



<u>Committee and Date</u> Oswestry Local Joint Committee
2 June 2011
7.00pm

<u>Item/Paper</u>
7
Public

OSWESTRY LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2011 AT WALFORD & NORTH SHROPSHIRE COLLEGE, SHREWSBURY ROAD, OSWESTRY

7.00PM – 8.50PM

Responsible Officer Michelle Evans
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PRESENT:

Members of the Committee:

- Mr Martin Bennett Shropshire Council
- Mr Bill Benyon Shropshire Council
- Mr Vince Hunt Shropshire Council
- Mrs Elaine Channon Oswestry Town Council
- Mr Romer Hoseason Oswestry Town Council (Substitute)
- Mrs Val Schofield Oswestry Town Council

Officers:

- George Candler Assistant Director, Culture and Leisure, (Lead Officer)
- Arren Roberts Corporate Performance Improvement Officer (Support Officer)
- Kate Garner Community Action Manager
- Inspector Stafford West Mercia Police
- John Harrison Group Manager, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Michelle Evans Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services (Notes)

There were approximately 45 members of the public at the meeting.

ACTION

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND CHAIRMAN’S STATEMENT

1.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief explanation and background about the purpose and powers of the meeting. The other Committee Members then introduced themselves.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies were received from Mr Keith Barrow (Shropshire Council), Miss Betty Gull (Oswestry Town Council) and Mr Gareth Jones (Oswestry Town Council).

2.2 Apologies were also received from Nicki Young, Community Action Officer (CAO).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 **AGREED:** That the notes of the meeting held on 7 October 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 The Community Action Manager gave verbal updates on the following:

- Speeding on Gobowen Road

The Highways Department were awaiting the results of the speed monitoring undertaken by Mouchel and would liaise with the Police to take this matter forward.

- GHB

The Community Action Manager would report on this issue later in the meeting.

- Wilfred Owen Green

The Community Action Manager updated the meeting on the tactile bronze interpretation panel for the Oswestry Town Green which had been funded through the LJC. The Community and Conservation Officer had been working with a local artist on the design and would be liaising with the sight loss group to ensure it met their needs.

- Market Towns Revitalisation

The Chairman would feedback on issues raised at the toolkit event held on 23 November 2010 later in the meeting. A further consultation focusing on improving the economy was to be arranged. No decisions had yet been made as the project was still at the 'ideas gathering' stage however all ideas would be considered.

6. SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET UPDATE

6.1 The Lead Officer gave an update on Shropshire Council's Budget for 2011/12 (copy of slides attached to the signed Notes) which covered the following areas:

- How Shropshire Council was funded
- Overall impact on Shropshire of the Comprehensive Spending Review and Draft Settlement
- Meeting our Savings Target

In summary, the Lead Officer reported that Shropshire Council was facing tough challenges in the next few years with much of the savings having to be found in the current year and next year.

- 6.2 In response to a query about whether the savings would have a knock on effect in the private sector and on employment in particular, the Lead Officer reported that the Council was mindful of this and was looking at how to manage the savings to ensure as little knock on effect as possible. The Chairman explained that the Council was transforming the way it worked and that it would not look, in four years time, how it looked now. The Council would not be able to provide as many services and would be looking to other groups to commission the provision of some services.

7. SHROPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

- 7.1 The Group Manager explained that a briefing note had been circulated (copy attached to the signed Notes) which provided an overview of the budget constraints facing Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) following the coalition government's comprehensive spending reviewing.

- 7.2 The Group Manager informed the meeting that the service was likely to sustain cuts of approximately £4m over the next four years, of which £3m had been identified through a 10% reduction in work force (approximately 60 posts), extending the life of fire engines from 12 to 15 years and less routine maintenance on buildings. He confirmed that fire stations were not currently at threat but this position may change over time.

- 7.3 The Group Manager went on to report that in response to these budget cuts their approach to providing community safety advice would be focussed at those in most need eg the elderly and vulnerable.

- 7.4 In response to a query, the Group Manager confirmed that Oswestry would be getting a new Fire Engine very shortly. He explained that in order to address the future provision of water in rural areas, the new appliance would carry more water however some of the other equipment had been removed.

- 7.5 In response to a query about staff morale, the Group Manager explained that the organisation had engaged with staff from day one and a lot of the ideas about how the service could be delivered with fewer resources had come from staff.

8. a) PACT MEETING (PARTNERS & COMMUNITIES TOGETHER)

- 8.1 Inspector Stafford gave a presentation (copy of slides attached to the signed Notes) about the future of policing in 2011 and beyond. The full impact of the budget deficit was not entirely clear and as the Chief Constable was leaving in July, it would be up to his replacement to make any decisions.

ACTION

- 8.2 Inspector Stafford reported that efficiency savings of £9.8m must be made over the next 3 years which would result in the workforce being reduced by approximately 6%, equivalent to 98 Police Officer roles and 189 Police Staff roles. Inspector Stafford explained that West Mercia Police had not been recruiting for some time and that retiring Police Officers were not being replaced.
- 8.3 Inspector Stafford informed the meeting of the new single command arrangements whereby there would be five territorial police units and one Chief Superintendent. He stated that the public would not notice any difference as it was hoped to preserve front line Police Services. He confirmed that there was no intention of reducing the number of CSOs. To date Oswestry had lost one driver/handyman and one secretarial/admin post would not be replaced.
- 8.4 In response to a query Inspector Stafford explained that the number of senior officers had been significantly reduced from five to one and the number of Chief Inspectors had been reduced from four to three.
- 8.5 Concern was raised that the 20mph speed limit on Upper Brook Street was not being observed. The Chairman informed the meeting that a further report had been presented to the North Planning Committee reviewing the Our Lady and St Oswald's Safer Routes to School Scheme. The Planning Committee had decided to continue to monitor performance of the Scheme, and had requested a report back to the Committee in twelve months time. Comments from members of the public would be fed into this review.
- 8.6 In response to a query about whether the community could be involved in the monitoring of speed, Inspector Stafford reported that the Police were not running the Community Speed Watch initiative due to health and safety considerations.
- 8.7 In response to a query raised at the previous meeting in relation to cyclists riding on pavements, Inspector Stafford confirmed that CSOs had been issuing Fixed Penalty Notices.

b) PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- 8.8 The Chairman requested questions from the floor. The following issues were raised:

- Road safety outside Woodside School

Councillor Hunt informed the meeting that the school were aware of this issue and had introduced a school travel plan, which the children had worked on, and a walking school bus which commenced from three different locations and enabled children to walk to school escorted by adults in high visibility jackets.

	ACTION
<p>Councillor Hunt agreed to raise this issue at the next governors meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Youth Centre 	VH
<p>Councillor Hunt reported that the MyPlace project at the Oswestry site would still be going ahead and he explained the reasons for the delay. Councillor Hunt confirmed that updates on progress would be provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future provision of Youth Services 	VH
<p>A number of queries were raised in relation to the future provision of youth services. There was a lot of work going on however the Committee were unaware of the specific proposals. Councillor Hunt drew attention to the new transition protocol for children moving into adulthood and explained that the intention was to ensure that vulnerable children received the help that they needed.</p>	
<p>8.9 The Chairman drew attention to the following consultations and explained that further information was available for the public to take away:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Strategy for Shropshire 2011 – 2016 • Keeping it in the County: Securing the future of hospital services in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin • West Midlands Ambulance Services: Our plans for becoming an NHS Foundation Trust 	
<p>8.10 Disappointment was expressed about the discontinuance of the Wrexham and Shropshire direct rail service to London Marylebone.</p>	
<p>9. COMMUNITY ACTION MANAGER – UPDATE ON CURRENT WORK</p>	
<p>9.1 The Community Action Manager updated the meeting on some of the current work of the team, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GHB <p>Various work was being undertaken to find out more about this specific issue as part of a wider project. More information would be available as the project developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footfall <p>This project was continuing and the group were looking to identify new premises for displaying art.</p>	

- Heritage Forum

The Heritage Forum continue to work on a programme of events for the Heritage Open Weekend in September.

- Town Plan Group

The Town Plan Steering Group were looking for new members to join a sub group to look specifically at environmental and economic issues.

- 9.2 The Community Action Manager explained that following a restructure, the team would now be called the Community Action Team and would have key roles in community safety and development, bronze level tasking and supporting elected members in their community champion role. She informed the meeting that she would be covering the Oswestry area in future and that Nicki Young, the current CAO would be moving to Whitchurch.

10. MARKET TOWNS REVITALISATION PROGRAMME – FEEDBACK FROM TOOLKIT EVENT

- 10.1 The Chairman updated the meeting on the toolkit event that had been held in Oswestry on 23 November 2010. A number of ideas had been raised all of which would go forward and feed into the Local Development Framework. The Chairman reported that the Council had received an award for this toolkit event.

11. ACTIVE OSWESTRY PILOT PROJECT AND PLACE BASED INTERVENTION PROJECT

- 11.1 The Support Officer gave a presentation about these two projects (copy of slides attached to the signed notes).
- 11.2 The Support Officer explained that Oswestry had been selected for the Active partnership project because of issues around deprivation, alcohol and drug misuse and the low level of participation in physical activity. The project was part of a wider review of physical activity focussing on Oswestry in order to understand the barriers to participation.
- 11.3 The Support Officer explained that a lot of community engagement had taken place with Oswestry people, including various organisations and sports clubs. It was hoped that by taking a co-ordinated approach and by working together participation in physical activity could be improved.
- 11.4 In order to explain the purpose of the Place Based Intervention project, the Support Officer discussed a real life case study involving a number of services including the Council, Police and Health. The focus of this project was on the people and the services accessed by them in order to find local solutions and better ways for services to work together.

ACTION

11.5 It was agreed for a response to be obtained to a query raised about the cut in funding to the Kingswell Centre.

12. OSWESTRY COMMUNITY CHEST

12.1 The Committee received the report of the Lead Officer (copy attached to the signed Notes) which considered the applications received by the deadline of 7 January 2011 and provided an update on the 2010/11 budget.

12.2 **It was AGREED that the Oswestry Local Joint Committee**

A. allocates funding to those organisations and their projects as set out in Appendix A to the report.

B. increases the Community Chest budget by £5,170.35.

13. FUTURE MEETINGS

13.1 The Chairman reported that the funding for LJsCs would be cut by 50% the following year and that the Oswestry LJC would be holding two meetings per year with a third strategic meeting being held jointly with the Oswestry and surrounding area LJsCs. Dates for these meetings had yet to be confirmed.

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13.2 The Lead Officer explained that he had been appointed to one of the three new Area Director posts and he would have responsibility for the north of the county. He explained the new way of working which would very much embrace the coalition government's localism agenda. The focus would be on what the local community wanted and by working in partnership would help shape local communities around their wants and needs within the finances available for that area.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____