

STRETTONDALE LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

NOTES OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS OF THE MEETING HELD AT 7.00PM ON THURSDAY 22 JULY 2010 AT ACTON SCOTT FARM MUSEUM, ACTON SCOTT, NEAR CHURCH STRETTON.

Present:

Committee Members

Shropshire Council

James Gibson Church Stretton and Craven Arms Electoral Division
Cecilia Motley Corvedale Electoral Division

Town/Parish Councils

Lynne Gray Eaton-Upon-Heywood & Hope Bowdler Parish Council
Mel McFarland Rushbury Parish Council
Peter Relph Church Stretton Town Council

Shropshire Council Officers

Sam Hine, Lead Officer
John Hodgkinson, Support Officer
Peter Dunhill, Community Regeneration Officer
Jane Palmer, Senior Committee Officer

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

14. Welcome and apologies

The Chairman thanked those present for attending the meeting and welcomed those present to address the Committee.

15. Notes of the last meeting held on 10 May 2010

RESOLVED:

that the Notes of the last meeting of the StrettonDale Local Joint Committee held on 10 May 2010 be approved as a correct record.

16. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mr P Relph declared a personal interest in the Community Pride award issue that would be considered later in the meeting given that he had put forward the proposed scheme.

17. Report from PACT - Partners and Communities Together

Acting Police Inspector G. Preece updated the Committee on crime levels in the Church Stretton area, current trends in crime and progress being made with ongoing enquiries with particular reference to a series of burglaries in the town.

Those present noted that the West Mercia constabulary website

ACTION

included crime maps for all parts of its area that detailed in pictorial form the spread of crime/incidents in its area.

A/Inspector Preece commented that statistics in an area such as Church Stretton could be easily skewed by very few crimes numerically and that this needed to be borne in mind when considering numerical data of this kind.

The Chairman thanked A/Inspector Preece for attending the meeting and updating those present on relevant policing issues in the Church Stretton area and wished him all the best in his career development and his new role as Acting Inspector.

18. Shropshire Council's Budget Consultation

Councillor Cecilia Motley presented the key messages relating to the Council's Revenue budget 2010/11 and future years. Copies of the key messages were tabled for information at the meeting.

She stated that the Council had to make £50M savings over the next 3 years - this was being achieved by looking at the Council's internal mechanisms [how to manage with less] and new ways of service delivery. She stated that difficult decisions would need to be made and urged those present to contribute to the process by sharing their ideas at this meeting, via the Council's web site or by making representations to their local Councillor.

Details of the questions raised are attached to the Notes of this meeting.

19. Tourism presentations and discussion

Presentation on Acton Scott Farm Museum

Mr Michael Turner, Acton Scott Farm Museum Visitor Services Manager, made a presentation on the relationship between Acton Scott Farm Museum and other 'honey pot' attractions in the Church Stretton area [shops, B & Bs, hotels, pubs, tea rooms, restaurants, service providers, general public].

He stated that recent and ongoing television exposure had especially increased attendance at the museum by day-trippers and weekenders. He added that the facility was maintaining a complementary attraction to others in the area [e.g. farmers' markets, Discovery centre, Stokesay Castle, Cardingmill Valley etc] and did not seek to work in competition but to provide an all-encompassing package to attract and retain visitors to the area.

Presentation on tourism in the Church Stretton area

Mr Alan Garner, Church Stretton Area Partnership Tourism Group, provided an overview of organisations and groups working to

promote the Church Stretton area and beyond.

He explained that the spread of interest to visitors to the area was wider than the Church Stretton area alone and he re-iterated the sentiments of the previous speaker in stressing the need for those working in tourism in the area to work together to help each other and develop a package of interest.

He stressed the importance of powerful and targeted marketing of the area and commented on the success of the 'Walkers are Welcome' initiative operating in the area. All present understood the merits of tourism and its success in helping to support the economy of the area and appreciated that it needed to be promoted and nurtured for the future benefit of the area and those living there.

There followed a general discussion on tourism related issues when the following points were raised:

- The need to encourage progress and not to become too insular given the positive impact of tourism on local businesses
- Recognition of the fact that tourism is replacing agriculture as an employer in the area
- Recognition of the importance of improved tourist facilities e.g. the historic timeline plaques in Church Stretton, the possibility of later opening hours for public conveniences in the town, the possibility of relaxing car park charges during the 'Welcome to Church Stretton' weekend
- The possibility of a trade discount scheme to be considered by the Church Stretton Tourism Group
- The importance of marketing other events in the area e.g. the Long Mynd hike, the Church Stretton Arts Festival

The Chairman thanked Mr Turner and Mr Garner for their interesting and informative presentations.

20. Update on issues raised at the last meeting

Members noted the update on the issues raised at the last meeting and considered the Community Pride Award proposal that, it had been agreed at the meeting on 10 May 2010, would be considered at a future meeting of the LJC.

Councillor Relph explained that the aim of the award was to recognise the work and the effort put in on a voluntary basis by

people in the local community.

The Committee Chairman stated that there was no Shropshire Council funding being offered towards this initiative and sought views from the floor.

The following comments were made:

- Mixed comments on the merits of a trophy/ a returnable annual trophy, a certificate
- Whether the award should be annual/ bi-annual
- Query the benefit of singling out individuals or whether the award would be better targeted to group effort
- Too much administration for little benefit
- The importance of recognising effort and having an outward display of appreciation
- Whether any element of competition is distasteful

A straw poll was taken with a small majority being in support of the initiative. The Committee would take account of the views of the meeting in considering whether to develop the proposal further.

21. Local Joint Committee Budget 2010/11 - Community Chest Funding

The Community Working Officer presented the funding report that detailed the current criteria for grant allocation and explained that the LJC had a budget allocation of £22,000 for the 2010/11 financial year and that, together with the uncommitted budget from 2009/10, gave a total budget of £25,015 for allocation by the LJC in the current financial year.

The grant applicants were present and available to explain the use to which any grant funding awarded would be put and to answer any related questions from the Committee.

With reference to the application from the Silvester Horne Institute it appeared that it might be possible to obtain good quality chairs at rather less than the applicants had anticipated. The Committee therefore agreed to fund 37% of the cost of the chairs up to a maximum of £5000. This arose because the original recommendation had been to fund £5000 of the estimated £13,500 cost. The applicants noted that a quotation for the cost of the chairs would need to be submitted and payment would be made on that

basis.

RESOLVED: that the following applications be approved:

Organisation	Summary	Amount Agreed	
Rushbury Trustees SD30	External repairs and maintenance to Rushbury school house	£500	ACTION Lead Officer
All Stretton history group SD31	Equipment to add to oral history recordings archive	£215	
Silvester Horne Institute Charity SD32	Improved seating [300 chairs for the improved facility]	£5000 [max]	
Mayfair Stroke Group SD33	Annual holiday for the Stroke Group	£750	

RESOLVED:

that the progress report on organisations and projects that were awarded funds at the 10 May 2010 meeting, be noted, as detailed in Appendix B to the report.

22. Public Question Time

In answer to a query from Councillor Relph, Councillor Mrs Motley reported that an ongoing review of LJC boundaries was taking place and that any changes to the boundaries of any of the LJCs would be subject to consultation and would be reported in due course. Until that time, the membership of the LJCs was to remain unchanged.

23. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the StrettonDale LJC would be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 6 October 2010 at Hope Bowdler village hall.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

BUDGET COMMENTS

STRETTONDALE LJC 20 - 22 JULY 2010 [Cecilia Motley, Claire Porter, Graham Chidlow]

- Q. We don't need so much paper circulated at the LJC; can the Council look at ways of reducing the paper trail?
- A. [CM] We will look at ways of reducing the amount of paper we use as a Council across all of the committees and will strive to make better use of IT as part of the drive to reduce paper.

- Q. Exactly what level are cuts is the Council expecting?
- A. [GC] Shropshire Council is projecting cash cuts in all Government Grants (except for Dedicated Schools Grant) of 5% year on year over the next 3 years. In real terms this is the equivalent of 7% a year.

Schools are funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant which is ring fenced for use only in schools. We are assuming the Dedicated Schools Grant remains at its current level. So whilst the total savings may appear a smaller percentage of the overall council gross budget, un-protected services are facing grant cuts of 21%-24% in real terms over 3 years as projected by the Institute of Fiscal Studies.

The Council has indicative savings targets of £15.8 million in 2011/12, a further £14.8 million in 2012/13 and a further £16.5 million in 2013/14. These savings are the equivalent of 12% of council tax each year for 3 years in succession.

- Q. Some districts have a higher precept than others. What is the Council doing to equalise this?
- A. [GC] The intention had been to equalise over three years but this was not now possible due to the Government cap. Therefore this would now have to be done over a long period of time.

- Q. Some Parish/Town Councils may not want to take on additional services; would this be expected?
- A. It will have to be looked at case by case. Shropshire Council would provide the monies if it was confident that the Town/Parish Council could provide a good and efficient service; requests for additional responsibility would be considered on a case by case basis.

- Q. Will the Council continue its current consultation processes on home building in the county or will the expense of consultation reduce/end this practice?
- A. The current process is almost complete and ending the process at this late stage would save little.