



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

COUNTY AND PARISHES LIAISON COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 3

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY AND PARISHES LIAISON COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 5 MARCH 2001 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.30 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative	Organisation
Mrs A Bainbridge	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr B Benifer	Chairman BALC
Mr A Cannard	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr B Chapple	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr D Goodenough	BALC
Mr C A Hogarth	SBALC
Ms A Hooton	BALC
Mr S Orchard	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr J H McB Page	Buckinghamshire County Council
Ms A Smith	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr G Spenceley	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mrs B Wallis	Chairman, Wycombe Association of Local Councils
Ms M Yates	Buckinghamshire County Council

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Mrs A R Bainbridge be elected Chairman for this meeting only.

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2000, copies of which had been previously circulated were confirmed subject to the deletion of Mrs C Hitchens being appointed Vice-Chairman.

2 BULK PURCHASE OF METERED/UNMETERED ELECTRICITY

The Committee received an oral report from the Group Manager, Traffic Safety and Signals on the bulk purchase of metered electricity.

It was noted that three years ago the County Council, through a bulk purchase scheme, obtained a saving of 12% on unmetered electricity. This equated to a saving of £200,000 each year for three years. A letter had been sent to all Parish Councils with information on the savings to be made by bulk purchasing electricity at discount rates and inviting them to make contact with the Group Manager for further advice and information.

During discussion, which included linking the supply of energy with maintenance, it was noted that a comprehensive infantry would need to be drawn up as part of the requirement.

3 LOCAL COMMITTEE - UPDATE

It was noted that Local Committees were currently being reviewed by the Select Committee on the Buckinghamshire Environment at the request of the Cabinet. As part of the review, a questionnaire was sent to all Parish Councils and those with associated interests. The responses received so far were generally positive. The representative from BALC reported that in general Local Committees were working well as practices between partners improved. It was also recognised that background information on subjects educated members and led to more pertinent questions and participation at meetings.

During discussion the following issues were highlighted:

- Each Local Committee needed its own identity according to its locality;
- Aylesbury Vale being a large area had experienced some difficulties in engaging Parish Councils.
- Management of agendas.

Further updates of the Local Committee review will be reported to each Local Committee in the next round.

4 RURAL WHITE PAPER

The Committee received an oral report on the Rural White Paper. The County Council was currently preparing a response to government which would be submitted to Cabinet and then to full Council for consideration.

The Paper identified key issues including:

- Living, working and protecting the countryside. This highlights legislation on Rights of Way, providing new homes, addressing the needs of villages including shops, post offices, pubs and transport issues.
- Town and Parish Council – focus on what they provide and how their responsibility might change. ‘Think Rural’ considers the impact of developing policy on the community with strong emphasis on rural issues. Bucks Community Action Group would be meeting in June where issues on the countryside both local and rural would be discussed.

The Committee discussed policing in rural areas, noting that the Cabinet Member for Community Services was in contact with the Police Authority and expected to hold a seminar after the County Council elections with all associated Councils being invited. The White Paper identified community safety and the establishment of links between rural and urban policing by highlighting neighbourhood watch schemes, racism, wardens and greater police visibility.

5 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - UPDATE

The Committee received an oral report from the Vice-Chairman of Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils, on the use of Information Technology by Local Councils.

The Vice-Chairman reported that a meeting with the Buckinghamshire Initiative which includes the Buckinghamshire County Council and District Councils IT departments, was looking at ways to develop an IT System for Local Councils which would give a single point entry to navigate a route to bring together information from all areas relevant to them. To date two meetings have been held, with the Group investigating the Invest-to-Save initiative. The Committee also noted that Local Councils who already have access to a computer, have already benefited by being able to contact officers and access departments and information with greater speed.

During discussion, it was noted that an e-mail survey on training etc had been circulated to Local Councils. When all responses were received and training needs identified a program would be developed.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15 October 2001 at 2.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN