

**NOTES OF A MEETING
RE: PROPOSED BUDGET SAVINGS BY
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 26th FEBRUARY, 2016**

PRESENT –

Councillor A. R. Greaves (Vice-Chairman – in the Chair)

Councillors

<i>A. Ali</i>	<i>Lancashire County Council</i>
<i>J. Cooney</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>D. E. Lord</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council/Lancashire County Council</i>
<i>D. Whalley</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>D. M. Whipp</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council/Lancashire County Council</i>
<i>P. White</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council/Lancashire County Council</i>

Also present

Mel Ormesher *Head of Asset Management, Lancashire County Council*

Officers in attendance

<i>Dean Langton</i>	<i>Strategic Director</i>
<i>Philip Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Senior Committee Administrator</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Iqbal and C. Wakeford)



1. MINUTES

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting of this Group held on 5th February, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. PROPERTY RATIONALISATION/STRATEGY

The Chairman welcomed Mel Ormesher to the meeting and she explained the rationale behind the County Council's Property Rationalisation/Strategy, which focused on a reduction in the number of Children's Centres, Community Centres and Libraries, and where this would lead the County in the future.

With the pressure on Local Government to make savings the County Council was looking at reducing the number of buildings it operated from, looking at the best use of these properties and if they were in the right place for the service(s) they delivered. There were a total of 220 properties (although not all were owned by the County Council but from which they delivered a service). The review would look at how best these services could serve the local communities.

Reference was made to the creation of the service provision areas which were proposed and Ms. Ormesher explained how these areas had been created. Concerns were expressed with regard to these areas and in particular the relationship between Barrowford and Western Parishes with some parts of the Ribble Valley. The rationale behind these groupings was explained but it was also acknowledged that people in Barrowford would not travel to access services in the Ribble Valley.

Following the consultation process a list of properties to be retained as Neighbourhood Centres would be recommended to the County Council's Cabinet for consideration. This list would then be published on 12th May, 2016 for a twelve week consultation period with a view to decisions being made by the County Council on 8th September, 2016.

There would then need to be further discussions regarding the future of the remaining buildings.

Details of the properties that had been put forward for consideration as possible Neighbourhood Centres was circulated at the meeting. The Group supported this approach and accepted that there were massive funding cuts that needed to be made and that there would be fewer buildings at the end of this process.

There was a discussion around the statutory requirements for library provision. It was explained that the County Council were required to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service." This was not defined but the responsibility of each library authority was to determine how best to deliver this service in the context of local need.

During discussion of the proposed Neighbourhood Centres the following comments were made:

West Craven

- It was reported that Earby Community Association had expressed a willingness to continue to manage the **New Road Community Centre in Earby** as a Neighbourhood Centre on a voluntary basis and in collaboration with County Council officers. Members felt that it was a suitable location for combined services, including the library service supported by volunteers funded by the County as an outreach service. Therefore Earby Library would be surplus to requirements.
- Three buildings in Barnoldswick were discussed: the **library, Barnoldswick Young People's Centre** which was located in **Barnoldswick Civic Hall** and Gisburn Road School which provided a **Children's Centre facility**. The suggestion put forward was to designate the library as the Neighbourhood Centre, the County Council to vacate the basement of the Civic Hall and consideration be given to operating the Youth Service from the Children's Centre as part of the new provision.
- Reference was also made to Barnoldswick Shop and the potential of co-locating this facility within the library or the Civic Hall. It was also suggested that the Town Council could operate the youth centre at the Civic Hall.

Barrowford and Western Parishes

- It was noted that the view in **Fence** was that they would lose their library service. The service was currently being run from part of the Village Hall on a part-time basis. The Village Hall Committee had expressed an interest in taking the library building as part of a community asset transfer. It was reported that the Corporate Director had already been in discussion with County Council officers about this interest.
- There was a discussion about the future of **Barrowford Library** and whether there was a willingness in Barrowford to run a voluntary service but this was not known. A decision had not yet been made as to whether the County Council would still be running this service and therefore it was suggested that this maybe something for future consideration.
- With regards to **Barrowford Children's Centre** it was explained that this Centre was attached to a private children's nursery. There was some discussion around the continuation of this provision or whether it should be relocated. Clarity around ownership was also requested.

Colne and District

- **Byron View Day Centre** was stated as being a specialist centre and more information was requested to establish the level of service provided. If this service was to cease from this location where would it go?
- A suggestion was made that the services provided at **Colne Young People's Centre** on Byron Road together with office provision could be relocated and the Byron Road building and site be declared surplus to requirements.
- There was a strong feeling that the **Family Centre** on Burnley Road in Colne should not be included in Colne's figures as a possible Neighbourhood Centre. The Family Centre provided a borough-wide service and one that was very specialist and sensitive. Combining this with other services was not considered appropriate for this facility.
- It was suggested that **Colne Library** could become a Neighbourhood Centre. There was capacity for other services to be re-located here.
- The **Sure Start** building in the centre of Colne was again considered to be a 'stand-alone' service. There was again a strong feeling that this service should not be moved and that other services should not be re-located to this facility unless there was sufficient capacity and it was a 'complementary' service.
- It was reported that the County Council owned premises in **Trawden** were part library services and part children's centre. The Social Interest Charity which had recently taken over the community centre had expressed an interest in acquiring this County Council owned building via a community asset transfer. They had suggested that provision for the continuation of the children's centre was available in the community centre and they could also run the post office from the County Council owned building as the shop/post office had recently closed.

Nelson and Brierfield

- **Pendle Youth Zone** was again another facility that provided a Borough wide service and therefore it was suggested that this facility be removed from Nelson's list and not be considered as a possible Neighbourhood Centre.
- The same was also said of **Nelson's Beacon Children's Centre** which was located on Walton Lane in Nelson. This was considered to be a 'centre of excellence' and it was felt it should remain as such.
- The **Burnley and Pendle Day Service** which operated from the Marsden Centre in Nelson also provided a specialist service and it was suggested that this also be removed from Nelson's list and not be considered as a possible Neighbourhood Centre.
- Further information was requested regarding the ownership details of the **Family Tree Children's Centre**.
- It was reported that Brierfield Town Council had expressed an interest in taking over the **Brierfield Young People's Centre** which was adjacent to the Town Hall. The Centre was not used on a full time basis and it was noted that there was also capacity in the Town Hall for relocation of services.
- It was felt that **Brierfield Library** should be considered as a possible Neighbourhood Centre for this area.

AGREED

- (1) That the County Council be advised of the comments above.
- (2) That it be agreed that the Corporate Director submit expressions of interest to the County Council on behalf of Earby Town Council, Old Laund Booth Parish Council and Trawden Forest Parish Council as detailed above.

3. COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS, WYCOLLER

Mel Ormesher reported that some expressions of interest had been received for Wycoller Country Park and that these requests were being processed.

It was noted that there were other pieces of land/areas in the Borough which came under the banner of Countryside Access such as Quarry Hill in Nelson and land at Skipton Road, Cottontree.

AGREED

That the position be noted.

4. WHITEHOUGH ACTIVITY CENTRE, BARLEY

Mel Ormesher reported that expressions of interest had been received for the Activity Centre at Whitehough and that these requests were being processed in line with the consultation process which ran until the end of March, 2016.

Concerns were expressed that in the meantime the building was empty and did not present itself as a viable business. It was acknowledged however, that the building may not continue to be used as an activity centre.

AGREED

That the position be noted.

5. WELLBEING, PREVENTION AND EARLY HELP SERVICE

Details of the County's Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service transformation proposals consultation was submitted for information. It was reported that officers were working on the consultation and a draft response to the consultation would be sent to Members prior to it being sent to the County Council.

AGREED

That the position be noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Whipp provided a brief update on the current situation regarding the County Council's withdrawal of subsidy for the bus service. The County's Bus Service Working Group had put forward a proposal that Sunday and evening services should not be subsidised; that bus services 180 and 280 (Preston to Skipton) run on a reduced frequency but with the likelihood that this service continues through Barnoldswick and that bus services 95 and 65 also continue on a reduced frequency. Details of the revised timetables had not yet been made available.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That the next meeting of this Group be held at 9.30 a.m. on Friday 1st April, 2016 at Nelson Town Hall.

Chairman _____