filter to reduce offensive odours. It was considered that this had been successful.

8. Update on twin bins

The district council's street scene service manager gave a presentation on the twin bin waste collection service.

He provided a background to the service, reasons for the new scheme and answers to questions from the public open forum, as noted above:

- Before 2003, recycling facilities were provided by recycling banks only and this resulted in 6% of household waste being recycled.
- When the waste service was brought in-house, a green box scheme was introduced. This increased recycling rates to 14% and then to just over 30% currently with the green garden waste wheelie bins.
- Although this was a significant improvement, the EU landfill directive stated that waste had to be diverted away from landfill. Limits would be in place for 2010 and fines imposed if those limits were exceeded. If current landfill trends continued to 2010, Lincolnshire would be fined in the first year between £10-£15million.
- The current collection scheme did exceed the statutory target to recycle 18% of household waste but the service only covered 73% households. Recycling had been identified as a major priority from public consultation and was also a focus of central government. Results from consultation carried out several years ago showed 51% respondents in favour of black bags. However, this consultation did not ask about a recycling collection service and so a questionnaire in SKToday circulated earlier in the year asked about this and more than 70% respondents showed a preference for wheelie bins.
- The council was committed to delivering a high standard recycling service and therefore allocated a £2.5million capital programme to purchase wheelie bins (made from recycled plastic) and convert the vehicles for collection. The wheelie bins were currently being delivered to households. This would be completed in June 2007 and the target was to achieve 50% recycling from households. Information was being sent to residents about two weeks before delivery of the bins and the subsequent collection. This had been considered the most effective time period. More positive than negative comments had been received about the information provided.
- The new wheelie bins were micro-chipped and this identified the household address, and lorry bin lifts measured the weight of waste and recyclables.
- The council had a legal duty to collect waste from households. Residents also had a legal duty to ensure that their waste was stored and presented to the council for collection in an appropriate manner. The waste from the wheelie bins could only

be collected with the microchip still in place, because this activated the collection vehicles. If anyone removed their microchip, their waste could not be collected and it was considered as damaging council property.

- There had been a lot of scaremongering that this would lead to a separate tax for waste collection. This was not the case and current legislation did not allow the council do this. The information was transmitted to the council offices and used to identify the recycling levels of each household. 'Good' recyclers could be rewarded and any problems experienced by poor recyclers would be resolved. Research had shown that this approach was the most effective.
- The silver bin was for recycling materials and the black bin for landfill waste. If a household had more recycling waste than could fit in the silver bin, this could be placed alongside the bin and would be collected. People could not, however, have side waste with the black bins. This prohibition would encourage people to think more about the waste they were throwing away to landfill. A weekly landfill waste collection would counteract this environmental essential message.
- If any person had difficulty in taking their wheelie bin to the edge of their property, the council did provide an assisted collection service, subject to a doctor's certificate.
- Cost savings would be achieved from not having to purchase black bin bags and from the introduction of a fortnightly collection. The cost to the council of processing recycling materials was currently £10 per tonne less than sending the same weight of waste to landfill.
- South Holland was the only council in Lincolnshire which had decided to keep their bag collection service. Over half of the councils in the country already operated a twin bin scheme.
- In relation to cleaning the bins, residents had a responsibility to ensure that waste was presented properly. To help, information packs provided advice on how to reduce smells from waste and people were encouraged to put landfill waste into bags before placing them in the wheelie bin. If a wheelie bin was damaged, this would be replaced by the council.
- Before the roll-out of the bins, properties were inspected by the collection crew. Those properties where it was considered a wheelie bin service would be problematic received another inspection. If anyone thought that their property was not suitable for a wheelie bin service, they should contact the council for a reassessment.
- The green bag scheme for garden waste would be phased out. People could obtain a green wheelie bins from the council for £10 (the cost of 17 green bags) instead. The content of the green wheelie bins was composted, whereas the green bags were sent to landfill.

The forum discussed a number of related issues. A few councils did compost their own green waste but this was a specialist and expensive service. The chairman informed the forum that he would ask the district council's portfolio holder for recycling to look into this. There was also some concern that SKToday, especially the edition containing the waste collection questionnaire, had not be distributed to all households. The strategic director explained that the council was keen to receive views from residents and that there was no motivation to shortcut or circumvent certain properties. A number of people indicated that had not receive a copy of SKToday. Those people should contact the council. *Late note – recent problems with distribution had been caused by a dissatisfactory service from the distribution company. The regional office of this company had recently gone into administration. The district council was working hard to identify a temporary solution. Normal delivery should resume in January 2007.*

The forum also discussed the possibility of providing different sized wheelie bins for people in sheltered housing complexes. The officer explained that the continuation of large communal bins was being looked into. It was not desirable to provide smaller bins in case the same capacity as other properties was required.

The officer was congratulated and thanked for his presentation that had cleared a lot of misunderstandings .

9. SKDC parish council conference

The district council's strategic director reported that an invitation had been sent to all parishes in the district to a parish council conference on 7th December 2006. She explained that proposed themes for the day event, stating that parishes had been asked to identify their top three preferences. This was noted and no comments were made by the forum.

10. Matters that the forum would like to consider at future meetings

The chairman invited the forum and the public to discuss any issues they would like to raise during refreshments after the meeting.

11. Date, time and venue for next meeting

17th January 2007, 7.00p.m. Bourne Corn Exchange.

A member of the forum offered Lawrence Park in Thurlby as an alternative location to the corn exchange. The majority agreed to hold the meeting at the corn exchange but Lawrence Park could be used for a future meeting.

GRANTHAM LOCAL FORUM



MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2006, 7.00P.M.
COUNCIL OFFICES, ST. PETER'S HILL, GRANTHAM. NG31 6PZ**

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Smith, South Kesteven District Council

Lincolnshire County Councillors: Councillor M. Williams (SKDC)

South Kesteven District Councillors: Councillor Chivers
Councillor Gibbins
Councillor Parkin
Councillor Shorrock (resigned at meeting)
Councillor M. Taylor
Councillor Wilks
Councillor A. Williams

Parish Councillors: Councillor Notley (Harlaxton PC)

Co-opted members: Mr Atkinson (Grantham Disability Forum)
Mr Prince (Grantham Town Centre Residents Group)

Tenant's Compact: Ms Clark (Earlesfield Compact)
Mr Cox (Grantham Town Neighbourhood Compact)
Mr Linford (Earlesfield Compact)

South Kesteven Officers: Duncan Kerr (Chief Executive)
Jo Toomey (Democratic Support Officer)

Others: 6 members of the public
1 member of the press

1. Introduction, welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman, district Councillor John Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Local Area Assemblies had been renamed Local Forums to avoid confusion with Local Area Agreements. Councillor Smith apologised for not attending the last meeting and thanked Councillor Frances Cartwright for chairing the meeting in his absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harris (Harlaxton PC) Councillor Stokes (SKDC), Councillor Thompson (SKDC), Councillor Wheat (Lincolnshire County Council & SKDC), Councillor Mrs Wheat (SKDC) and Mr Wootten (Grantham Road Users Group).

Councillor Shorrock tendered his resignation from the Forum. He stated his reasons for leaving and moved to the area designated for members of the public.

2. Public open forum

Question 1: Why did the Cabinet decide not to back the recommendations of the Engagement Development and Scrutiny Panel (DSP) to create a progressive Local Forum where the people who attended could decide the structure of the meetings and their agenda? Recommendations were also made about the appointment of a Chairman from within the forum.

Response: The Engagement DSP made recommendations on the operation of the forum. Each forum had an independent Chairman. Agenda setting is governed by the limited length of the forum. Members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions, which will either be answered or referred to an appropriate department/committee within the council or any other appropriate body.

Question 2: Why did the Cabinet not take up a critical power for the forums? None of the powers or responsibilities recommended by the Engagement DSP were taken up by Cabinet. They took out the idea that forums could make recommendations to Portfolio Holders and DSPs. There should be assurances that if something is brought up, it will be considered properly and responses reported back.

Other members of the Forum supported the view that forums should have the power to make recommendations to appropriate authorities. There were suggestions that the agenda should have included items on Grantham Hospital and the District Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). One member of the Forum did not feel that it was appropriate to use the Forum to attack the Cabinet decision, which had been made five months prior to the meeting.

Response: An update on the LDF can be given under agenda item 9: 'Matters notified to the Chairman by forum members' and the Chief Executive can provide an update on Grantham Hospital on his arrival.

Question 3: Given the poor attendance of members of the public, what was done to advertise the forum?

Response: Items were included in the Grantham Journal on two separate occasions and posters had been displayed.

Suggestions of other places the forum could be advertised included the County newspaper and the tenants' newsletter, 'Skyline'.

Question 4: Are there terms of reference for the Local Forum?

Response: There are no specific terms of reference for the Local Forums as they were designed to be broad bodies that addressed the needs of individual communities across the District, however, the Forum could develop its own terms of reference and submit them to the council.

It was AGREED that members of the Forum should consider possible terms of reference for discussion at the next meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting – 7th June 2006

Subject to the following amendments, the minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting:

1. "Christopher Knotley" should read "Christopher Notley"
2. "SAFFA" should read "SSAFA"
3. "Grantham Town Centre Compact" should read "Grantham Town Neighbourhood Compact"

At the last meeting it had been agreed that "A Town Council for Grantham" should become a standing agenda item; its omission from the agenda was noted. The Chairman explained that items suggested for each agenda had to be prioritised. He proposed that the issue should be referred to the District Council's Engagement DSP for further investigation and an update report provided at the next meeting.

It was AGREED that the District Council's Engagement Development and Scrutiny Panel should look further into the issue of a Town Council for Grantham and report back at the next meeting of the forum.

4. Update from last meeting

Gorse Lane: Members of the Healthy Environment DSP went on a site visit to Gorse Lane to see the problems first hand. This was followed by a meeting of the DSP at which recommendations were made. A representative from the County Council's Highways was present for the site visit as was the local County Councillor who also attended the meeting afterwards.

Residents' Parking: The report from the feasibility study was almost ready for release. It was anticipated that consensus would be reached between the county and seven district councils by spring 2007, after which approximately eighteen months of legal work would be required. At the last meeting it had been agreed that a working group should be set up to look at the issue in conjunction with the release of the feasibility study, so that a scheme could be in place when the legal framework had been finalised. The group would be co-ordinated by the Economic DSP. The Chief Executive suggested that representatives from the County Council could be invited to a future meeting to explain the delays surrounding the scheme.

It was AGREED that the Forum should request that the Economic DSP set up a working group to look into residents' parking. The group should consider co-opting member from the Grantham Town Centre Residents Group and other residents.

South West Lincolnshire PCT: The Chief Executive gave a brief update on the situation of Grantham Hospital. Consultation papers indicating changes to services from United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust were expected in February 2007. There had been a lot of management changes within the trust which had made consistent dialogue difficult. The Chief Executive was asked whether the PCT had been questioned on which services had been commissioned for Grantham. While the PCT put out contracts for services, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust stated whether or not it was safe for them to be delivered in each location. It was suggested that the Trust should contract services from other locations. It was suggested that the forum should support the work of the Grantham Hospital Defence Committee. A request was made that the Chairman of the group should be invited to the next meeting of the Forum. Representatives from the PCT and United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust should also be invited.

It was AGREED that the Chairman of the Grantham Hospital Defence Committee and representatives from the Primary Care Trust and United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust should be invited to the next meeting of the Local Forum.

5. Membership

No nominations for new members had been received. A suggestion was made that young people should be represented on the forum. Very few young people had ever attended meetings of the forum. Posters advertising the meeting had been circulated to all secondary schools in Grantham. It was suggested that young people could be encouraged to participate in the local forum through 'Democracy Day'.

6. Footpaths in Grantham and the Disability Discrimination Act

The issue had been raised by a member of the forum who felt that split routes for pedestrians and cyclists did not comply with statutory requirements, specifically regarding access for wheelchair users. The officer responsible for joint thoroughfares had been invited to the meeting but was unable to attend; a copy of a statement received from him was circulated. The Chairman expressed his disappointment that the Highways Department was not represented at the meeting.

There had been complaints about the centre line separating the cycleway and pedestrian area becoming slippery, which presented problems for wheelchair users. Concerns had also been raised about low branches and junctions that had not been ramped.

A Sustrans Liaison Ranger present at the meeting spoke about the volunteers who addressed the problems caused by over-hanging branches. He explained that rangers had the authority to cut down overhanging branches or report the problem to the County Council; he also emphasised that being a ranger was voluntary.

Specific complaints were made about the dropped kerb at the bottom of Springfield Road, Grantham, where the stop line for the traffic went beyond the dropped kerb. This meant that people relying on the dropped kerb were unable to cross the road even when the traffic had stopped. Members cited problems accessing dropped kerbs and the obstruction of the footpath caused by vehicles parking on the pavement.

It was AGREED that the County Council should be asked to send a representative to the next meeting of the Local Forum.

7. Twin Bin Roll Out

The district council's Chief Executive gave a presentation on the roll out of the twin bin scheme. He made the following points:

- In 2003, 6% of the waste produced in South Kesteven was recycled, meaning South Kesteven was in the bottom quartile.
- In 2003 a green box scheme was introduced to improve performance. Within 12 months nearly 14% of waste was being recycled.

- The Council's recycling rate improved further (to nearly 27%) in 2005/06 with the introduction of green bins to recycle green waste.
- In 2010 the EU would impose a fixed allowance for each county on the amount of waste that could be landfilled. Exceeding this limit would result in a fine of £150 per tonne.
- The landfill allowance would be reduced further in 2013. Exceeding this limit would also result in the county being fined.
- Lincolnshire had been identified as one council who were unlikely to meet the EU quotas. Fines could mean increased taxes or cuts in services.
- To date, SKDC had offered a kerbside recycling scheme through the green box system to approximately 73% of the district's residents and an optional green waste collection to over one-third of the district.
- To meet stretching targets, a new waste collection system had been initiated. One silver bin (for recyclables) and one black bin (for refuse) were being circulated to all houses in the District. Each bin would be collected once a fortnight.
- Microchips had been included in each bin to identify the house to which they had been allocated and to allow equipment on waste collection vehicles to weigh their contents.
- The chips that allowed the bins to be weighed would be used to identify the best recyclers in the district who could be offered rewards. Those who did not recycle well would also be identified; they would be offered education and incentives to improve.
- The council had also begun to look at community-based awards for recycling.
- A helpline had been set up and a mini webpage had been put online addressing frequently asked questions.

Comments were received from Local Forum members and members of the public, as follows (*summary of responses in italics*):

- Are there any plans at a later date to impose a charge to each household for the amount of waste disposed over and above the current Council Tax? (*The district council have found it more beneficial to offer incentives for good recyclers. The council has undertaken negotiations with local businesses in attempts to ascertain sponsors of incentives*).
- A lot of recyclable materials have arisen from excess packaging of goods; entering discussions with supermarkets and other local vendors might present ways in which the amount of waste could be reduced.
- Recyclables are not collected from industry, is this because they do not count towards the council's targets? (*The Council has prioritised the roll out of the programme for residents. It is anticipated that this will take approximately six months. After that it would be possible for the Council to look into extending collections and developing a chargeable trade waste scheme*).
- With the introduction of limits for the amount of waste that can be sent to landfill, would it be feasible to investigate the incineration of waste, the energy from which could be used elsewhere? (*Recently there has been lots of research into incineration and energy use. The District Council have been actively working with the County Council. The primary concern would be the amount of carbon dioxide produced when burning the waste. There would also be significant public resistance to the burning of waste*).
- Is the Council working on a different collection scheme for terraced houses? (*The scheme for terraced houses will follow the same pattern as the twin bin scheme, however, different coloured bags will be provided instead of wheeled bins*). The number of bags that would be issued per household was not known.

- If no side waste is collected, what will happen to any additional recycling? (*There will be no limit on the amount of recycling that is collected. The 'no side waste' rule refers to refuse for landfill*).
- It would be useful to know what happens with recycled materials in terms of their becoming useful again, particularly as the recycling process consumes large amounts of energy. (*Uses for recycled materials are often dictated by trends in the market. The outlet South Kesteven's recycling is being taken to is well regulated by the Environment Agency and ensures a continuous audit trail*).
- Instead of looking to incinerate rubbish to produce energy, the Council should be looking at using alternative sources of energy including solar power.
- Is there the intention to either recycle the contents of litter bins within the town centre or to introduce a number of different bins for different kinds of waste? (*This is an idea that is worth investigating and taking forward. The suggestion will be passed on to the Service Manager, Street Scene*).
- What happens to recycling that is put out as part of a contaminated load, i.e. with refuse for landfill? (*There is a need to change practices; the Council needs to try to change their attitude. Recycling presents the opportunity to make a link between people's lifestyles and the planet we live on. The scheme is not optional; the whole community has to come together. If a householder decides not to participate in the recycling element, they will have to manage with one refuse collection every fortnight*).
- Would EU levies be based at County or District level? Could South Kesteven hit targets for recycling and still be penalised for failures elsewhere in Lincolnshire? (*If other parts of Lincolnshire failed to meet targets, residents of South Kesteven would be penalised through reductions to services or higher council tax*).
- What provisions are being made for sheltered housing schemes based around flat complexes? (*For specific complexes, details should be given to the Chief Executive to look at information on a case-by-case basis*).
- Why haven't residents been given the option of having smaller bins? (*The bins have been bought in bulk. Differentials in individual need per household would be expensive. There would also be implications on the technology used to lift the bins. The bins selected were considered the optimum size to best meet the needs of the majority of residents*).
- Lincoln City Council and North Kesteven District Council have issued different sizes of bin based on the needs of residents. (*The Chief Executive was not aware of this but agreed to look into it further*).
- How is recycling that will not fit in the silver bin going to be measured? (*This would be looked into*).
- The production of emissions during the recycling of glass is no greater than the emissions produced from the manufacture of new glass. (*The market for coloured glass is limited, however the glass is ground into sand and used as aggregate for roads*).
- Is it possible for the Council to put pressure on supermarkets about excessive packaging? (*It is likely that the impact would be limited. There might be more success if comments were fed in from the consumers*).

While the majority of forum members were very positive about recycling, a minority of members expressed concern about the large amount of energy recycling would require, the reliance of recycling on consumerism and the implanting of microchips into the wheeled bins.

8. SKDC Parish Council Conference – December 7th 2006

The Chief Executive informed members of the forum that SKDC would be hosting its first ever Annual Parish and Town Council Conference on Thursday 7th December 2006. A letter had been sent to all parish councils in the district asking them to identify topics they would like to consider as part of the event. A copy of the letter was circulated at the meeting. As part of the consultation process, the local forums were being asked to identify topics they thought should be considered. Suggestions raised by forum members were:

- The relationship between parish councils and SKDC's Development Control Services
- Youth and community engagement

Depending on the topics requested the day could be structured around large group sessions or a number of different workshops where attendees would be able to select the topics of most relevance to them.

Forum members asked whether the Grantham Charter Trustees would be invited. The Charter Trustees would automatically be invited to the event as members of the district council. Members expressed the need for Grantham to have its own democratic representation in the form of a town council. The Mayor of Grantham said that the Charter Trustees had agreed to wait for the white paper to be published.

The forum briefly discussed the composition of the District Council's Cabinet. Some of those present felt that the Cabinet could not meet the needs of Grantham people, as there were no Grantham councillors on the Cabinet. Under the council's executive arrangements, those appointed to the Cabinet should serve the needs of the whole district.

9. Matters notified to the Chairman by forum members

Local Development Framework (LDF) update: The Statement of Community Involvement had undergone consultation and been adopted. A paper on 'Issues and Options' had also been put out for consultation in autumn 2005. 250 responses were received. A core strategy and site specific allocations were prepared based on the results of the consultation. Nationally, the first two authorities had submitted their core strategy; both of these were found to be deficient by the Secretary of State. Letters from the Secretary of State were sent to all authorities suggesting that they re-look at their core strategies. The amended core strategy would undergo further consultation. The delay had also meant that the plan could be more current. The previous core strategy was based on the most recent Lincolnshire planning document: the Lincolnshire Structure Plan, instead it would be possible to incorporate the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

Cyclists: Concern was expressed over the number of cyclists using pavements. The majority of members felt that cyclists did not show consideration for pedestrians, particularly the most vulnerable. Bourne had experienced significant problems of cyclists riding on the pavements. A crackdown by the police reduced the problem. It was suggested that the police could work in conjunction with CCTV. It was acknowledged that cycling through town on the roads could be dangerous and it was suggested that more dedicated cycleways could lessen the problem.

It was AGREED that a letter should be sent to the police, asking them to actively prevent cyclists riding on the pavement.

Pelican Crossing, Wharf Road: It was reported to the forum that there had been incidences when traffic travelling along Wharf Road ignored the traffic lights. The crossing was used by people taking children to a local school. The forum believed that this should be monitored.

It was AGREED that when writing to the police about targeting cyclists who used the pavement, they should be asked to monitor the crossing on Wharf Road.

10. Matters that the forum would like to consider at future meetings

Items carried over from previous meetings:

- Update on residents' parking
- A town council for Grantham
- Community Policing
- Cycleway/footpaths and compliance with Depart for Transport guidance and the Disability Discrimination Act

Items added 04.10.06

- Updates on Grantham hospital (standing item)
- Condition of roads in Grantham (particularly New Beacon Road)

11. Date, time and venue for next meeting

7.00p.m. Wednesday 6th December 2006 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ.

The meeting was closed at 21:17.

DEEPINGS LOCAL FORUM

Minutes of a MEETING of the DEEPINGS LOCAL FORUM held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 20th September 2006 at The Deepings Leisure Centre.

PRESENT

Councillor Paul Carpenter South Kesteven District Council – Chairman

LCC Councillors: None

SKDC Councillors: Councillor Ray Auger
 Councillor Mike Exton
 Councillor Reg Howard
 Councillor Ken Joynson
 Councillor Andrew Moore
 Councillor Stan Pease
 Councillor Tom Webster

Town/Parish Councillors: Councillor Phillipa Lincoln – Deeping St James Parish Council
 Councillor Peter Naylor – Langtoft Parish Council
 Councillor Pauline Redshaw – Market Deeping Town Council
 Councillor Peter Roffe – Langtoft Parish Council

SKDC Officers: Ian Yates – Strategic Director
 Paul Morrison – Scrutiny Officer
 Dawn Temple – Sustainable Waste Management Policy Officer

Others in attendance Chris Beckett – The Deepings School (Head Teacher)
 Nicky Sharkey – Leisure Connection
 Steve Parks - Leisure Connection
 Rob Gerram – Lincolnshire Free Press

8 representatives of Deepings Swimming Club

7 other members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Dilks and Trollope-Bellew, Councillor Linda Colbourn (Chair of Baston Parish Council) and John Hayes MP.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Deepings Local Area Assembly meeting held on 24th April 2006 were approved as a correct record.

3. Public Forum

A number of questions were asked in relation to the Deepings Leisure Centre and also waste collection, it was agreed that these would be considered and addressed under the respective agenda items. A number of further questions were asked as follows: -

One of the main issues concerning residents of Langtoft is the need for a weight restriction through the village along East End and West End/Stowe Road due the large number of HGV's using the village as a short cut. Why is the County Council reticent in approving a order?

As there was no representation from Lincolnshire County Council at the meeting, the Chairman agreed that the question would be forwarded to the County Council for a response.

Does SKDC have to charge Council Tax on buildings it owns?

Mr Yates advised that Council Tax was only applicable to domestic dwellings, business premises paid non domestic rates. SKDC buildings were liable for non domestic rates in the same way as everybody else.

4. The Future of Deeping Leisure Centre

Further to minute 5 of the last meeting, Councillor Auger explained the background to this issue, the SKDC Healthy Environment DSP had set up a Working Party to examine the condition of the Centre, a meeting would take place on 22nd September. The questions from the members of the public were then addressed as follows:-

Based on Government guidelines relating to health and well being of individuals – will there still be a Deeping Leisure Centre in five years?

Will there be any funding given to the up grade of the Leisure Centre, if so why not?

If the Leisure Centre becomes a leisure trust who will own the building and who will be responsible for maintaining it?

I understand the Welland Room is part of the Deepings School. If this is correct, why does the Leisure Centre take

bookings and deal with the charges for hire and not the school?

In response to the first question, Councillor Auger advised that there definitely would still be a leisure centre in five years time. SKDC was examining different ways of operating it for example, by means of a leisure trust.

With regard to government guidelines on health and well being, these were not a council priority and no big improvements were therefore planned, however with the Olympic Games taking place in 2012 this would have some impact in the future. At the moment there was no funding provided for upgrading the Leisure Centre. However, the Working Group would be submitting a report to the Council's Healthy Environment Development and Scrutiny Panel (DSP). A programme of capital and revenue expenditure would be recommended but this would not take effect until 1st April 2007 at the earliest. With regard to the Welland Room, this was part of the Deepings School, but was a shared facility. The Leisure Centre took bookings when it was not in use by the school.

If a leisure trust was created, the centre would still be owned by SKDC but a leisure trust would have access to funding that was not available to the District Council under government rules. It was accepted that Grantham and Bourne both had more modern facilities than Deepings, which was now 30 years old.

There was considerable discussion on the present condition of the building and its effects on some of the clubs who use it. For example, the boiler had broken down several times in the last year, which had caused the Deepings Swimming Club to cancel meetings and refund payments to members. The Deepings Swimming Club was of a high standard and any cancellations would have a detrimental effect on this high standard, some of the swimmers were of international quality. Leisure connection were operation the centre without a contract and were therefore reluctant to invest in the facility. It was also suggested that better use of the astroturf facility.

Councillor Pease suggested a visit should be arranged to the NKDC Leisure Centre at North Hykeham.

Another issue was the Lincolnshire County Councils "schools for the future" initiative. It was possible a new school maybe built on the playing field but this would not happen for five to ten years. It was confirmed that they was no strategic long-term plan for the site at the moment.

AGREED: that the Forum expresses its concern at (i), the present condition of Deepings Leisure Centre and (ii) the long term future of the centre.

5. Twin Bin Roll Out

The District Council's Strategic Waste Management Policy Officer, Dawn Temple, gave a presentation on the household waste Twin Bin Scheme.

The twin bins were starting to be delivered with information packs. A new branding had been launched with the bins and a helpline and a mini website set up.

Mrs Temple was thanked for her presentation. Questions from the Forum and the public were invited. In response to these the officer and the District Council Members explained that:-

- The roll out of the twin bins would be finished in June 2007;
- Recycling banks would remain;
- Household collections would be for one wheelie bin on alternate weeks;
- People not able to manoeuvre would be able to register with an assisted collection scheme. The collection crew would collect and return the bin from where it was stored;
- When recycling rates were measured at each household, these will be done as a percentage of a household's total waste and so no disadvantage or advantage larger or small households;
- All recyclables were to be put in the one silver bin, compost waste should be put in the black bin, a green wheelie bin or a home composter or compost heap, the green bags for garden waste would be stopped;
- The recycling scheme was very expensive but set up costs had been included in the Council's capital programme so it did not have any impact on the Council Tax. On-going revenue costs did have an impact on Council Tax but the fortnightly collection had offset this as a weekly collection for both bins would have required significant expenditure and would be prohibitive;
- No additional landfill waste would be collected other than the black wheelie bins, but if people did have problems individual visits would be arranged. Additional recyclable waste would however be collected;
- The Council have tried to lobby against the over packaging of products but this was currently under enforcement by Government and was perhaps something for the supermarket to consider;
- The Council did provide educational events in schools and a countywide Trash Back incentive scheme was in place for the purchase of reusable nappies.

The questions deferred from the public open forum were as follows:-

I understand that the bins must not be put on the pavement before a certain time on collection day, can you confirm the times and reasons for this?

Are recycling facilities provided for sheltered housing?

Will wheelie bins be provided for churches and halls?

With regard to the first question, Councillor Auger explained that it would be acceptable for householders to leave out wheelie bins the night before a collection, but leaving wheelie bins on the street days in advance would not be tolerated. It was confirmed that wheelie bins and recycling facilities were provided for sheltered housing schemes and for churches and halls.

Mrs Temple confirmed that if the chip was removed from the bin, then the bin would not be emptied as the chip activated the bin and emptying equipment. If the bin was stolen it would be replaced by the District Council. If it was subsequently found the chip would identify the origin. The chip would measure the weight of the waste but nothing more, it could not tell what type of waste was placed in the bin.

6. South Kesteven District Parish Council Conference - 7th December 2006

The Chairman advised that SKDC, together with the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) were organising a Parish and Towns Conference to be held at the Guildhall, Grantham on 7th December 2006. At the moment it was intended that two representatives per Parish and Town Council would be able to attend. A long list of topics had been drawn up from which it was hoped to select a maximum of five to be considered in detail at the conference.

7. Matters to be Considered at Future Meetings

The following topics were identified:-

- Update on Leisure Centre
- Langtoft special expense area
- Update on recycling
- Update on economic development

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on Monday 29th January 2007 at West Deeping Village Hall (agreed after the meeting).

The meeting concluded at 9.29 pm.

REPORT TO ENGAGEMENT DSP

REPORT OF: BMS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OFFICER

REPORT NO.: CSV46

DATE: 17th November 2006

TITLE:	UPDATE REPORT – FRONTFACING TELEPHONY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	n/a
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	n/a
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	n/a

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Access Cllr Paul Carpenter, Access and Engagement Portfolio	
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Access and Communication	
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	n/a	
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	n/a	
INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	Carried out and appended to report? Not Applicable	Full impact assessment required? No
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Report to Engagement DSP 14 th June 2006 – “Talk to Me” Protocol Customer Service Standards CSV44 – Report to Engagement DSP 21 st September 2006	

1. INTRODUCTION

The Engagement DSP asked that they be kept updated on telephony response performance for frontfacing extensions and corporate performance on responses to letters, e-mails and appointments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Engagement DSP continue to be appraised of the monitoring results.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Annex A to this report shows the frontfacing telephony statistics for September, together with Corporate performance against Customer Service Standards for 06/07.

Corporate performance against Customer Service Standards is now available on the intranet in the Customer Services section.

October's reporting of Customer Service Standards will be patchy, as the Service Managers are establishing their teams under the new structure and only certain reporting lines remain valid. The first reporting under the new structure will be in November. Service Managers have been advised that these will be collated into a table and displayed monthly on the intranet for internal benchmarking. Emphasis will be placed on an internal service target of 100%.

Service Managers have been asked to validate the telephone numbers within their service areas, and will receive a monthly e-mailed telephony report commencing the end of November. Front-facing telephone numbers will continue to be monitored.

The "Talk to Me" protocol will be introduced to Service Managers at the Service Managers away-day on 22nd November 2006. This will enable the Service Managers to take ownership within their service areas and ensure both themselves and their staff have a sustainable telephone answering practice. The monthly telephony reports will support Service Managers in monitoring this.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

Not applicable

5. COMMENTS OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

Not applicable

6. COMMENTS OF MONITORING OFFICER

Not applicable

7. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

Not applicable

8. CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

There has again been a dip in telephone answering performance in October. Overall, the percentage of answered calls is still below performance, as is the percentage of those calls answered within 10 rings.

Performance for e-mails, appointments and letters has been sustained.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

Jackie Mills
BMPO
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ANNEX A TO
CSV 44

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE - CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Month	Answered (%) Telephone (frontfacing)	Within Target (%)			
		Appointment	e-Mail	Letter	
Apr-06		55.82	99.33	97.94	73.75
May-06		51.81	99.50	98.62	83.78
Jun-06	71.29	51.78	99.36	96.45	94.99
Jul-06	73.52	53.66	98.76	96.08	95.09
Aug-06	69.86	50.64	96.91	98.65	98.51
Sep-06	70.12	62.62	98.16	98.90	98.86
Oct-06	64.73	51.03			
Nov-06					
Dec-06					
Jan-07					
Feb-07					
Mar-07					
CUMULATIVE%	69.90	53.91	99.04	97.68	91.02

Agenda Item 13

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP

17th AUGUST 2006

Present: Councillor Frances Cartwright (Cabinet Member) (Chairperson)
Councillor Mike Taylor (Chairman of Engagement DSP)
Councillor John Kirkman (Chairman of Resources DSP)
Hilary Lovell (Assistant HR Manager)

Apologies: Chris Sharp (Corporate Head, Corporate & Customer Services)
Carol Drury (Staff representative)
Anne Jappie (Staff representative)

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The arrangements for scrutiny and performance monitoring in Chris Sharp's report to OMT, Equality Impact Assessments dated 28th July 2006 were discussed and agreed.

It was decided that the equality impact assessments for existing policies would go to the DSP with responsibility for the relevant service area.

It was agreed to send out guidance to DSP chairs and vice chairs on impact assessments and the role of members within the process.

PRIORITISATION OF EXISTING POLICIES

The list of existing policies was examined to see if the policy had any relevance in the following 7 areas:

1. Eliminating discrimination
2. Promoting equality of opportunity
3. Promoting good relations
4. Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment
7. Is there evidence or reason to believe that some groups could be differently affected by the policy?

The above were looked at in terms of race, gender, disability, age, religious belief and sexual orientation.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

As the prioritisation exercise was not completed, a meeting was arranged for 2.30 pm on Thursday 31st August 2006 to complete the exercise and make decisions on how the impact assessments would be prioritised.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP

31st AUGUST 2006

Present: Councillor Frances Cartwright (Cabinet Member) (Chairperson)
Councillor Mike Taylor (Chairman of Engagement DSP)
Councillor John Kirkman (Chairman of Resources DSP)
Hilary Lovell (Assistant HR Manager)
Carol Drury (Staff representative)
Anne Jappie (Staff representative)

Apologies: Chris Sharp (Corporate Head, Corporate & Customer Services)

PRIORITISATION OF EXISTING POLICIES

The exercise begun at the meeting on 17th August 2006 on the list of policies was completed.

There was discussion on how the results of the above exercise would be used to prioritise the policies.

The policies are to be split into three – high, medium and low relevance and the relevance will be decided on how many “yes” answers there are to the 7 areas looked at. Those with 6 or 7 “yes” answers will have high relevance, those with 3, 4 or 5 “yes” answers will have medium relevance and those with 1 or 2 “yes” answers will have low relevance. Those with no “yes” answers will have no relevance.

There are 72 policies in total:

11 with 7 “yes” answers
30 with 6 “yes” answers
7 with 5 “yes” answers
6 with 4 “yes” answers
2 with 3 “yes” answers
0 with 2 “yes” answers
0 with 1 “yes” answer
16 with no “yes” answers

It was agreed that Hilary Lovell would discuss with those managers with several high relevance policies which they felt should have the highest priority. HL would then share this information with the Steering Group.

Councillor Kirkman asked if the list of policies could include the relevant DSP.

Due to the fact that there are 41 high relevance policies it was agreed that BVPI SK84 (% of equality impact assessments completed on existing policies) which is 55% for 2006/7 was not realistic and that this should be changed to 40%.

Councillor Taylor also felt that SK83 (% of equality impact assessments completed on new policies) should be amended to read 100% from 14th August 2006 as all new policies are to be impact assessed from that date.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 2.30 pm on Friday 6th October 2006 in Committee Room 3.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP

6th OCTOBER 2006

Present: Councillor Frances Cartwright (Cabinet Member) (Chairperson)
Councillor Mike Taylor (Chairman of Engagement DSP)
Tony Campbell (Director of Tenancy Services)
Carol Drury (Staff representative)
Hilary Lovell (Assistant HR Manager)

Apologies: Councillor John Kirkman (Chairman of Resources DSP)
Chris Sharp (Corporate Head, Corporate & Customer Services)
Anne Jappie (Staff representative)

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

PRIORITISATION OF EXISTING POLICIES

The prioritisation of existing policies was finalised. Following discussion with Service Managers a final list of 71 policies has been agreed – 36 high relevance, 16 medium and 18 low. High relevance policies will need to be assessed by 31st January 2007. Those managers with no high relevance policies will be asked to assess the medium and low relevance policies in their areas.

The impact assessments undertaken will be submitted to the relevant DSP for scrutiny. The high relevance policies will be spread across the DSPs as follows:

Resources	13
Engagement	5
Community	12
Healthy Environment	3
Economic	3

It was agreed that impact assessments on the policies in Tenancy Services would not be started until the outcome of the LSVT ballot is known.

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME/GENERIC EQUALITY SCHEME

The Group were informed that the consultation exercise currently being undertaken by the Lincolnshire equality project was due to end on 23rd October 2006 and that this consultation is very important in helping the authority to develop its Disability Equality Scheme.

Hilary Lovell suggested that in developing the Disability Scheme, the Generic Equality Scheme be reviewed to have a Race Equality Scheme and a Disability Equality Scheme as appendices to the Generic Scheme. This will

make it easier when new legislation is introduced to add to the Generic Equality Scheme. Under the Gender Equality Duty which comes into force in April 2007 for example we will be required to produce a Gender Equality Scheme which can be appended to the generic scheme.

This proposal was agreed by the group.

FUTURE WORKPLAN

It was agreed that a plan be developed for the steering group of future work that needs to be undertaken. Hilary Lovell to e-mail suggested workplan to members of the group for discussion at the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be 2.30 pm on Thursday 9th November 2006 in Committee Room 2.

Engagement DSP - Performance Monitoring 2005/06

Those indicators with a number in the PI column are from the Government's Best Value Performance Indicators suite used by many Councils. The remaining indicators are local to SKDC and may be relatively simple measures/indicators only. The reader is asked therefore to exercise an element of caution when interpreting any data attached to them.

IND Type = C - Cumulative/% - Percentage/ CA - Cumulative Average/N - Number/A - Average

Reporting = blank - Monthly/Q - Quarterly/Y - Yearly/H - Half yearly (Sept)

PI	SKDC Priority Area and PI Description	Lead Officer	IND Type	Reporting	2005/06 SKDC Outturn	2004/05 Upper Quartile	2006/2007 SKDC Target	April	May	June	July	August	September	Are We Improving Yr on Yr?	2007/2008 SKDC Targets	2008/2009 SKDC Targets
ACCESS Priority A																
SK20	No of visitors to the SKDC website	Andy Nix	C	Q	434,194	N/A	420,000			118,999			281,542	Y	450,000	460,000
SK21	% of 'application for service' transactions that are dealt with by the CSC - Grantham	Andy Nix	C		N/A	N/A	50%	n/a	22.60%	22.6%	28.7%	28.7%	28.7%	n/a	65%	80%
SK22	% of 'application for service' transactions that are dealt with by the CSC - Area Offices	Andy Nix	C		N/A	N/A	50%	n/a	3.10%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	8.7%	n/a	65%	80%
SK23	No of self service transaction (excludes Internet & Telephone Payments	Andy Nix	N	Q	N/A	N/A	1000			264			338	n/a	1200	1440
SK24	% increase yr on yr in all self service transactions	Andy Nix/Revs Manager	%	Q	169.6%	N/A	10%			0%			60%	N	10%	10%
COMMUNICATIONS Priority A																
SK70	No. of copies of SK Today issued	Ellen Breur	C	Q	4	N/A	5			1			2	Y	5	5
SK71	No. of SKOOPS issued	Ellen Breur	C	Q	6	N/A	6		1				3	n/a	6	6
SK72	No of Residents that have received a copy of SKToday	Ellen Breur	N	Y	57%	N/A	67%						N/a	n/a	72%	77%
SK73	No. of staff that feel well informed (measured through staff survey)	Ellen Breur	CA	Y	36%	N/A	50%						N/a	n/a	60%	65%
SK74	% of PR outputs to media actually published	Ellen Breur	%		81.8%	N/A	82%	100%	100%	83%	90%	88%	88%	Y	84%	85%

DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS (DSPs) WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7

INTRODUCTION

This Work Programme is partly derived from the Cabinet's Forward Plan, but also contains items that have been brought forward by the DSPs themselves.

Where the item has appeared on the Forward Plan, the anticipated date of the key decision is listed in the second column. The third column shows the last available date that the full DSP can consider this item before the key decision is due to be taken (unless a special meeting is called). This does NOT necessarily mean that the item will appear on the DSP agenda, this will only happen if this is requested by the Chairman or members of the DSP. There will also be instances where there is no DSP meeting before a decision is due to be taken; in these cases the next meeting date after the decision date is shown.

As Cabinet meets monthly and the DSPs meet bi-monthly it is not possible within the current timetable of meetings for the DSPs to consider every single Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision. Scrutiny members are therefore encouraged to read this Work Programme and bring forward items for consideration where they think that an item should be considered by the DSP.

DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS (DSPs) WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7

ENGAGEMENT DSP

<u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	<u>Date item appeared on Forward Plan</u>	<u>DATE OF KEY DECISION (IF APPROPRIATE)</u>	<u>DSP MEETING</u>
Members IT		N/a	Working Group is meeting
Access and Modernisation Group		N/a	Working Group is meeting
Monitoring of telephone standards		N/a	Ongoing
Equalities		N/a	To receive minutes of Multi Cultural Consultation Forum
Review of Generic Equality Scheme	14.07.06	Not before December 2006	16.11.06
Service Plans : Gateway Review	N/a	Jan/Feb 2007	16.11.06

DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS (DSPs)
WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7