

**Committee and Date**

Burnell and Severn Valley
Local Joint Committee

26 September 2011

Item/Paper

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Public

NOTE OF ACTIONS AND DECISIONS FROM THE MEETING OF THE BURNELL AND SEVERN VALLEY LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 JUNE 2011 AT HARLEY VILLAGE HALL, HARLEY (7.30 – 9.10 PM).

Responsible Officer David Wise

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Present

Mr T Barker (Vice-Chairman), Mr S Bott, Mr M J Bradbury, Mr W H Higgins, Mr P Ince, Mr E J Plant, Mr R Purslow, Mr T Roberts, Mr B Nelson and Mrs C Wild (Chairman)

There were approximately 21 members of the public at the meeting.

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED: That Mrs C Wild be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

2. Apologies for Absence/Substitutions

Mr M Corrie (Leighton and Eaton Constantine Parish Council) gave his apologies.

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED: That Mr T Barker be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. Shropshire Council Rural Challenge Capital Fund

The Chairman reported that projects in rural areas of Shropshire not included in the Market Towns Revitalisation Programme were eligible to apply for funding, but they would have to demonstrate that they would create employment opportunities. Applications for funding had been submitted by Dorrington Village Hall Committee (enhancement works) and Cressage Pre-School. The closing date was the end of June.

5. Declarations of Interest

Mr Bradbury declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Stapleton Village Hall funding application. (He left the room during the discussion of this application).

6. Notes

RESOLVED : That the note of the last meeting held on 7 February 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

ACTION

7. Rurality Forum

Mrs Cecilia Motley, Shropshire Council's Portfolio Holder Flourishing Shropshire Communities: Rural Affairs, Carbon Reduction and Sustainability, was present. She explained her background. Part of her remit was to try to ensure that the Council took into account the needs of rural communities, and were treated as equitably as urban communities.

Mrs Motley gave an overview of the comments which had been raised at the previous meeting. She felt that some very pertinent points had been made. With regard to the first section over the role of parish councils in community support she noted that no concerns had been raised by members of the audience. In relation to the specific question of whether the role of parish councils was respected by Shropshire Council she explained that previously district councils had been their main point of contact. Shropshire Council had introduced a parish charter and she and Gwilym Butler (Portfolio Holder Flourishing Shropshire Communities) were committed to making the relationship more effective.

With regard to people's experiences about broadband quality, Shropshire Council's recent bid to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) had been unsuccessful, but a comprehensive broadband strategy was being developed. Another attempt would be made to achieve the delivery of fast internet, but the Council needed support from local communities and businesses to build a compelling case.

Mrs Motley noted that some positive comments had been made about public transport and that access to GP surgeries in Cressage and Dorrington was considered excellent. She supported the concept of outreach surgeries.

Finally with regard to the rural economy she drew attention to the importance of tourism. The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was on their 'doorstep'. She felt that the Council should consider encouraging more small hotels, holiday lets, and also equine tourism. The idea put forward that Shropshire Council should have a slot on their website to advertise business units was very good.

Mrs Motley agreed to take forward some of the ideas in order to obtain improvements.

8. ICT Support for Parish Councils

Mr Nelson expressed concern that until recently the initiatives developed by the former Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council had not been built on, with a seemingly arms-length approach by Shropshire Council over ICT support to parish councils. He suggested that at least more official email facilities should be available for clerks and chairs of parish councils and more technical knowledge and support for physical infrastructure provided.

Neil Langford, Shropshire Council's Head of IT, explained that the introduction of a unitary authority had presented a big challenge over IT. However free helpdesk services had been provided to parish councils with some e.g. Shrewsbury Town Council receiving up to a dozen personal computers at no charge.

He accepted that parish councils had been concerned at the budgetary proposal to withdraw immediately from providing ink cartridges and printing paper free of charge and to introduce a variable charging system for technical support from 1 April 2012.

Shropshire Council had recently adopted a new ICT strategy. An ICT Governance Board would be overseeing direction of the new ICT Strategy and there would also be an ICT Stakeholder Group.

A new shared Shropshire Public Services exchange network would involve the Fire and Rescue Service, parish and town councils and other public bodies. The intention was to give more functionality. Lotus Notes for staff would be replaced by Microsoft Outlook and free video conferencing, pod casts and instant messaging etc, would transform the way services were carried out and made more accessible. The new exchange would firstly be rolled out to Shropshire Council members and staff. It was then hoped starting in September to roll out .gov.uk email addresses to the Chairs and Clerks of Parish Councils. He stressed that Shropshire Council would discuss with individual parish councils the level of technical support they required and would also be providing a website. It might be co-op net but it would be signposted to the Shropshire Council network.

Shropshire had the third highest amounts of hot spots in the UK and he expressed confidence funding would be obtained for improved broadband for Shropshire businesses and residents.

Mr Nelson agreed that that Shropshire Council were now taking positive steps over the matter and indicated his willingness to serve on the stakeholder group.

RESOLVED : That Mr Nelson be recommended for appointment on the ICT Stakeholder Group.

9. Current Policing Issues – PACT (Partners and Community Together)
No Police representatives were in attendance.

10. Funding Applications

The Committee considered a report on seven funding applications.

The Chairman allowed applicants present to speak in support of their application and invited questions.

After discussion the Board voted separately on each application.

RESOLVED : That the following awards be made

	Applicant	Project	Grant
a	Church Pulverbatch Parish Plan Steering Group	Church Pulverbatch Parish Plan	£300

b	Leighton Village Hall Committee	1st Leighton Beer Festival	£300 towards the cost of glassware, printing costs and entertainment
c	Dorrington Youth Club	Woodlands One Night Camp– Shropshire Outdoor Survival. Friday 22 – Saturday 23 July 2011.	£250
d	The Condover Parish Paths Partnership	Footpath Information Display Boards and Walk Leaflets: Condover and Dorrington	£433
e	Buildwas Village Hall Committee	Refurbishment	£1,500
f	Stapleton Village Hall Committee	Kitchen insulation	£1,000 provided the applicants contact Building Control at Shropshire Council to ensure the project conforms to Building Regulations Conservation of Fuel and Power) and Tim Barker supervises the paperwork associated with the project.
g	Little Willows Pre-School, Cressage	ICT improvements	£482.19

12. Public Question Time/ Identification of future agenda items

The Chair asked members to email her with any suggestions for the next agenda.

The Chair reported that David Wise was taking early retirement from Shropshire Council with effect from the end of August. In wishing him well for the future she thanked him for his services including his uplifting work with Rachel and good sense of humour, and he received a round of applause.

13. Future meetings

It was reported that meetings had been scheduled for Monday 26 September, 2011, at Pitchford Village Hall and Monday 5 March 2012 at Cound Guildhall.

Chairman:

Date: