

THE SEVERN LOOP LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

NOTE OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 27 MARCH 2013 AT THE GUILDHALL, FRANKWELL QUAY, SHREWSBURY

Responsible Officer: Ken James
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Committee Members Present:

Shropshire Council:

Andrew Bannerman
Anne Chebsey
Mansel Williams

Shrewsbury Town Council:

Alan Townsend

Others Present:

West Mercia Police:

Superintendent James Tozer
Sergeant Claire Greenaway

There were approximately 16 members of the public present at the meeting.

ACTION:

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman made an introductory statement welcoming everyone to the meeting and gave a brief explanation and background about the purpose and powers of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

With reference to the funding application from the Belle Vue Arts Festival, Councillor Alan Townsend indicated that he was a supporter of the festival which he had helped to set up. In addition, Councillor Mansel Williams indicated that he was a supporter of the festival and that much of the event was based at the English Bridge Workshop with which he was involved.

With reference to the funding application from the Shrewsbury Food Festival, Councillors Alan Townsend and Mansel Williams indicated their association with the festival through the involvement with Coleham School.

4. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was agreed that the notes of the meeting held on 24th October 2012 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

5. **UPDATES**

The following updates on actions arising from the previous meeting were received:

- Northern Gateway Enhancement Scheme – Councillor Andrew Bannerman indicated that the works had completed. The provision of additional lighting under the bridges and the cleaning of brickwork and tiling would be undertaken by Network Rail as part of enhancements to the railway station.
- St Julian's Friars Gyratory - Councillor Andrew Bannerman indicated that, as phase 2 of the scheme, St. Julian's Friars had now closed to vehicular traffic. Crossings for pedestrians at the bottom of Wyle Cop were due to be provided as phase 3 of the scheme.
- Princess House, The Square - Councillor Andrew Bannerman indicated that the extension of Princess House on to the public highway in The Square had been granted by the planning inspector following the public enquiry.
- Butcher Row Toilets - Councillor Anne Chebsey indicated that Shrewsbury Town Council had awarded the contract for the scheme to provide new toilet accommodation to a local builder. There was a 16 week programme for the works which were expected to commence soon.
- River Towpath at Frankwell - Councillor Anne Chebsey indicated that Severn Trent Water would be undertaking sewer diversion works and providing a new manhole cover prior to the repair of the collapsed section of the river towpath which was due to start on 10th June.
- Plastic Kerbside Collections - Councillor Mansel Williams indicated that the Council's Waste Services Manager had advised that as the kerbside recycling service was operated as an integrated contract, the addition of plastic recycling as part of the service had been achieved at no extra cost to the Council. The enhancement of the kerbside collection service had resulted in an increase in plastic recycling which accounted for only 10% of the waste stream. Further enhancements to the kerbside collection service would include food waste recycling.

6. **LOCAL POLICING UPDATE**

Sergeant Claire Greenaway provided an update on policing activities within the Severn Loop area, including priority matters and initiatives as follows:

- **Burglary**
Crime in Shrewsbury had fallen again and concentrated efforts had been made to reduce the number of burglaries occurring and bring those responsible to justice.

- **Violent crime in Night-time Economy**
This had been addressed as a matter of priority and the efforts made had produced a large reduction in incidents.
- **Cycling on Pavements**
Joint work was being undertaken with Cycle Shrewsbury to address the problem as a matter of priority. A large amount of work would be put into this in the next three months. Cyclists were being stopped and questioned about why they were cycling on pavements and they had indicated that they were scared to cycle on the roads.
- **Priority Areas for Attention**
Violent crime was decreasing, burglaries were decreasing and robbery was decreasing.

Superintendent James Tozer, the Commander for Local Policing in Shrewsbury, emphasised the amount of work that was undertaken with partners in tackling crime. There had been a 10% reduction in crime across Shropshire and hot spot problems in the Shrewsbury area had reduced to around 5 calls a month compared with some areas of the county where around 100 calls a month were received.

Superintendent James Tozer then invited questions/comments from local residents and the following points/questions were raised:

- 999 Calls - Superintendent James Tozer indicated that depending on the area of the county that calls had been, they would be taken at the police call centres in Battlefield, Shrewsbury or Worcester.
- Town Centre Police Office – Superintendent James Tozer acknowledged the local residents concern at the impact that the possible closure of the town centre police office could have on the effectiveness of local policing. There was a dedicated policing team for Shrewsbury town centre at present. However, with reductions in the police budget it had to be accepted that changes to current arrangements would have to be made. He undertook to use his best endeavours to ensure that the best possible policing cover was provided for the town centre, but did not under estimate the difficulty of the task ahead.
- Police and Crime Commissioner – Andrew Bannerman indicated that Bill Longmore, the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, had accepted an invitation to attend the next Shrewsbury Wide LJC on 4th July 2013 to address the meeting.
- New 101 contact number - Superintendent James Tozer and Sergeant Claire Greenaway indicated that local residents were making use of the new 101 contact number to get in touch with the Police and its use was working well and channelling callers direct to West Mercia. They emphasised that the 101 contact number was being promoted as the preferred means of contact.

7. AREA COMMISSIONER UPDATE ON LOCAL ISSUES

Jake Berriman addressed the meeting on his role as the Central Area Commissioner. He spoke on local commissioning and how the Council would now be focusing with communities on the services it needed and working with those communities to explore a different way of designing and delivering services. In becoming a 'commissioning' council, efforts were being made to work more efficiently and effectively with partners to shape services for each community and its particular needs and challenges. The aim was to ensure that services did not cost more than they should and were delivered by the best people to do the job and supported local jobs and economic growth.

With specific reference to Shrewsbury, Jake Berriman stated that his role entailed responsibility for the town's assets and activities and indicated that he had recently met with local organisations and was looking at the access into and out of the town. In his work he had also joined the steering group to progress with local business the establishment of a Business Improvement District in the town centre. In addition, work had been undertaken to commission a consultant for the Way Finder Project to examine the branding of the town and how visitors to the town centre could be best directed to move about the town.

Alan Townsend expressed concern at the depressed appearance into town through the Riverside Shopping Centre and the lower areas of the Darwin Shopping Centre and the need for signing in those areas to show that they were areas for major redevelopment. Jake Berriman indicated that he would raise this with the officer overseeing the scheme when he met with him in the morning.

**Jake
Berriman**

8. MONITORING CENTRE REVIEW

The following statement from Andrew Gough, the CCTV Manager from the Public Protection Team was tabled and received:

"The Monitoring Centre in Shrewsbury operated a 24/7 service, monitoring cameras in Shrewsbury, Whitchurch, Cleobury Mortimer and Craven Arms and responding to out of hour calls on behalf of the Council and other agencies.

Currently Shropshire Council funded the Monitoring Centre which included the staff and maintenance of the cameras it monitored. Many CCTV systems had been established using funding from the Government in 2001 / 2002. Systems had since then relied on local arrangements to keep them operational.

A key outcome of the review was to ensure the sustainability of CCTV operations because of their contribution to the wider community safety agenda. CCTV provided key information and gave the public a level of confidence and re-assurance. The review was necessary because the current system had operated successfully for over 10 years and was therefore in need of development. The Council had to explore ways of ensuring the system remained operationally effective for another 10 years at least.

At no stage in the review of the Monitoring Centre had it been said that funding for the Monitoring Centre would not be available but other models of operation needed to be considered. It would be wrong, in the present financial climate, not to undertake a review into what the service delivered, how the service was delivered and the cost involved in delivering it.

A number of options were being considered in respect of the future delivery model for the service and once a decision had been reached on what option was best suited a business model would be developed and consulted on.

The Monitoring Centre continued to provide a service on a 24/7 basis and be part of the crime reduction and community safety work in Shropshire.”

9. SCRUTINY AT SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

A briefing paper, prepared by Councillor Tim Barker – Chairman of the Performance and Strategy Scrutiny Committee, on the work undertaken by Shropshire Council's Scrutiny Committees was tabled and received.

Andrew Bannerman indicated that meetings of the Council's scrutiny committees were open to the public and there were opportunities at those meetings for the public to directly address the committees during the public question time session.

A local resident referred to the public concern at the loss of public highway in The Square, following the planning inspector's decision to permit proposals to extend the frontage of Princess House. He expressed the view that the planning application for the scheme had been poorly advertised and asked if the process for determining planning applications could be scrutinised to prevent such an occurrence in the future.

Andrew Bannerman stated that many local residents and organisations felt that their views on the Princess House scheme had not been taken into account.

Jake Berriman considered that it was possible for the process of decision making at area planning committees to be scrutinised to test whether there was sufficient fairness and transparency for all views on proposals to be heard and considered to enable applications to be determined appropriately.

Members indicated that supported such a request being made by this LJC and Andrew Bannerman undertook to take the matter up with the Chairman of the Performance and Strategy Scrutiny Committee.

**Andrew
Bannerman**

10. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING

Gwyn Bevan, Community Action Officer, presented his report setting out details of three grant funding applications that had been received.

RESOLVED:

That the following applications for funding from the 2012/2013 budget be approved:

**Gwyn
Bevan**

Application	Amount
Shrewsbury Food Festival 2013	£1,000
Belle Vue Arts Festival 2013	£1,500
United Reformed Church – Improvements to Disabled Toilets and Access	£1,200
Shrewsbury Cantata Choir – Silver Jubilee Concert	£1,500
Frankwell Bowling Club – Provision of Floodlighting	£1,000

11. **COMMUNITY ACTION UPDATE**

Gwyn Bevan reported on forthcoming activities in the town centre, including the Busking Festival over the coming weekend; the River Festival, Marathon and Food Festival in June; and the Heritage Open Days in September. In addition, he referred to the appointment of new trustees and committee for the management of the West Mid Showground and their aim to develop a year round programme of events for the people of the town. Anyone wishing to use the site for an event would be welcomed.

12. **HAVE YOUR SAY – QUESTION TIME**

Councillor Andrew Bannerman asked all those present to complete and return the feedback forms circulated before leaving.

He then invited questions/comments from local residents and the following points/questions were raised:

- Sustainable Housing Development - A local resident commented that proposals for major housing developments being promoted for the town comprised the provision of dwellings to the lowest sustainability standard and unsuitable for ecological family living in the future. He asked if further public consultations would be held on the proposals. Jake Berriman stressed that the Council could not require sustainability standards beyond those prescribed by the Government. He acknowledged the concerns raised in respect of the provision of mass production housing by national housing developers seeming to drive down innovation, and reported on efforts being made in that area by the Council with the release of a parcel of land on London Road for individuals to commission their own architects to design dwellings for their plots. Andrew Bannerman indicated that he would look to see if Ian Kilby, the Council's Planning Services Manager, could attend a future meeting to speak on appropriate future housing provision for the town.
- National Relaxation of Planning Regulations – A local resident enquired about Shropshire's position to resist unwanted development. Jake Berriman stated that local authority planning controls would be reduced by the Government. However, local plans

**Andrew
Bannerman**

would give protection against ad hoc development and the Council had such a local plan in place. It was now vital that the emerging 'Site Allocations and Management of Development' document (SAMDev) was implemented to provide increased protection.

- Pedestrian's Crossing the Smithfield Road/Chester Street Junction – A local resident thanked the Council for the improvements that had been made as part of the Northern Gateway Enhancement Scheme to assist pedestrians crossing the Smithfield Road/Chester Street junction.
- Northern Gateway Enhancement Scheme – A local resident expressed concern that oversized HGV's unable to drive under the Cross Street tunnel were having extreme difficulty in turning back around in front of the tunnel due to the position of traffic lights and traffic direction etc signage leaving little room for manoeuvre. Andrew Bannerman indicated that he would pass the concerns onto the highways engineers.

**Andrew
Bannerman**

A local resident enquired whether the operation of the traffic lights would be monitored to check that traffic flows were improving. Anne Chebsey indicated that schemes were usually monitored after a settling in period and Andrew Bannerman indicated that Members would be pleased to receive any feedback from pedestrians and motorists on their impressions of how the scheme was operating.

- St Julian's Friars Gyratory - A local resident stressed the need for attention to be given to improving road safety in the vicinity of the scheme, particularly the need for traffic calming on Wyle Cop to enable formal pedestrian crossings to be safely provided. Mansel Williams indicated that the proposed crossings to be provided at the bottom of Wyle Cop would be raised platforms across the carriageway, rather than marked coloured pavers, which would assist in slowing down traffic. Andrew Bannerman expressed the view that a cultural change was being sought, with the reduction in cross town traffic and introduction of 20mph speed limits, to enable pedestrians and motorists to better engage with each other

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND DATES FOR MEETINGS IN 2013/14

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Severn Loop Local Joint Committee would be held on Wednesday 19th June 2013 at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury.

Ken James

7.00 pm to 9.00 pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date: