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| **MINUTES** | **MEETING:** | Parish Council Network Meeting |
| **DATE:** | 25.05.23, 3.00 – 5.00 |
| **VENUE:** | The Centre, Brinsworth   |
| **CHAIR:** | Cllr Sarah Allen |
| **MINUTE TAKER:** | Catherine Oxtoby (RMBC – Parish Council Liaison Officer) |
| **In Attendance**  |
| Cllr Sarah Allen (SA) | RMBC, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods |
| Martin Hughes (MH) | RMBC, Head of Neighbourhoods |
| Catherine Oxtoby (CO) | RMBC, Parish Council Liaison Officer |
| Malcolm Brown | Bramley Parish Council |
| Joanne Holsey | Dalton Parish Council |
| Kate Butler | Aston Parish Council |
| Terry Craven | Thrybergh Parish Council |
| Thomas Collingham | Thurcroft Parish Council |
| Dave Smith | Dinnington Town Council |
| Andrew Woodhead | Anston Parish Council |
| Peter Blanksby | Wales Parish Council |
| Clive Jepson | Anston Parish Council |
| Richard Swann | Woodsetts Parish Council |
| **Apologies**  |
| Gill Culverwell | Brampton Bierlow Parish Council |
| Julie James | Treeton Parish Council |
| Simon Oldham | Whiston Parish Council |
| Rod Walker | Todwick Parish Council |
| Sarah Whitaker | Ulley Parish Council |
| Debbie Middleton | Wales Parish Council |
| Rebecca Thompson | Bramley,Hellaby, Letwell & Thorpe Salvin Parish Councils |
| Dave Rowley | Ravenfield Parish Council |
| **Item** | **Subject / Discussion**  | **Action**  |
| **1.** | **Welcome & Introductions**Cllr Allen welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions were made. |  |
| **2.** | **Notes from Previous Meeting** There were no actions from the previous minutes.  |  |
| **3.** | **Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy**MH presented the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy to the group.The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy was developed in 2018 but updated and refreshed in November 2022. As a Council we are now keen to promote the strategy and the role of Parish Councillors and get your opinions on how we can continue to improve our neighbourhoods. The vision of the strategy is:-* Work with local people to find solutions to local issues building on our heritage and assets - ‘Work with’ communities rather than ‘doing to’
* Make it easier for people to get involved in the local community
* Build on the strengths and assets within our communities and our voluntary, community and faith sector
* Work closely with our local services (Council, Police, etc.)
* So that we effectively tackle issues important to the community

Slides attached.Questions for discussion**Do you support the current ward priorities that are included within your parish?**DS - A recent survey of Dinnington has highlighted lots of health issues above national statistics on childhood obesity and other health issues. Dinnington also has very low figures for male life expectancy so definitely support health initiatives. Unfortunately, Dinnington does not have any sports or leisure facilities for the community, residents instead have to go into Rotherham or to Maltby which they can’t often afford to do. Initiatives to resolve this would be welcome.KB - Lots of local authorities offer grants from strategic CIL money, not the allocation for Parish Councils. This is not something that is offered by Rotherham. In Rotherham it is very rare that Parish Councils get 106 money. If it isn’t being spent would it not be of more benefit to spend it in communities?Cllr SA - We are due to have discussions with a neighbouring authority about how they spend their CIL money. MH has also done some research. My understanding of this is the CIL should be distributed to areas of deprivation. We are still looking at the mechanism to distribute this money. These are discussions I am having and it is on the agenda for the next quarterly meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive. PB - Discussion was held previously about Parish Councils delivering Borough Council services. Has this gone any further?SA - Yes that discussion did happen but nothing seems to have come from it. If this is something you still want to happen then we need to raise it again. RS – We currently have issues with speeding in Woodsetts. We tried to improve the central part of the village where children were crossing. Everything seems to have died off now though. We need some co-ordination of how we can improve the situation. Cllr SA - During covid we had a meeting in the church graveyard and invited all residents from our area to bring deckchairs and come to meeting. We invited transportation and traffic managers and have met with them regularly since and it was only at the end of this April that they brough us a plan. It took 3 years to get to that point so there is no quick solution. Cllr SA suggested speaking to Ward Councillors about this as this is potentially something they could submit as casework.MH - You can also raise with your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.TC - Agree with ward priorities and aware they will be updated. Don’t feel like we were pushed to include parish councils in but do see that they should be. From a Parish Council point of view the previous clerk adopted the ward priorities as parish priorities so I will be looking to do that again. Not sure if other councils do that. JH - We were asked last year to feed into these priorities so these have been taken to the Parish Council already.MH – hopefully the ward priorities resonate with the Parish Council priorities. All 25 wards have a priority to make their area feel safer whether that’s traffic calming reducing Anti-Social Behaviour etc. It’s about sharing resources to achieve that shared goal and that is what we are still working on. Overall the consensus was that Parish Councils are supportive of priorities but need to understand some decisions making. They would also like the wording “to work with Parish Councils” adding.**How can your Parish Council help tackle those priorities and achieve what is important to your local residents?**DS – “Work with communities not do to them”, how do you intend to do this?MH - This is a culture change for the council and partners. Getting it across that we can’t just decide what is best but need to talk to Ward Councillors, Parish Councils and residents to find out what is important to them. DS - We have people coming into Dinnington and doing things. I then get questioned about this but generally don’t know anything about it. MH - I believe it is changing slowly. An example of this is the floods in 2019, the Council went into Dinnington and started work but the Town Council said you haven’t talked to us. This then changed the way the council worked in Dinnington. I can’t say that every officer has got the message yet and we do need you to keep raising when this is not the case.Cllr SA - I see now more than ever Parish Councils cropping up. We have made some progress but there is still more to be done. What we have to realise though is that Parish Councils are not a gatekeeper to the community. We do need to get better at pulling Parish Councils in at the first opportunity. KB - I have been a member of the Joint Working Group for several years and in the last few years have seen many positive changes. |  |
| **4.** | **Joint Working Group Updates**Joint Working AgreementThe annual refresh is currently underway. This is due to be completed early July.Parish Council WebpagesThe Borough Council webpages for Parish Councils are now updated. Clerks have been e-mailed and asked to double check information is correct. CO now has ability to edit pages so all amendments should be sent to her so pages can be kept up to date.Training ProgrammeWebsite Training due to take place on 6th June. Invitations have been sent to all Clerks.Number of other sessions being planned including Precept, Election training for Clerks and Carbon Literacy. All sessions are recorded so anybody who can not attend can watch the sessions when convenient. If anybody would like adding to the group please contact CO. |  |
| **5.** | **AOB**CJ stated that there is still an issue with some Parish Councils not having Parish Council e-mail addresses for their councillors. **ACTION: CO to add to next Clerk Meeting agenda for discussion.** The next scheduled meeting is due to be held the week of the bank holiday weekend so may cause some issues with attendance. It was agreed that the meeting would be changed to the first week in September instead. **ACTION: CO to amend and update.**CJ stated that as a Parish Council we have never been encouraged to apply for CLF money due to the relationship between the Parish Council and Ward Councillors. One councillor in particular has stated that they will never support a bid from the Parish Council. Cllr SA - This is very disheartening to hear. I think you are right to test the water on a predominantly Parish Council project, it does however come down to individual councillors. Bear in mind though that an application is submitted and a rationale must be made. If somebody is unhappy about a decision they can appeal and it will then be escalated. MH - At the end of this month there will be a publication showing how Ward Councillors have spent their CLF money, it also shows what money is available. Anything left over can be carried over to next year. Each area also has a capital budget which is decided upon by a majority vote. TC - We have a really good relationship with our NC so I do think it may depend on how each Parish Council engages.DS - Applied for money from Miners Welfare but Rotherham Council stopped us getting that. As a town council we have initiatives but don’t get any help from the Borough Council. There are no proposals to help Dinnington or other deprived areas. RMBC decided that Dinnington should have to pay £30,000 for a new sports field, this stopped the money from the Miners Welfare. It will take a year to resolve this. DS - Dinnington has received £12 million Levelling Up funding but now don’t seem to be getting any towns and villages fund. Maltby are getting a substantial amount of money. Dinnington TC can’t even see the plan that they are spending £12 million on.Cllr SA - I look after the Town and Village funding, we held off making a decision until we found out about Levelling Up funding. I have not seen a masterplan for Dinnington so not sure if one exists. I do understand that officers who were developing it have been out to meet the Town Council. DS - The working relationship needs to be improved with the Council. Dinnington Town Council contacted RMBC and asked housing how many people were on the housing waiting list in Dinnington, we were not provided with this information so had to put in a FOI.Cllr SA - I am aware of some Ward Councillors who have also had to put in FOI to find out information. This is more about Officers understanding Ward Councillors and Parish Councils and what information they need. If this happens again, please let me know and I will chase.CJ - Do Councillors in other areas have regular contact with Parish Councils? Cllr. SA - We do not have a Parish Council in Greasbrough but once a quarter we hold a Ward Meeting to which the public, partners and local groups are invited. CJ - At the latest Parish Council meeting the new Chair suggested a meeting with Ward Councillors, Parish Council and members of the public but this was shot down. Cllr. SA - There is a section on the council website so you can complain about a Ward Councillor. If you are unhappy with your Ward Councillor please use this section. | **CO****CO** |
| **6.** | **Date and Time of next meeting**6th September 6.30 – 8.30Todwick Village Hall**Please note Code of Conduct training will be held instead of a Network Meeting in September.**  |  |