

WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL EDEN LOCALITY BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Eden Locality Board** held on Wednesday, 24 April 2024 at 6.00 pm at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Penrith

PRESENT:

Cllr C Atkinson
Cllr L Baker (Vice-Chair)
Cllr P Bell
Cllr H Carrick
Cllr S Castle-Clarke
Cllr J Derbyshire
Cllr P Dew
Cllr M Eyles
Cllr M Hanley
Cllr N Hughes
Cllr N McCall
Cllr J Murray (Chair)
Cllr M Robinson
Cllr M Rudhall
Cllr G Simpkins

Officers in attendance:

Mr J Greenbank	Democratic Services Officer
Ms L McClellan	Traffic Management Team Leader
Mr N Wright	Senior Manager Safe and Strong Communities
Ms V Upton	Traffic Management Manager

PART I ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V Taylor and Councillor A Connell.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

Ms S Castle-Clark declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9 “20mph Prioritisation”, in respect of her role at the Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) and remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

54. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no Exempt items on the agenda and therefore the public and press were not excluded from the meeting.

55. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Council's public participation scheme as outlined in the Constitution at Part 2 – Section 5: Functions of Committees, Paragraph 15.16.1, Mr Jonathan Davies spoke in his capacity as Chair of the Clifton Community Council on the subject of Agenda Item 9: 20 MPH Prioritisation.

Mr Davies stated that Clifton had made an application for the introduction of 20 MPH limits with the parish but had not been included in the list of schemes contained within the report on the agenda. He added that Clifton Community Council had not been advised of the reasons for this and expressed concern that the parish would not be able to implement speed restrictions despite the significant work that had been undertaken as part of the application process.

56. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Proposed by Councillor P Dew
Seconded by Councillor M Eyles

and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 March 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

57. PRESENTATION: M6 LUNE GORGE UPDATE

Mr K El-Rayes, National Highways M6 Lune Gorge Senior Project Manager, gave a presentation updating the Board on the work being undertaken as part of the M6 Lune Gorge Structure Renewal Scheme. The presentation provided the following key information;

- Groundwork investigative work had six-week left until completion. The outcome of this work would inform the final design of the bridge that formed part of the project.
- Consideration had been undertaken to determine the profile of work needed to ensure that disruption to agriculture in local area was minimised. This included avoiding certain work taking place during the lambing season.
- The number of contraflows used on the M6 had been reduced to reduce disruption to motorway users.
- Specialist gantry cranes were being sourced to allow operation in all weather conditions and reducing potential delays.
- Tebay Industrial Estate was under consideration as the main compound for the project, with the use of the Tebay National Highways Depot to be used as a secondary compound.
- A strategy for signage to inform road users of the work taking place was under development.
- Community Engagement work was underway to introduce the project team to key local stakeholders and the community.

- Social value work was underway to ensure that local communities benefited from investment in the area through the National Highways Social Value Fund.
- Key social value fund projects included;
 - A donation of over 50 Easter eggs for Unique Kidz children centre.
 - A new slide for the Bendrigg Trust
 - Lakes School Careers Fair
 - Funding to allow the Sharing Shed to build a shed for the local community to share food and clothing.
- Work with Civil Engineering T-Level students from Workington had been undertaken highlighting the key features of the project.

Councillor P Dew queried why work had not been undertaken with a school with Westmorland and Furness, with Mr El-Rayes accepting that further consideration was needed on how to better engage local educational establishments. He added that the project team would welcome further engagement and asked that members of the Board share any contacts that they felt would be useful with the project team.

The housing of workers for the project once work had begun in 2026 was raised by Councillor J Derbyshire, with it being noted that significant pressures on the private rental market existed. In response Mr El-Rayes explained that the project team was working on an accommodation strategy to ensure that the impact of the project was minimised. This would include seeking to employ local contractors as much as was possible and working with schools to see how apprenticeships could be used. It was planned that this strategy would be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

Mr Martin Follmer and Ms Michaela Maunders, Customer Leads for Kier and Balfour Beatty, also attended the meeting and provided a presentation updating members of the Board on the work taking place in respect of the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project. The key points raised were;

- The projects key drivers were to improve safety on the A66 and deliver improved economic outcomes for local communities.
- Improve traffic flow from Junction 40 across to Scotch Corner, through dual carriaging of the road.
- The outcome of the legal challenge to the project was expected to be known soon, following which work could progress.
- The Secretary of State had approved the DCO for the project on 7 March 2024 and the construction phase was planned to begin in late 2024.
- The project aimed to create £150m in social value for the local area, with £11m having been already generated.
- A careers event had been held to engage locally and ensure that where possible the project could recruit locally.
- Going forward stakeholder engagement would seek to include local landowners, organisations and charities.

The Board was informed that the A66 project and Lune Gorge projects were working jointly on the Accommodation Strategy.

Councillor N Hughes raised the issue of footpath access near to the A66 for residents accessing schools from Eamount Bridge. Ms Maunders advised that consideration was being given to ensure safe pedestrian access in areas near to the road.

Mitigation against the adverse impact of diversion routes imposed through nearby communities was raised by Councillor P Dew. He added that no money was available in the plans presented to ensure this, which he asked be taken into consideration going forward.

Councillor M Robinson raised the grant to Newton Rigg for added social value and sought further details. Ms Maunders advised that the grant was for training materials to support the delivery of educational work at the college. She added that further details could be provided as the project progressed.

58. PRESENTATION: ASSETS AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Mr Allan Harty, Assistant Director of Corporate Assets, Fleet and Capital Programmes and Mr James Daplyn, Capital Programme Control Manager, provided a presentation on the development of a capital Programme for Westmorland and Furness. The key points raised were;

- The Council has a large number of assets from the disaggregation of Cumbria County Council and the aggregation from the former district Councils.
- Assets were of a wide variety ranging from office buildings to public conveniences and care homes.
- It was planned that the Council would invest £0.5bn up to 2029, which would consist mainly of government grants and matched funding. This represented significantly more for the local area than under previous local government arrangements.
- Key projects highlighted underway were;
 - Voreda House, new office accommodation in Penrith
 - Beaconside Primary School, design work is underway on the expansion of the site
 - A592 Upgrade work
 - Decarbonisation

The Board discussed the energy saving generated by the construction of Voreda House and the long term benefits of the operation of the building. Mr Daplyn explained that it was expected that a saving of £20m over 5 years would be generated but that work would be undertaken over the first 12 months of operation to validate this forecast.

Councillor P Dew also raised the disposal of surplus assets with Mr Harty explaining that the Cabinet would be considering an approach as part of the Council Plan.

Decarbonisation projects were also raised by Councillor Dew with Mr Harty informing the Board that every project was subject to a business case which needed to demonstrate its affordability.

Councillor H Carrick noted the increase in property maintenance highlighted in the presentation and Mr Harty explained that details of the amount could be provided following the meeting.

The Board also asked that a map of all the assets owned by the Council be made available. Mr Harty advised that this was being undertaken and that it had taken time due to the large number of assets held and the various forms in which they had been recorded by legacy councils. He added that once collated a map of council owned assets would be made available online.

59. PRESENTATION: A LOCAL PLAN FOR WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL

Mr Dan Hudson, Interim Senior Manager, Planning Policy and Ms Rachel Armstrong, Acting Planning Policy Manager, gave a presentation on the work being undertaken to develop a new Local Plan for Westmorland and Furness.

They advised that work on the Plan was being undertaken to allow the Council to begin drafting the document following the introduction of new planning guidance in autumn 2024. Mr Hudson advised that it was hoped that the Government would approve the Council to allow work to commence as part of the first tranche of councils preparing local plans. In order to achieve this work was being undertaken to ensure that drafting of the Plan could commence as soon as approval was provided.

Specific challenges in Eden were highlighted as;

- A growing population
- An aging population
- A high proportion of residents employed in the rural economy
- Ensuring the developments carbon footprint are minimised
- Housing Affordability

Councillor M Eyles raised the need for greater joined up thinking in the planning of development projects in regards of infrastructure. Mr Hudson agreed that this should be the case and that it had been insufficient previously. He added that infrastructure planning had been undertaken differently when separate district council and that going forward it was planned that a Community Infrastructure Levy would be introduced instead of the use of S106 orders as had been used in Eden.

The protection of rural areas while allowing for necessary development to allow communities to grow and support young people was highlighted by Councillor M Robinson. Mr Hudson replied that this was an area that needed careful consideration and that balancing the approach taken between the challenges in areas like Barrow and Eden to ensure that planning policy reflected the local areas.

Therefore Mr Hudson advised that the Local Plan would seek to allow a bottom-up approach to development rather than impose a top-down approach, allowing local communities to grow based on their needs. As a result of this it was intended that the Local Plan would not be a prescriptive document.

Place Action groups were also discussed with Councillor Robinson asking how they could be used to assist in the development of planning policy. Ms Armstrong responded that a lot of working was taking place in respect of Neighbourhood Plans and that the team was supporting communities in this respect where needed.

The Board also discussed the approach to viability of developments. Councillor H Carrick highlighted that the developer was often in a position under existing guidance to determine viability and decide on the make up of developments. This was seen by some people as detrimental to the needs of the local community. In response Mr Hudson agreed that viability was a challenge but stated that the Council had specialist officers to ensure that claims regarding viability by developers could be challenged and that the Council would have its own assessment of viability for each development.

Councillor Carrick also noted the Design Code being prepared as part of the Local Plan work and questioned how it could be applied on a Council wide footprint, recognising the differences in building design across the footprint. Mr Hudson responded that he welcomed engagement from the Board on the design code and it sought to ensure that the document would reflect the areas it covered.

60. 20 MPH PRIORITISATION

Ms Victoria Upton, Traffic Management Manager, presented a report outlining the background to the 20mph policy, applications from communities received and the prioritisation process undertaken to determine which applications would be taken forward in the first year of the scheme.

She advised that 50 applications had been received which had been assessed and a prioritisation process undertaken to determine which schemes should be taken forward in the first year. Ms Upton added that the scoring matrix used could be provided to members for information.

The list of schemes identified for progression had been provided at Appendix 3 to the report and if approved by the Board further work would be undertaken prior to detailed plans being brought back to the Board for approval in January 2025. Work on the other applications would also continue to allow proposals for schemes in years 2 and 3 when ready.

The Board expressed disappointment that some areas had not progressed in the first year and noted that Penrith had not been included in the proposals, but recognised that significant work was required before all area ambitions could be achieved. Ms Upton emphasised that no areas had been excluded and that all the applications received would be worked on.

Councillor M Robinson asked if details of how many application areas contained schools in year one could be provided.

The issues experienced in Wales in relation to their efforts to introduce 20mph limits across the country were raised by Councillor M Eyles. Ms Upton responded that Wales had attempted a different approach to that undertaken by the Council, whereby limits had been imposed centrally. This had led to a number of issues of limits in places where they were not appropriate and therefore had been placed under review. The approach undertaken by the Council however was driven by local communities highlighting the needs in their areas.

The funding of schemes was highlighted by Councillor P Dew who noted that the report stated that matched funding would be sought from parishes. He queried if those that had applied were aware of this. Ms Upton clarified that matched funding would be sought in-kind, with the use of local methods of communication such as newsletters to engagement communities.

Councillor M Hanley queried if applications could still be submitted, with Ms Upton advising that a significant amount of work was required on existing application but that new ones could be received.

Proposed by Councillor P Bell
Seconded by Councillor M Robinson

and **RESOLVED** that, having invited applications and undertaken a scoring process to consider the locations requested across Westmorland and Furness, the 12 schemes for Eden Locality listed in Appendix 3 to be report, be approved to be progressed to design, consultation, then legal Traffic Regulation Order process and delivery (subject to local support) for the first year of the project in 2024/2025.

[Councillor N Hughes left the meeting during this item]

61. PENRITH PARKING PROTOCOL

Miss Laura McClellan, Traffic Management (Eden) & TTRO (Westmorland and Furness) Team Leader, presented a report seeking approval of the amended Penrith Parking Protocol developed following consultation with residents.

The amended protocol sought to make application of the rules for Resident Parking Permit entitlements fairer and ensure consistency in enforcement. The consultation had demonstrated a number of issues in how the previous protocol had been developed. Following on from the representations received a number of changes were made to the Protocol to clarify some uncertainties.

Councillor M Eyles queried if in order to qualify for a flexible permit applicants need a residents permit. Ms McClellan explained that this was not necessary and that the flexible permit were provided in circumstances where people needed to park in order to visit as carers or assist elderly relatives as an example. The permits could also be used by residents who used more than one vehicle or had to use variety for

work. Determination of each case laid with the Civil Enforcement Team through the application process.

Proposed by Councillor J Derbyshire
Seconded by Councillor M Robinson

and **RESOLVED** that consent be given to Officers to progress the amended version of the Penrith Parking Protocol, which is attached as Appendix A to the report, to Statutory Advertisement and consultation as part of the Penrith Traffic Regulation Order.

[Councillor P Dew left the meeting during this item.]

62. EDEN LOCALITY BOARD DEVOLVED COMMUNITIES BUDGET

Mr Nick Wright, Senior Manager, Community Services, presented a report outlining proposals, following a Board workshop on 21 March 2024 to allocate the devolved communities budget during 2024/25. He advised that in addition to the funding outlined in the report an additional £50k had been awarded through the Household Support Programme. While Board approval was not sought for the allocation of this funding Mr Wright explained that this would be undertaken through the delegated powers if the overall budget was approved. He added that details of the funding approved would be brought to a future meeting.

Proposed by Councillor J Murray
Seconded by Councillor M Robinson

and **RESOLVED** that:

1. £50,000 be allocated to a community fund grants programme;
2. £16,000 be allocated to a sustainable transport grants programme;
3. £29,393 be allocated to enable projects and interventions targeting Eden Locality Board priorities;
4. £31,148 be allocated to a 0-19 grants programme;
5. £10,000 be allocated to support a project (or projects) supporting strategic priorities for those aged 0-19;
6. £17,016 be allocated towards 11-19 Universal Services;
7. £48,000 be allocated to enable projects within each Place Action Group area with £6,000 being ring-fenced for spend in each area;

8. the decision by council to allocate £34,870 to enable a Money Advice Service and agree to the continuation of this service via Citizens Advice Carlisle and Eden, be noted; and
9. decisions on budget allocations and grants of up to £5,000 be delegated to the Senior Manager Community Services, with the agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair of Eden Locality Board.

63. SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

Mr Nick Wright, Senior Manager, Community Services, presented the Safe and Strong Communities which updated the Board on the work taking place within the Communities Team. He advised that the report also sought a nomination for the Council's representative on the UK Shared Prosperity Funded Grants Panel. The Panel considered funding applications for arts and cultural events, including music festivals, within the Eden area, the nominee would sit alongside Councillor V Taylor, who sat on the panel as part of her role as Cabinet member.

Ms Sue Castle Clark queried if the work being undertaken with Place Action Groups (PAG) highlighted in Appendix 2 of the report would take a flexible approach regarding joint working across parish boundaries. Mr Wright confirmed that this would be considered as part of the work taking place.

Further to this Councillor M Robinson asked if work relating to PAGs could be advanced, informing the Board that the new High Sheriff for Cumbria had stated an intention to focus on support work for local communities. In particular Alston Moor had been identified. Mr Wright advised that discussions with CALC and ward councillors could take place off-line to help progress this work.

Proposed by Councillor M Robinson
 Seconded by Councillor J Derbyshire

and **RESOLVED** that:

1. the status of the Eden Locality Board discretionary budget be noted;
2. the communities update contained within the report at paragraphs 3.1 - 3.29 be noted; and
3. Councillor M Hanley be nominated as the Council's representative for the new UK Shared Prosperity Funded Grants Panel for cultural initiatives as described in paragraphs 3.27 - 3.29 of the report.

64. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items of business considered at the meeting.

65. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting would be held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 17 July 2024.

The meeting ended at 8.42 pm