

Minutes

Thursday 20 May 2004 at 2.30pm
The Alamein Suite, City Hall
Malthouse Lane, Salisbury

**THESE MINUTES SHOULD BE KEPT FOR USE BY DISTRICT COUNCILLORS
AT THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

P R E S E N T

District Councillors

Councillor B M Rycroft – Chairman

Councillor F D Bissington – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Mrs P J Bissington, R Britton, I D McLennan, W Moss,
Mrs. M M A Peach and L Randall

Apologies: Councillor P J Leo

County Councillors

Apologies: County Councillor J P Johnson

Parish Representatives

Mrs B Carter (Downton), K Gross (Laverstock), T King (Whiteparish)
and A Webster (Pitton & Farley)

Officers Present

David Bunting (Wiltshire County Council), Lindsey Brown (Partnership Team)
and Andrew Rose (Democratic Services)

MINUTES NOT REQUIRING COUNCIL APPROVAL

245. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

246. PUBLIC QUESTION/STATEMENT TIME

There were none.

247. COUNCILLOR QUESTION/STATEMENT TIME

There were none.

248. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none

249. COMMUNITY AREA PLANS & LOCAL PLAN ACTIVITY

Lindsey Brown gave a Powerpoint presentation to the Committee. During this presentation, the following points were made:

- The Area plan process has moved forward continuously by stages
- In the Southern Area, 134 people have been consulted as part of the People's Voice Panel
- It may appear that the process for finalising the plans in June 2004 is rushed, but in fact, the Community Planning Officers were put in place in March 2003 and have been working steadily towards the June 2004 date since then.
- A Community Questionnaire received a 47% response rate and represented a wide range of people.
- The various local plans will all feed into the Area Plan.
- Councillors and Parish Councils may be aware of possible solutions to problems that the Partnership Team are not aware of, and this information could be vital.
- It is very important to the success of the Area Plan that there is a sense of ownership by the community, Parish Councils and Members.
- The name of the plan must be something identifiable to all contributors and users, so "The Southern Area Plan" may not be a useful name for organisations such as the Primary Care Trust.
- The comments made today will be taken into consideration by the Partnership Team when drawing up the final Community Area Plan for the Southern Area.
- After the Plan is produced, the Southern Area Committee can decide in what ways, and how frequently, it is kept updated and informed.

Following the presentation, the Committee, including the Parish Councillors present, considered each of the nine categories of the Community Plan in turn. The points that arose during the discussions were as follows:

Transport

- Alderbury Parish Council is undertaking, as well as traffic speed measures, ways to reduce the weight of vehicles using the village roads (i.e. HGV's).
- It is important that Wilts and Dorset Bus Company are liaised with in an effort to improve the transport links to towns and villages that will give greater access to services for the local residents.
Lindsey Brown replied that the Strategic Alliance believes this is a crucial issue.
- There is a problem of 4 wheel drive vehicles using tracks and causing damage. This needs to be rectified.
- It is unlikely that Wiltshire County Council will provide any funding towards the Community Transport Scheme, and so, it may be up to Town and Parish Councils to contribute out of their precepts. Otherwise, the whole scheme may not get off the ground.
- Cycle paths are a very good idea, but if they are not kept clear and usable, cyclists will not utilise them and will revert to dangerous roads. The Downton to Salisbury route is just such an example.
- In Downton, private mini-buses can be used as an alternative to public transport and can in fact work out cheaper to use and be more convenient.
- Travel tokens for public transport could be allocated to the local community for distribution for use in specific circumstances.
- In Whiteparish, there is concern about how busy the Alderbury by-pass is and consequently, the length of time it takes for residents to drive into Salisbury. Also, the London Road is very busy, further adding to the problem.
As a consequence of this problem, the village of Alderbury is being used as a rat-run by vehicles, and of even greater concern, by heavy goods vehicles.

- Parish Transport Grants are available and Parish Council's should get together to apply for funding.

Crime and Community Protection

- Alcohol exclusion zones can be quite effective, but Alderbury Parish Council investigated the possibility of implementing one and met opposition from the Police who said it would be unenforceable. There should be much more liaising with the Police in an effort to win their support for such zones.
- In Alderbury, there have been many attempts to set up schemes that will encourage young people not to 'hang about' on the streets, but the reason why there has been a high failure rate for such schemes is staffing. There perhaps needs to be more engagement with parents to encourage them to play a part in staffing these schemes to help make them a success.
- Crime takes up more Parish Council time than anything else, and yet, the Councils are virtually powerless to take action.
- There is a problem that residents do not report petty crimes to the Police because it is believed nothing can be done or that it will have no effect. However, if all incidents were reported, the Police would be aware of a growing problem and be in a position to take action.

The Environment/Countryside and land based issues

- Curbside collections are either underway or are due to commence shortly.
- A concern to communities is that when each Parish is looked at to identify its ratio of open land, privately owned land (that may not be available to residents) is taken into account.
- In Pitton, the community and Parish Council has been very active in setting up flood plans, and indeed, two separate bodies have been formed, the first is the Flood sub-committee of the Parish Council and the other is a residents organisation called Pitton Village Flood Action Group.
- One way to alleviate flooding is for all the various agencies concerned to get together and to communicate.

Housing and the built environment

- The term "affordable housing" requires a clear and precise definition. In Whiteparish, for example, there is an urgent need for local homes for local people at affordable prices, but not built to be filled by people on the Salisbury housing list.
- In order to get a substantial number of affordable homes, it is necessary for there to be many large developments so that 25% of those properties can be developed as "affordable" as per policy guidelines.
- Housing Associations are a very good way to facilitate affordable homes. However, there is some concern over the amount people need to pay when they eventually sell their home and the cost of inflation based price rises on the 50% of the property owned by the Housing Association.
- One issue that needs to be considered is that whilst a property may be deemed affordable today, all it takes is for the property to be extended and/or enhanced so that in future years the value of that house makes it unaffordable to many sections of the local community. This is a problem of planning.
- Villages and towns that do not expand or grow face the problem that their young people will move away to find a place to live that they can afford, so an increase in size of villages is not always a bad thing.

Culture

- There is a major problem with the R2 money scheme in that the options for Parish Councils to spend the money is very limited.
- Downton has a Millennium Green that needs protecting.
- Pitton has a piece of land in the centre of the village that should be listed as a leisure facility.
- Any street activities or festivals in the towns and villages should be listed as they add to the culture of the community.

Social Care and Health

- The Hospital Alternatives Team (as listed in the draft plan) comes under the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and not the Salisbury Health Care Trust (SHCT) although it is based in Salisbury Hospital.
- There is a project being undertaken in Southampton that could be tapped into in relation to asthma
- Within the Western and Northern areas of the district, there are Link schemes available that allow vehicles to be made available for people to have transport to get to hospital. There is also one in Downton.
- Laverstock is without a doctor's surgery. A suitable location and shop is available in the village.

Better Access to Services

There were no comments made.

Education, Skills and Learning

- Vocational training has been discussed at Wiltshire County Council with agreement that more people should undertake such opportunities.
- Replacing temporary school classrooms (often portacabins) with permanently built structures would go a long way to assist schools and the learning environment. The relevant authorities should be encouraged to initiate a programme to do this, otherwise, it is unlikely that this issue will ever be resolved.
- In Laverstock, the schools have, and are, growing so much that they are starting to overcrowd the village and to take up land that was specifically kept clear for visual reasons.
- The building of hundreds of new houses over the next few years is going to put even greater pressure on already overcrowded schools. This issue should be tackled now rather than to wait for the problem to start. By then, it will be too late.

Economy

- Winterslow skateboard park (as listed in this section) would better sit in the Culture section.
- The issue of Youth Workers does not sit comfortably in the economy section.
- Historically, the creation of business zones/parks in towns and villages have been unsuccessful because they attract outside firms who bring their existing workforce with them. There needs to be more effort made to find local jobs for local people.

Following consideration of this matter, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending this special meeting which clearly demonstrated that deferring this matter from the April meeting was a wise decision as it has taken quite a lot of time to get through.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm