



Committee and Date  
Whitchurch and Prees Local  
Joint Committee

1 March 2010

7.00 pm

Item

**4**

Public

**Note of the meeting held on 2 December 2009 at Tilstock Village Hall**  
7.00 pm to 9.10 pm

**Responsible Officer** Karen Nixon

**Officer**

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## **Present**

### **Committee Members**

Susan Bower

Christopher Dutton

Peggy Mullock

Paul Wynn (Chair for the meeting).

### **Shropshire Council Officers**

Tom McCabe, Lead Officer

Karen Nixon, Committee Officer

Laura Rowley, Director of Resources

Julie Ruler, Community Regeneration Officer

Neil Willcox Support Officer

### **West Mercia Police & Guest Speaker**

PC Antony Jones

PC Chris Peel

Ian Binks, Regional Manager British Telecom

*There were approx 25 people present in total.*

## **Apologies & Substitutions**

1. Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Doris Ankers, Tom Biggins, Gerald Dakin, John Patrick, Peter Thompson and Roy Tydeman. There were no substitutions.

## **Election of Chairman for the Meeting**

2. It was proposed by Peggy Mullock, seconded by Susan Bower and duly **RESOLVED:** That Paul Wynn be elected as Chairman for the meeting.

## **Declarations of Interest**

3. The following members declared an interest as follows;

Peggy Mullock – item 8 M, Friends of Whitchurch grant application.  
Chris Dutton – item 8 O, Moreton Saye Village Hall grant application.

Neither member took part in the debate or voting for each item. Mr Dutton left the room whilst his item was being discussed.

### Note of Meeting

4. The note of the previous meeting held on 9 September 2009 was approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

At the bottom of page 5, new facility for Ash Bowling Club, a member of the public asked if the stipulated conditions, that the group demonstrate match funding, planning consent and insurance before the December meeting, had in fact been achieved. The Chair confirmed that yes, the Club had fulfilled the criteria.

The Committee also noted the 'Comments, Questions and Suggestions Action Sheet'.

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the previous meeting, held on 9 September 2009, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### Shropshire Council Budget Consultation 2010/11

5. The Chairman welcomed Laura Rowley, Director of Resources, who introduced and amplified Shropshire Council's Budget proposals for 2010/11. All were circulated with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation on the Budget Proposals and a supplementary paper outlining the voting session to be undertaken.

A Question and Answer session was held at the conclusion of the presentation and questions were taken and responded to at the close of the item. Some of the issues raised were;

- The Council Tax increase for North Shropshire for 2010/11 was 0.71%, in line with the unitary business case.
- It was stressed that the public's input does make a difference.
- Examples of savings required to deliver savings of £7.1m+ were ranked with savings in efficiencies making up the largest proportion of savings, reduction in administration as the second largest area (service reviews were already underway) and increases in income as the smallest area of savings.
- There would be an overall review of car parking charges across the county in 2010. It was noted that on average, car parking charges were to go up 10 pence per hour.
- Pressures faced in 2010/11 included a scheme to provide 400 extra care housing units across the county.
- A 5 year capital strategy for the Council.

At the conclusion, all were reminded that in addition to consulting with the 28 Local Joint Committee's across the county, budget consultation meetings were being held separately on 18 December 2009 and 14 January 2010 at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury to which everyone was invited.

Specific groups such as the Older People's Forum, Younger People and Adults with Learning Disabilities were having separate presentations on the budget. An on-line consultation would shortly be available on the Council's website and everyone was urged to contact the Council to offer their views or suggestions. All responses would be looked at and fed into the budget process accordingly.

**RESOLVED:** That the consultation be noted.

### **PACT Meeting: Partners and Communities Together**

6. PC Tony Jones introduced this item and the following matters were discussed:
- Problems of boy-racers in Brades Road Prees – matter now resolved
  - Queensway Park and problems with youths – Officers were working in partnership with Queensway Fields Residents Association and Council Officers to look for a solution.
  - Vandalism at Hatton Way Walk where a mosaic had been destroyed was highlighted. Officers undertook to look into this.
  - CCTV development/improvement in Whitchurch
  - Speeding at Station Road, in both directions
  - Speeding at Alkington Road, between the turning into Saddlers Walk and the bridge under the by-pass.
  - The recent success of Operation Vulture, a cross county police initiative targeting night crime, was welcomed.

PC Jones undertook to investigate matters further and report back to the next meeting.

### **Broadband Coverage in Rural Areas**

7. Ian Binks, Regional Manager, BT, provided a short presentation on ADSL Broadband which covered how it worked, the local network, the bigger picture and the local picture.

Questions from members of the public on problems with access to broadband were answered and Mr Binks explained how it was possible to improve broadband speed and performance. He also referred to issues with infrastructure, e.g., small exchanges and distance from exchange which could all impact on broadband access. Proposed solutions to broadband speed and access were discussed.

Mr Binks' presentation referred to several websites from which help could be obtained and he particularly recommended [www.thinkbroadband.com](http://www.thinkbroadband.com) as a very useful site with lots of information.

Particular concern was expressed about when rural locations such as Adderley would have access to an equitable broadband service. Mr Binks explained that he was unable to guarantee this; solutions to rural access problems could not be achieved by the private sector alone as it simply was not profitable.

A question was asked about there being an obligation for new builds having broadband access, to which Mr Binks replied there was currently no such obligation to do this. The introduction of overhead optic fibre cables was discussed as offering a possible solution, as well as provision shortly by Avanti.

Mr Townley, a resident of Adderley specifically asked about the possibility of his local community tapping into the existing primary school's broadband line. The Director of Resources advised that she was aware of the lack of broadband coverage in Adderley and the problems this caused. The Council was currently tendering for broadband services and she was happy to look at this option for the local community if there was no alternative. She asked the gentleman to leave his contact details for her after the meeting and agreed to pursue the matter and contact him directly.

In drawing the item to a close, the Chair thanked Mr Binks for attending the meeting and answering everyone's questions.

## Funding Requests

8. The Committee received a report setting out various funding requests, past and present, and recommendations from the Youth Panel for endorsement by the LJC, which was introduced and amplified by Tom McCabe Lead Officer.

It was confirmed that all committee members had received copies of each application, along with supporting documents where provided prior to the meeting.

### RESOLVED:

- a. The Committee noted the approved project allocations from previous meetings totalling £38,448.00 (shown in detail at Appendix A).
- b. The Committee approved the following seven projects recommended for decision (see Appendix B) totalling £9,689.00;

Friends of Whitchurch Heritage	£ 689.00 - approved
Moreton Say Village Hall	£ 7,000.00 - approved
Alport Football Club	£ 2,000.00 - approved (50% of original request)

The Committee refused the following projects recommended for decision (see Appendix B);

Chamber Of Commerce	£ 4,460.00 – refused
Whitchurch Cricket Club <i>suggest re-apply next year</i>	£ 5,000.00 – refused
Queensway Playing Field Assoc <i>site visit by LJC to be arranged and suggest re-apply next year</i>	£ 3,500.00 - refused
Sir John Talbots Technology College <i>not strictly within the LJC's remit. Suggest look at other avenues of funding with Neil Willcox.</i>	£ 10,000.00 - refused

- c. The Committee endorsed all nine youth funding applications recommended to them by the Youth Panel, totalling £7,291.00 (see Appendix C).

### High Cost Service Review: For Information

9. Members noted a report that had been requested by Gerald Dakin, for information. It particularly highlighted Service 221, Market Drayton to Whitchurch on a Friday, which was currently costing £13.83 per passenger trip and subject to review.

Cllr Wynn said he had received many letters from elderly people about this service which he would pass on to the officers concerned.

All present were urged to make their views known to Jon Hayes by 4 January 2010.

There was some criticism of the transport website which the public did not find very user friendly. They cited the Wrexham site as a good example. Officers undertook to pass this comment back.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted

### Public Question Time and Identification of Future Agenda Items

10. Two questions were raised on behalf of Gerald Dakin;
- The public toilet at White Lion Meadow Car Park had no water or soap and the hand dryer was not working. There was water on the floor.
  - On the exit from the Waymills Industrial Estate site onto the main road, there are various signs advertising local services. They impede the view from the right-hand side as you exit the estate. Could the signs be placed further inside the industrial site itself, so as not to cause an obstruction?

Officers agreed to look into these.

Mr Don Pearce of Whitchurch Cricket Club asked if business rates were going to be reviewed. Currently in North Shropshire, sports clubs got an 80%

discount, but recently at a sports forum he attended he noted that sports clubs in South Shropshire received a 100% discount. He asked if this could be investigated, which was agreed.

Business Grants to new businesses were currently available for £1,000 if this was match funded. A question was asked if this could be reduced to £500, as often fledgling businesses could not always raise such a large amount. The Director of Development Services responded that he would see if there could be any flexibility and report back.

A member of the public expressed dissatisfaction about internet training being provided to the general public locally and its effect on small businesses in the area. The Director of Development Services stated that Shropshire has in the past and will continue to encourage small businesses across the county. People will shop on-line regardless of IT training being provided. The business world was changing and Shropshire was no exception.

A member of the public asked for information about how road repairs were prioritised, particularly in Prees. Officers referred to a presentation on this that had been made to the September meeting. They were asked to contact Bob Ellis directly if they had any specific questions or queries.

Concern was expressed at the potential loss of the station car park at the Waylands if a housing development were to go ahead there. Officers assured that they were looking at this in conjunction with the Local Development Framework. It would be discussed at a forum meeting shortly.

Julie Gallacher requested an update on the Skatepark. New Generation Youth (NGY) had yet to hold an AGM and confirm their plans for the future. When this was received an update could be given.

The Community Regeneration Officer meanwhile confirmed that she was working towards getting the community together to host the Skatepark at Sir John Talbot's Technology College and the Market Hall in Whitchurch in the spring. This was subject to volunteers being trained fully in the erection and dismantling of the equipment. Officers assured they would continue to monitor this.

**Date of Next Meeting**

- 11. It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 1 March 2010. The Chairman suggested Morton Saye Village Hall as the venue for the next meeting and this was agreed.

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**DATE** .....