

CORSHAM AREA BOARD July 18th 2013
AGENDA ITEM NO.

Corsham Community Area Network (CCAN)
Report and recommendations to Corsham Area Board

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update from CCAN and to make a recommendation on the way forward for the Area Partnership.

2. Background

- 2.1 CCAN was established as the Community Area Partnership for the Corsham Area in 2009 and since then its Steering Group has worked well with the Area Board and has been widely regarded both in and out of the community area.
- 2.2 However in December 2012 we reported to the Area Board that the small Core Group of volunteers remaining with the Partnership would continue to support Partnership activity and the role of the Network Co-ordinator until the end of the financial year but would then be looking to recommend a new way forward.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 The CCAN vision was to develop links with community area groups and clubs using a Steering Group and thematic action groups to take forward community projects and actions in support of the Community Area Plan. Strong links with Transition Community Corsham (Transcoco) provided immediate action groups for Transport and Environment and good results were achieved in these areas.
- 3.2 Achievement and credibility was maintained due to the efforts of a reasonably small number of people but it has not been possible to develop additional action groups or recruit significant new interest in the Steering Group itself.
- 3.3 The concept of an Area Network does however exist and it flourishes in the form of the impressive number of volunteers, clubs and interest groups that are established in the community area and through the increasing internet, website and social network links between them. It also exists in the social and community activity naturally generated by community groups as part of their regular programmes.
- 3.4 The Corsham Area is not alone in having difficulties in sustaining the original model of a central Steering Group and multiple Actions Groups. As a result alternative operating models are being developed that require less investment in the formal Steering Group model and which rely more on established community groups and links.

4. An Alternative Model

- 4.1 The Partnership role and the concept of the network remain valid and provide the potential for a focus at the community area level that would not otherwise exist. To make best use of that focus it is proposed that the role of the Partnership co-ordinator, funded by Wiltshire Council through the Area Board, is used as a Network Co-ordinator deployed more directly to work with and support existing groups, acting as a link between those groups and helping to shape their activities in support of the Community Plan. The role would still allow for the identification of issues and would highlight the opportunities for joined up community action or individual projects to assist with their resolution.
- 4.2 A Core Group of supportive community representatives, including the Town Council and Area Board, could continue to provide oversight and support and reporting would continue through the Area Board.
- 4.3 The benefit of the model is to use allocated funding in direct support of community activity and to remove the formality of committee activity.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 Work Plan responsibilities for the Network Co-ordinator would have a strong focus into the community and would include:-
- Continuing to develop the network (and database) of local contacts and improving the effectiveness of network links
 - Encouraging projects that reflect the Community Priorities
 - Sending out Newsletters and developing the CCAN website (linking to the Your Community Matters site) to communicate across the Community Area
 - Providing Partner Updates for Area Board meetings and participating in agenda setting meetings
 - Encouraging and co-ordinating community input to Consultations.
- 5.2 A specific project for 2013/14 will be to develop the community input for the next Corsham Area Joint Strategic Assessment to be issued in early 2014.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Corsham Area Board:-
- a) Approves the change in Partnership model and accepts the role of the Network Co-ordinator with an over-seeing Core Group of community representatives
 - b) Approves an initial funding request for the Network Co-ordinator post from within the Area Board allocation as outlined in Appendix 3
 - c) Provides positive support to assist in developing the Co-ordinator role and addressing Community Plan priorities.

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Appendices

1. CCAN End of Year Report
2. CCAN Finance Statement 2012/2013
3. CCAN Application for Funding 2013/2014