

LICHFIELD DISTRICT PARISH FORUM

Thursday 6 July 2017

Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield

There will be tea and coffee available from 6.45pm
with the meeting commencing at 7.00pm

AGENDA

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. To receive the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2017 (Copy attached)
4. Presentation on Preventing Radicalisation (Jenni Coleman)
5. Question & Answer Session with Lichfield & District Police (Marisha Place)
6. Any Other Business –
Staffordshire County Council - Environmental Maintenance “Community Based Approach to Partnership” Work Programme – See attached (Cllr Tittley)
7. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 4 April 2018



Bulletin – 8th June

Staffordshire County Council – Environmental Maintenance “Community Based Approach to Partnership” work programme

The “Bulletin” of 23rd March reflected on the outcome of a joint SPCA/SCC workshop at which the County Council outlined proposals involving the prospect of parish and town councils working in partnership with SCC and/or taking sole responsibility for certain functions, principally associated with highways and related environmental maintenance. It has subsequently been made clear that the county council will continue to meet its statutory duties with regard to routine and reactive maintenance of highways, covering major work items such as resurfacing, pothole repairs, grass cutting for visibility (at bends, junctions and signs), gritting, gully emptying and drainage improvements. However, the County Council’s decision to end financial support for environmental maintenance through the Lengthsman Scheme and the Neighbourhood Highways Team visits will present new challenges for many parish councils.

It can also now be confirmed that the County Council will set up a new ‘micro-website’ that will address the issues arising from the decision to cut back on environmental maintenance programmes. The website branding will feature the wording “Highways Your Way: Local Communities. Local Priorities”, and put the accent on ‘self-help’, encouraging parish councils to get more involved in relatively small tasks to help neighbourhoods to look good and work well. It is intended that the website will feature all the information that parish councils will need to explore the options open to them and make appropriate decisions. There is a range of options that parish councils might consider, including weed control and enhanced grass cutting; maintenance of hedges and fences; the painting and cleaning of street furniture; ditching and clearing of debris from drainage assets. The County’s Community Highways Liaison Teams will remain on hand to provide any necessary support and advice about responsibilities when working in the highway or making changes to the highway structure.

The website will also feature case studies involving parish councils that are already successfully dealing with related work items themselves at a local level.

NALC / Plunkett Foundation Call to Action

Please find attached an information flyer summarising the benefits of setting up a community co-operative. This further ‘call to action’ aims to embed awareness within town and parish councils across England of the potential for community co-operatives to address the challenges local communities are facing and fully-funded support available from Plunkett.

Plunkett is a national charity that helps communities across the UK to set up and run community co-operatives; enterprises that are owned and run democratically by large numbers of people in their community. Working in partnership with NALC, it is well placed to help parishes in the creation of such enterprise models. Plunkett’s 2015-17 strategy aims to build on its achievements to date, and inspire an even larger movement of people who solve their challenges by running community co-operatives. With a new Parliament around the corner, and the new financial year having just started – now is the best time for parishes to find out how to start up a community co-operative and to get involved in the regeneration of local economies in their areas. Councils can contact the **Plunkett Helpline on 01993 810 730 or email info@plunkett.co.uk** to receive free, initial advice and find out how Plunkett can support them.

‘Park Run’ policy consultation

The Department for Communities and Local Government has published a consultation on conserving the free use of public parks. The government are proposing to introduce legislation which would put it beyond doubt that local authorities, including parish councils, cannot charge ‘Park Run’ or ‘Junior Park Run’ for the use of public parks. The link to the consultation paper can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/running-free-consultation-on-preserving-the-free-use-of-public-parks>

The deadline for responses is 28th June and further details can be found in the attached paper.

Jonathan Owen, NALC CEO, writes...

Digital Councils seminar

On 25th May we held our third Digital Councils seminar at the London offices of [AON](#) who I am grateful to for hosting and sponsoring the event. Subjects covered included the power of digital communications, case studies examples of the digital journeys councils have undertaken, branding for councils in the digital age, legal and risk management frameworks for operating online, a new social media community for local areas and an open mic session; speaker presentation slides will be available on the website shortly. Feedback was very positive indeed with 95% of delegates rating the conference overall very good or good and I also wanted to share some of their written comments: “really useful”, “nice to see how other councils are operating” “informative and knowledgeable”, “a really excellent and engaging day”, and “a worthwhile and enjoyable day”. You can read more about the event on the [Twitter hashtag #nalcevents](#).

NALC Annual Conference and Exhibition 2017

Our Annual Conference and Exhibition 2017 will be an essential event for councillors, council officers, county association members and officers as local councils join with other parts of the public (including government and principal councils), private and voluntary sectors to discuss the key policy issues of the moment. The important themes will centre on partnership working, economic development, sustainability, health and well being, housing and planning, and openness and transparency. What I am sure will be a brilliant two-day event will also celebrate NALC’s 70th anniversary and our Star Councils 2017 winners, as well as our host city Milton Keynes being 50 years old this year. For general delegates, you can find out more information and [now book your places](#); separate booking information for county association delegates will be circulated shortly.

Council tax statistics

Parish precepts have risen by 0.2 per cent on last year’s increase according to Department for Communities and Local Government’s recently published [live tables providing Band D Council Tax figures, average Council Tax per dwelling and Council Tax statistics for parish and town councils](#). Headlines include: total precepts increased by just over £40 million to £485 million, the average Band D is now £61.03 per year compared to £57.40 on 2015/16, a rise of 6.3 per cent to £3.63 (or 7p per week). We are in the process of undertaking further analysis of this data as part of our ongoing work on council tax referendums, this will be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of Policy Committee.

STONE TOWN COUNCIL ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK 30 Hours per Week

Salary: SCP 23-25 - £21,268-£22,658 (pro-rata)

Stone Town Council is the largest parish in Stafford Borough, and one of the largest in Staffordshire. The Council is seeking to appoint a part-time, permanent, Assistant Town Clerk.

The main duties of the role will be to act as secretary to the Town Mayor, to be responsible for organising, attending, and minuting meetings of the Council and its various committees and sub-committees, and to maintain the Council’s website. Though training will be given, the role would suit a candidate with previous experience of undertaking some or all of these duties. Candidates will also need to be proficient in the use of IT, particularly Microsoft Word and Outlook, will be expected to have or be willing to work towards completion of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

The Council will be flexible in terms of the pattern of hours worked, but candidates must be available to attend evening Council meetings, which are normally held on Tuesdays, and to attend a number of Mayoral functions which could be at evenings or weekends.

Please contact the Town Clerk, Les Trigg, on the number below for an informal discussion about the post. Application details can be obtained by emailing clerk@stonetowncouncil.org.uk or telephoning 01785 619740. The closing date for applications is 17th July 2017.