

North East Derbyshire District Council

Growth Scrutiny Committee

8 March 2016

Working with Town and Parish Councils

Report of the Governance Manager

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide an update on progress in respect of the action plan on the scrutiny review into working with parish and town councils.

1 Report Details

1.1 On 15 April 2015, Cabinet considered a report of a scrutiny review by the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment Scrutiny Committee into working with parish and town councils. A copy of that report is attached at **Appendix 1**. Cabinet approved all seven recommendations from the review which were as follows:

- (1) That consideration be given when providing training as to:
 - whether any District Council events could be opened up to parish / town councils;
 - whether more training could be provided in partnership with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils (DALC).
- (2) That a contact list of the services available to parish / town councils at the District Council be circulated to all parish clerks within North East Derbyshire and this list should also be provided to the Contact Centre and be available on the Council's intranet/Internet for use by all Council officers and elected members.
- (3) That a calendar of meetings for the District Council be circulated to all parish councils for information.
- (4) That any consultations involving parish councils be undertaken in a timely manner to help parish councils schedule in the item at parish council meetings.
- (5) That consideration is given to how parish councils can best be involved in any consultation on how Section 106 monies were to be allocated in their parish.

- (6) That a review of the District and Parish Liaison Forum be undertaken to identify ways in which its agenda could be more equally balanced between the District and parishes and be reformatted to encourage attendance by parish/town councils.
- (7) That the Council welcomes any support the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils could provide to encourage and assist parish/town councils in building their capacity through mechanisms such as the Local Award Scheme and the Certificate in Local Council Administration

1.2 The Governance Manager was designated the lead officer for the review. A report to ERSE's successor committee, the Growth Scrutiny Committee, was considered in August 2015 and showed that most of the recommendations either had been, or were in the process of being, actioned.

1.3 The key outstanding recommendation related to the District/Parish Liaison Group (recommendation 6) which scrutiny felt needed to be reviewed. Details of the review can be found in a report to be considered at Cabinet on 9 March 2016 which is attached as **Appendix 2**.

1.4 An update on the remaining actions is given in **Appendix 3**.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 To give an update on the actions taken in respect of the recommendations arising from the Working with Town and Parish Councils Scrutiny Review.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 The Planning Manager, Strategic Partnerships Manager and Improvement Officer have all been consulted during the review.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 N/A

5 Implications

The implications of each recommendation are set out in the attached action plan.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Committee notes the progress against the recommendations from the Working with Town and Parish Councils Scrutiny Review.

7 Decision Information

| | |
|--|-------|
| Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards) | No |
| District Wards Affected | None. |
| Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework | None. |

8 Document Information

| Appendix No | Title |
|--|---|
| 1 | Report of Scrutiny Review |
| 2 | Report to Cabinet regarding District and Parish Liaison Group |
| 3 | Action Plan |
| Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers) | |
| None | |
| Report Author | Contact Number |
| M Kane | 7753 |

Appendix 1

Agenda Item No 6

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

15 April 2015

Working with Parish and Town Councils Scrutiny Review

Report No JW/02/15/SRB of the Councillor J Windle, Chair of the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment Scrutiny Committee

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To ask Cabinet to approve the recommendations of the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment Scrutiny Committee's Review of Working with Parish and Town Councils.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 North East Derbyshire District Council agreed to undertake a review of Working with Parish and Town Councils as part of its work programme for 2014/15. It was felt timely to review this area as the relationship with Parish and Town councils is important and members wished to review how it was working.
- 1.2 The aims and objectives of the review were to:
- Identify and establish what communication takes place with our parishes
 - Look at training provided for parish councils in areas such as Planning and Code of Conduct
 - Understand how the parishes work and what issues concern them
 - Look at potential of where we could work together better in delivering mutually-agreed objectives, for example through partnership working and procurement of services
 - Look at the effectiveness of the District/Parish Liaison Group
 - Identify any best practice
- 1.3 The Review Panel met on four occasions and considered a variety of information to gain an understanding of the subject area. The Review Panel also interviewed a range of officers at North East Derbyshire District Council and also Parish Clerks. The full report attached at **Appendix A** sets out in more detail the evidence gathered and synopsis of the views expressed.

1.4 The recommendations are:

- (1) That consideration be given when providing training as to:
 - whether any District Council Events could be opened up to Parish/Town Councils.
 - Whether more training could be provided in partnership with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.
- (2) That a contact list of the services available to Parish/Town Councils at the District Council be circulated to all Parish Clerks within North East Derbyshire and this list should also be provided to the contact centre and be available on the Councils intranet/internet for use by all Council officers and elected members
- (3) That a calendar of meetings for the District Council be circulated to all Parish Councils for information
- (4) That any consultations involving Parish Councils be undertaken in a timely manner to help Parish Councils schedule in the item at Parish Council meetings.
- (5) That consideration is given to how Parish Councils can best be involved in any consultation on how Section 106 monies were to be allocated in their Parish.
- (6) That a review of the District/Parish Liaison Group be undertaken to identify ways in which its agenda could be more equally balanced between the District and Parishes and be reformatted to encourage attendance by Parish/Town Councils
- (7) That the Council welcomes any support the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils could provide to encourage and assist Parish/Town Councils in building their capacity through mechanisms such as the Local Award Scheme and the Certificate in Local Council Administration

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To ensure the Council is maintaining a good working relationship with its Parish and Town Councils.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 As detailed in the full report.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Not applicable

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

5.3.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

6 Recommendations

6.1 As detailed in paragraph 1.4 of this report.

7 Decision Information

| | |
|--|--|
| Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards) | This is not a key decision at this stage prior to the decision of this matter by Cabinet |
| District Wards Affected | |
| Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework | |

8 Document Information

| Appendix No | Title |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| A | Working with Parish and Town Councils |
| Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers) | |
| | |
| Report Author | Contact Number |
| Sue Broadhead Overview and Scrutiny Manager | (01246) 217060 |

**NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

**WORKING WITH PARISH AND
TOWN COUNCILS**

APRIL 2015

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Chairs Foreword

I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment Scrutiny Committee. It details the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Committee from its review of Working with Parish and Town Councils.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders involved in the review for their advice, support and co-operation throughout the review process and in particular, the officers who took the time to speak to Members of the Committee. I would also like to acknowledge the Parish Clerks and Parish Councils who contributed to the review by attending a focus group or completing a questionnaire. Their time and input into the review was greatly appreciated.

The review panel found that the relationship between the District and Parish/Town Councils was well established and working well. However, there were some ideas for how this could be improved and I hope that the recommendations contained within this report, if accepted, will strengthen the relationship further.

In conclusion I would like to thank members of the Committee and Sue Broadhead our Scrutiny Manager for the work they undertook in gathering evidence and co-ordinating the review.

Review Panel

The review panel comprised the following members:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Councillor J Windle | (Labour) – Review Panel Chair |
| Councillor J Allsop | (Conservative) |
| Councillor G Butler | (Labour) |
| Councillor A Cooper | (Independent) |
| Councillor W Lilleyman | (Labour) |
| Councillor B Rice | (Labour) |
| Councillor P Riggott | (Labour) |

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That consideration be given when providing training as to:
 - whether any District Council Events could be opened up to Parish/Town Councils
 - Whether more training could be provided in partnership with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils
- 1.2 That a contact list of the services available to Parish/Town Councils at the District Council be circulated to all Parish Clerks within North East Derbyshire and this list should also be provided to the contact centre and be available on the Councils intranet/internet for use by all Council officers and elected members
- 1.3 That a calendar of meetings for the District Council be circulated to all Parish Councils for information
- 1.4 That any consultations involving Parish Councils be undertaken in a timely manner to help Parish Councils schedule in the item at Parish Council meetings.
- 1.5 That consideration is given to how Parish Councils can best be involved in any consultation on how Section 106 monies were to be allocated in their Parish.
- 1.6 That a review of the District/Parish Liaison Group be undertaken to identify ways in which its agenda could be more equally balanced between the District and Parishes and be reformatted to encourage attendance by Parish/Town Councils
- 1.7 That the Council welcomes any support the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils could provide to encourage and assist Parish/Town Councils in building their capacity through mechanisms such as the Local Award Scheme and the Certificate in Local Council Administration

2. Introduction

- 2.1 At its meeting on 31 July the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of Working with Parish and Town Councils.
- 2.2 The relationship between the District and Parish/Town Councils was considered important and members felt it was timely to review how it was working.

3. Scope of Review

- 3.1 The review aimed to:
 - Identify and establish what communication takes place with our Parishes
 - Look at training provided for Parish Councils in areas such as Planning and Code of Conduct
 - Understand how the parishes work and what issues concern them
 - Look at potential of where we could work together better in delivering mutually agreed objectives, for example through partnership working and procurement of services

- Look at the effectiveness of the District/Parish Liaison Group
- Identify any best practice and areas for improvement

4. Method of Review

- 4.1 The review panel met on four occasions to consider the scope of the review, key issues they wanted to discuss and key people they wished to interview.
- 4.2 Evidence was gathered in a variety of ways including written sources and interviews with a range of officers, the Chair of the Standards Committee and the Chief Officer of the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils. A focus group was also held with Parish Clerks and all Parish Councils were sent a Questionnaire. A meeting of the District/Parish Liaison Committee was also observed.

5. Evidence and Research

- 5.1 The following documents were considered as part of the review:
- Scene setting presentation by the Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator and the Overview and Scrutiny Manager.
 - Details of the Local Council Award Scheme.
 - Examples of agendas for North East Derbyshire District/Parish Liaison Group and Bolsover Partnership and Parish Councils Liaison Meeting.

6. Key Findings

6.1 Strengths

- 6.1.1 The Review Panel was advised by the Chair of Standards Committee that there was a very good record of high standards within the District and Parish Sectors and this was supported by the few complaints received. Parish Councils had the opportunity to sit on the Standards Committee as two co-opted members were appointed, which she welcomed. However, she advised the Panel that more recently there has been a lack of consistency with turnover and recruitment difficulties. The Co-opted members could also use the District/Parish Liaison Group to feedback to other parishes on their work.
- 6.1.2 Several stakeholders commented on the training provided by the District Council and said it had been well received. Examples provided included:
- Planning Officers had attended several Parish Council meetings to talk about Planning responsibilities of both the District and Parishes so each had a clear understanding of their respective roles. Other Planning issues had been discussed including the Local Plan.
 - Housing Advice was raised during the Parish Clerks Focus Group as a key area of support that was needed from the District Council particularly in relation to housing developments within parishes.
 - Governance provided advice on issues such as the Code of Conduct and assistance with Declarations of Interest. The Governance team had also

attended a number of Parish Council meetings to provide advice especially since the Localism Act.

- Environmental Health had also visited a number of Parish Councils to provide information and presentations on enforcement, dog fouling, litter and some more specific concerns. They had participated in other Parish events to undertake activities such as micro chipping of pets, education and sale of dog bags to Parish Councils and supported estate patrols as part of a PDSA event.

6.1.3 The Review Panel gathered evidence from Parish Councils regarding their experience of using services provided by the District Council. Services highlighted included Human Resources and Payroll which was highly regarded by the majority of users commenting on the service. Grounds Maintenance was similarly regarded with several commenting on the good service. Although all respondents commented on the cost of the Grounds Maintenance Service compared to private companies which it was stated had led to some Parish Councils going elsewhere for its provision. One comment made was that the Parish Council would prefer to remain with the District Council but having done a Value for Money check with a company the difference was significant.

6.1.4 The Parish Clerks who commented on whether the District Council listens to the views of their Parish Council felt that they did listen. However, they also stated that listening did not always produce the results they wanted. It was generally acknowledged that if the Parish Council asked a question they would receive a satisfactory answer. One example given was on Planning where they would get disclosure which was appreciated. Whilst better co-ordination would be welcomed it was largely stated that officers were helpful and supportive.

6.1.5 Several officers stated that they had a well established working relationship with Parish Councils which they thought worked well. Examples were provided by a variety of officers from different service areas such as Streetscene who commented that this relationship in practice included providing assistance on issues such as proposed change to facilities including signposting, design and build.

6.2 Areas for Improvement

6.2.1 The Chair of Standards Committee advised the review panel that the Ethical Standards Survey results had showed some gaps in the knowledge of some clerks and parish councillors. The majority of stakeholders interviewed thought training that had been provided was of a good standard. The Chief Officer of the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils (DALC) said she would welcome the opportunity of working closer with the District to provide more training in partnership. Other stakeholders suggested it would be very beneficial if the District could open up the training it provides to District Councillors and Officers to Parish Councils where appropriate. It was also recognised that it was not just about the offer as even when quality training was provided take up could be low.

6.2.2 Discussions on communication suggested that whilst this was working reasonably satisfactory a number of easy to resolve measures would improve this area. Comments were made from a number of parish clerks and councillors, that some clerks act as gatekeepers to what they pass on to their Chairs and Councillors. Whilst it was recognised this may be a positive action to prevent the Chair and

Councillors being inundated with documents, it was also stated that occasionally clerks may be over selective. It was suggested that officers needed to consider where it was appropriate to also send the information to the Chair of the Council as well as the Parish Clerk.

- 6.2.3 Several Parish Clerks told us that they found it was easier to contact the Council when they had a named contact. Without this some had found it difficult to get to speak to the person needed. Examples of some other difficulties provided included where officers were off sick or had left the authority and queries were not passed on so remained not dealt with. Another example highlighted involved a call to main switchboard by a Parish Clerk on a long standing issue she had been liaising with an officer on. Before she was put through to the officer she was asked to provide much of the information again which increased significantly the time she was on the phone.
- 6.2.4 Several Parish Clerks raised the issue of the provision of a contact list for key officers, main service areas and portfolio holders of the District Council. This also needed to be available on the Councils website and kept up to date. A copy of the Councils diary would also be useful for Parish Councils to co-ordinate with meetings of the District, particularly on planning consultations. This information was felt particularly important this year with the impending move to Mill Lane. DALC also stated they would like to be more involved in communication with the District Council and would welcome information on newly elected members after the election so they could communicate directly with Councillors.
- 6.2.5 The Review Panel received a suggestion that a designated District/Parish Liaison Officer as a first point of contact for a parish clerk would be helpful. However, others thought that this was not feasible in the current climate and would be a difficult role for one person to have sufficient service knowledge across the Council. Several Parish Clerks commented that Parish Councillors who were also District Councillors were very supportive in raising issues for them or directing them to the appropriate officer. Others felt that Councillors role was the broader governance role rather than raising individual issues which was the role of the Parish Clerk
- 6.2.6. One key area of discussion was the role and effectiveness of the District/Parish Liaison Group. Most stakeholders felt that it had a role to play and some district officers regarded it as useful for sharing information with Parishes. Opinions varied amongst all stakeholders on how useful it was, ranging between good, satisfactory to not always relevant. On the whole stakeholders from parishes agreed with this but felt it needed to be reviewed to ensure it was made more relevant to Parish Councils. All parties acknowledged that attendance was variable. Several highlighted the wide diversity of the local council sector in terms of size, resources and commitment which it was felt played a part in this. Several commented that there were useful items on the agenda but the general feeling was it was a District led forum. Often there were lengthy consultation items where it was felt the District was wishing to cover their agenda. It was accepted that the Governance Team made efforts to get items from Parishes but Parishes did not always respond proactively. This may be because there was so many ways for Clerks to get information such as from DALC and the Derbyshire Town and Parish Forum that the agenda had to be something useful for Clerks to attend as for many time was at a premium. DALC was still keen to be involved in the Group as thought it is useful but agreed with other stakeholders that it needed to have Parishes bringing forward

items more equally with the District. The Chief Officer stated she would also like to be invited to include items on the agendas for every meeting. Upcoming items she would like to see are financial regulations, elections and Code of Conduct

- 6.2.7 There were several suggestions for how the Group may be revitalised. It was thought that it could have a role in training new parish members following elections. The format of quarterly meetings could be refreshed with one off events such as 'meet the officers' at informal small workshops. Less PowerPoint presentations were raised by many stakeholders. Parish Councils could also be invited to appoint a designated Councillor to attend, not to exclude any other Councillor who wishes to attend but to have a named representative.
- 6.2.8 Capacity within some Parishes was also raised as an issue due to the variety of the parish sector which could result in Parishes looking to the District Council to drive this process. A few stakeholders commented that the District had a role to play but the Parish sector also has to look to their own sector to improve liaison methods. This was supported by a discussion the review panel had with the Chief Officer of DALC. She was very keen to equip Parish Councils with the support and skills they needed to perform their role. She provided evidence on the Quality Parish Scheme set up in 2003 originally to demonstrate the increasing professionalism of Local Councils. The Scheme existed to celebrate the successes of the very best local Councils and to provide a framework to support all local councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential. The Scheme had been revised into The Local Council Award Scheme. The Chief Officer provided details on Parish Councils within North East Derbyshire who had or were signing up to the Scheme and also Clerks who had taken the Certificate in Local Council Administration.
- 6.2.9 One final area mentioned was consultation with Parish Councils on how Section 106 monies should be spent within their parishes. There was a feeling that Parish Councils were well placed to identify projects within their villages that would benefit from this type of funding. They stated they would like to be involved in discussions on where the money would be spent. It was suggested that a question could be included on the planning consultation sheet to gather these views.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The review panel heard views from a wide selection of stakeholders during this review. On the whole they concluded that the relationship between the District Council and Parish/Town Councils was working well. The majority of stakeholders felt that the support they received from the District Council was good and acknowledged the changing environment in which both organisations were working.
- 7.2 However, there were some areas for further improvement. These were mainly concerned with reviewing how the District/Parish Liaison Group worked to encourage participation, improving communication on both sides and sharing training.

Stakeholder Engaged During Review

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Councillor Jane Austen | Chair of Standards |
| Steve Brunt | Assistant Director – Streetscene |
| Sharon Gillott | Environmental Health Manager |
| Faye Green | Community Safety Manager |
| Mathew Kane | Governance Manager |
| Steve Lee | Strategic Partnerships Co-ordinator |
| Kelly Massey | Active and Healthy Lifestyle Team |
| Frazer Powell | Senior Governance Officer |
| Sarita Presland | Chief Officer - Derbyshire Association of Clerks |
| Debbie Whitehead | Community Engagement Officer |
| Focus Group | Parish Clerks |

Appendix 2

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

9 March 2016

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| Review of District and Parish Liaison Group |
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Report No. GBXR/23/15-16/MK of Councillor G Baxter MBE, Leader of the Council

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To present for Cabinet's approval new arrangements for the District and Parish Liaison Group.

1 Report Details

1.1 In July 2015, Cabinet considered a report of a scrutiny review undertaken by the Economic Regeneration, Skills and Environment (ERSE) Scrutiny Committee on the Council's working relationship with Town and Parish Councils. The review made the following recommendations which were all approved by Cabinet:

- (1) That consideration be given when providing training as to:
 - whether any District Council Events could be opened up to Parish/Town Councils.
 - Whether more training could be provided in partnership with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.
- (2) That a contact list of the services available to Parish/Town Councils at the District Council be circulated to all Parish Clerks within North East Derbyshire and this list should also be provided to the contact centre and be available on the Councils intranet/internet for use by all Council officers and elected members
- (3) That a calendar of meetings for the District Council be circulated to all Parish Councils for information
- (4) That any consultations involving Parish Councils be undertaken in a timely manner to help Parish Councils schedule in the item at Parish Council meetings.

- (5) That consideration is given to how Parish Councils can best be involved in any consultation on how Section 106 monies were to be allocated in their Parish.
 - (6) That a review of the District/Parish Liaison Group be undertaken to identify ways in which its agenda could be more equally balanced between the District and Parishes and be reformatted to encourage attendance by Parish/Town Councils
 - (7) That the Council welcomes any support the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils could provide to encourage and assist Parish/Town Councils in building their capacity through mechanisms such as the Local Award Scheme and the Certificate in Local Council Administration
- 1.2 The Governance Manager was designated the lead officer for the review. A report to ERSE's successor committee, the Growth Scrutiny Committee, was considered in August 2015 and showed that most of the recommendations either had been, or were in the process of being, actioned.
- 1.3 The key outstanding recommendation related to the District/Parish Liaison Group (recommendation 6) which scrutiny felt needed to be reviewed. In discussing the work of the Liaison Group with parishes, scrutiny highlighted several key concerns with the Group's current format (Wednesday evening meetings on a quarterly basis):
- Over-reliance on "chalk and talk" and PowerPoint methods.
 - Lack of response and 'ownership' from parishes resulting in low attendance;
 - Generally 'District led' in its approach;
 - Need for greater focus on training.
- 1.4 The District and Parish Liaison Group was informed of the outcomes of the review at their meeting in July 2015 where an alternative format was presented for discussion. This was based on:
- A reduction in the number of meetings from four to two, acknowledging that parishes have a number of demands on their time and a number of sources of information from which to access information (e.g. District Council, National and Local Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks). Reducing the number of events also allows the District Council to focus resources into two well planned events per year;
 - The first session (in June, after the annual meetings) based around a conference theme on a Friday day-time with a further 'business' style meeting on the usual Wednesday night (in November/December).
 - Each parish being invited to nominate a member representative (and substitute) to attend the meetings along with the clerk although this would not debar other members from attending.

- Future meetings being based on the principles of participation and involvement rather than presentations.
- Closer working between the District Council and Derbyshire Association of Local Councils but also with other partners.

1.5 Following consultation with the parish and town councils, a further presentation was made to the District and Parish Liaison Group in January 2016 firming up the proposals.

1.6 Subject to Cabinet approval, the new arrangements will begin in 2016/17. Parish and town councils will be written to requesting contact details for their nomination and substitute. Proposed dates for the conference and business meeting are 1 July and 30 November 2016 respectively, subject to final approval by Cabinet of the 2016/17 calendar of meetings (see separate report). Additional meetings can be set up where there is a need.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 To increase the District Council's level and quality of involvement with parish and town councils and encourage a more collaborative approach to training and information exchange.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 The new proposal was consulted on with parish and town councils between September 2015 and January 2016 and, although there were limited responses, the new concept was broadly supported.

3.2 A copy of this report will be sent to the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils and to all parish and town councils in the District. It will also form an appendix to a report to the Growth Scrutiny Committee on 8 March 2016.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 To keep things as they are. However, this is not recommended as the current District and Parish Liaison Group is not as effective as it could be. Its approach is too presentational and too District Council led. As a result it generally yields a low turnout with many parishes choosing not to get involved and own it, as "their" meeting.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 None.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 None.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

5.3.1 None, other than staff time.

6 **Recommendations**

6.1 That the new arrangements in respect of District and Parish Liaison events be approved in line with the proposal given in paragraph 1.4 above.

7 **Decision Information**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards) | No |
| District Wards Affected | All |
| Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework | N/A |

8 **Document Information**

| Appendix No | Title |
|--|-----------------------|
| None | |
| Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers) | |
| | |
| Report Author | Contact Number |
| M Kane | 01246 217753 |

Appendix 3

Working With Parish and Town Councils Action Plan

| Recommendation | Action proposed | Resources needed | Timescale | Progress update |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <p>That consideration be given when providing training as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether any District Council events could be opened up to parish / town councils; - whether more training could be provided in partnership with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils. | <p>Following consultation with the relevant Chair, invite each parish council to send one member free of charge to any future planning or ethical standards training hosted by NEDDC.</p> <p>Work with DALC to provide training as part of the revitalised District and Parish Liaison Forum.</p> | <p>None, other than officer time.</p> | <p>By May 2016.</p> | <p>This will be picked up through the review of the District and Parish Liaison Group where joint training and information sharing will be the focus of an annual event. DALC will be key partners in this work.</p> <p>NEDDC worked with DALC during the 2015 parish councillor inductions by providing meeting room space and delivering one of the sessions to new members.</p> |
| <p>That a contact list of the services available to parish / town councils at the District Council be circulated to all parish clerks within North East Derbyshire and this list should also be provided to the Contact Centre and be available on the Council's intranet/ Internet for use by all Council officers and elected members.</p> | <p>Send a copy of the Annual Council Diary to all parish and town councils in the District.</p> | <p>Now the Print Unit is no longer a commercial enterprise the cost of in-house printing has significantly decreased. The cost of printing and sending a diary to each parish and town council would be approximately £1 per copy.</p> | <p>By July 2015 Completed June 2015</p> | <p>The Council Diary contains a full up-to-date contacts list for services, members and senior officers of the Council. Copies of the 2015/16 version have been distributed to members, parish and town councils and the Contact Centre and this will be done in future years. The information supplied in the Diary is largely replicated on the Council's Internet.</p> |

| Recommendation | Action proposed | Resources needed | Timescale | Progress update |
|---|--|------------------|--|---|
| That a calendar of meetings for the District Council be circulated to all parish councils for information. | Send a copy of the Annual Council Diary to all parish and town councils in the District. | As above. | By July 2015 Completed June 2015 | The Council Diary contains a full list of dates for meetings of the District Council. Copies have been sent to all parish and town councils and will be in future years. |
| That any consultations involving parish councils be undertaken in a timely manner to help parish councils schedule in the item at parish council meetings. | <p>Communications Officer to post an item on NEDi reminding officers to consult with parish or town councils at the earliest stage on local matters.</p> <p>Officers to ask parishes whether there are key places to which consultation documents (e.g. letters, flyers and questionnaires) can be sent.</p> | None. | July 2015 Completed June 2015 | Officers have been reminded of the need to involve parish councils in consultations and parish councils have been requested to advise of the best places to send consultation material. |
| That consideration is given to how parish councils can best be involved in any consultation on how Section 106 monies were to be allocated in their parish. | A session on how to engage with Section 106s be delivered as part of the refreshed District and Parish Council Liaison Forum. | None. | December 2015 | The agenda for the first meeting of the refreshed District and Parish Liaison Group is under consideration. Something on Section 106 agreements will be considered for inclusion at this or a future event. |

| Recommendation | Action proposed | Resources needed | Timescale | Progress update |
|---|---|----------------------|---|------------------------|
| <p>That a review of the District and Parish Liaison Forum be undertaken to identify ways in which its agenda could be more equally balanced between the District and parishes and be reformatted to encourage attendance by parish/town councils.</p> | <p>Outcome of the review and options for moving forward to be raised at Forum meeting on 15 July 2015.</p> <p>Initial proposal to be based around the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rebrand group as the District and Parish Council Summit. - Agree with members terms of reference for the District and Parish Council Summit. - Hold two events (rather than four) per year – one in November/December to coincide with budget setting consultation and another in May with a training theme. | <p>Officer time.</p> | <p>July 2015 Completed July 2015</p> <p>July 2015 Completed July 2015</p> | <p>See Appendix B.</p> |

| Recommendation | Action proposed | Resources needed | Timescale | Progress update |
|----------------|---|------------------|--|-----------------|
| | <p>- Each parish and town council to nominate one councillor (and one substitute) to attend but this would not debar others who wanted to from attending.</p> <p>Consult with all parishes and wider Council membership on proposal.</p> <p>Firm up arrangements.</p> <p>Introduce new arrangements from December 2015.</p> | | <p>August - September 2015 Undertaken September 2015 - January 2016</p> <p>October 2015 Completed March 2016</p> <p>December 2015 New arrangements introduced from May 2016 to tie in with start of municipal year</p> | |

| Recommendation | Action proposed | Resources needed | Timescale | Progress update |
|---|--|------------------|---|--|
| That the Council welcomes any support DALC could provide to encourage and assist parish/town councils in building their capacity through mechanisms such as the Local Award Scheme and the Certificate in Local Council Administration. | Request that DALC provide an update on the progress of their Scheme and CiLCA to a future parish and town council event. | None. | May 2016 Completed May 2016 | DALC have covered the new Local Award Scheme as part of previous sessions at the District Council and as part of their Councillor Induction sessions in which the District Council was involved. |