



Committee and Date
Oswestry Local Joint
Committee

13 June 2013

7.00pm

Item/Paper

4

Public

OSWESTRY LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

**NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2013 AT THE CENTRE,
OAK STREET, OSWESTRY.**

7.00pm – 8.25pm

Responsible Officer Michelle Dulson

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PRESENT:

Members of the Committee:

Mr Martin Bennett	Shropshire Council
Mr Bill Benyon	Shropshire Council
Mr Vince Hunt	Shropshire Council
Mr Romer Hoseason	Oswestry Town Council
Mr John G Jones	Oswestry Town Council

Officers:

Kate Garner	Community Action Manager, Shropshire Council
Sgt Scott Barnes	West Mercia Police
Michelle Dulson	Committee Officer, Shropshire Council (Notes)

There were approximately 10 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 explained that the meeting would be looking back at the last four years of the Oswestry LJC during which time £112,000 of funding had been given to community groups/organisations in the LJC area to try to improve the quality of life in Oswestry.

All of the budget for this year had been spent but it was hoped to have a similar budget next year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Keith Barrow, Councillor Miss Gull, Councillor Mrs Elaine Channon and Councillor Mrs Val Schofield (Substitute).

ACTION**3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

3.1 None received.

It was agreed to take agenda item 7 (Public Question Time and PACT Meeting) next.

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

4.1 Sgt Scott Barnes attended the meeting to discuss local policing matters. He reported that there had been no burglaries of dwellings within the LJC area over the last month. This was in part due to the force wide initiative Operation Citadel aimed at driving down burglaries.

4.2 Sgt Barnes informed the meeting how the public could protect their own property by ensuring windows and doors were locked, leaving a light on when out and security marking their valuables etc. He drew attention to the Immobilise website which helped to identify lost and stolen property and which the Police have access to. It also helped with insurance claims if property was recorded on the website.

4.3 Although it was not a problem in the Town, Sgt Barnes informed the meeting that in St Martins and Gobowen, catalytic converters were being stolen from car exhausts. He advised the public to keep their vehicle in a garage if possible or in a well-lit, busy area. If you had to park your vehicle on a drive, he advised the public to consider investing in security lighting which acted as a good deterrent. He also advised people to keep their garden tools securely looked away in a shed and to consider using a shed alarm.

4.4 In response to a query, Sgt Barnes confirmed that any time a crime had any elements of a hate crime it was reported and recorded as such. He requested that if anyone knew any victims of a hate crime that had not reported it to let him know. He wished any such victims to know that there was a full support network available to assist them.

4.5 In response to a query about the number of Police available on the ground, the Chairman reported that Oswestry Police Station was not to close and that it had been proposed that further police teams be based there, but that was subject to what happened in Ellesmere, where the Police Station was to close. It had been suggested that Ellesmere Police share the Fire Station with the Fire Service. Also, local policing teams were being reconstructed. Therefore, a response would be obtained once up to date information was available.

ACTION

- 4.6 Sgt Barnes explained that the telephone number 112 was an international Police number whereas most people recognise 999. It was hoped to encourage the public to ring 101 which would take them through to their force area.
- 4.7 In response to a query about smart water, Sgt Barnes explained that each part had its own unique dna which would be unique to your property once registered. It was available from a company online and more information could be obtained from the Safe and Able Team if required.
- 4.8 In response to a query about how the Police were coping with the night time economy and why they had recently objected to a late night licence, Sgt Barnes reported that the licence was until 4.30am but it was impossible to keep officers out all night dealing with the aftermath of alcohol consumption. As a service, they went where the demand was but could not keep officers on duty all night. The Police did not see a genuine need for a 4.30am licence.

5. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5.1 **AGREED:** That the notes of the meeting held on 27 September 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**6. LJC REVIEW:
FOUR YEARS OF SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY**

- 6.1 The Chairman informed the meeting that Oswestry LJC had awarded funding to various groups and organisations covering areas such as sport and recreation, the arts, economic development, environment and heritage, youth and senior citizens etc.
- 6.2 The Chairman drew attention to the various displays around the room which highlighted various activities and events that different groups had spent their grant monies on. The Chairman explained that representatives from a number of groups that had received funding from the LJC would be giving presentations on how they had spent the money and the difference it had made.
- 6.3 Oswestry Senior Citizen's Club
Councillor John G Jones informed the meeting that the Senior Citizens Club was for over 50s and held various events including dances and quizzes for its 250+ members. They had also won awards for their gardens. The Oswestry Senior Citizen Club had applied to the LJC for funding towards the replacement of the buildings' gable end and a Jubilee party. He thanked the LJC for their contributions which had made a big difference.

ACTION**6.4 Oswestry & Surrounding Area Association for the Elderly**

Mrs Kath Griffiths informed the meeting that the Oswestry & Surrounding Area Association for the Elderly had been holding tea dances at the Pedigree for the past three years and had received funding from the LJC on two or three occasions. The tea dances were held on the first Friday of the month and were free to attend. Some 40-80 people attend the dances, some from sheltered housing etc. The tea dances were enjoyed by all and the Association were very grateful to the LJC for its funding.

6.5 Oswestry Branch Shropshire Voluntary Helping Hands Association

Mr Phillip Morris reported that the Association had started as part of the Orthopaedic Hospital League of Friends and would celebrate its Diamond Jubilee the following year. The Association had about 45-50 members and carers who they took on an outing and for a meal each month. It was free for the member and their carer thanks to funding from the LJC. They had about a dozen members in wheelchairs who needed specialist transport. He explained that he would be going to the Derwen's print shop the following day to arrange for a new publicity leaflet which would be printed using LJC grant monies. The Association were very grateful to the LJC for the funding given over the last four years as it was difficult to raise enough money to balance the books.

6.6 Fusion Arts, Oswestry

Jay, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Fusion Oswestry Arts, a community interest group, informed the meeting that they were based at The Centre and offered a range of activities including drum, guitar and song writing workshops, dance sessions and photography etc to young people. They also offered studio time and rehearsal space etc, and were currently setting up their own radio station.

He reported that the LJC grant had been used to promote the launch day on the 8 December 2012 when there had been a number of activities taking place throughout the day including free recording sessions from which a compilation CD would be produced, performances by all age groups, the lighting for which had all been done by young people. There had been a free arts workshop to create a cover for the compilation CD.

Young people and families alike enjoyed the day and took away launch day freebies such as key rings, plectrums, mouse mats etc. The LJC funding had also been used to purchase two pop up banners and a six foot long banner so they could turn any space into a Fusion Arts Space. In all, staff donated 110 hours of their time on the launch day.

Jay explained the other activities being offered and drew attention to their competition to win a free recording session. He informed the meeting how people could become a member or associate member. They were very grateful for the funding received and wished to open up the arts to everyone.

ACTION

- 6.7 The Chairman reported that there was funding in the budget for next year, but he warned that the next Comprehensive Spending Review could possibly require another £60-80 million of cuts on top of the £87 million already taken out over the last four years so it was not clear whether LJC's would have a budget after next year.
- 6.8 Councillor Vince Hunt informed the meeting that over the past four years of the LJC he had enjoyed this part the most. It had been a real pleasure to be able to help all the groups and organisations and to see public money being put to good use. He thanked all those groups and organisations that had applied for funding over the last four years
- 7. SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL AREA COMMISSIONER FOR THE NORTH**
- 7.1 The Chairman reported that Tim Smith, the newly appointed Area Commissioner for the North had been unable to attend the meeting due to a prior engagement in another part of North Shropshire.
- 7.2 The Chairman informed the meeting that in order to deal with ongoing financial pressures, the Council wished to work in different ways in order to be more efficient and effective and were currently undertaking a pilot in Church Stretton. It was hoped to get Church Stretton commissioning ready before rolling out to the other market towns in the next 12-18 months.
- 7.3 The Area Commissioner for the North would be working closely with local Councillors as the Council moved into these new and interesting times.
- 8. COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM – UPDATE ON CURRENT WORK**
- 8.1 The Community Action Manager gave a brief update. She felt that the Oswestry cluster of LJC's was unusual because it had chosen to delegate its arts and sports funding to Oswestry and District Arts Association and Oswestry and District Sports Council to allow them to decide how it should be spent and she would like to see this happen elsewhere.
- 8.2 The Community Action Manager informed the meeting that the Community Action Officer for Oswestry, Ruth Mansfield, had now moved to a new position within Shropshire Council but it was hoped that a new person would be in post by early April.
- 8.3 The Community Action Manager informed the meeting of the work currently being undertaken by the Community Action Team including funding assistance, economic development, Market Town Revitalisation work in Oswestry and Ellesmere. She confirmed that she would report back to the next meeting progress from the Oswestry Joint Economic Board.

ACTION

8.4 The Community Action Team would play a good supporting role to the Area Commissioner for the North and would work alongside local Members.

8.5 The Chairman reported that the Community Action Team had assisted with research at the Land Register to try to identify who owned vacant properties in the town.

9. OSWESTRY 2020 UPDATE

9.1 The Chairman gave a brief update. Responses from the Consultation had been fed back to the Working Group. The feedback gave a strong steer towards economic development in the town, which he hoped the public agreed, were being addressed in a number of different ways.

9.2 The Chairman reported that it was hoped the draft Neighbourhood Plan would be available for consultation by the end of March 2013 before being adopted by both the Town Council and Shropshire Council by the end of April.

9.3 A member of the public informed the meeting that the letter they had received about the consultation at the Memorial Hall had stated the incorrect time.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 In response to a query it was confirmed that West Midlands Ambulance Service would be invited to a future meeting of the Oswestry LJC, especially in light of an article in that evening's edition of the Shropshire Star reporting that WMAS were not achieving their targets.

10.2 The Chairman drew attention to the updates in Chatterbox. He explained that this had been the last meeting of the current round of LJC's but they would continue after the elections in May.

10.3 A member of the public who had recently moved to Oswestry wished to express how great Oswestry was, it had a lot of personality, was individual and community minded. She felt that people welcomed you as soon as you arrived and made you feel part of the community. It certainly was not a ghost town and had a lot of independent shops.

10.4 Finally, the Chairman thanked the Community Action Team, Committee Officers and IT support who had serviced the LJC over the last four years.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 The next meeting would be held at 7pm on 13 June 2013, venue to be confirmed.

MD

Chairman: _____

Date: _____