

MINUTES

Meeting: MELKSHAM AREA BOARD
Place: Bowerhill Village Hall, Halifax Road, Bowerhill, SN12 6QN
Date: 20 March 2014
Start Time: 7.00 pm
Finish Time: 8.45 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Pat Aves, Cllr Terry Chivers, Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr David Pollitt, Cllr Jonathon Seed (Vice Chairman) and Cllr Roy While

Wiltshire Council Officers

Kevin Fielding – Democratic Services Officer
Sean Clacksfield – Communications Officer

Partners

Melksham Community Area Partnership – Chris Holden, Colin Goodhind & Shirley McCarthy
Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service – Mike Franklin
Melksham Chamber of Commerce – Graham Ellis
Wiltshire Community Area Partnership – Laura Pictor

Total in attendance: 21

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
1	<p><u>Chairman's Welcome, Introduction and Announcements</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Bowerhill Village Hall for a special meeting of the Melksham Area Board to discuss and ratify proposals for future funding of community led projects from the Melksham Area Board.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
3	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
4	<p><u>Partnership Arrangements</u></p> <p>The Chairman advised that the Area Board felt that it was important that this issue was discussed and ratified before the new financial year and that It should be noted that the financial figures identified on the report were subject to change according to the amount of revenue funding available to the Board in the next financial year.</p> <p>The Chairman then outlined the four proposals:</p> <p>The Chairman explained that as the expected funding would now be lower than was first anticipated, he had decided that it would be helpful to have options 1, 3 and 4 to consider alongside the original option, (No.2).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% revenue funding for the Melksham Community Area Partnership. 2. 20% funding to the Melksham Community Area Partnership with 80% funding to the Community Project Support Officer (CPSO). 3. 100% funding to the Community Project Support Officer (CPSO). 4. 100% funding to community projects, (no funding for the Melksham Community Area Partnership or Community Project Support Officer (CPSO)).

The Chairman then outlined the role of the Community Project Support Officer:

- Ring-fenced funding for payment to “Community Project Support Officer” (CPSO) to be contracted on a self-employed basis with resulting hours becoming available for local groups (including the Melksham Community Area Partnership) to bid for to support community lead projects. It should be noted that this is the ring-fenced funding for this purpose and it is possible that for specific projects, and subject to available revenue funding, the Area Board may agree to fund additional hours.

2014/15 – £9,000,00

2015/16 - £9,000,00

2016/17 - £9,000,00

(It should be noted that the financial figures identified on the report were subject to change according to the amount of revenue funding available to the Board, and some doubt about this was expressed)

- Whilst the overall spend reduces over the three year period it is anticipated that this will be in line with other pressures the Board will face on its spending.
- The CPSO hours will be a resource that any local group will be able to bid for alongside bids for grant funding. All bids would have to clearly demonstrate how they were contributing towards fulfilling that stated aims of the Area Board - principally (but not necessarily exclusively) based on the priorities identified in the Community JSA. There would be no limit on the number of projects a group could apply for support on, but consideration could reasonably be given to the number of previous projects supported when considering new applications, especially if there was a shortage of available time as a result of a high number of applications.
- Decisions over the allocation of the CPSO time would be made exclusively by the Area Board members, usually at a public Area Board meeting and the CPSO would be responsible to the Chair of the Area Board, or the Vice-Chair in their absence. Where appropriate the Chair could delegate certain parts of this role to the Community Area Manager for expediency. In exception, the Board could allocate limited amounts of time to projects, by means of a Chair’s Action, where it is not practicable to wait for the next scheduled Area Board. In any such case the Chair would need to report to the next Area Board details of any such decisions made.

- The CPSO would be expected to prepare a regular report of their activities and Outcomes achieved for presentation at the Area Board.

The Chairman then opened the debate to the floor.

Points made included:

- That the Melksham Community Area Partnership (MCAP) sought assurances from the Area Board that MCAP would be able to make more than one bid per financial year for community funding
a.JH Yes, MCAP would be able to make more than one bid per financial year.
- That MCAP had only been made aware of one proposal for funding arrangements, (option No.2) by the Area Board, options No's 1,3 and 4 were now being presented on the night without MCAP being able to discuss prior to the meeting.
a.JH It was felt that as the expected funding would now be lower than was anticipated, then it would be helpful to have options 1, 3 and 4 to consider alongside the original option, (No.2).
- That MCAP was a worthwhile organisation that was doing good work in the community, losing Phil McMullen would be a blow, the partnership would be less effective with his loss.
*a.JH The Area Board took no pleasure in having to allocate less funds for community use, but Central Government was driving all local Councils to make hard decisions on how they spent money and try and make savings. MCAP had done a lot of good in the local community working with local businesses and organisations.
The Area Board acknowledged the amazing work that community volunteers do, without them many things in our community just wouldn't happen.*
- Could the meeting have assurances that community groups would not have to jump through hoops to obtain future funding from the Area Board
a.JH Community groups would still be able to receive community area grant and member initiative funding from the Area Board.

As there was some confusion as to the relevance of the appendices of the report contained in the agenda pack the Chairman explained that they referred to the hiring of the Community Project Support Officer and not the funding process.

The Chairman explained that Area Board had taken legal guidance on the creation of the CPSO post with the Wiltshire Council solicitor and were following that guidance.

- That MCAP members present at the meeting were surprised at the

additional proposals now added by the Area Board without giving the Partnership any notice of them.

a. JH explained that due to the expected level of funding being lower than anticipated it would be helpful to have the other options to consider at the public meeting.

- That the MCAP Steering Group had not been given time to discuss the extra options.
a. JH advised that the MCAP Steering Group had shown little interest in working with the Area Board when he had met with them previously.
- That the addition of the extra proposal options was welcomed.
- That MCAP was a good mechanism for getting community issues moving.
- It was felt by one attendee that the venue wasn't the best choice for the meeting.
- *JH advised that the Area Board tries to hold its meetings in both the town and community area. Both the Assembly Hall and the Town Hall were already booked so Bowerhill Village Hall was chosen as the venue.*
- That the meeting details didn't appear to be on the Melksham Area Board web site on the morning of the meeting.
- a. Kevin Fielding – Democratic Services Officer, Wiltshire Council advised that there had been an IT glitch on the morning of the meeting, the meeting details were online by 10am.
KF also advised that the meeting had been legally called with the meeting agenda issued five clear working days before the meeting, and that the agenda had been given the usual distribution and publicity that any other Melksham Area Board meeting would have been given.*

Cllr Jonathon Seed – Vice-chairman, Melksham Area Board

- That not all Area Boards had partnership arrangements.
- That the proposals did not spell the end of the partnership, Wiltshire Council were having to look very hard as to how it allocated its funding to the Area Boards. The partnership may well have to start looking at other funding streams, talking to local businesses etc.
- There never would be ring-fenced funding for the partnerships.
- If the partnership continued to have its 100% funding each year, then there would be nothing to allocate for funding other community projects.

- Area Board funding had changed over the last four years or so from revenue to capital funding.

The Chairman gave the other members of the Melksham Area Board the opportunity to speak.

Terry Chivers

- Was still listening to the debate.

Pat Aves

- Favoured option 2.

Roy While

- Felt that a more efficient way of working was needed with realistic and achievable outcomes involving others but still embracing the skills of the partnership. Favoured option 2.

David Pollitt

- Would prefer the funding to be spent on CPSO time, with other bodies able to bid for CPSO time. Favoured option 3.

The Chairman gave Laura Pictor – Wiltshire Community Area Partnership the opportunity to address the meeting.

Points made included:

- That of the 18 Area Boards across the county many had different partnership arrangements.
- That it was important to look at Melksham's JSA priorities and explore them fully.

Cllr Roy While proposed that the Area Board adopted option No.2 - 20% funding to the Melksham Community Area Partnership with 80% funding to the Community Project Support Officer (CPSO) this was seconded by Cllr Jonathon Seed.

Decision

- **That the Melksham Area Board agrees that future community funding shall be 20% funding to the Melksham Community Area**

	<p>Partnership with 80% funding to the Community Project Support Officer (CPSO).</p> <p><i>(Note, Cllr Terry Chivers and Cllr David Pollitt voted against the motion)</i></p>
5	<p><u>Close</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everybody for attending the meeting.</p>