

Melksham Community Area Partnership STEERING GROUP MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Melksham Police Headquarters
March 11 2010

Present: Sarah Cardy
Tim Jalland
Mel Rolfe
Lee Emery
Graham Ellis
Alison Morley
Thelma Carr
Pauline Helps
Davina Griffin
Abbi Gutierrez
Colin Goodhind
Miriam Zaccarelli

1. Welcome and Apologies

Colin welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made. Apologies were received from Chris Holden, Mavis King, Jim Law, April Law and Brian Warwick.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on January 13 were unanimously approved.

3. Report on the Consultation held on January 23 2010

Miriam reported that the public consultation resulted in 157 surveys being completed – either on paper at the event or on line following the subsequent email campaign. Many thanks went to the people who had helped at the event (Tim Jalland, Chris Holden, Sarah Cardy, Graham Ellis, Alice Adcock, Abbi Gutierrez) and the work put in by Miriam was recognised. It was acknowledged to be a good example of what could be achieved by the small group.

Sarah suggested that a de-brief is held to assess the event and gain learning points. Lee stressed the importance of going to the Area Board with the findings. The cost of the event was requested and Miriam will forward a financial report to the Steering Group.

Action: MZ

4. Update on Theme Groups

Colin summarised the progress in the groups he has been involved with.

a. Community safety

The group has carried on but is looking to expand the representation. A lot of the villages do not have issues so do not get involved. The group works closely with the police. A big upcoming project will be a public event to review the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Watch and identify actions to support and improve it further. Plans for this event have been welcomed by the Wiltshire Police Authority.

b. Health and wellbeing

A small group has met to start things off. There is scope to link with the themes of accessibility and elderly people. The group was formed to look at issues that came out of the health fair on January 28 and to be a central point of all the things that are going on. The main aim of the next meeting will be to agree a strategy for a public Community Health event to identify shortfalls in health and well-being provision and agree actions to fill the gaps.

c. Waterways Group

A few key people have met to form this group. The group's general aim is to enhance the waterways in the Melksham area for the benefit of visitors and residents alike and the main aim

of the next meeting is to agree a strategy for consultation on the Melksham Link (Wilts and Berks Canal Development through Melksham).

There are some contentious issues but it is agreed that consultation will include the fact that the proposals are subject to certain conditions being suitably met. The contentious issues are the mix of water quality from the river and the canal and the level of the river decreasing with abstraction. It will not go ahead unless the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and the environment agency are happy with the plans. The proposed development of about 2 miles of Canal through the area will improve a few things in Berryfield. It was observed that the Kennet and Avon Canal in Devizes has made a great positive impact to the town.

d. Sports and leisure

This group should be up and running shortly and its focus will be to look at the leisure facilities in the area.

All these groups have on their agenda to grow to be representative of the area and each theme group will then report to the Steering Group. Colin clarified that these four main theme groups have been started as there was a pressing need, while the other groups remain themes, not yet groups.

e. Arts and Culture

Alison explained work she had done under the Arts and Culture theme in getting Arts for All involved and that instead of forming a group to have meetings she is simply remaining in touch with people in the relevant areas in order to keep an eye and mind to bringing things together.

This is the same as CAYPIG with the youth - it is a matter of keeping informed and connected and referring to those areas with existing bodies as themes instead of theme groups.

Alison explained that the Arts theme should look at being a part of the Age No Barrier Week in July and to link in with Waitrose with some arts or cultural event.

Alison requested that Arts and Culture be a theme group, not just a theme, as culture is important in affecting the whole feel of the area. Youth is also an important group, and someone is needed on the Steering Group who is mainly concerned with Youth.

Sarah clarified that the purpose of everything the CAP does is to feed into the Community Plan. Lee raised concern that nothing had yet been done about refreshing the old one. A theme group needs to be set up to work on the Community Plan and data from the consultation needs to feed into it.

Action: MZ

Alison reported that she has been explaining to people who ask how the CAP can benefit them that it is a way of joined up thinking.

She asked for clarification on whether the CAP is a consultation body or a mechanism for running events and projects and Abbi clarified that it can do both and link them together where possible. The theme groups can go to the Area Board for funding, can do specific consultations, and if a project is needed then the board can be approached for funding.

It was agreed that some guidelines need to be drawn up to ensure that each theme group is working to a generic set of rules of engagement of how to engage people, thus avoiding criticism. This will ensure groups do not become led by a particular interest group. That would include terms of reference and it was clarified that this does not come from the board as CAPs are independent.

It was decided that the Steering Group will prepare a generic terms of reference for all the theme groups, and that WFCAP can support.

It was agreed that there is a need to get someone from WFCAP to explain the precise purpose of the CAP, how other partnerships work and relate to other groups, how theme groups are formed and how to access funding. Guidelines on running consultations are also needed as the way questions are asked can determine the responses given. Abbi explained that Andrew Jack, the new Partnership Development Officer can help with statistics and consultation. Laura can be asked to help with terms of reference and guidelines on consultation. This will be followed up and reported back to the Steering Group by email.

Action: MZ

Colin reported that he and Chris go to WFCAP meetings and a WFCAP conference will be held on May 8 which will be beneficial in showing best practice.

Action: CG

Colin explained that the process is still in the beginning learning stages and the relationship between the Arae Board and the CAPs is still being clarified. It was agreed that it is better to start something and then change it than to not start anything due to uncertainty.

f. Villages

Tim reported on the development with the villages. A meeting had been held in Poulshot (with the Parish Open Meeting) on March 2 in which Chris Holden gave a presentation but the meeting was not representative of the village. On March 22 there will be a presentation at Melksham Without. In Poulshot the issue has been with ponds and Tim had started work on solving it, and after the meeting it started moving, with a business plan being prepared by people in the village. This could be a quick win.

Action: TJ

It was acknowledged that it may be a while before Parish Councils can see what they can get out of the CAP so they may be reluctant to contribute funding. The benefits are the funding available and the networking opportunities.

Thelma raised the issue of the villages being remote and Tim reported that he has had little feedback from the persistent work he has done in contacting Parish Councils. In order to reach whole villages it may be necessary to mailshot every household. Alison suggested that schools and churches are a good way to get information out.

5. Report on the South West Market and Coastal Towns Network Conference in Tiverton

Colin reported that the conference (attended by himself and Miriam) was useful for meeting people, looking at ways to generate power and many ideas for sustainable development. Addressing climate change was discussed although secondary to discussions was the issue of where it comes from. A full report will be given.

Action: MZ

Miriam reported that a benefit of the meeting was developing links with Trowbridge and Devizes CAPs as a lot of issues overlap. Tim added that MCAP would have greater appeal to people in Poulshot if he could demonstrate the links with Devizes. Abbi clarified that the boundaries around the Community Areas are not walls, they are open to anyone living, working or with an interest in the area, so Poulshot people can go to the Devizes CAP.

6. Report on Area Board Workshop held on March 8 2010

This was attended by Colin who reported that it was a very good example of Wiltshire Council genuinely seeking feedback from people on their work with CAPs so far. Abbi reported five outcomes from the workshop: parishes being least happy with the Area Boards, people not knowing about the Area Boards, people not having enough decision making power and getting different types of people to engage with the CAPs. A new electronic voting kit was used at the meeting and this can be borrowed for consultation events. The outcomes will inform recommendations to Cabinet, which may change some of the powers. The results of the event and the corresponding online survey will be forwarded to the Steering Group.

Action: AG

7. ChAP meeting on charitable status on March 16 2010

It was agreed that someone from the Steering Group should attend this meeting to find out whether or not the CAP should apply for charitable status, and report back to the group.

Action: MZ

8. Age No Barrier Week, July 10 – 17 2010

This week is relevant to every theme group and was agreed to be an ideal opportunity to hold an event that brings old and young people together. The CAP could also produce a calendar showing all the events that week, and include it on the website. Village magazines could be used.

It was agreed that a working group be formed to look at an event for this week, as well as for the Carnival on July 18 2010 and Party in the Park. Consultation at such events needs to be thought through carefully and run in an exciting and engaging way as people do not want to spend time on questionnaires. The same stand could be set up at the village summer fetes, thereby reaching the whole community.

The working group for all these summer events will include Alison, Tim, Sarah (possibly), Graham and Miriam. Brian Warwick should be involved. The first meeting will be April 29 at the Well House, Spa Road.

Action: AM, TJ, GE, MZ

9. Any other business

Graham announced a meeting of the TransWiltsCommunity Rail Partnership on Friday March 26 at Bridge House, in which the recommendation for the route through Melksham to increase from 2 to 5 trains a day will be discussed.

Sarah announced that Waitrose is opening on March 18 and they have £1000 to spend on charity each month and people can vote in store on which charity that will be.

Lee suggested that standing outside these major stores to carry out consultations would be a way of reaching a wider audience than the locals of Melksham town. It was agreed that the CAP needs some marketing material to encourage people to join up, to summarise and explain what we are.

Action: MZ

It was also agreed to invite someone from another CAP to Steering Group meetings to explain what has been done and learn from their experiences.

Action: MZ

Mel suggested she use her network of conferences for PCSOs to explain to them about the CAP and Sarah suggested the CAB is asked to show what sort of advice is asked for in the Melksham Area.

Action: MR, SC

Colin reported that the Community Safety Group bid successfully for £500 from the Area Board for the Bluz'n'Zuz youth group. The Area Board has given money for a range of things and money is given at every other meeting, giving the CAP time to prepare a case. The CAP should help the Area Board target its support and funding. Abbi reinforced the fact that the CAP is a strong candidate for funding as it closely links to community needs.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on May 13 2010 at the Police Headquarters in Melksham