



Committee and Date  
Bishop's Castle, Chirbury &  
Worthen and Clun LJC

14 June 2012

7.00 pm

Item

**5**

Public

**BISHOP'S CASTLE, CHIRBURY & WORTHEN AND CLUN  
LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE**

**NOTE OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS STEMMING FROM THE MEETING HELD  
ON 9 FEBRUARY 2012  
7.00 PM – 10.00 PM  
AT  
SpArC Centre, Bishop's Castle**

**Responsible Officer** Amanda Holyoak

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**Committee Members Present:**

Shropshire Council

Charlotte Barnes Bishop's Castle  
Heather Kidd Chirbury & Worthen (Chair)

Town/Parish Councils

Valerie Whately Bettws-y-Crwyn Parish Council  
Jane Carroll Bishop's Castle Town Council  
Andrew Craig Chirbury with Brompton Parish Council  
John Croxton Clunbury Parish Council  
Eddie Jones Newcastle on Clun Parish Council  
Jonathan Roberts Clungunford Parish Council  
Llewellyn Morgan Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council  
Jackie Williams Lydbury North Parish Council  
Ann Parry Myndtown Combined Parish Council  
Brian Ince Worthen with Shelve Parish Council

**Officers Present:**

Martin Key, Environmental Manager  
Mathew Mead, Community Action Officer  
Andy Mortimer, Planning and Corporate Policy Manager  
Alan Penton, Leisure Development Manager  
Paul Sutton, South Shropshire Housing Association

There were approximately 25 members of the public present at the meeting.

## **ACTION**

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from the following members:  
Nigel Hartin, Clun Electoral Division, Trevor Hughes, Bedstone and Bucknell Parish Council

### **2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

The Chair reported that Colin Pendry was to step down both as Vice-Chair and also as a Member of the Committee. Jane Carroll was appointed as the new Vice-Chair.

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 The following personal and prejudicial interests were declared in respect of funding applications : Eddie Jones - in the funding application from Clun Valley AED Scheme, Heather Kidd, Jane Carroll, Charlotte Barnes - in the funding application from Enterprise South West. They indicated that they would leave the room should consideration of, and voting take place on these individual items. As these applications were not discussed they remained in the room. Heather Kidd declared a further personal and prejudicial interest in the grant application submitted by Bishop's Castle Community College, as a governor of the school. She left the room during discussion of this application.

### **4. Decision Notes of the LJC Meetings Held on 9 October 2011**

- 4.1 The Decision Notes of the Bishop's Castle, Chirbury & Worthen and Clun Local Joint Committee held on 9 October 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **5. Police Report**

- 5.1 Inspector Thomas introduced both himself and the local policing team - Sergeant Woolley and PC Gutteridge.
- 5.2 He highlighted the importance of preventative measures and asked the Committee to promote in their communities the website [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com) which helped greatly in the recovery of property and capture of thieves.
- 5.3 PC Gutteridge was now permanently in post at Bishop's Castle and supervised by Sergeant Woolley. Issues and problems could be raised with PC Gutteridge through PACT meetings or through elected members.

- 5.4 The LJC area was generally one of low crime, there had been 94 incidents over the last 28 days, involving 22 crimes and 8 vehicles crimes. The importance of ensuring vehicles were locked with nothing on show was emphasised.
- 5.5 He explained that the new 101 number was for reporting historical crimes only, the 999 number was only for emergencies and crimes in progress. In response to questions about the speed of getting police officers to a crime scene in very rural areas, it was explained that all police vehicles and radios contained tracking devices, and the most appropriate and quickest police presence would be sent to the scene of the crime.
- 5.6 Committee members expressed appreciation of rapid spread of information regarding where, for instance, car crime was taking place.
- 5.7 PC Gutteridge explained that two priorities identified through the PACT were drugs issues particularly in Bishop's Castle and the Snailbeach area, and speeding in Worthen, Marton and Chirbury. She encouraged use of the Crimestoppers number - 0800 555111 - to share anonymous information and intelligence about criminal activity.
- 5.8 Members of the Committee drew attention to speeding problems in other parts of the LJC area. They were encouraged to submit these issues through the PACT. They would then be prioritised and feedback would be provided as to whether they would be followed up and if so when. PC Gutteridge also endeavoured to keep people informed of what actions were being taken in relation to the drugs issues identified.
- 5.9 The Committee expressed its gratitude to the police officers for attending the meeting.

*It was agreed to move the update on Broadband to later on the agenda*

## **6. Water Shortages in the Clunton Area/Charges for Private Water Supplies**

- 6.1 Martin Key, Environmental Manager was welcomed to the meeting. The unusual weather over the past year had led to water supplies mainly from ground water running dry. In particular the Clun region had a microclimate and had been much drier than other parts of Shropshire. He confirmed the responsibility for water provision did lie with the owner of the home. Severn Trent had provided bowzers but it was not their responsibility to do so and this might not happen in the future.
- 6.2 Discussions had been started with the Environment Agency and attempts were to be made to access European Funding for larger

scale solutions such as reservoirs or water management systems. Work was ongoing with Severn Trent regarding provision of stand pipes but they would have to recover the costs of these. Costs were around £200 - £300 per tap plus the cost of the water and views from the community on suitable locations were needed.

- 6.3 Members wondered if abstraction of water had exacerbated the situation and heard that this was regulated by the Environment Agency.
- 6.4 The Committee thanked the Environmental Manager for explaining the situation and answering questions.

## **7. SpArC Centre**

- 7.1 The Chairman reported that Teme Leisure had been invited to attend the meeting but had declined the invitation as they were still in negotiation with Shropshire Council and felt there would be no information they could bring in addition to that provided by the Council's representative.
- 7.2 She welcomed Alan Penton, Leisure Development Manager, from Shropshire Council and invited him to outline the current situation with regard to the SpArC Centre
- 7.3 Mr Penton provided a detailed explanation of the current position of the SpArC Centre during which the Committee noted the following:
- Teme Leisure had managed the Centre for the last three years
  - Management of the SpArC Centre had never, previously been procured or opened up to external competition
  - There was therefore no lease or funding agreement in place and negotiations were currently taking place to achieve this. This would enable Teme Leisure to carry on managing the site without going down the procurement route
  - The SpArC Centre would not be closed as some press reports had suggested
  - Teme Leisure did receive funding from the Community College through the education budget
  - There had been a reduction in funding in Leisure Services for the last three years across all sites
  - There had been a variety of solutions to address reduced funding for other facilities in the county, eg schools taking on management, reduced opening hours, management restructuring, outsourcing of facilities not on school sites
  - The importance of the SpArC Centre to the most rural part of Shropshire was acknowledged by the Council
  - Some reduction in opening hours was not desirable but probably necessary at low usage times in the light of the resources available

- 7.4 The Chair invited Members of the Committee and members of the public to ask questions and these included:
- what was the percentage reduction of funding?
  - how were funds provided to Teme Leisure - for all sites they managed or SpArC alone?
  - Did the Council have effective control over Teme Leisure's Management?
  - If a contract with Teme Leisure could not be agreed would it then be opened up to other private companies?
- 7.5 In response to questions Mr Penton explained that the reduction of funding over the last three years was in the region of 30%. All schools received a funding allocation for the joint use of leisure facilities. This was a contribution to the schools' use of the facilities and could not be used to subsidise community use but was important to the overall funding structure. He confirmed that the swimming pool was in the ownership of the school. There were issues with all joint use sites at schools related to utility costs so SpArC was not a unique case.
- 7.6 He confirmed that a rurality factor had been applied to the SpArC Site to support its' importance to the local community. He also confirmed that the management fee allocated to Teme Leisure was for all four sites at SpArC, Ludlow, Cleobury Mortimer and Church Stretton. This was then broken down into individual site budgets. He also explained that there was a representative from each leisure centre site on the Teme Leisure Board
- 7.7 The Chairman of the SpArC Centre User Group expressed concern that the cut being passed from the Council to Teme Leisure would hit the SpArC Centre particularly hard as it was an expensive centre to run. Mr Penton reiterated that the Council had not applied a cut to Teme Leisure any greater than to other operators in the county or to Shropshire Council managed leisure sites. He also confirmed that negotiations were underway with Teme to reduce the impact of reductions to SpArC. He expected this would still result in some level of reduced opening hours but it was hoped this would not be detrimental to community use.
- 7.8 Members of the public expressed concern that the centre would be shut to adults during the daytime. Mr. Penton said that this would be a decision for Teme Leisure in negotiation with Shropshire Council. He pointed out that none of the joint use facilities in Shrewsbury were open to the public during the school day though there were other options for the public here. The safety of students and staff has to remain the main priority and it should be noted that the leisure facilities are primarily for the school though it is also accepted that community use is a very important component.

- 7.9 A member of the Committee pointed out that Teme Leisure had improved the usage of the building and widened the community offer. Mr Penton reiterated that the Council was very happy with the job done by Teme Leisure but legal difficulties had delayed making an agreement more secure. In answer to further questions he explained both parties wished to avoid a procurement process which would be lengthy and expensive.
- 7.10 Those present discussed marketing and boosting user numbers of the Centre. Mr. Penton made the point that there were not enough people living close by to help address the problem and subsidy would remain critical to its' future. There had been some trials of offering swimming for longer hours but this meant significant staffing costs and had hardly been taken up.
- 7.11 The main concerns of those present were that Teme Leisure would apply cuts harder to the SpArC Centre than at other sites. Mr Penton reiterated that, ultimately that decision would be for Teme Leisure to make though he pointed out that the Council would wish to support Teme in ensuring that a balanced programme of activities was achievable within the funding limits.
- 7.12 The Chairman of the SpArC users Group and the Chairman of the Committee encouraged members of the public to make contact with them so that the Group could represent their views.
- 7.13 Mr Penton explained that when an agreement was reached, the Council and Teme Leisure would release a joint statement.
- 7.14 The Chairman thanked Mr Penton for attending the meeting and for his clear and reasonable explanation of the situation. It was hoped by all present that the best outcome for the community would be achieved.

## **8. Housing Issues**

- 8.1 Andy Mortimer, Planning and Corporate Manager, Shropshire Council and Paul Sutton, Executive Director, South Shropshire Housing Association (SSHA) were welcomed to the meeting.
- 8.2 Mr Sutton gave some background information about South Shropshire Housing Association which owned 2300 homes across southern Shropshire and Northern Herefordshire. These were mainly social rented properties, but with a growing portfolio of shared ownership properties.

His presentation covered the following in relation to how the Housing Association and Shropshire Council would be working together to provide affordable housing in coming years:

*Funding for affordable housing* - last year 322 homes had been bid for from the Homes and Communities Agency but funding for only 32 had been received. However SSHA was committed to 200 homes over the next four years. He commented that Shropshire Council should be congratulated on putting in place the Community Infrastructure Levy which was regarded as the most creative in the UK.

SSHA was looking at ways to use assets better in the face of the slow down in private development and Section 106 agreements. . It had agreed that property would only be sold if it would enable provision of at least two more.

The Chair of the LJC commented that the replacement properties should be in the same place as any that were sold.

*Which communities were suitable for affordable housing* – all communities were, where there was need. SSHA operated under contract with Shropshire Council through the Home Point Choice Based Letting scheme. Members noted that there were currently 7,481 households currently on the list, 6,027 with a Shropshire postcode.

*Sites suitable for affordable housing* - those zoned in the local plan, SAMDEV, or exceptions sites within or abutting existing village or town boundaries, ideally flat with access to services and drainage.

*Who will build the new homes* - SSHA had plans to build 33 and aspirations for 200. Other Housing Associations also had plans to provide around that number and Shropshire Council were intending to build 62.

*How can Parish and Town Councils help* - by promoting affordable housing policies, helping find suitable sites and brokering relationships and understanding Shropshire Affordable housing policies, especially choice based letting.

*Partnership activity* - SSHA had met with HCA to consider community led initiative pots of money for new homes. It continually lobbied the Local Enterprise Partnership on the importance of housing to the economy.

### **Andy Mortimer, Head of Planning Policy Group - Shropshire Council**

Andy Mortimer reminded those present of the SAMDEV consultation of 18 months ago. The SAMDEV would replace the

## Local Plans of the District Councils.

The SAMDEV consultation showed settlements and land around them that had been promoted or previously identified for development. 5000 representations had been received in response to this consultation and 2000 sites had been considered and assessed. Criteria including ecology, drainage and highway access were assessed and evidence had been taken from parish councils, rural toolkit evenings, local members and community action officers. Evidence received was currently being considered and the next stage of the consultation would invite views on proposals over a three month period.

The Chair referred to some confusion within Parish Councils on place plans, not helped by the similar terminology used for 'parish plans'. She reported that some parishes in her electoral division did not appear to have any connection with the settlements they had been asked to comment on, and some thought that all parishes needed to create Place Plans. She emphasised that the point was to give a flavour of housing and infrastructure need but she felt that more explanation and guidance was needed.

Andy Mortimer explained that Place Plans were based around 18 market towns and key centres. A workshop had been held last year with representatives from the main towns who had been asked where they thought they drew their catchments/customers from and this information had been used. It was a best fit process from that perspective and they would be kept under review.

He agreed to take the message back that more needed to make the process clearer. **AM**

In response to questions about what was meant by affordable housing, Paul Sutton explained that this was below market housing and could be social rented, affordable rented tenure or shared ownership equity.

Members of the LJC reported that locations such as Snailbeach, Stiperstones and Worthen with Shelve were desperate for affordable housing to retain young people and support local schools and businesses.

Mr Sutton reported on some innovative approaches in other parts of the county eg involving a derelict pub at Neenton. He was also keen for understanding of the choice based letting system to be promoted.

The Committee expressed its appreciation to Mr Sutton and Mr



Mortimer for attending the meeting and answering questions.

**9. Broadband Update**

The Chair said she was disappointed with the written update provided and felt it was not applicable to sparsely populated areas of the county which would never be able to provide a high level of demand. Members also queried a pilot in Lydbury North which was not mentioned in the report and wished to establish what that involved.

A more specific report suited to the LJC area was requested.

**10. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**11. Issues Update From Around the LJC Area**

No further issues were raised.

**12. Grant Applications 2011/2012 – Decisions Report**

When discussion was held around the grant application submitted by Bishop's Castle Community College, Heather Kidd declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a governor of the school and left the room. **RESOLVED:** that all recommendations in the report be agreed without discussion.

A) Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre - Gleanings from the past – Looking to the future  
Recommended grant: £500

B) Leasowes Bank Arts Festival 2012  
Recommended grant award: £960

C) Global Village Proposal - Shelton Hospital  
Recommended grant award: £250

D) Clun Valley AED Scheme – Expansion of scheme  
Recommended grant award: £2,500

E) Bishop's Castle Youth Club – Extension of youth activities  
Recommended grant award: £1,000

F) Land, Life and Livelihoods - Preparation of Business Plan for Clun Community-Led Catchment Management Project  
Recommended grant award: £250

G) Enterprise South West Shropshire – Business plan for the Role  
Recommended grant award: Defer decision on this application and  
request presentation from the applicant at the next LJC meeting.

H) Bishop's Castle Public Hall – New tables and chairs for the hall  
Recommended grant award: £1,217.43

I) – Bishop's Castle Community College – BIG BANG exhibition at  
the NEC  
Recommended grant award: £500

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 14 June 2012