



## **RURAL WORKING GROUP**

**CASTOR – 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

### **Present**

Henry Clark, Chair, Peakirk & Rural Working Group  
Richard Astle, Director, GPP  
Nick Goodman, Environmental Capital Officer, GPP  
Teresa Wood, Peterborough City Council  
Cllr David Harrington, Newborough ward councillor  
Nicola Francis, Peterborough City Council  
Zena Coles, Bainton and Ashton Parish Council  
Cllr David Over, Barnack ward councillor and Chair of Rural Scrutiny Commission  
Bob Johnson, Glinton Parish Council  
Cllr John Holdich, Glinton and Wittering ward  
Gerry Kirt, Glinton Parish Council  
Sally Jackson, Peakirk Parish Council  
David Buddle, Thorney Parish Council councillor  
John Bartlett, Thorney Parish Council  
Leonie McCarthy, Neighbourhood Manager – City Wide, PCC  
Ian Dewar, CPALC  
Frieda Gosling, Ufford Parish Council  
Richard Anker, Castor Parish Council  
Kirsten Bennett, Cambridgeshire ACRE  
June Woollard, Barnack Parish Council  
Cathy Summers, Peterborough City Council  
Cllr Diane Lamb, Glinton and Wittering ward  
Steve Horner, Peterborough City Council  
Rohan Wilson, Bretton Parish Council

### **Apologies**

Mark Davis, RAF Wittering  
Graeme Law, Peterborough City Council  
Cllr Peter Hiller, Northborough Ward Councillor  
Rosemary Morton, Willowbrook Farm  
Keith Lievesley, Ufford Parish Council

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

Henry Clark welcomed members to the meeting of the Rural Working Group (RWG), individuals introduced themselves. Henry explained that following a positive meeting with the planning department, rural communities had been offered an additional period of consultation. All parish councils have been invited to respond and he stressed that we must make the most of this opportunity.

## 2. Transport in the Rural Communities – Overview

Teresa Wood (Group Manager - Transport and Sustainable Environment) introduced the three key themes of today's meeting.

- Delivery of Sustainable transport options
- Traffic management, volume and speed
- Providing access to services for rural communities

These are the three key areas highlighted within the Rural Vision and Strategy.

## 3. Bus Service Review

Cathy Summers (Team manager – Passenger Transport) explained the rationale, the changes and the implications of the Bus Service Review. Cathy's presentation is attached and it was explained that this meeting was part of the consultation with parish councils and ward councillors. A more formal consultation with councillors was planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> October. Comments from the group included.

**Lack of advertising** - Gerry Kirt (Glington) – This situation has arisen due to a lack of advertising of services. Earlier this year (and following the City Council's monitoring of passenger numbers) promotion of services was undertaken locally. This appears to have raised passenger numbers and it would be good to see the difference this has made.

**Teresa Wood to revisit passenger data for Glington services to see what effect the promotion had on passenger numbers.**

**Post meeting note: Glington service 403/413 - Passenger figures used for the review, both on-bus and ticket machine data, showed an average of no more than 6 passengers per journey. The total number of passengers for the month used (June 2009) totalled 1,257. Following the promotion by Glington the figures for September have been analysed. During September the overall average passengers per journey is 3.5 with a total of 1,204 passenger journeys for the month.**

**Lack of consultation** – A number of the group raised the issue that there has been little or no consultation with bus users on these changes. This would appear to contradict the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), although it was unclear whether the SCI covered transport and may only relate to planning.

**Teresa Wood to ensure that the consultation on the review complies with existing legislation and policy within city council.**

**Communication of changes** – It was recognised that any changes in service will be difficult to communicate to residents, particularly the elderly and the vulnerable. Parish Councils, Community groups, faith groups and voluntary organisations have a big role to play in promoting new service provision. It was stressed that Your Peterborough magazine can be used to promote these changes.

**CallConnect service provision** – There would be one CallConnect vehicle covering Peterborough's rural communities (this was a concern for the group who felt that one bus would be insufficient to cover the whole rural area) but there was also the opportunity to use vehicles from Stamford and Lincolnshire if appropriate. Where possible, Intelligent journey planning would be used to ensure the vehicles and passengers were not making unnecessary journeys and minimise the dead mileage, when the vehicle is running empty.

**More ambitious plans and attracting young people** – Richard Astle challenged the plans to be more ambitious, with later service provision that would particularly attract younger people. A similar scheme in East Northampton is particularly popular with young people.

CS highlighted the option to expand the Call Connect proposals to Sundays. This could also include an evening expansion of the service at some point in the future.

**Safe and accessible routes to bus stops** – Issues of unlit bridleways and steep terrain were raised and how this might impact on people getting to scheduled, commercially run bus services. The group was reminded that a CallConnectplus service, available to residents unable to access scheduled services would be available.

A separate list of specific comments relating to villages is being compiled by PCC.

**City to Rural services** – The group expressed serious concerns over the lack of membership provision for city dwelling bus passenger – those that use bus services to access the rural areas. In reality this means that city residents cannot use the service to get from, say, Peterborough city to Peakirk, yet Peakirk residents can use the service to get to Peterborough city.

**Cathy Summers left the meeting** – 7.55pm

#### **4. Traffic management, Volume and Speed – Long Term Transport Strategy**

Teresa Wood explained that the Long Term Transport Strategy was currently being developed and would set the tone and direction for future transport needs in the city. The Long Term Transport Strategy would then inform the Local Transport Plan (the next one is due for adoption in April 2011), the programme for action regarding transport issues.

The group welcomed the opportunity to feed into these documents, initially through some dialogue with Barry Kirk, Group Manager, and then by forming a smaller sub group to specifically concentrate on rural transport.

**Nick Goodman to invite Barry Kirk to a future meeting and then co-ordinate a sub group to specifically concentrate on this area.**

A number of issues were raised by the group including: can we be looking at national best practice in traffic management, using Neighbourhood plans to inform actions, rat running and congestion from the A15, the possibility of a park and ride from Bourne or Deepings, Speedwatch initiative, vehicle activated signs and using rail travel from redundant stations.

## **5. Sustainable Transport in the Rural Communities – TravelChoice**

Nicola Francis (TravelChoice Team Manager) outlined the history and background to the TravelChoice programme. Originally funded by the Department for Transport for the urban area ; the project has now been mainstreamed by Peterborough City Council to cover the entire unitary area. The programme is about delivering behaviour change including information, engagement, small scale infrastructure changes, education and incentives.

David Harrington recognised that the basic infrastructure needs to be in place otherwise people have no choice but to drive their cars. TravelChoice is about promoting walking, cycling, car sharing, taxi sharing as well as public transport and recognises that there needs to be a mix of transport options.

It was recognised that parish councils, voluntary groups, faith groups and community groups have a huge role to play in promoting the TravelChoice work in the rural areas and that each village might like to try different things (electric bikes, walking buses, maps, car share schemes).

**TravelChoice to circulate a menu of ideas that parish councils can adopt or pursue. Nick to co-ordinate and parish councils are asked to put on their meeting agenda.**

**It was noted that neither Newborough or John Clare Schools have accessed the Safer Journeys to School funding – Nick to work with TravelChoice to pursue this opportunity.**

## **6. Community led transport initiatives**

Sally Jackson led an item on community initiatives. Sally cited the CPRE's work on developing a road hierarchy, particularly on connecting roads between villages. There was also the opportunity to recognise the adoption of quiet lanes (Successful in Ashton) within the Long Term Transport Strategy. The implications of not repairing potholes was also discussed and whilst it would form a natural traffic calming measure, the potential litigious repercussions would be untenable.

Frieda Gosling highlighted the Biodiversity and aesthetic value of untrimmed hedges and road verges, this requires changes in maintenance and management regime and something which Frieda is working hard on with Peterborough City Council.

## **7. Rural housing Strategy and Site Allocations**

Nick gave a brief update on the RHS and was delighted that the actions and activities contained within it had been adopted by various departments and agencies, and action was already happening. Kirsten Bennett explained that in Cambridgeshire, ACRE had developed a Rural Housing Partnership which brought social landlords and parish councils together to explore the potential for exception sites. Whilst the Local Plan in Peterborough restricts exception sites to the larger villages, it is hoped that we can replicate this in Peterborough.

**Nick to co-ordinate a seminar bringing together parish councils and Registered Social landlords looking to set up a partnership to develop exception sites.**

## **8. Rural Scrutiny Commission**

A full update is expected at the next meeting – the Rural Commission will meet next Monday (5<sup>th</sup> Oct).

**9. Date of next meeting 25<sup>th</sup> November, Ufford (tbc)**

RESPONSIBLE	ACTION	DEADLINE
TW	Teresa Wood to revisit passenger data for Glinton services to see what effect the promotion had on passenger numbers.	ASAP
TW	Teresa Wood to ensure that the consultation on the review complies with existing legislation and policy within city council.	ASAP
NG	Nick Goodman to invite Barry Kirk to a future meeting and then co-ordinate a sub group to specifically concentrate on feeding into Long Term Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan.	Asap
TravelChoice and NG	TravelChoice to circulate a menu of ideas that parish councils can adopt or pursue. Nick to co-ordinate and parish councils are asked to put on their meeting agenda.	Asap
TravelChoice and NG	It was noted that neither Newborough nor John Clare Schools have accessed the Safer Journeys to School funding – Nick to work with TravelChoice to pursue this opportunity.	asap
Nick/Cambs ACRE	Nick to co-ordinate a seminar bringing together parish councils and Registered Social landlords looking to set up a partnership to develop exception sites.	asap