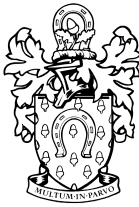


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Notes of a Meeting of the **PARISH COUNCIL FORUM** held on **Tuesday 20 October 2015 at 7.00pm** in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham

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Mr Kenneth Bool – Chairman of the Council (in the Chair)

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SPEAKERS:	Mr Jake Atkinson	Chief Officer, Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
	Mr Brett Culpin	Community Infrastructure and Planning, Rutland County Council
	Mr Nick Sandford	Government Affairs Officer – Local, The Woodland Trust
	Mr David Trubshaw	Conservation Officer, Rutland County Council

CLERK TO THE FORUM:	Miss Marcelle Gamston	Corporate Support Officer
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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:	Mr Jim Atack	Braunston Parish Council
	Mr Roger Begy	Rutland County Council (Greetham Ward)
	Mr Chris Bichard	Braunston Parish Council
	Mr Derek Harrington	Brooke Parish Meeting
	Miss Gale Waller	Rutland County Council (Normanton Ward)

There were 40 County and Parish representatives attending the meeting. A list of representatives who signed the attendance sheet is attached.

1) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

- The Chairman welcomed all parish representatives to the Parish Council Forum.

2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Miss Gamston read the apologies.

3) NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The Notes of the Parish Council Forum held on 27 July 2015 were confirmed by parish representatives and signed by the Chairman.

4) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

There were no matters arising from the notes of the last meeting.

5) “TALKBACK”

No discussion took place under this item.

6) WOODLAND TRUST – Nick Sandford, Government Affairs Officer – Local, The Woodland Trust

Mr Sandford gave a presentation on the Woodland Trust entitled “Life’s Better with Trees”; a copy of which was available on the Rutland County Council website, attached to the agenda for this meeting. Leaflets on the Woodland Trust and Free Trees for communities and schools were made available.

Key areas highlighted included:

- The Woodland Trust was a conservation charity formed 40 years ago in Devon (one person/one site) and now owned over 1,000 sites across the United Kingdom covering 20,000 hectares with approximately 400,000 members and active supporters.
- The Trust owned four woods in Rutland covering 86 hectares.
- The Trust’s vision was for a United Kingdom rich in native trees and woods, for people and wildlife.
- The key aims of the Trust were to enable the creation of more native woods and places rich in trees; to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future and to inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees.
- That the unique range of benefits of trees, woods and forests included: health and wellbeing, water benefits, economy and sustainable communities.
- That access to green spaces was associated with better mental and physical health across socioeconomic groups. The Coalition Government had targeted 1 million trees to be planted across the country.
- That people living far away from green spaces were 27% more likely to be overweight or obese.
- That trees enhanced mood, improved self esteem and reduced blood pressure whilst environmental volunteering including tree planting was as effective as aerobics in improving fitness, all of which could improve individual health. The cost to the economy from physical inactivity was £8.2 billion a year.
- Trees helped to improve water quality by up to 85%.
- Surface water flooding – trees in appropriate places could improve flooding by 60%.
- That woodland related activities encouraged a sense of community by getting people involved in their community and contributed to a sense of well being.
- The Trust’s “Access to Woodland Standard” stated that everyone should have access to a wood within easy reach of their home.
- Only 9% of people in Rutland had a small wood within walking distance (500m) of their homes.
- That the Trust offered Community Tree Packs – 18” high trees sent through the post with instructions on how to plant (free); packs of 30 trees were available for schools and packs of 100 or 400 trees were available for parish and community groups.
- That the current project for the Trust was The First World War Centenary Woods project the aims of which included the planting of 3 million trees and involving 1 million children by 2018.
- The Community Woodlands Pilot (November 2015 – October 2017) looked to provide start up grants of £500 to at least 40 communities, to provide project support grants of £10,000 for at least 10 communities, to employ a Community Woodland Officer to deliver direct support, to run community training workshops

and to create an online map of grant funded projects. This would be primarily but not exclusively in the north of England.

- That the Trust could offer advice for incorporating woodland strategies into Neighbourhood Plans.

The following points were noted:

- That Oakham Town Council was involved with the Agincourt Grove Campaign and would be planting one tree, a 6 foot standard, encased in a metal cage with a plaque to commemorate the battle. Application could be made to the Woodland Trust for 1 to 60 trees (whips) through Stuart Holm, Woodland Creation Advisor.
- In response to a query as to whether the Trust got involved in the commercial side, Mr Sandford replied that the Trust was primarily involved in conservation but recognised that woods survived by being copped/supported over a number of years. A number of local authorities managed a large amount of woodland and looked at it commercially. The Trust looked to put money back into conservation.

The Chair thanked Mr Sandford for his presentation.

7) TRANSPARENCY CODE AND FUND AND OTHER UPDATES – Jake Atkinson, Chief Officer, Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils

Mr Atkinson gave a presentation on the Transparency Code for Parish Councils, the Transparency Fund and other updates; a copy of which was available on the Rutland County Council website, attached to the agenda for this meeting.

Key areas highlighted included:

- Examples of transparency included: right to inspect and copy minutes, Register of Members' Interests, audit, right to attend meetings, Freedom of Information, Code of Conduct, Clerk's Financial Interests (s.117) and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
- New legislation around transparency included: Publicity Code for Local Government (Mandatory March 2014) for example, newsletters advertising; the openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (Mandatory August 2014) included filming, social media and Clerk decision making; Transparency Code for Parish Councils with a turnover not exceeding £25,000; Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which would change from the 1 April 2017 in that an audit would be required whatever size the council and the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 (£200k plus – not mandatory).
- Transparency was important because parish councils were publicly funded public bodies; discretionary codes had failed; poor and/or criminal practice; changes to audit and new media and technology.
- That the Transparency Code stated that data must be published on a website, publically accessible and free of charges and published within timescales. Councils with a turnover not exceeding £25k would be removed from routine external audit from 2017/18. There would be no change to internal audit. From 1 April 2017 sector led body would appoint external auditor, although councils could opt out and appoint their own.
- The Transparency Code put in place the need for the annual publications of: expenditure over £100; end of year account (Section 1), governance statement (Section 2) and internal audit report (Section 4); list of councillor responsibilities and details of public land and building assets.

- The Transparency Code put in place the need for the regular publication of: draft minutes of all council and committee meetings within one month after meeting, and meeting agendas and associated papers no later than three clear days before meeting.
- The Transparency Code put in place the need for publication on: a website which was publicly accessible and free of charge to view and could be the council's own website, a community website that the council had pages on or the district/borough council's website.
- The 7 steps to Openness & Accountability:-
 - Step 1 – Learning/information gathering
 - Step 2 – Talk about it as a council
 - Step 3 – Get it on paper (list – plan – policy)
 - Step 4 – Organise/reorganise council's information
 - Step 5 – Take control of website/email, etc
 - Step 6 – Implement and test
 - Step 7 – Monitor and review
- The LRALC was communicating with individual councils regards the Transparency Fund. So far the LRALC had received over 40 applications which NALC advised was the highest in the country.
- Councils could expect to receive further opportunities for briefing sessions, guidance and updates from LRALC; official guidance from DCLG, a share of the Transparency Fund (£4.7 million over 3 years) and answers to specific questions from the LRALC/NALC.

Other sector issues

- Business Rates – share to be given to Parish and Town Councils. The Government was still considering whether to make mandatory.
- Council Tax Support (CTS) grant – DCLG investigating passing on the grant directly to local councils/making 'passporting' mandatory. The LRALC had contacted billing authorities, via email. The Forum was advised that the LRALC were still waiting for a response from Rutland County Council.
- "Capping" and the referendum principles – various models around top 100 charging local councils. The Government was hoping to confirm that these would not be capped during this government.
- Changes to procurement rules (LTN 87) and new NALC model Financial Regulations, full details of which were available in the LRALC newsletters or by contacting the office.
- Proposal to Government to allow non-councillors to vote on Neighbourhood Plan Committees.
- Local Audit and Accountability Act; changes to audit in 2017 would impact on all local councils.
- The possibility of a Local Government Ombudsman to cover parish councils.
- Pension auto-enrolment.
- The recording of meetings.
- The Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS).

The following points were noted:

- That funds from the Transparency Fund could be used to fund the most appropriate website. The Leicestershire County Council website service was open to Rutland Parish Councils but the current service would cease in August 2016. This service would be going out for Tender but a commitment had been given to continue to deliver parish council websites. It was suggested that parishes approached Leicestershire to sign up to the existing service and then commit to the new service. Parishes would be able to apply to the fund this year and next.

- That the Quality Council Scheme required that draft minutes were published.
- That funds from the Transparency Code were available to offset additional financial burdens.
- If there was sufficient demand the LRALC would consider holding a 1-hour workshop in Rutland to assist on completion of the funding application form.
- That there was no specific transparency code for parish councils with a turnover between £25,000 and £200,000.

The Chair thanked Mr Atkinson for his presentation.

8) CONSERVATION AREAS – David Trubshaw, Conservation Officer, Rutland County Council

Mr Trubshaw gave a presentation on Conservation Areas; a copy of which was available on the Rutland County Council website, attached to the agenda for this meeting.

Key areas highlighted included:

- Mr Trubshaw advised that Rutland County Council was required to designate as a conservation area: “Any area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. (Statutory definition). National Planning Policy Framework stated that the local authority should ensure that a conservation area justified its status because of its special architectural or historic interest. (Government policy)
- There were 34 conservation areas in Rutland, dating back to 1970 with the newest being 2004.
- Boundaries were decided through consultation between the County Council, Parish Council and residents to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest.
- Some boundaries had been extended to include land important to the setting of the conservation area but the final decision rested with the County Council, as the local planning authority.
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 72 required that “special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area”.
- That the Rutland Local Plan policies related to decision making.
- That the Rutland Local Plan Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan was specific to conservation areas and areas adjoining.
- That Rutland County Council was undertaking a review of conservation areas the aim of which was to define the special character and thereby aid planning decisions. The reviews also provided the opportunity to review boundaries and measures needed to safeguard it, for example, Article 4 direction.
- That planning controls within a conservation area were more stringent over new development, demolition and alterations. Planning applications were also subject to extra publicity and with a new development consideration had to be given as to whether it preserved (“doing no harm”) or enhanced the area. There was a presumption against demolition of building that made a positive contribution to character or appearance and that planning permission was required to demolish boundary walls or buildings of more than 115 cubic metres. For alterations planning permission was required to clad buildings; to enlarge a house by an addition or alteration to the roof; to extend beyond the side wall of the original house; to extend by more than one storey beyond the rear wall of the original house; to install a satellite dish visible from a highway; and to display illuminated

advertisements. However, houses enjoyed “permitted development rights” and solar panels did not require consent.

- That 6 weeks notice needed to be given of any proposal to cut down, lop, top or uproot a tree (exceptions were if it was dead, diseased or dying, less than 75mm in diameter 105 metres above the ground, or work was by statutory undertakers).
- The Article 4(2) directions removed householder permitted development rights for alterations fronting the highway or open space and should be used only where necessary to protect amenity.
- The information on conservation areas was available on the Rutland County Council website.

The following points were noted:

- That Article 4 had been amended to include solar panels in Ashwell and Whitwell, following an appraisal. That there was no responsibility on an individual to preserve or protect a property or area.
- That the Conservation Officer attempts to comment on planning applications of buildings where there was likely to be a harmful impact; local knowledge was paramount when views were sought.
- That the planning legislation allowed solar panels but listed buildings would need permission. If not particularly prominent approval, was likely to be recommended.
- The boundary of a conservation area could be reviewed through appraisal. An appraisal would give the opportunity to suggest where land immediately next to the boundary where it affected the area should be included.
- It was envisaged that where there was a neighbourhood plan that the appraisal of a conservation area could interlink with the plan to give coordination between the two.
- With regard to unauthorised work on trees/hedges within a conservation area the Council had previously looked to take action where it appeared to have been deliberate. If work undertaken was to a tree that was not particularly significant then the Council would not necessarily look to take action.
- That Article 4s only applied to development that could be seen from the street or an area of open space.

The Chair thanked Mr Trubshaw for his presentation and advised the Forum that hard copies of the presentation were available from the clerk.

9) RUTLAND LOCAL PLAN REVIEW ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION
– Brett Culpin, Community Infrastructure and Planning Obligations Officer,
Rutland County Council

Mr Culpin gave a presentation on the review of the Local Plan and the key Issues and Options report; a copy of which was attached to the agenda for this meeting.

Key areas highlighted included:

- The existing documents comprising the Local Plan covered the period to 2026.
- The main reasons for reviewing the Local Plan included: to extend the plan period to 2036 and provide a minimum 15-year time period as recommended by the government; to combine a number of existing documents into a single Local Plan and reflect any new issues that had arisen; to provide for any additional new housing, employment or other development that would be required over the

extended plan period and to reflect the preparation of a number of neighbourhood plans in Rutland which the Council wanted to encourage communities to produce.

- That the “Issues and Options” document would set out key issues and possible options and was the first stage in preparing the Local Plan review and would not include policies or proposals.
- That there would be a 9-week consultation period – 10 November 2015 to 12 January 2016. Information would be available on the Council’s website and at public libraries in Rutland, consultation letters and/or emails would be sent to all Town and Parish Councils/Meetings and a community roadshow would be held at various areas in the county.
- That under a government directed “call for sites” initiative there was also an early opportunity for developers, landowners, town and parish councils and others to put forward development sites for consideration. This was a separate consultation with a closing date – 5 November 2015. Sites put forward would be assessed as part of the Local Plan Review. Further information was available on Rutland County Council’s website.
- Key issues included: what role the Local Plan should take in coordinating Neighbourhood Plans; did the Settlement Hierarchy need to change; how much new housing and other development was needed; should the current distribution of development between the towns and villages be retained; should the current distribution of development between Oakham and Uppingham be retained; what were the most suitable directions for growth at Oakham and Uppingham; what additional infrastructure would be needed; were sites for employment, retail or other uses needed; were changes to minerals and waste planning policies needed; arising from an updated local waste needs assessment.
- Following the consultation period the Council would consider all the comments received before preparing the next “Preferred Options” version of the Local Plan. This would set out the proposed policies and sites to be allocated for development in the plan. It was estimated that this would be published in August/September 2016.

The following points were noted:

- That where land use allocation had not been taken up this could be rolled forward but the Council would need to understand why a site had not been developed; there was a need to make sure sites allocated came forward.
- That the purpose of a Local Plan was to demonstrate the need for site allocation and the Council needed to be aware of neighbourhood plans and the timeframe for any reviews of adopted plans.
- That schools, where now academies and the Local Authority had a duty to cooperate to meet need.

The Chair thanked Mr Culpin for his presentation.

For further information

- Council’s website www.rutland.gov.uk/localplanreview
- Email localplan@rutland.gov.uk
- Telephone 01572 722577

10) PARISH BRIEFING PAPER

The Parish Briefing Paper for 20 October 2015 was circulated at the meeting.

11) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A reminder was given that potential agenda items for the Parish Council Forum should be sent to Corporate Support, Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP, or emailed to corporatesupport@rutland.gov.uk

12) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 28 January 2016

Monday 18 April 2016

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10 pm

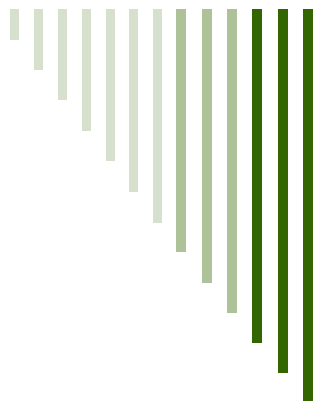
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PARISH COUNCIL FORUM
TUESDAY 20 October 2015, 7.00PM

ATTENDANCE LIST

NAME	REPRESENTING
Cllr Kenneth Bool	Chair
Mr David Thwaites	Ashwell Parish Council
Mr Barry Draycott	Barrowden Parish Council
Mr Michael Griffiths	Barrowden Parish Council
Mrs Grace Wilkinson	Barrowden Parish Council
Mrs Margaret Towl	Burley Parish Meeting
Mr Cliff Bacon	Clipsham Parish Meeting
Mr Chris Donovan	Cottesmore Parish Council
Mr Roger Hyde	Cottesmore Parish Council
Mrs Janice Patient	Cottesmore Parish Council
Mr Victor Pheasant	Empingham Parish Council
Mrs Rowan Scholtz	Empingham Parish Council
Mr Colin Hagger	Exton Parish Council
Mr Derek Palmer	Exton Parish Council
Mr John Pitts	Exton Parish Council
Mr David Hodson	Greetham Parish Council
Dr Andrew McGilvray	Ketton Parish Council
Dr Janet Higgins	Langham Parish Council
Mr Jake Atkinson	Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
Mr Tony Fowell	Lyddington Parish Council
Mr Lawrence Webster	Market Overton Parish Council
Mr Christopher Renner	Normanton Parish Meeting
Mr Adam Lowe	Oakham Town Council
Mrs Joyce Lucas	Oakham Town Council
Mr David Johnson	Ridlington Parish Council
Mr Terry King	Rutland County Council (Exton Ward)
Mrs Diana MacDuff	Rutland County Council (Ketton Ward)
Mr Edward Baines	Rutland County Council (Martinsthorpe Ward)
Cllr Tony Mathias	Rutland County Council (Oakham SE Ward)
Mrs Stella Smith	Ryhall Parish Council
Mrs Pat Bellamy	South Luffenham Parish Council
Mrs Susan Sewell	South Luffenham Parish Council
Mrs Carolyn Welch	South Luffenham Parish Council
Mrs Penny Briant	Stretton Parish Council
Mr Richard Foster	Stretton Parish Council
Mr Anthony Redmayne	Thorpe By Water Parish Meeting
Mr Mike Clatworthy	Tickencote Parish Meeting
Mrs Rita Kelly	Tinwell Parish Meeting
Dr Martin Barker	Tinwell Parish Meeting
Mr David Casewell	Uppingham Town Council
Mr Ron Simpson	Uppingham Town Council

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THE PARISH BRIEFING



Rutland
County Council

Also available online at:
www.rutland.gov.uk

Tuesday 20th October 2015

GETTING READY FOR WINTER

Under the Highways Act, Rutland County Council is tasked with ensuring that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice. This same legislation acknowledges that it is not possible to treat the entire highway network or to keep treated parts completely clear at all times.

In order to carry out its statutory duty, the Council has developed a comprehensive Winter Maintenance Service which aims to allow the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians on priority routes; mitigate delays due to winter weather; reduce damage to the highway network as a result of ice; and carry out all operations safely.



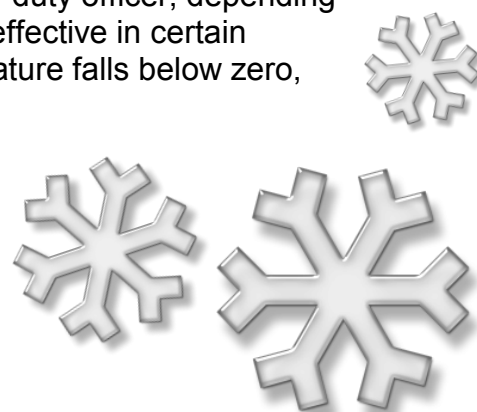
Gritting operations will be undertaken by our chosen contractor using their own vehicles. In addition, during extreme weather, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contractors will be used to clear snow from footways. Farmers will be contracted to clear snow from carriageways as directed. Our gritting routes cover major A and B roads, bus routes, designated access routes into most villages, main routes to GP surgeries, hospitals and schools.

During periods of extreme weather, treatment of additional locations will be determined by prioritising requests from the police and members of the public, provided that resources are available. The defined precautionary routes will always take priority and the target time for treatment of the network is four hours.

Footways do not normally receive a precautionary treatment. However, when snow is forecast, precautionary gritting will be carried out on the main footways in Oakham and Uppingham town centre areas only. Where resources are available, treatment of other footways will take place on a priority basis – for example, areas with high numbers of vulnerable residents.

Daily decisions on winter maintenance actions are made by our duty officer, depending on the weather forecast. It should be noted that gritting is only effective in certain conditions and will not necessarily take place when the temperature falls below zero, on a dry road surface, or when residual salt levels are sufficient to deal with the expected conditions.

Advice on winter services can be found at:
bit.ly/rutlandwinter Our Winter Gritting Routes can also be viewed online at: roadworks.org
If you have any queries regarding winter maintenance in Rutland, please contact: highways@rutland.gov.uk



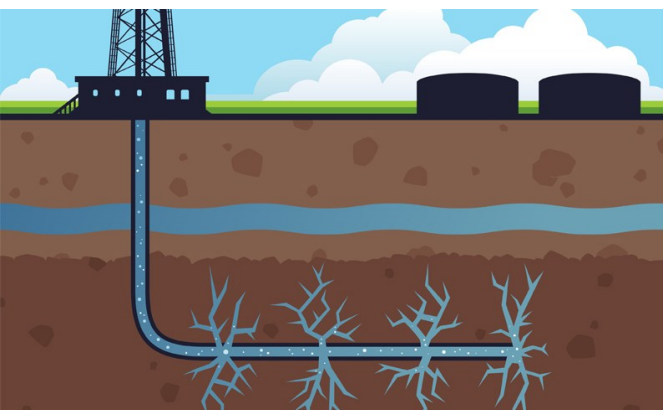
INFORMATION ON FRACKING

There are no potential fracking proposals in Rutland and the County is outside the currently licensed areas for fracking and the blocks of land identified by the government across the UK.

The County Council's Local Plan provides the local planning framework for development but does not currently have specific policies on fracking. There is however a range of government planning policy on fracking available which can be used by the Council in determining any planning applications for fracking.

There will be an opportunity to consider additional local plan policies to cover fracking, if these are needed, as part of the Council's Local Plan Review. However it is not clear at present as to what a specific local plan policy on fracking could say that would be different to national planning policy.

Further information about fracking is available on online: <http://bit.ly/1OFcy9B>



PARISH CLERK TRAINING



On 15th September, Rutland County Council joined forces with the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils (LRALC) to deliver an informative session on ethical standards for Parish Clerks.

Although the session wasn't well attended, those who came enjoyed the event and provided excellent feedback. We would like to continue to work with LRALC to deliver relevant training for Members and Clerks so please look out for future events.

If anyone has a specific requirement for training, we will be happy to consider these.

For further information, please email Sue Bingham: sbingham@rutland.gov.uk or telephone 01572 758165.

LLR Prepared

LLR Prepared is the Local Resilience Forum for the policing area covering Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland and wants to encourage residents, communities and businesses to plan ahead in case of emergencies.

The Partnership has a range of advice, handy toolkits and templates on its website. To access this information and learn more about emergency planning, please visit: www.llrprepared.org.uk

