

MINUTES

Meeting: DEVIZES AREA BOARD
Place: Devizes School, The Green, Devizes SN10 3AG
Date: 21 March 2016
Start Time: 6.30 pm
Finish Time: 8.30 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Anna Cuthbert, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Simon Jacobs (Chairman), Cllr Laura Mayes and Cllr Philip Whitehead (Vice Chairman)

Wiltshire Council Officers

Graeme Morrison (Community Engagement Manager)
Libby Beale (Senior Democratic Services Officer)
Wendy Higginson (Community Youth Officer)
Heather Alleyne (Head of Safeguarding)

Town and Parish Councillors

Devizes Town – Judy Rose, Nigel Carter
Erlestoke – Stan Jonik
Potterne – Tony Molland

Partners

Wiltshire Police – Inspector Nick Mawson
Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service – Jack Nicholson
Devizes Community Area Partnership- Kate Freeman

Total in attendance: 50

| <u>Agenda Item No.</u> | <u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u> |
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| 1 | <p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.</p> |
| 2 | <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Philip Mackie, Chris Butler, Doug Roseaman, Chris Callow, Andrew Geddes and Albert Wooldridge.</p> |
| 3 | <p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016.</p> |
| 4 | <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p> |
| 5 | <p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <p>The Chairman drew attention to the announcement available in the agenda pack. It was explained that each community area had been given the opportunity to establish a Health and Wellbeing Group to coordinate joined up services for older people. The Chairman encouraged anyone interested in becoming a Champion for Older People to get in touch. The meeting was updated that a forum had been held on 15 February 2016 to coordinate Devizes' response to flooding and parish councils were reminded to submit their details and flood plans to Public Protection. The Chairman thanked the 120 people in the Devizes area who had been volunteer litter pickers over the weekend of 5-6th March in aid of the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign, further litter picks were planned for the coming months.</p> |
| 6 | <p><u>Partner Updates</u></p> <p>Written updates from partners were available in the agenda pack.</p> <p>Inspector Nick Mawson advised that over the winter there had been instances of rogue cold callers in the area however this was being addressed by the police and had reduced lately. The meeting heard that recently there had been a couple of high-value burglaries in the area and residents were reminded to take photos and mark high value goods so that they could be traced if stolen. It was understood that the chances of burglary in Devizes were still very low.</p> <p>Station Manager, Jack Nicholson, Fire and Rescue Service, updated on the combination with Dorset Fire and Rescue service, which would see a 1.99%</p> |

precept increase for Wiltshire residents in 2016/17 and the average cost of the merger for Wiltshire residents that year would be an increase of £67.86.

Questions were raised as to how the service could make efficiencies and the officer confirmed it would look at sharing buildings with the Council and other emergency services. Following questions from the public, it was advised that the number of fire engines arriving at a fire initially depended on the information provided to staff when the emergency was first called in. Recently, fire engines had been unable to access an incident in West Lavington due to cars parking on either side of the roads; in response to this event the Council was re-issuing double-yellow lines on the road in the village.

The Chairman updated that the Daisy Centre for people with complex learning disabilities was near completion and due to open in the summer, near Green Lane Hospital.

Tony Aldridge, updated the Area Board that for the second year running Devizes had been nominated for the National Coach awards and had also been identified in The Times as one of the top market towns in Britain. The coach group was working hard to promote Devizes as a tourist destination.

Devizes School informed the meeting about the numerous events the school had been involved in since January including: youth parliament, World Book Day, science week, maths challenge, a trip to Belgium and university trips. The Head Teacher was particularly proud of the students on a recent school trip to Italy; a teacher from another school had written to her to let her know what fine role models the students had been.

The Chairman thanked Sue Marshall for all of her hard work as acting Head Teacher and also Alex Eaves for the School's engagement with the community. The Chairman looked forward to the school continuing to be a long-term partner of the Area Board. The vicar at St James' Church also commended the school for its great pastoral care.

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Open floor session

The Chairman encouraged members of the public to take the opportunity to ask questions of their local councillors. A question was raised as to when the footpath to Potterne would be restored to make it usable by pedestrians. Cllr Philip Whitehead advised that the footpath would be on the maintenance list from 1 April once additional funding was available, however the councillor explained that this would take some time to organise as it would require a road closure. It was noted that the footpath could not be moved.

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, responded to a question on the number of foster carers in Wiltshire, advising that there were not sufficient numbers in Wiltshire and the Council was on a permanent recruitment drive.

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| | <p>Cllr Philip Whitehead responded to questions on the cashless parking system at Sheep Street and advised that this was a trial to gather information about how the new system affected car park use, the councillor encouraged the public to feedback their experiences. The cashless system was designed to save money as using a cash system currently cost Wiltshire Council £650,000 per year.</p> <p>The Chairman announced a change to the order of the agenda, to proceed as detailed below.</p> |
| 8 | <p><u>Alzheimer's Support</u></p> <p>Sheila Ashley from Alzheimer's Support introduced the charity and the work it was doing to make Devizes a 'Dementia Friendly' town. The session began by the screening of a video demonstrating the problems faced by those with Dementia and simple actions people could take to support a person with Dementia, such as being patient and a friendly face. Alzheimer's Support had already organised sessions with organisations and businesses in Devizes to support them to be Dementia aware and encouraged any other interested groups to get in touch.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Sheila for her informative presentation and work to support Dementia awareness in Devizes.</p> |
| 9 | <p><u>Local Youth Network</u></p> <p>Wendy Higginson, Community Youth Officer, introduced applications for youth grant funding.</p> <p>Devizes Eisteddfod had applied for £500 to partake in a choir event which would be a spin off from their usual November event. The Chairman commented that the event would also bring parents of children attending the event into Devizes, thereby supporting the local economy.</p> <p>Devizes Youth for Christ had applied for £2,000 for a pop up youth café over the summer holidays; this would be a free event, for around 5 days with professional youth workers attending.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>To grant Devizes Eisteddfod £500 for Wiltshire Choir of the Year.</p> <p>To grant Youth for Christ £2,000 for a summer youth project in Devizes.</p> <p>To note the minutes of the last LYN Management Group meeting.</p> |
| 10 | <p><u>Devizes Passengers</u></p> <p>Kate Freeman (Devizes Community Area Partnership) and Jasper Selwyn</p> |

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| | <p>(Devizes Passengers) presented on Devizes to Pewsey transport links. It was understood that the bus network in Wiltshire was fragile with most services subsidised; DCAP and Devizes Passengers wished to increase bus passenger numbers and plan for growth. Devizes Passengers had, with the support of a consultant employed Wiltshire Council, organised a trial bus timetable from Devizes to Pewsey which the group was now advertising with the intention of boosting passenger numbers prior to the bus review in 2017. Current bus routes were shown highlighting that in reality many of the current routes were not convenient for users, Devizes Passengers was campaigning for better routes to attract people to use the buses.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport acknowledged that funding for buses had been cut in recent years however would not be cut in 2016/17 and a bus consultation was currently being undertaken to collect data to allow the Council to make informed decisions about bus services.</p> |
| 11 | <p><u>Housing-meeting local need.</u></p> <p>Heather Alleyne, Head of Safeguarding (Wiltshire Council), presented on the national policy context and local picture in relation to home ownership. Recent changes at the national level were explained, for instance household benefits had been reduced and currently it was increasingly difficult for housing associations to build new homes. Wiltshire Council was currently working to increase the supply of new homes and increase owner occupations across the county. Devizes was broadly in-line with the Wiltshire average in terms of home ownership, social housing and private ownership however demand for 1-bed affordable homes was very high in the town. The officer gave the locations of new affordable homes in the community area.</p> <p>Following questions from the public, the officer confirmed she would pass on the official definition of 'affordable housing' and details of the effect of the removal of the 'bronze bracket'. The public heard that shared ownership was an option for local people however they would need to register with the Council. Comments from the public included that the average house price in Devizes was very high in comparison to average salary. In response to questions as to why housing allocations were determined outside of the Council, it was explained that current processes followed the legal framework prescribed by the Government.</p> <p>Cllr Anna Cuthbert updated on the homelessness situation in Devizes, explaining that she had encouraged rough sleepers to have their housing needs assessed; this had achieved some positive outcomes however it was noted that rough sleepers would be required to address their rent arrears and drug habits if they were to be housed by the Council.</p> |
| 12 | <p><u>Wiltshire Council Budget update</u></p> <p>Cllr Philip Whitehead updated on Wiltshire Council's budget for 2016-17; which saw a reduced budget of approximately £25m from the previous year. It was explained that approximately one third of the budget the council had available to</p> |

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| 13 | <p>spend was a government grant, which had been reducing year on year and the demand for services was also increasing at the same time. Services to support the vulnerable in the community had been prioritised by the Council and savings would be made from other areas. It was noted that a move towards more online services and merging services with other providers, such as the CCG, would help to achieve savings.</p> <p><u>Area Board Capital Funding</u></p> <p>Representatives from Market Lavington Village Hall and Devizes Development Partnership spoke in support of their applications for funding. The Chairman explained that due to the applications being considered at the end of the financial year there would be a shortfall of £241.20 should the full funding be granted, consequently it was agreed to reduce grants by £120.60 each.</p> <p>It was noted that £560 had been granted between meetings of the Area Board for necessary tree maintenance, this was taken as an urgent decision due to health and safety concerns.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>To ratify £560 granted to Devizes and District Association for the Disabled between meetings of the Area Board.</p> <p>To grant Market Lavington Community Hall £4879.40 for increased storage space.</p> <p>To grant Devizes Development Partnership £2,058.60 for the installation of a CCTV camera and wireless link at Wadworth roundabout.</p> |
| 14 | <p><u>Air Quality Update</u></p> <p>The Chairman advised that Cllr Anna Cuthbert would now to Chair the Air Quality and Transport Strategy Working Group.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>To appoint Cllr Anna Cuthbert to the Air Quality and Transport Strategy Working Group.</p> |
| 15 | <p><u>Urgent items</u></p> <p>There were no urgent items.</p> |
| 16 | <p><u>Close</u></p> |