

**Craven Arms & Rural Local Joint Committee****Notes of Decisions and Actions of the Meeting Held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 11 November at the Discovery Centre, Craven Arms.****Present:****Shropshire Council**

David Evans	Church Stretton and Craven Arms Electoral Division
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**Town/Parish Councils**

David Hedgley	Diddlebury Parish Council
Mike Hardingham	Clee St Margaret Parish Council
Carol Byng	Culmington Parish Council
Andrea Minton Beddoes	Wistanstow Parish Council

**Co-opted Members**

Mark Trafford	Sibdon Carwood Parish Meeting
Rebecca Deakin	Shropshire Housing Group
Ann Sutcliffe	Shropshire Housing Group
Neville Stephens	Craven Arms Area Youth Group
Andrew Corbett	Craven Arms Business Network
Janet Radford	Grow, Cook, Learn
Ali Kennedy	CasCA

**Officers in attendance**

Fiona Boak, Sector Support Officer, Shropshire Council  
 Lisa Bedford, Senior Community Enablement Officer, Shropshire Council  
 Russell Millhouse, University Centre Shrewsbury

There were approximately 30 members of the public present at the meeting.

**1. Welcome**

Cllr Evans welcomed everyone to the meeting especially those from the Business Network as this was a joint meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Lee Chapman, Andrew Pike [Culmington PC], Cllr Cecilia Motley, David Bytheway [Wistanstow PC], Mandy Fowler [Diddlebury PC], Caroline Magnus [Onibury PC]

**3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

No declarations were made.

**4. Notes of the Meeting held on 15 July 2015****AGREED:**

That the notes of the meeting held on 15 July be approved and signed as a correct record.

**ACTION****DE/LB**

## 5. University Centre Shrewsbury

Russell Millhouse, Head of Secretariat and Student Support, University Centre Shrewsbury, was in attendance to give an overview of the development of the University over the last three years. (See Appendix A).

It was explained that the University of Chester is the sponsoring authority and that relationship will end at some point in the future when Shrewsbury is able to be a fully stand alone University. Hence why it is called the University Centre at this stage.

All degrees will be issued by the University of Chester. Fees are £9000, the same as Chester. With 70% of staff being dedicated to Shrewsbury.

In the early stages the curriculum will be research focussed due to the high student to staff ratio. All courses are based on place with lots of fieldwork.

There is a compulsory programme for all students called SPEAR (skills, professional, entrepreneurial, academic, research) which will link with local communities and projects.

Currently there are 45 undergraduates and 40 post graduates enrolled in the university and 25% of those are from a 25 mile radius of Shrewsbury.

It is anticipated that numbers enrolling will quadruple within 5 years.

The relationship with local businesses was raised. It was explained that there is a 6 week compulsory placement at the end of year 2 for all students.

Lack of arts based courses was raised, but it was explained that there is already access to arts courses in Shrewsbury and the University Centre didn't want to be seen to be competing with other providers.

It was highlighted that there was a great need to engage with young people from Primary school age onwards to raise expectation and give a flavour of university. The University Centre already has events for all secondary schools and colleges with a liaison department which has responsibility for such activity.

Concern was expressed about the lack of job opportunities for graduates. It was explained that degrees have been developed with the local employment sector in mind, therefore there was a focus on business courses and health, as there are deemed opportunities available for graduates in Shropshire in these sectors.

## 6. Marches Growth Hub and five minute funding update

Fiona Boak from the External Funding team have an overview of the funding opportunities including the emerging European Funding streams which are in coming forwards over the next year.

It was explained that Shropshire Council keeps an up to date list of grant funding opportunities on its website

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/1774860/Grants-loans-and-incentives-summary-sheet.pdf>

There are a small number of grant schemes open currently such as Green Shoots, and Leader funding will be available next year.

An overview of the Marches Growth Hub was also given. This is a new web based facility and physical hub provision (x 3 one in each county) to support business across the Marches local enterprise partnership area.

<http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/>

There is lots of useful information for all types of business on the website.

## **7. Public Questions and any other business**

Written updates were handed out from the police, the Connecting Shropshire broadband partnership and the flood team at Shropshire Council.

Janet Radford gave an overview of Grow Cook Learn and the activities available at the Discovery Centre.

<http://www.shropshirehillsdiscoverycentre.co.uk/>

A question was raised about the lack of mention of the increase in break ins in the Corvedale Area in the written report. It was explained that the message to give to communities is to protect their own property with smartwater, lighting, alarms etc, all of which can be sourced for relatively low cost and will help to decrease the chances of becoming a victim. Any queries

A question was raised as to why Shropshire Council had cut its cultural funding.

**ACTION: LB to seek a response.**

### **Date/Time of next meeting**

The next public meeting will take place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm. Venue TBC.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.