

AGENDA 15, Enc xiii)

Parish Liaison Working Group – notes from meeting on 31st October 2019

The main points are quite interesting this time:

~ Library Consultation: There are severe strains on the existing service – down to 30 libraries, 3 mobiles and only 3.5 qualified librarians. There is a statutory duty to provide a service and a wide ranging consultation will be ongoing once the independent contractors have been appointed. Individuals will have the opportunity to reply to a survey and there will be drop in sessions as well. The whole aim is to find out what users want from their service. Town & Parish Councils (TPCs) are asked to ensure that publicity is as wide spread as possible when the consultation begins; Information on Borrowbox – for downloading ebooks and magazines was also handed out;

~ Crime & Anti- social behaviour: Philip Soderquest updated everyone on work ongoing, largely to improve communication with TPCs. Often when actions are taken, there is no follow up and no - one knows the outcomes. Again, resources are an issue. County Councillors have access to an Independent Community Safety Office, but often this does not get down the chain of information. Perception is very important and if the facts are not known, the perception can be misinterpreted by the public. Quality and reliability of information given to a safety team also needs checking as it is not always reliable, There can also be a long time lag as formal legal proceedings may have to take place before the public is informed. It was suggested that NALC add training courses for the TPCs on this subject whilst the communication structure is improved;

~ Climate Change: There was a presentation about the County's aims on this to reduce carbon etc. by 2030. (The slides may appear to be circulated for TPCs). NCC emissions are dropping year by year. They are looking for finance to test some possible methods of carbon reduction within the County and at County Hall. If you want to know more – email climate@northumberland.gov.uk . They are also getting grants for more EV charging points; there is a plan to put a solar roof over the car park at County Hall – and if it works well to try them elsewhere. There is already a high proportion of renewables in the County;

~ Local Services update: much from this comes out from the sub group working party and is onto the website or in E-news from NALC. There is a bid in for money to refurbish and maintain the metal bridges in the County; LED lighting is finished but if there are problems – report to County Hall please. Road signs that are dirty or covered by growth was raised and the County are working on this and with volunteers to help.