



Committee and Date Bridgnorth, Worfield, Alveley and Claverley Local Joint Committee Wednesday 9 February 2011 7:00 p.m.
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Item/Paper 3 Public

**NOTES OF ACTIONS AND DECISIONS FROM THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2010 AT WORFIELD RECREATION ROOM**

7:00 – 9.00 p.m.

Responsible Officer Anne Cousins

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Committee Members Present:

Shropshire Council

Mr Christian Lea (Chairman)

Mr Les Winwood

Mr Michael Wood

Mrs Tina Woodward (Vice Chairman)

Town/Parish Councils

Mr David Voysey, Alveley and Romsley Parish Council

Mr Simon Elcock, Astley Abbots Parish Council

Mr Terry Lipscombe, Badger Parish Council

Mr David Tooth, Beckbury Parish Council

Mr Geoff Bodenham, Bridgnorth Town Council

Mr Richard Cotham, Claverley Parish Council

Mrs Isabel Faithful, Quatt Malvern Parish Council

Mr Malcolm Duff-Walker, Ryton and Grindle Parish Council

Mr Peter Dent, Tasley Parish Council

Mr Len Ball, Worfield and Rudge Parish Council

Shropshire Council Officers present:

Michael Hyatt, Lead Officer

Vicky Turner, Community Regeneration Officer (CRO)

Anne Cousins, Committee Officer

Environment Agency

Martin Fenn, Environmental Monitoring Officer (Analysis and Reporting)

West Mercia Police:

CSO Sue Eden

CSO Shelley Hyde

There were 40 people present in total.

ACTION

32. Apologies and Substitutions

- 32.1 Apologies were received on behalf of Mr John Hurst-Knight and Mr William Parr, Shropshire Council; and Mr Ian Amos, Kemberton Parish Council.

33. Declarations of Interest

- 33.1 Mr Michael Wood declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 – funding applications from the Bridgnorth Town Plan Steering Group and the English Haydn Festival.
- 33.2 Mr David Tooth declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 – funding application from the Six Parishes Friendship Club.

34. Notes and Matters Arising

- 34.1 The Chairman provided an update to the road safety issues between Cross Lane Head and Bridgnorth, as follows:

“Volumes of heavy goods vehicles using the B4373 - Within Shropshire, the A and B road network are the roads that must carry this type of traffic and are signed as such. The A and B road network is generally constructed to a higher structural standard than more minor roads and receives maintenance appropriate to this type of traffic loading. These routes are also on the defined County network for winter maintenance reflecting their strategic importance.

Cross Lane Head is named within our Village Speed Limit Programme for consideration during this current financial year however with current budget constraints it is unlikely that any further work will be carried out on these villages at the present time”.

- 34.2 The Chairman also drew attention to the update provided in the agenda papers from the PCT regarding the operating theatre at Bridgnorth Community Hospital. He was delighted to hear that the operating theatre was to be re-furbished and would be re-opened by the end of the current financial year.
- 34.3 There was discussion about the housing query (item 3 in the Comments and Questions sheet attached to the minutes) and it was agreed that it would be helpful to invite officers from the housing department to attend a future meeting.
- 34.4 **RESOLVED:** That the notes of the previous meeting, held on 14 July 2010, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Lead
Officer**

ACTION

35. Bridgnorth Lions Club

At the invitation of the Chairman, a representative of the Bridgnorth Lions Club addressed the meeting and explained the "Message in a Bottle" scheme. This scheme encouraged elderly and/or disabled people to record their medical details in a bottle and keep it in the fridge where it could be found by the emergency services if necessary. A display of bottles and leaflets was available at the back of the hall.

36. Consideration of Funding Applications

36.1 The Chairman suggested, and it was agreed, that the funding applications be considered next on the agenda. Michael Hyatt, Lead Officer, introduced the report.

36.2 There was some discussion about the application by the Bridgnorth Players for £2,012 for portable lighting. Some Members expressed concern that the whole cost of the lighting appeared to be coming from Council funding of one kind or another; other Members wanted reassurance that the Bridgnorth Players would extend the range of venues where they gave performances. A representative from the group explained the group's desire to go to smaller venues throughout the area. On being put to the vote, it was unanimously agreed to fund the whole amount.

36.3 The application for £1,245 by the Bridgnorth Town Plan Steering Group towards the costs of the production of a Town Plan provoked some discussion. The officer recommendation was for deferral, pending more information about committed expenditure and final cost. A representative of the group explained that they had only just received a grant from Bridgnorth Town Council, which had enabled them to progress with the project. At the time of making the application to the Local Joint Committee, they were unable to record much progress as at that time they had no funding. Members were asked by the applicant to re-consider the officer recommendation, because any deferral would simply delay the project.

36.4 There was further discussion about the relationship between groups set up to produce a Town or Parish Plan and their local Town or Parish Council. It was confirmed that community led plans were produced by voluntary groups which were separate bodies from Town and Parish Councils. This application for funding was not being made by Bridgnorth Town Council, but by a group of citizens who had volunteered to produce a Town Plan.

ACTION

36.5 An amendment was proposed that a decision on funding should be made at this meeting, rather than being deferred. On being put to the vote, a majority voted in favour of the funding request for £1,245.

36.6 The application by the English Haydn Festival for £5,000 towards their costs was considered. It was noted that the Festival had received LJC funding in previous financial years. The officer recommendation was that, if the application was to be accepted, there should be a clear expectation that the Festival would reduce its dependence on LJC funds in future years.

36.7 Members discussed the value of the Festival to tourism across the whole District and opinions were divided as to whether the Festival should be encouraged to seek funding from elsewhere in future years.

36.8 On being put to the vote, a majority of Members voted in favour of providing £5,000 funding to the English Haydn Festival.

36.9 **RESOLVED:**

A That each application received for the Community Chest and the Larger Grant Scheme be considered in the light of the officers' recommendations.

B That the following grant approvals be confirmed:

Community Chest

C7 Six Parishes Friendship Club – Day Trip	£345
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Larger Grant Schemes

5 Bridgnorth Players – portable lighting	£2,012
6 Astley Abbots Village Hall – floor repairs	£1,939
7 Bridgnorth Town Plan – production costs	£1,245
8 English Haydn Festival – festival costs	£5,000

**Lead
Officer**

ACTION

37. Knotweed along the River Severn

37.1 Martin Fenn, of the Environment Agency, gave a presentation on the issue of Japanese knotweed (copy attached to signed minutes).

37.2 The presentation covered how Japanese knotweed was introduced into the UK; why it was such a problem; and whose responsibility it was to deal with it. It was made clear that the principal responsibility rested with land-owners. The cost of eradicating knotweed from the UK was estimated by the government to be one and a half billion pounds.

Mr Fenn informed those present that Japanese knotweed was a controlled waste product and it was an offence to cause it to spread. Work was on-going to develop bio-control, i.e. the use of aphids to attack plants.

Other invasive species covered in the presentation were Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam.

37.3 Mr Fenn answered a number of questions, covering the role of the Environment Agency; who was responsible for knotweed on footpaths and the actions householders should take if they found knotweed in their gardens. Mr Fenn advised householders to cut back plants every year just below the lowest node and to burn, not compost, the cuttings. In response to a question about Himalayan balsam, Mr Fenn explained this could be treated with herbicides and research was underway to find a biological method of control. Unlike knotweed, Himalayan balsam could be composted. Anyone wishing to report Japanese knotweed, or other invasive species, was advised to contact Mr Fenn at the Environment Agency (e-mail martin.fenn@environment-agency.gov.uk or tel 01743 283540).

All

38. Key Current Policing Issues – PACT (Partners and Communities Together)

38.1 CSO Sue Eden introduced this item and gave apologies for her colleague, PC Matt Picken, who was currently on response duties.

38.2 She reported the crime figures from 1 July to 30 September 2010, which were 8 burglaries of dwellings; 14 other burglaries; 10 criminal damage incidents and 6 drug offences. She was pleased that it was a low crime area.

ACTION

38.3 PACT surgeries would be held at The Plough, Claverley, on 19 October at 7.30 p.m.; Tuck Hill Village Hall, 25 October at 7.00 p.m. and at The Squirrel, Alveley at 7.00 p.m. on 3 November.

39. Market Towns Revitalisation Programme

39.1 Michael Hyatt, Lead Officer, gave a brief resume of the Market Towns Revitalisation Programme, which had been launched in September 2010. This programme allowed capital funding to be allocated to market towns and Bridgnorth would be receiving £450,000. The Lead Officer explained that Shropshire Council would be working with Bridgnorth Town Council to develop funding proposals by April 2011.

39.2 Residents were invited to attend a meeting on 4 November at 7.00 p.m. at Westgate, where there would be an opportunity to participate in the debate and contribute ideas. Further information was also available from Vicky Turner, Community Regeneration Officer.

39.3 In response to a query from a member of the public, the Lead Officer confirmed that the meeting was open to all residents from the surrounding area, not just Bridgnorth residents. The intention of the project was to improve the hinterland, as well as the market town itself.

40. Update on Environmental Quality of Life Programme

40.1 A briefing note attached to the agenda papers provided a brief summary of progress to date on this project, which aimed to investigate ways in which Environmental Maintenance (street cleaning, grounds maintenance and associated services) can be delivered in communities in more effective ways.

40.2 Steve Brown, Head of Environmental Maintenance, offered to speak to residents with any queries after the meeting.

41. Public Question Time and Identification of Future Agenda Items

41.1 A parish councillor raised the issue of the huge number of e-mails which parish council clerks and chairmen were receiving. Other parish councillors agreed that this was a problem.

ACTION

41.2 A parish clerk expressed the view that it was difficult for clerks to know which pieces of information to include on parish agendas and which to exclude. Some parish councils had a number of members who did not have access to e-mail and it made the situation very difficult.

41.3 In response, the Lead Officer agreed to look into this matter further and see if there were any actions which Shropshire Council could do to help this situation, but he explained that it was extremely important for public organisations to consult and engage with local communities. It was, however, a time of severe spending restraints.

Lead Officer

41.4 It was suggested that a practical solution would be to provide executive summaries of documents.

41.5 There was a plea from a member of the public that all communications from public bodies should be written in plain English. She cited the Core Strategy documents, which she had found impossible to understand.

41.6 With regard to future agenda items, it was suggested that the divisional surveyor should be invited to a future meeting to discuss the general maintenance and improvement of roads, rather than just potholes as stated on the Suggestions sheet.

Committee Officer

42. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9 February 2011 at 7.00 p.m. at Westgate, Bridgnorth.

Deadline for receipt of funding applications to be considered at this meeting: Monday 10 January 2011.

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....