

TDC & PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS COLLABORATION WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 at 5.30 pm in the Online Only.

Present: Councillor Alan Currie (Chair); Councillors Austin, Bailey and Fellows

In Attendance: Officers: Chris Blundell, Penny Button, Greening and Hannah Thorpe

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received at the meeting.

9. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

10. TDC AND PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS COLLABORATION WP QUESTIONNAIRE - TDC OFFICER RESPONSES

The Chair invited Members to comment and seek clarifications on the questionnaire responses.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- It was important for information to be provide to residents so that they understand the different responsibilities between TDC and the parish and town councils; particularly that extra services would be given to parishes that paid for those extra services;
- Clarity on what the precept was used for;
- The district Council comms team could provide that level of support for putting together information to share with residents;
- A skills audit could be done for all parish and town councils and then identify where the support could be provided to parishes;
- Asset transfer processes seem to be taking too long;
- There was also a suggestion at one of the sessions for a return of the Parish Forum;
- It had been suggested that a strictly controlled and controlled agenda could be established for a new Parish Forum if it was to be set up;
- A developmental role for a middle level TDC officer(s) could be established for Corporate Director's representative(s) and that role would be interacting with parish and town councils;
- There was a suggestion for more generic circulation similar to The Loop that could be produced for parishes;
- After every Local Government election, the district council could identify areas where newly parish and town councils could take part in induction training, for example planning training;
- Opening up to parish and town councils to what is already available would be a positive way forward;
- For collaborative working to work well, there is a need for buy in by the parishes and the district council needed to be clear about what it wanted out of this collaborative arrangement;
- It was important for TDC to listen to the feedback coning form the parishes and building a transparent relationship between the two tiers.

Officers responded to Member comments and questions as follows:

- The annual residents survey is usually used to explain the various services being provided by the council;
- Residents have largely shown interest in getting their bins collected and keeping their areas safe;
- The parishes that asked for the extra precept could also take the lead in explaining to residents what they were using that for;
- Having a dedicated officer as the contact between TDC and parishes was in principle a good idea, but the big issue was resourcing such a role;
- The Waste Collection department held weekly meetings with town councils and the main areas of interest for these councils were waste collection and open spaces;
- These sessions could be extended to other parish councils if they wished to take part in such an arrangement;
- Town and Parish Clerks could attend and discuss other areas of interest to the parishes;
- Enforcement and Open Spaces teams were also represented at these meetings;

- Town Clerks could request representatives from other TDC services to attend on an ad hoc basis;
- During covid, TDC hosted weekly meetings with parishes (Parish Conference Calls) and there was a google document that officers produced that contained queries from parish and town councils which officers would complete with responses to those queries;
- A similar document could be used for the Waste Collection meetings;
- It would be a good idea to come up with ideas for supporting newly elected parish and town councillor as part of the induction process;
- Officers could identify top ten transactions that take place between TDC and the parishes and develop notes for sign posting parishes and residents;
- A circulation similar to The Loop but trimmed down could be produced for parishes. However in the meantime parishes could subscribe to The Wave.
- There used to be PACT meetings with parishes that TDC officers would attend.

The Chair thanked officers and Members for attending the meeting and said that a report drafting session was now scheduled for 24 November.

Meeting concluded: 6.05 pm