

Melksham Area Community Safety Group Meeting

Held at Melksham Town Hall on Thursday 28th January 2010

Present:

Colin Goodhind	Chairman/vice-chair MCAP
Diane Tandy	Pubwatch
P.C Kevin Harmsworth	Wiltshire Police
Mike Mills	Melksham Without Parish Council
Mark Griffiths	Wiltshire Council - Melksham Without North
Rod Eaton	Wiltshire Council - Melksham North
Jon Hubbard	Wiltshire Council - Melksham South
Win Rose	Queensway TARA
Brian Mudge	Local Resident (Arrived 7.30)
Duncan Hames	The George Ward School/Prospective MP (Arrived 7.30)
Mavis King	Atworth Parish Council

Apologies: Rowena Green, Margaret Bryant, Angus MacPherson

1. Welcome and Apologies

Colin Goodhind welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as correct.

3. Matters Arising

Colin reported that it had not been possible to arrange invitations to the youth representatives and that he will arrange for them to attend the next meeting

ACTION: C.G.

4. Update from Melksham Police

P.C. Kevin Harmsworth gave an overview of recent police matters in the area.

- A) New priority for the Town Centre NPT was the vandalism of the Pavilion in King George V Playing Fields. He had contacted the Town Council and Wiltshire Council for assistance.
- B) There had been significant robberies at Somerfield and the Melksham town Rugby club. He was confident they knew who was responsible and would be dealt with.
- C) Forest TARA had raised issues concerning rogue door to door traders. Kevin was to provide an article for the residents' newsletter warning of the dangers, their rights and actions which could be taken. Colin asked if the imminent Digital Switchover had produced an increase in rogue callers. Kevin thought not.

- D) Kevin reported the loss of the Bear as a 'Bluez 'n' Zuz' venue. He asked if anyone present knew of a suitable new venue to contact him.
- E) Kevin reported that Community Payback was progressing and there was work in progress to get some publicity done. Win will liase on this for the group.
- F) Rachel Fowler Centre had lead removed from its roof.
- G) In response to recent press speculation concerning the Islam for U.K. group wishing to march through Wootton Bassett, actions were in hand to reach out to local Islamic communities to prevent undue pressure from the national group.
- H) Wiltshire Council Anti Social Behaviour Panel (Tom Ward) is creating a pamphlet about Anti Social Driving to be handed to drivers caught offending, in the hope they would consider the dangers of their actions.
- D) He reported that local police were working with The George Ward School and Media Diploma students on a project about the working of the Police.

5. Neighbourhood Watch

Colin has attended Melksham Police Station and collected the paperwork to start a scheme in Longford Road. While there, he was shown the latest work being done to update records held about local schemes and contact details of coordinators. Colin has put forward this group as the focal point for the provision of information about Neighbourhood Watch Schemes to the public.

Mike Mills informed the group that coordinators on Bowerhill complained of the lack of contact by anyone and the failure to disseminate information.

Mavis King reported that she had been able to keep the scheme going in Atworth despite lack of resources and related the details of a recent doorstep incident which had been resolved successfully due to Neighbourhood Watch diligence.

It was agreed that although individual Watches were working, there was a need for Area Coordinators. Mike Mills raised the issue of cost for signage. Kevin agreed to supply the information he had about current costs.

ACTION: K.H.

Brian Mudge asked why Watch Schemes couldn't pay for signage.

Colin has asked if the National Signage could be used instead of the Wiltshire blue signs because they fade badly but has been told that most people prefer the blue helmet sign.

Mary Jarvis has contacted the group to say that MWPC is keen to see Neighbourhood Watch expanded and suggested that schemes could be 'opt out' as opposed to currently being 'opt in' to encourage wider resident participation.

Colin undertook to update Mary on progress and to provide maps detailing areas covered by local and area coordinators, for the next meeting.

ACTION: C.G.

6. New Biometric Proof of Age Cards

Colin gave an outline of the presentation given by Touch2id at the recent combined meeting. He expects the scheme to be rolled out in Melksham once the evaluation has taken place. Colin had contacted Insp David Cullop regarding ways of speeding up the roll-out to Melksham and there followed a discussion on the funding requirements for introducing the scheme and providing the first wave of cards to young people. Jon Hubbard asked for the cost price of these cards so that funding estimates could be calculated and Colin undertook to confirm this.

ACTION: C.G.

7. Payback Scheme in Melksham

Win Rose gave an update on the first scheme to be introduced in Melksham. She informed the group that the location of the work to be done was in fact the Nature Reserve in the Queensway area and not Clackers Brook as previously reported. She outlined plans to generate some local publicity which the scheme Project Coordinator, Tracy Geiran, was to undertake. Work would be done in Feb/Mar on alternate Mondays.

Kevin reported that 2 further schemes were in the planning stage.

ACTION: W.R.

8. Any other Business

Colin discussed the need to provide the Melksham News with an update of the work being covered by the Group. He suggested an area to be covered in an article should be to let the wider Melksham Community Area know that their representatives are welcome at this forum.

Another topic for wider publicity is the 'Immobilise Scheme' where a simple registration of valuable and electronic items is done on a secure web site, and in the event of a robbery, police and insurers have return details in the event of recovery or to prove an item in someone's possession is stolen.

An 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency) initiative was also discussed and could be included in the above informative article.

9. Date and time of next regular meeting

As agreed in November the next regular meetings are scheduled for 25th February and 25th March 2010. The next combined CSG/NTG meeting is the 1st April.

Post-Minutes Note:

Colin circulated a message from Mary Jarvis (Clerk to Melksham Without Parish Council) on the subject of hedge cuttings left on the banks and in the road from Challymead to Broughton Gifford after farmers have been cutting hedges. With the recent snow and rain this is making the road hazardous, especially for motorcyclists and cyclists. Mary pointed out that this had been brought up several times by the Parish Council and asked if this could now be brought to the attention of the relevant farmer(s), perhaps by the police. Colin apologised for not bringing this message to the meeting and asked for comment via email. This was forthcoming but no actual conclusion reached and action agreed so it has been included on the agenda for finalising at our next meeting on Thursday 25th February.