

Developing Area Boards in Wiltshire

Weekly Update Report

Your weekly roundup of news from the area boards development team: 20th October 2008.

AMESBURY

The Amesbury Pilot Area Board has now met four times since it was established. There has been good attendance and the meetings have covered many aspects of how area boards and partnerships will work in the future. The Steering Group has adopted a communications plan, terms of reference for the group and is now in a position to launch the Pilot Board. The launch will take place on Thursday 4th December - venue to be agreed. All of the parishes in the Northern Area are being asked to nominate a representative to serve on the Pilot Board. The first meeting will aim to explain fully the role of the Board and the Area Partnership and provide an opportunity for questions and answers with the Area Boards Development Manager, Steve Milton.

On 9th October, Chairman, Stan Stubbs, represented the Amesbury Pilot Area Board Steering Group at a meeting in Trowbridge to discuss the boundary of the Amesbury area board. Representatives from Pewsey and Tidworth were also present. 8 options were considered, but by the end of the event it was clear that the consensus view was that the area board for the Amesbury area should be coterminous with the existing community area. The full decision of the Steering Group can be found at

www.onecouncilforwiltshire.co.uk

Following the last meeting, the Steering Group confirmed the issue it wishes to track through the Area Board process. That issue is - *public transport options for young people*. The Board will examine the feasibility of providing subsidised transport to enable young people in Amesbury Community Area to access leisure facilities in Salisbury, Tidworth, Andover and elsewhere. Steve Milton has started to research the issue and is examining the current level of provision in the area, cost and demand.

Steve is in the process of recruiting a dedicated community area manager to work with the Board over the next few months - interviews are taking place on 3rd November. The Board considers it important to have a dedicated support

officer working in the area. and these meetings will begin in the next month. Last night we looked at the draft rule book for the area boards and we had a very useful discussion - particularly on the role of parish councils in the approval of local grants. We would not want to see the board imposing schemes in our areas against the wishes of the parish. I'm glad to say this was well received by the members and Steve agreed to make this clear in the Rule Book.

Just to let you know that the first meeting of the Pilot Board is an open meeting so anyone can attend and I would encourage everyone to get involved and find out what the area boards are going to do, what the area partnerships are all about and how the role of parishes fits into this new structure for Wiltshire

CALNE

The Calne Pilot Area Board Task Group met for the second time on 16th October 2008 to move forward issues arising from the Pilot Area Board meeting in September. This was a very positive meeting and the minutes will shortly be posted on the One Council website under Area Boards, Calne.

Curzon Street Traffic Congestion: A project group is being formed comprising representatives of the Town Council, Police, Fire Service and the Community Partnership to work with County Highways officers. They will be identifying different options that may help to relieve congestion problems in the town. It is hoped that different options can be tested out over a period of time and that local people and technical officers will work together to decide which options, if any, will provide a suitable solution to the problem. (Terms of reference are currently being drawn up for this project group).

Dropped kerbs: Highways Officers have provided valuable assistance in discussing this issue with the Task Group. Recognising that the Community may not be able to receive all of the dropped kerbs it wants in one go, the Community Partnership are about to start consulting with the community to draw up a list of priority sites. Highways Officers will then

assess this list and it will inform their implementation programme.

Both of these last two points will be reported back to the Area Board jointly by Highways Officers and Task Group members in November.

Young People's Issues: The CAYPIG provided an update to the Task Group and will be invited to attend the Area Board in November. Jane will work with the Youth Development Worker to consider more innovative ways of presenting these issues, which will be less daunting for the young people involved and will provide an opportunity to try out more interesting methods of delivering information to the Board.

Participatory Budgeting: £8,000 of funding has so far been identified for the Participatory Budgeting event that is proposed for spring 2009. The Project Manager is currently working with a Town and District Councillor to form a project group. The national P.B. Unit Team is going to be visiting Salisbury in the near future to give advice on Participatory Budgeting. Members of the Calne Project Group hope to be able to attend or to arrange for a similar visit to be made to Calne.

In addition to this event Jane is also working towards testing out other PB methods and ideas:

- In November the Area Board will be undertaking budget consultation work.
- In addition the work that is being done around engaging public participation through prioritising highways issues for action constitutes a different form of Participatory Budgeting.

Review of the Community Plan: The Community Partnership is involved in ongoing consultation across the Community Area. In order to reach out to as many people as possible the Partnership is going to attend family lantern making workshops across the Area (part of the annual Christmas parade). It is also working with Community First and WREC to ensure opportunities for involvement among young people and BME groups. It will be visiting residential homes to engage with older people and hopes to link with some of the larger employers in the area too.

Plans are underway for the Community Visioning event, which will be held on 6th December at Marden House, Calne.

CHIPPENHAM

Vicky is on leave this week..

Pilot Area Board Meeting: Following the Pilot Area Board meeting on 22-Sep-08 Vicky Welsh has produced a summary of the evaluation forms. This will assist the Area Board Task Group when it considers changes to the content/style and format of future meetings.

Task Group: The Area Board Task Group met on 8-Oct-08. Evaluation of the Pilot Area Board meeting concluded:

- Meeting was well chaired
- Everyone had the opportunity to speak
- People felt welcomed

Improvements for next time include:

- Sound system/hearing loop
- Different room layout
- Reduce length of meeting
- Improve publicity

The Task Group also agreed plans for the next Pilot Area Board meeting – this will be the State of Area Debate which they have decided to call “Opportunity Knocks”. This large public event will be co-hosted by ChAP (Chippenham Area Partnership) and the Pilot Area Board.

It will be an opportunity for service providers to share information and explain how they will work with the Area Boards, and also an opportunity for local people to tell us about their concerns and priorities for their community. There will also be the opportunity to tell us what they value about their community.

The aims and objectives of Opportunity Knocks demonstrate clear links with the Area Board Development Project and the ChAP review of the Community Plan.

Vicky is working closely with members of the Task Group (County, District Town and Parish Councillors, Police, Fire, PCT, ChAP CAYPIG) to ensure that the Pilot Area Board agendas are inclusive and promote community engagement.

Sticky Issue: Sticky issues brought to first Pilot Area Board and are being progressed. Parish Councils have been asked for details of Sticky Issues, and Vicky will identify any common or recurring themes for action.

Neighbourhood Policing: Work with Inspectors from the Wiltshire Constabulary and with the Project Manager for Calne has resulted in a proposal to test out the consultation and the setting of Neighbourhood Policing Priorities through Community Partnerships and the Area Board process. This is a piece of work that is

carried out 3 times per year and so it is hoped that it will be able to be tested during the development phase. The local Inspector is hoping that this is an idea which may be rolled out as a standard procedure to all of the areas in Wiltshire.

There are also plans for the Police Inspector to offer one-to-one surgeries to members of the public in the week following Area Board meetings. This will provide the opportunity for local residents to follow up any specific issues directly with the Inspector.

Issues Book: Interviewees have been successfully recruited for the Chippenham & Villages Community Area:

- Local small business man
- Working Mum

Equalities And Inclusion: Vicky to meet with WREC representative upon return from leave to discuss methods of consultation and practices of reaching out to provide opportunities for everyone within the Community Area to be involved in the Area Board / ChAP / Review of the Community Plan.

Vicky is exploring the possibility of using a “Diary Room” approach to capture views from members of the community who might not normally engage with their local authority.

CORSHAM

Dave Roberts has formed a Steering group with County Councillors and other representatives from the North Wiltshire Area Four Committee and agreed membership of a task group. Terms of reference have been agreed and the Steering Groups has held 3 meetings. This group has also set up a working group to look at community engagement events. Dave has also been working with the Corsham Community Area Partnership (CAP) and its membership has now expanded from 4 main members to thirteen members. The CAP is reviewing its arrangements and exploring what they need to do to be fit for purpose by April 2009

Corsham will be acting as a ‘control area’ for Southampton University’s issue book research – filming for which has now been completed. In effect, this means that the issue book will be used in Calne to facilitate discussion with community partners and the public. The same meetings will be held in Corsham without the benefit of the issues book. This will enable Gerry Stoker’s research team to analyse the value added by this new deliberative tool. The results will be evaluated by Gerry’s team as part of the overall project evaluation in Spring 2009.

PEWSEY

Dave has agreed funding and approved an outline project proposal for a round of 16 community engagement events in November. This will take the form of a peripatetic, arts based participatory roadshow with active involvement from young people. Further details will follow. The activities will form the basis of a review of the local community plan undertaken by the Corsham CAP.

The Pilot Area Board will be tracking the issue of public transport and an initial meeting is in the pipeline. This will be informed by the community area profile produced by the WCC Research Team earlier in the summer.

The Pilot Board will be considering the first draft of the ‘Rule Book’ on 14th October. Police, PCT, Fire and Rescue are fully engaged with the Corsham Pilot.

MALMESBURY

Planning is currently underway for the November pilot Area Board Meeting. Local people are being encouraged to have their say about what should happen to the Burnham House site (following its closure in June 2008) and this will be recorded through the use of the electronic voting sets. Wiltshire County Council Transport Planners and a representative from Mouchel will be informing local people about the outcomes from a recent Freight Assessment and Priority Mechanism which has been looking at HGVs on a stretch of road running through the community area. Following the September pilot Area Board local people were invited to collect and submit data to supplement the commissioned work and will have the opportunity to discuss the value of collecting this data and their future involvement. It is possible that part of the meeting on 19th November will be filmed for the Politics Show and BBC Points West.

Following the September meeting speed guns have been purchased and it is anticipated that a community group, currently being identified and supported by the Malmesbury & Villages Community Area Partnership, will work with the police to informally gather road traffic speed data to help local villages distinguish between real and perceived speeding vehicles.

A number of local shop keepers have contributed to views which will feature in the Issue Book video/DVD, while WCC budget survey cards have been provided to the Children’s Centre to gauge their interest.

PEWSEY

The first formal meeting of the Pewsey Pilot Area Board took place on Monday 20 October in the Bouverie Hall in Pewsey. The launch was very successful with over 50 people in attendance (20 people more than expected, and at least 14 of these were actual members of the public!) Councillor Tony Molland was elected Chair of the Pilot Board and he will continue in the Chair through until the conclusion of the pilot phase in March 2009. Encouragingly, there were two articles in the Gazette & Herald last week featuring the Pilot Board, as well as a piece on GWR FM during the morning news.

The 50 people who attended the launch included; district and county councillors, parish representatives, frontline services and partner agencies including the PCT, Police, Fire and Rescue and the local Highways Engineers. Peter Dect of the Pewsey Community Area Partnership was also in attendance. The meeting was lively, with many opportunities for the public to join in and take part in the discussions. At one point there was a vote of the full assembly on whether to continue with a long standing project to create a local skate park - the result of which was an overwhelming 'yes' vote that was subsequently ratified by the full voting members.

Caroline Brailey provided an opportunity for all participants to comment on how they found the meeting and initial analysis shows a very positive reaction from most participants. The only real criticism was that the discussions around the issues didn't lead to decisions or action (as it will when the Boards are operating for real in July 2009). The audience also expressed concern that the Chairman could only be nominated and elected by the District and County Councillors present.

It was clear from some of the comments received that more work is required to ensure that people have a better understanding of the way in which Area Boards will operate in the future. This should go a long way to allay fears that the Boards will be little more than talking shops. People also complained about the sound being poor, but other than that most people liked the venue and the layout.

The next meeting is on 2nd December and issues for discussion will include the local economy, so there may well be a different audience and participants

SALISBURY

Marianna Dodd attended the Salisbury City Area Committee (Community) on 14 October to present a report to members with the aim of providing an update on progress to date of the Salisbury Area Board.

As agreed at the last Area Board meeting, Marianna Dodd met with Mike Franklin, Relationship Manager of Fire & Rescue to discuss ways in which the Area Board could become involved in a Salamander training programme planned for Devizes/Salisbury. It was felt that partners on the Board might be able to assist in the referral process and/or attend the training to talk to participants. There might also be a publicity opportunity, which we agreed, must be sensitively handled and would be managed jointly through Fire & Rescue and County/District publicity and communications departments.

The aim of this initiative is to test out the potential of identifying referrals from a wider source, e.g., utilising joint knowledge and intelligence resources of partners from police, health, education authorities, in terms of vulnerable or troubled young people who might benefit from training designed to boost confidence and self-esteem. This will be an agenda item at the next Area Board meeting to be held on the 6 November.

Participatory Budgeting: Arrangements have been made for Leslie Silverstone from the Participatory Budgeting (PB) Unit to attend the next Area Board meeting on the 6 November to give a presentation about PB and about designing a programme for Salisbury. Cllr Paul Clegg and Marianna Dodd will meet with Leslie on the 6th to discuss a draft programme in preparation for the Area Board meeting.

An inaugural meeting of the Salisbury Area Partnership, organised by the South Wiltshire LSP was held on the 23 October which was well attended by a wide range of stakeholders from the third sector, business community, councillors, public sector, arts & leisure etc. Steve Milton gave a presentation about the role of the partnership and its future relationship with the Salisbury Area Board that was well received by the audience. Workshops were held to explore how stakeholders felt a partnership should work and what they could bring to a partnership. Stakeholders from each workshop were then asked if they would like to put forward their names for a working group. A report of the outcomes will be produced by the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance of the

event and circulated to those who attended and other stakeholders.

TIDWORTH

A meeting was held in Tidworth on 16th October to discuss Regeneration and Building Sustainable Communities in the Eastern part of the Salisbury Plain Super Garrison area. This group works under the Military/Civilian Integration project and is chaired by Mark Boden, with representation from Defence Estates, the Army, Wiltshire County Council, Kennet District Council (KDC), Salisbury District Council (SDC) and the MCI project. Work is being carried out to make sure that regeneration sites for high quality recreational, sporting, leisure, retail, leisure development plus new barracks and soldiers' family accommodation as well as civilian housing are included in the Local Development Frameworks being prepared by KDC and SDC. The site identification being carried out, will lead to a master planning exercise.

Tidworth Residents' Forum was held on Monday night (20th October) and was attended by about 30 people to hear updates on local matters and put questions forward to county, district and town councils about local facilities and services.

Tidworth Area Health and Social Care Forum was held on Wednesday and attended by Wiltshire PCT, Salisbury Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Tidworth Development Trust, Wiltshire Involvement Network, Ashdown Family Centre and other local care groups. Members received updates on the future plans of Wiltshire PCT and the Hospitals Trust and information on the take up of the other services and problems caused by missed appointments, etc.

All above meetings attended by Val Powley with appropriate input.

The next meeting of the Tidworth pilot Area Board meeting is planned for 10th November at 7pm in the Tidworth Community Centre.

TISBURY

Tisbury is developing a new community area partnership alongside the pilot area board. A huge amount of work has been done between the two groups to develop solutions to identified local issues. Task groups have been called to focus on car parking and road safety. Tisbury and Parishes Community Area Partnership (TAPCAP) will be presenting a report to the board in November regarding the need for and deployment of a speed indication device. A report template has been

produced and the board will be considering its success as part of the development phase.

TAPCAP has agreed a constitution, which will also be presented to the area board in November. The area board has seen early drafts and are keen to adopt a similar approach. TAPCAP and the board have adopted a 'plain English' approach to all documentation and aim to keep paperwork to a minimum and ensure it is accessible to the public.

The board has decided that each member should adopt a portfolio and a future meeting will focus on identifying and allocating portfolios.

The board is deliberating the way it will function and questioning fundamental elements of the project, such as the influence that Area Boards will have over frontline service budgets. The members feel that without some meaningful influence over budgets and service priorities, the Boards will be unable to shape services to reflect local priorities. The board invited an officer from the highways department to discuss devolution of budgets and resources. The meeting was not a perfect experience for either the Board or the Officer concerned and this has prompted the Board to investigate how the board experience can be improved and how frontline services can be encouraged to be as flexible as statutory partners.

Another matter under discussion is the involvement of parishes not currently within the pilot area. In 2009 the area board is likely to cover Mere, Tisbury and Wilton, so there is a need to keep these neighbouring areas informed. To reflect the wider area the title of the board is the South West Wiltshire Area Board.

The board has also considered methods of involving parishes. All parish councils will be invited to a meeting to discuss proposals such as parish clustering. It is hoped that Keith Robinson will attend this meeting.

TROWBRIDGE

The focus of efforts over the last couple of weeks has been the organisation of the Trowbridge Community Discovery Day at the Arc Theatre on Sunday 2nd November. The event is being organised by the Trowbridge Community Area Future Partnership with support and funding from the Council.

The free event will run from 11am to 4pm and will include something of interest for all the family. Entertainments will include dance, music and singing, sports roadshow, street art, hip hop and a puppet show ! There

will be refreshments, competitions and prizes, including a treasure hunt.

Displays and consultations on a range of issues will be held and the views of local people will be sought through questionnaires, a graffiti wall and a video diary room !

Participants will include:

- Transforming Trowbridge which will include displays of the waterside development, new library and other development sites
- the PCT including plans for the new Primary Care Centre
- the Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- the Fire Service
- The Youth Council
- The Wiltshire Racial Equality Council
- Wiltshire Council and the Trowbridge Area Board
- the Town Council
- the Neighbourhoods and Parishes

The event will be officially opened by Jane Scott.

WARMINSTER

Warminster Community Day was held on 17th October in Warminster Assembly Rooms. The event was designed to showcase the work and achievements of local groups and organisations, to help the community partnership develop its links and networks and to enable local people to have say on the town plan and other local issues, as well as get more information about the new Wiltshire Council. The event was well supported with close to 50 groups and organisations participating. The general public also supported the event with a steady stream of visitors throughout the day. Jane Scott opened the event and MP Andrew Murrison attended in the afternoon. Feedback from the event has been very positive and learning points will be shared in due course. A report will go to the Warminster Area Seminar this week to now propose the setting up of the pilot board for the area. The Area Seminar meeting to be held on 30th October will set a date for a first pilot board meeting now that the groundwork has been done.

WOOTTON BASSETT & CRICKLADE

Following our report last week about the departure of Shelley Parker from the Development Team, Niki Lewis and Steve Milton will be

interviewing candidates for the position on 3rd November.

KEY MESSAGES OF THE WEEK

As readers will see from this week's updates, the Area Board Development Programme is now moving into delivery phase following the preparatory and initiation work carried out during the summer months. Warminster Community Day was an enormous success and bodes well for the other events planned around the County.

When reviewing the outcome of the Warminster event, it seemed clear to Mary and I that our thinking about community engagement can become clouded by our preoccupation with structures. What we saw at Warminster was the beginnings of a community network – groups coming into contact, communicating, sharing resources, discussing common problems, joining up initiatives. We also saw 'ordinary' local people gaining information, discussing local issues, voting on priorities and - in some cases - putting their names down to take part in local activities. This seems to be at the heart of what we are setting out to achieve. Building social capital, providing opportunities for local participation, developing and sustaining the ongoing and systematic flow of information between the community groups and service providers. In reviewing this, Mary and I identified the need to build partnerships upon strong local foundations – the local community network. The community network is the place where things happen, where people participate, where social capital is held - it must be the central focus of our structural response to community governance.

It was a pleasure to be involved with the launch of the Salisbury Community Area Partnership at the Studio Theatre in Salisbury on 23rd October. My presentation seemed to be received positively – although I have not seen the feedback forms! There was a good turn out on a wet evening and a great deal of enthusiasm in the hall. A key message from the workshops was the importance of working with the existing community groups and partnerships – there is no need to add another layer, merely a more effective mechanism for coordinating and joining up activities to strengthen capacity. This seems to reflect Matthew Taylor's message to the Wiltshire Assembly at Centre Parcs a few weeks ago.

Other issues this week included the discussion of boundary matters in the Pewsey,

Tidworth and Amesbury areas. There was little enthusiasm for changes to existing community areas, with a preference for Area Boards with less than 4 members where this would ensure the preservation of a community area. The IE will be asked to consider this suggestion. The Boundary Committee is expected to report in the next few weeks and that will enable the long running debate about boundaries to be concluded.

That's it for this week, I'm now on leave until 3rd November looking after George during half term – I'll be picking up and responding to emails and starting to work on various aspects of the project report.

To discuss any of the matters set out in this week's briefing paper, please contact:

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