

Community Cohesion Thematic Group Meeting

2.00 pm, 23rd September 2011, Council Chambers, WLBC

Present:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cllr Iain Ashcroft | Chair |
| Cllr Bob Pendleton | WLBC |
| Cllr John Mee | WLBC |
| Jill Bradley | WL CVS |
| Cerys Smye-Rumsby | WL CVS |
| Louise Cropper | Help Direct |
| David Tilleray | WLBC |
| Jonathon Mitchell | WLBC |
| Shaun Walsh | WLBC |
| Jeanette Hickey | Lancashire Constabulary |
| Puala Jones | West Lancashire Disability Support |
| Phyllis Roberts | Young People's Service |
| Claire Pollard | Ashurst Residents Association |

1. Apologies

Gina Moran – West Lancashire College

2. Individual Introductions

Those at the meeting briefly introduced themselves

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 10th June 2011 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

Item 4 – It was noted that the provision of information about 2nd homes funding will be included in the strategy that is produced

BP – There is a need to gain an understanding of where the LSP underspends are.

ACTION – DT indicated that there is a report due to go to the next LSP Executive on the 7th October and following this, the Chair will feed back to this meeting.

Item 4 – Councillor Grant was unable to attend this meeting but has indicated that he will attend the next meeting.

Item 6 – The group was asked to note that David Bellamy attended the opening of the allotments in Hesketh Bank.

Item 8 – PJ to feed back to next meeting on the developments with “Text Live”.

Item 9 – LCC couldn’t provide a representative to talk about social transport at this meeting, so this will be covered at the next meeting.

5. Update on CCTV from the Community Safety Partnership

DT gave an update on CCTV project in West Lancashire. The LSP has provided funding to upgrade CCTV across the Borough. There are currently 2 systems – fibre optic and microwave technology and some of the kit is now around 10 years old, so this is an opportune time to replace the system. It is also hoped that there will be some money left to install a few new cameras (around 6). At the same time the current monitoring suite will be moved from Westec House, as part of the redevelopment of the site, to a new location. PPQs have been sent out to 27 contractors that may be interested in the contract and this list will then be reduced to around 10 for the tendering process. The deadline for submission is the 21st November and it is envisaged that the contract will be agreed after Christmas. Continuity of CCTV coverage will take place whilst the upgrade is being progressed.

IA – Will the placing of any new cameras be based upon police intelligence?

DT – Yes, consideration will be given to crime hotspots and advice will be taken. The new monitoring suite will allow greater coverage and may even include private businesses.

BP – Has there been any consultation with business estates?

DT – Not as yet because the inclusion of these areas is just a possibility for the future at the moment. The priority for this funding is to replace the existing system.

BP – Has any consideration been given to the use of a mobile CCTV unit?

DT – This was something that was used around 8 years ago, however, it deteriorated with age and became damaged and is now obsolete. Mobile units are good in theory but they are not widely used due to the vandalism risk.

JH – Police use an ANPR system in West Lancashire and also have access to a mobile CCTV unit, which they use from time to time.

BP – Perhaps there could be a review of the placing of CCTV cameras on the main routes in and out of industrial estates?

DT – It all comes down to cost, if there was more then this could be a strategic approach.

BP – Perhaps this is something that could be considered through the LDF planning process.

6. Joint Venture Capital

SW updated the group on the development of the JVC – One Connect Ltd, which is being introduced to deliver savings and safeguard jobs. It goes live on the 3rd October with ICT and revenue and benefits and will eventually be located in Greetby Buildings. The refurbishment isn’t quite complete so, in the meantime, staff will continue to work from the Derby Street office. It is envisaged that savings of around 15% will be realised against the current cost for services. This is the biggest contract

that WLBC have and SW will be responsible for contract delivery and overseeing business improvements.

BP – Some areas of the contract aren't clear and will need to be closely monitored.

SW – Agrees that the contract does contain an element of risk and work will be undertaken to minimise the risks and continually monitor them. Staff will be protected and seconded to OCL, meaning that the jobs will be retained within West Lancashire. In the longer term, there is no guarantee that the service will continue from Greetby Buildings, however, the company has invested circa £1m which they will want to protect.

7. Self Financing Housing

JM gave an overview of self financing housing – each year a subsidy is provided by central government through the Housing Revenue Account, this is redistributed from rental income. A proportion of the rental receipt is sent to central government and redistributed, however, the Localism Bill allows councils to opt out of this, to take on debt and manage it.

Next steps – negotiations have started with CLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) and they have been invited to visit West Lancashire. Stock and asset management analysis is taking place to develop a variety of business models. There is a need to be aware of the implications of taking on debt in the General Revenue Account.

Self financing would allow local authorities to plan for their long term future and create a platform for regeneration of certain areas. It would also allow access to private finance – PFI.

BP – There could be an opportunity to develop a social enterprise, this has happened in Rochdale. The funding will need to be used strategically and not purely focussed on refurbishments etc.

JM – Consideration will be given to the re-investment of any surplus and processes for this decision making. Asset mapping is crucial to inform this process.

CP – Consultation with tenants on this issue is crucial

BP – Agreed, that it is important to consult with tenants on the debt management model.

8. Action Plan

- **Action No. 2 – Community Food Growing**

Feedback will be provided on the Glenburn project when known. Hesketh Bank allotments were opened by David Bellamy and 64 plots have now been taken up.

- **Action No. 3 – Timebanks**

Help Direct invested money in Tanhouse and Digmoor through Oaks Church but the timebank covers the whole of Skelmersdale. The scheme has been well received and to date 67 people have joined and 845 hours have been utilised on various activities e.g. baking, baby sitting, ironing etc.

CSR – Intergenerational work has started with the Portugese community,as there has been a request for ‘stand-in grandparents’ for children whose own grandparents are abroad.

ASK would like to come to a future meeting of this group to tell members what they are involved in.

- **Action No. 4 – LGBT**

There was no update available for this meeting.

- **Action No. 5 – Disabilities**

JH gave an overview of ASBRAC (Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conferences), which are a similar model to the DV MARAC’s. They have been created following the introduction of ASB minimum standards and the need to assess and manage the most vulnerable victims of ASB. They are a very useful format for managing ASB and vulnerable victims. JH wants to use this model to include all minority groups.

- **Action No. 6 – Tensions Monitoring**

JH provided an update on the local impact of the recent national disorder. Asda in Skelmersdale closed early as disorder was expected. A petrol bomb was thrown at police and forensics were recovered and there were a number of other small incidents – windows smashed, small fires lit etc. Social networking was monitored and visits took place to give warnings about riot incitement. Throughout this period meetings with key contacts took place. To date three people have been arrested for disturbances at the Concourse and three regarding their involvement in disturbances at Asda, one is still being sought. Some of these people gave themselves up after a poster campaign showing the faces of those who the police wanted to talk to. Also 76 officers from Lancashire were sent to assist the Met during the riots.

The company Cuadrilla have started investigative drilling in Hesketh Bank which could lead to the site being used for fracking – this is a method used to extract natural gas from shale. It can cause environmental issues and a number of protesters (inc. Friends of the Earth) held a weekend of events. There was a police operation to ensure no disorder took place but there were no issues.

DT – Senior police officers will be meeting with executives from the company to find out what happens next.

- **Action No. 7 – People and Communities**

The People and Communities page on the LSP website is currently being updated to reflect the fact that People and Communities is now an event based sub-group of Community Cohesion.

There is a schedule of training courses being held between September 2011 and June 2012. Details can be found on the CVS website – www.wlcvvs.org. Anyone interested in attending should contact Greg Swift at West Lancs CVS on 01695 733737.

9. Exchange of Information

DT – Preparation is underway for a “Freedom of West Lancashire Parade” through Ormskirk on the 22nd October. Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, based at Weeton Barracks near Preston, will march through the town centre ahead of the special service at Ormskirk Parish Church. Officers from West Lancs Borough Council are working with the police to review security arrangements for the day.

BP – There has been another successful beat sweep with over 100 children involved, 6 skips were filled in 3 hours. From the 24th October in the run up to bonfire night, more beat sweeps are planned as part of the “Bright Sparx” initiative. It was first launched last year to combat anti social behaviour, promote fire prevention messages and reduce fire callouts.

PJ – The development of a health passport is underway with the NHS, and ways of making it available electronically are being reviewed so that it can go on the internet. A Small Sparks grant has been applied for, for a keep fit DVD for wheelchair users and it is hoped that a library can be set up so it can be borrowed. The group has been invited to join with GPs next week to launch their toolkit. West Lancs Young Carers will come under the umbrella of Barnados from the 30th September.

10.A.O.B.

There were no items under A.O.B.

11. Proposed Items for Next meeting

The group agreed on the following agenda items for the next meeting (in addition to the standard agenda items):

- Social transport - LCC
- Update on the LEP – Cllr Grant

12. Dates for Future Meetings

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held after Christmas and group members would be notified of the date.