

Chairman's update for the Calne Community Area Board 7th July 2009

This update is to provide information about the work that has been carried forward from the Pilot Area Boards Project in the Calne Community Area, specifically from the last Pilot Area Board meeting held on 10th March 2009; it also provides information and proposals for future work to be carried out by the Area Board and project groups arising from the Board.

- **Community Area Assessment** – identification of local issues and priorities for action:

Review of the Community Area Plan

Following the final receipt of the revised Calne Community Area Plan, the Community Area Manager will co-ordinate a response from Frontline Services within Wiltshire Council. This will enable the Area Board to begin to focus upon specific areas of work. The Area Board will also encourage partner organisations and agencies (eg. Police, Fire and Rescue, NHS Wiltshire, to provide their responses)

- **Community Decision Making** –

'Drop the Kerb' project

This project emerged during the Area Board development phase from an issue raised by the local Access for All group and local Mothers and Toddlers group. It focussed on a perceived lack of lowered kerbs in places that were relevant to the needs of local people.

The project involved the community in identifying and then voting to prioritise potential sites for new dropped kerbs around the area.

The resulting list was then used to inform Highways Engineers in their work planning and the top 4 sites were implemented in March 2009 (within 4 months of the issue being raised).

This project is now closed, but Highways engineers will use the list to inform future work in the area and, if necessary, a similar exercise may be run in the future to identify further sites.

Information about this project will be displayed at the Area Board meeting on 7th July 2009 and will be on display in the 'Community Corner' (Calne Community Area Partnership's temporary Community Hub on the High Street).

- **Local Challenge** – identifying persistent ‘sticky issues’ and holding services to account:

Curzon Street Project:

Traffic congestion along the narrow stretch of Curzon Street has been identified as a persistent ‘sticky issue’ in the Calne Community Area.

During the Area Boards development phase a project group was formed, made up of a range of community representatives including; the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Community Area Partnership, Town, District and County Councillors. This group worked closely with WCC Highways Officers to identify ways to address the issue.

At the end of the Area Board pilot phase the project group was dissolved in line with its terms of reference. At that point Highways Engineers had confirmed that, in principle, they had no objection to proposals, identified through the group, to trial 3 different options on the ground, in order to identify the best solution to the issue.

With the move to a Unitary Authority and the election of new Wiltshire Councillors, the Chairman will propose that a project group is re-formed in order to review, identify funding and progress this piece of work.

Priestley School Road Safety Issue:

At the final Calne Pilot Area Board meeting, representatives of the Priestley Primary School Parents Teachers Association presented a petition including 505 signatures relating to road safety issues outside of the school entrance at Prince Charles Drive. At the meeting it was minuted that the issue should be referred to the Town Council and the Police and, if necessary should then be referred back to the first Wiltshire Council Area Board.

In the interim the Community Area Manager has maintained contact with the various partners involved.

To date the PTA has reported some improvement in the situation following a period of increased police presence in the area at busy periods. Police action took the form of friendly reminders to people whose parking presented a road safety concern and this was backed up by reminder letters being sent out to parents by the school. However as police presence is not a sustainable solution the problem is beginning to increase again.

Future planned work that may help the situation includes:

- Double yellow lines, as proposed in the Wiltshire Council parking review. These are due to be implemented in the autumn.
- Highways engineers will be running a feasibility study that will compare vehicle speeds and pedestrian activity with school/parent concerns. This will inform officer recommendations for improvements to pedestrian crossings, signage etc and the School Travel Plan. However, under current arrangements any work resulting from this would probably not be implemented until 2010/11.

Other action which has the potential to ease the situation has also been identified:

- Provision of off street parking for residents occupying homes at the entrance to the school.
- Encouraging/promoting a culture change around walking to school and road safety awareness.

The Chairman of the Area Board and the Community Area Manager are currently involved in identifying partners and opportunities to progress these points.

○ **Other work:**

A Community Hub for the Calne Community Area.

Since January 2009 the Community Area Partnership has occupied a vacant shop unit in the High Street on a temporary, month to month, basis. Initially this arrangement was made with North Wiltshire District Council in order to facilitate opportunities for the Partnership to engage with the Community more widely during the preparation of their review of the Community Area Plan. During this time opportunities have also been extended to other partner groups and agencies, including the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Youth Development Service and Westlea Housing Association and the arrangement has evolved to embrace the concept of a 'Community Hub' in which a wide range of services, groups and organisations run public surgeries, consultation events and community activities. The arrangement has continually been endorsed by Members of North Wiltshire District Council, the 'One Council' Implementation Executive (Scrutiny) and, since June 4th, Wiltshire Council.

Feedback suggests that this has been a valuable arrangement and that there is a desire to pilot, over a longer period of time, a more structured approach to running a facility that moves towards the 'Community Hub' concept, which has proved successful in other areas of the country.

In addition to those who have already taken the opportunity to use it, this facility could provide opportunities for Wiltshire Councillors to hold surgeries, for other Wiltshire Council service providers and other partner groups to undertake consultation, it could also provide a means to address issues emerging in the Community Plan review, especially those around e-learning and public transport.

If this concept is to be piloted in the Calne Community, it is vital that it should be carried out in an organised, methodical manner which pays particular attention to long term sustainability and funding.

Before making a decision as to whether the Area Board is in favour of such a project taking place the Chairman will propose that a project group should be formed and that this group will report and make recommendations to the next Area Board meeting. The project group should include a range of community representatives and should operate within terms of reference that it will draft at the first meeting and which should be similar to the generic project Terms of Reference that were established during the pilot phase. These will be agreed by the Chairman and will then be approved by the Area Board at its next meeting.

Proposals:

- 1. Re-form a project group to review, identify funding and progress the Curzon Street Project.**
- 2. Form a project group to consider the concept of a Community Hub for the Calne Community Area, to make recommendations to the Area Board and, if necessary, to progress this issue.**

Prepared by Cllr Alan Hill (Wiltshire Council – Chairman of the Calne Community Area Board) and Jane Vaughan (Calne Community Area Manager) for the Calne Community Area Board meeting on 7th July 2009.

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