



Committee and Date
Oswestry Local Joint Committee
16 February 2012
7.00pm

Item/Paper
4
Public

## OSWESTRY LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

### NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT THE MARCHES SCHOOL & TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE, MORDA ROAD, OSWESTRY

7.00PM – 9.10PM

**Responsible Officer** Michelle Evans

Email: [michelle.evans.lads@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.evans.lads@shropshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: (01743) 252727

#### 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
Miss Betty Gull	Oswestry Town Council
Mrs Val Schofield	Oswestry Town Council

##### Officers:

Kate Garner	Community Action Manager, Shropshire Council
Joanne Coote	Project Manager, United Utilities
Adrian Dean	Democratic Services, Shropshire Council
Richard Thomas	Democratic Services, Shropshire Council
Alison Brock	Broadband Project Manager, Shropshire Council
Inspector Stafford	West Mercia Police
Michelle Evans	Committee Officer, Shropshire Council (Notes)

**There were approximately 24 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 drew attention to the Welcome Note which had been circulated giving a brief explanation and background about the purpose and powers of the meeting.

#### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Mr Keith Barrow (Shropshire Council) and John Gareth Jones (Oswestry Town Council).

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 3.1 Mrs Elaine Channon declared a personal interest in Application B6 of Agenda Item 10.1 (2011/12 Oswestry LJC Budget Report and Funding Requests for Consideration) as she was the Patron of Osyteers. Mrs Channon also declared a personal interest in Application B9 as she sat on the Management Committee of the Oswestry Youth Café.

### **4. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 4.1 **AGREED:** That the notes of the meeting held on 2 June 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **4.2 MATTERS ARISING**

##### **4.2.1 UNITED UTILITIES**

Ms Joanne Cootes, Project Co-ordinator updated the meeting on work being undertaken to clean the Vyrnwy Large Diameter Trunk Mains water supply to Liverpool. She reported that they were now on site, excavations had been dug from Oswestry to Drynewedd. The pipes from Brogyntyn to Old Fort Road would be ready for insertion the following week. Pipes were awaited behind Kwik Fit in Gobowen Road.

The traffic management scheme around Woodside School was working well and no complaints had been received. She confirmed that they were on schedule to meet their delivery date.

#### **4.3 OTHER MATTERS ARISING**

- 4.3.1 The Chairman drew attention to the responses to questions raised at the previous meeting, which had been circulated (copy attached to the signed Notes).
- 4.3.2 A special Oswestry Cluster LJC with a focus on health issues in the area had been arranged for the following week to include details of proposed changes to the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and a virtual tour of the new Oswestry Medical Centre.
- 4.3.3 The Chairman confirmed that the issue of traffic lights at the junction of Middleton Road and Rof Street was to be included as part of a bigger study around traffic flows which would include the impact of any changes to the entrance and exit to the central car park.
- 4.3.4 The Chairman requested members of the public to let him know where additional litter bins were required in the town.

## **5. REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2013 – UPDATE**

- 5.1 Mr Richard Thomas and Mr Adrian Dean gave an update on the Community Governance Review (CGR) of Oswestry Town and areas of adjoining parishes currently being undertaken by Shropshire Council (copy of maps and draft recommendations attached to the signed Notes).
- 5.2 One of the changes being proposed by the Council's working party was for some of the developed area of Oswestry Rural to fall inside Oswestry Town and be included as part of the Castle Ward. The reason for the proposed change was issues in relation to voting (some electors have to travel 8 miles to Rhydygroesau or Selattyn to vote when their nearest poll station is in Oswestry where their neighbours vote!).
- 5.3 Another significant boundary change being proposed was that the new boundary to the West of the Town should follow the A5 and A483.
- 5.4 Some re-alignment of town warding arrangements were also being proposed and Mr Dean informed the meeting of the electoral arrangement of polling districts and estimated electorate figures for April 2016 which showed the average number of electors per seat for each ward within a range of + or – 10% of the average number of electors. Development sites within the town had also been included (90 electors). Mr Dean drew attention to other changes including part of Maserfield to be included in Oswestry Rural. It had been suggested that Gatacre Ward be retained but become smaller.
- 5.5 It was confirmed that the consultation would begin in October. The consultation document would then be circulated. The Chairman requested that the information be taken away and studied very closely and discussed with others.
- 5.6 In response to a query it was confirmed that very few people would be affected by the changes and for them it would just mean that they became part of a different ward and would vote in a different polling station. In response to a query, it was confirmed that these proposed changes would not affect school catchment areas.
- 5.7 Concern was raised about community identities and how the community would work together in such large areas. Mr Thomas requested that if members of the public could identify recognisable neighbourhoods that these be fed into the consultation.
- 5.8 In response to a query Mr Thomas explained that the average number of electors per seat was currently 728 but this was expected to increase to 760 by 2016 but within a range of + or – 10% so between 680 and 800 approximately. As long as the number was within this range and met the other legal tests, it would be allowed.

**ACTION**

- 5.9 Concern was raised about having only one polling station for such large areas, especially where a large proportion of electors do not have access to transport. Concern was also raised that certain community identities could be lost and social cohesion diluted by moving some areas into different wards.
- 5.10 Concern was raised that young people lacked knowledge about the democratic process and so were not engaged. The Chairman informed the meeting about the Oswestry Youth Council and Mr Hunt drew attention to school councils. He agreed that young people need to understand that they can make a difference.
- 5.11 The Chairman thanked Mr Thomas and Mr Dean for attending and looked forward to hearing the preliminary results. He urged the public to respond to the consultation.
- 6. COUNTYWIDE BROADBAND PROJECT**
- 6.1 Ms Alison Brock gave a presentation (copy of slides attached to the signed Notes) which looked at the future of broadband in Shropshire. She reported that BT had announced it was bringing superfast broadband to Oswestry independently of the BDUK bid. No details were yet available but Ms Brock would attend a future meeting when these were available.
- 6.2 The Government has pledged to make funding available to enable as many people as possible access to a minimum of 2mbps. Shropshire Council had therefore submitted a bid to BDUK and had been awarded £8.2 million together with Telford and Wrekin. Shropshire Council had also agreed capital funding of £2 million to enable 100% of Shropshire access to a minimum of 2mbps and to deliver superfast broadband to as much of the county as possible.
- 6.3 Ms Brock went on to explain what was being done within Shropshire Council to improve broadband. She touched on the social inclusion and economic benefits of broadband in the area. The current broadband speed in Shropshire had been mapped and those areas with a speed of less than 2mbps had been highlighted. It was also hoped to see growth in the mobile coverage of Broadband.
- 6.4 Ms Brock then discussed the next steps which included a report to Cabinet in October setting out the scope for what it was hoped to deliver to individual areas of the county. Central Government would then need to sign off the Council's broadband plan before a technical partner could be procured. A programme of demand stimulation would be undertaken with communities and businesses.
- 6.5 Ms Brock requested the public to complete the questionnaires which had been circulated indicating why access to broadband was important to them. She informed the meeting that she could be contacted on the Council's Connecting Shropshire website.

**ACTION**

- 6.6 In response to a query about whether broadband speed would then be dependant on an individual's ISP (Internet Service Provider), Ms Brock confirmed that BT Open Reach would provide only the infrastructure and that multiple ISPs would be looked at in order to provide competition to drive down the prices. This was currently being monitored.
- 6.7 In response to a query Ms Brock explained that it was hoped to include all members of society including those with no internet access by creating community hubs and providing training and ongoing support. In response to concerns the Chairman drew attention to the use of assistive technologies in adult social care which would also benefit from superfast broadband eg alarms.
- 6.8 A member of the public drew attention to the Digital Unite group which provided support and encouragement for those with little computer skills. Free access to pcs in libraries across the County was also highlighted together with the Supernova Speech Programme which was available for the visually impaired.
- 7. COMMUNITY ACTION MANAGER – UPDATE ON CURRENT WORK**
- 7.1 The Community Action Manager updated the meeting on some of the current work of her team, which included the following:
- The Heritage Open Day/Weekend had been a great success.
  - The Oswestry Town Museum was being supported by the Town Council.
  - The Oswestry Youth Café's 6 month programme was coming to an end.
  - The work of the Oswestry Community Alcohol Partnership with young people.
  - Place plans for site allocation / local development framework.
  - Market Towns Programme – a second round of ideas would be considered if they benefit the economy of the town.
  - Community safety / Crime reduction – they were working closely with local policing teams.
  - A new Anti Social Behaviour reporting line had been introduced. The telephone number for which was 0345 678 9020.
  - Developing the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). Packs had been circulated if anyone wished to join the Voluntary and Community Services Assembly (contact Sarah Dodds, the VCSA Co-ordinator on 01743 252295).

**ACTION**

- The tactile map had been installed at the Wilfred Owen Town Green and it was hoped that an official opening would be arranged shortly.
  - Tender documents had been sent out for the Ash Road Play Area project.
  - Lots of work was ongoing on the finger post project. 11 fingerposts were due to be installed during the week commencing 17 October.
- 7.2 Ms Garner drew attention to the meeting of the Oswestry Cluster LJC the following week (7pm 27 September 2011 at The Marches School) which had a focus on health issues and in particular the proposed changes to Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, the new medical centre in Oswestry and information about the West Midlands Ambulance Service 'Make Ready' project.
- 7.3 The new leisure centre in Oswestry would open on 1 October with free swimming sessions on 2 October.
- 7.4 Ms Garner drew attention to the Eid al-adha celebration being run by Sure Start on 10 November 2011 at the Eastern Oswestry Community Centre.
- 7.5 Ms Garner reminded the meeting that the deadline for applications for the next round of the Oswestry Community Chest was 6 January 2012. Any art related applications should be directed to the Oswestry and District Arts Association.
- 8. GOOD NEWS STORIES**
- 8.1 A paper highlighting good news stories from Oswestry Town Council was circulated and Members of the Committee updated the meeting. Updates given included the following:
- Oswestry in Bloom received a gold award for the seventh consecutive year. The Committee were very grateful for the support from local businesses and residents.
  - Oswestry Youth Musical Festival had been one of the best to date.
  - A Museum for Oswestry was in the process of being established on the first floor of the Guildhall and would be open between 10am and 4pm Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays and also on evenings when the Attfield Theatre was in use.
  - The Mydeco project had now commenced at the Powis Hall and would include the installation of a lift.

**ACTION**

- 8.1
- The Town Council had established a regeneration forum with Shropshire Council and would be hosting a further World Café event following the success of the previous event.
  - A Bed and Breakfast scheme was being set up to improve B&B facilities and to create new bed spaces to boost local tourism and the economy.
  - The Town Council had been an active participant in the recent Oswestry Heritage Open Day and had recently launched a dvd on the Oswestry silver collection.
  - The Town Council was working with Shropshire Council and the local Town Plan Steering Committee to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for Oswestry.
  - Oswestry Chamber of Commerce had been relaunched.
  - This year's Christmas Music Live would include an ice rink on Festival Square.
  - The Town Council's website was to undergo a major refresh.

Suggestions for the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations were requested.

- 8.2
- Councillor Vince Hunt updated the meeting about the ongoing construction at Centre North West and the successful remedial works by United Utilities at Woodside School to manage the school drop off which was proving a success.

- 8.3
- The Chairman presented a slideshow of the new leisure centre which would open on 1 October 2011. He confirmed that the infrastructure for a café had been put in however it would be up to the operator to introduce this. In the meantime, vending machines were available in the reception area.

- 8.4
- In response to a query the Chairman confirmed that a skateboard park was part of Phase II, planning for which would probably begin as soon as possible. The old leisure centre was to be sold to help pay for Phase II. The Chairman confirmed that the new leisure centre had facilities for the disabled and indeed was DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant.

**9. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PACT MEETING (PARTNERS & COMMUNITIES TOGETHER)**

- 9.1
- Inspector Stafford reported that the old Chief Constable had retired and the new one had taken up post. He confirmed that Oswestry had not lost any officers or CSOs.

**ACTION**

- 9.2 Significant investment was being made to Oswestry Police Station which now had a new front and work was due to start on other parts of the station. The life of the Station was therefore guaranteed. He stressed the importance for a town the size of Oswestry to have a station and he felt it was in a very good location.
- 9.3 Inspector Stafford reported that four to five special officers had been trained to assist the regular staff especially on Fridays and Saturdays.
- 9.4 Inspector Stafford informed the meeting that officers from Oswestry had supported colleagues in Birmingham during that Summer's riots.
- 9.5 The problems with taxi drivers had been assessed. There had been two reported assaults, damage to taxi meters, a taxi driver not being legal and 3 people ran off without paying. The taxi marshalling scheme was working well however.
- 9.6 Inspector Stafford updated the meeting in relation to boy racers around Gatacre. He reported that it had been reasonably quiet with only two reports of anti social drivers. He requested that the public report any incidents and take down licence numbers as action could then be taken.
- 9.7 Inspector Stafford reported on the underage drinking patrols being undertaken jointly by the police and trading standards in addition to the Youth Inclusion Scheme whereby if any alcohol was seized, names and addresses were taken and a visit made to the young persons home. The response from parents had been very positive.
- 9.8 The Bronze tasking multi agency work was ongoing. If anyone had a real problem they should report it either to the police or via the new anti social behaviour helpline. Action could then be taken.
- 9.9 In response to an issue of concern, Inspector Stafford reported that following the police drug raids in April there had been a reduction in the use and number of incidents sustained. The main licensed premises and all officers had been supplied with testing kits. Inspector Stafford confirmed that 400 kits had been used in the last two years.
- 9.10 A query was raised in relation to cars for sale being parked on pavements. Inspector Stafford informed the meeting that you could sell your own car but a trader would need planning permission. It was confirmed that a response would be obtained from the highways section.
- 9.11 Another issue raised was cars parking on the pavement in Leg Street. Inspector Stafford confirmed that this was the responsibility of Shropshire parking and would be passed on to them.

**KG****KG****ACTION**



## **10. FUNDING DECISIONS**

### **10.1 OSWESTRY COMMUNITY CHEST**

10.1.1 The Committee received the report of the Community Action Manager (copy attached to the signed Notes) which considered the applications received by the deadline and provided an update on the 2011/12 budget.

10.1.2 It was **AGREED** to fund those organisations and their projects as set out in Appendix A to the report, as follows:

**£150 to Oswestry and District Civic Society for the installation of a blue plaque at the site of Barbara Pym's birth place.**

**£100 to Shropshire Cat Rescue for the purchase of a gazebo to aid fundraising.**

**£930 to the Oswestry Association for the Elderly for a programme of six tea dances.**

**£250 to Oswestry Sure Start for the Eid al-adha celebration event.**

**£1250 to the Osyteers volunteering project which will offer practical help to those in need of assistance.**

**£1917 to Oswestry Dial-a-Ride for the installation of new routing software.**

**£2000 to Cambrian Station Building for the installation of automatic doors.**

**£1000 to Oswestry Youth Café for resources for alcohol awareness/healthy living project for young people.**

**£7,000 to Walford and North Shropshire College to fund the Leanrdirect facility at The Qube.**

10.1.3 It was **AGREED** to defer the application from the Staffordshire and South Shropshire Health Trust to obtain further information about the programme of healthy living sessions for the minority ethnic women in Oswestry.

10.1.4 In view of the reduced funding available, it was **AGREED** that the LJC adopts the priority themes as set out in the report and uses these to guide future decisions and as information for potential funding applicants, as follows:

- **Economic development – supporting the economy of the town and improving employment opportunities.**

**ACTION**

- 10.1.4
- **Activities for young people and older people, especially those which encourage healthier living.**
  - **Building capacity into the voluntary sector and supporting sustainable development, as opposed to dependency.**
  - **Improving the local environment – built and natural.**
  - **Celebrating our local heritage.**
  - **Art and culture development.**
  - **Sports development.**

**10.2 SPORTS FUNDING**

10.2.1 The Committee received the report of the Community Action Manager (copy attached to the signed Notes) which outlined the rationale for delegating 5% of the 2011/12 budget to Oswestry and District Sports Council to enable them to run a sports funding programme on behalf of the LJC.

10.2.2 **It was AGREED that the Oswestry LJC delegates £1350 to the Oswestry and District Sports Council and that the Five Perry Parishes LJC be requested to reconsider supporting the Oswestry and District Arts Association as well as the Sports Council.**

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11.1 The next meeting would be held at 7pm on Thursday 16 February 2012, venue to be confirmed.

**ME**

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_