

**Feedback from the Southern Wiltshire Area Board Budget Consultation –
Actions on Local Employment and Community Safety**

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To update the Board on the outcome of our consultation on our own budget which commenced at our last meeting on 7 April 2011.
- 1.2. To set out the proposals for action in the areas that featured highly in the consultation and receive feedback on these proposals.
- 1.3. To nominally set aside an amount of money from the Board's budget and delegate authority to the Community Area Manager to spend up to £250 in order to implement activities associated with the projects.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Southern Wiltshire Area Board wanted to initiate projects in the community area which meet local needs and respond to local challenges.
- 2.2. In order to find out what areas it should work on the Board held a consultation exercise at its meeting on 7 April 2011 and also administered an electronic survey asking the same questions to our community area network.
- 2.3. The results are summarised as follows:

In total there were 131 responses.

Q1 Which issues affect the largest number of residents?

Local employment came a clear top (21%) with community safety second (18%). The JSNA issues all scored very low single figures.

Q2 Which issue has the greatest impact on residents' quality of life?

Local employment and community safety came joint top (19% each). Sports and leisure facilities came 2nd (17%). JSNA issues again only scored single figures although alcohol-related issues scored 8%.

Q3 Which issue is likely to become more significant in the future?

Local employment again came top (21%) with climate change, conservation and environment second (15%)

Q4 Which one of these issues would you like to see the Area Board doing something about?

Local employment again top (23%) with climate change, environment and conservation second (15%). There was a batch of “Others” (20% but no single issue emerged as significant).

Q5 Do you agree with the Area Board allocating some of its budget to address one or more of these issues?

Yes 87%; No 13%

Q6 If Yes, how much?

41% said we should allocate 10-20%. (27% said 20-40%).

Overall

A significant majority of respondents feel the Area Board SHOULD take up one of these issues. Local employment emerges very clearly as the topic people would wish to see tackled. The majority of respondents would like to see up to 20% of board funding used in this way.

3. The Next Steps

- 3.1. So far there are 2 strands of work emerging which look to address the 2 main issues that emerged from the consultation. These are Local Employment and Community Safety.
- 3.2. **Local Employment:** The Community Area Manager has met with Wiltshire Council’s Economic Development Manager to look at ways in which the Board can have a positive impact on local employment in Southern Wiltshire. Furthermore, the Chairman and Community Area Manager met with Alan Shaw, Chair, Pitton and Farley Parish Council who is taking on the Economy section of the Southern Wiltshire Community Plan 2010 -15.
- 3.3. Already there are two distinct projects emerging, however both projects entail preliminary consultation with key stakeholders to assess viability:
 1. Work with home-based businesses and small businesses to identify what the Board could do to support their development. Initially we will hold a focus group with small/home based businesses to ascertain requirements.
 2. Work with business parks and industrial estates in the community area to improve the promotion of local job vacancies at a local level. For example,

the provision of a jobs board at each site. Initially we are making contact with businesses on business parks in our patch to discuss the proposal.

- 3.4. Further to this Wiltshire Council's Economic Development Manager identified 2 areas in which the area board could have influence. Of the two listed schemes below there are no clubs in operation in the Southern Wiltshire community area:

Work Clubs - encouraging people who are out of work to share skills and experience

Work Clubs provide people with a place to meet to share experiences, find opportunities, make contacts and get support to help them in their return to work. Job Centre Plus (JCP) will provide practical advice on establishing or supporting a Work Club, and encourage innovation and partnership working to make the most of local resources and expertise. The content of each Work Club will vary according to local needs, but could include:

- providing people with an insight into a particular industry/sector
- visits to workplaces
- employment focused sessions on recruitment methods and interview techniques

JCP advisers will signpost customers to local Work Clubs where they are available.

Enterprise Clubs - encouraging people who are interested in self-employment to share skills and experience

Enterprise Clubs are places where new small businesses can access professional advice and guidance that they might not otherwise be able to afford. JCP are keen to encourage local businesses to get involved in the development and operation of Enterprise Clubs so that unemployed people interested in self-employment can learn from their knowledge and experience. JCP will provide practical advice to those wanting to establish or support Enterprise Clubs and JCP advisers will signpost customers to local Clubs where available.

The content of each Enterprise Club will vary, but could include:

- the opportunity to network with other entrepreneurs and self-employed people
- financial, legal, market and business advice
- office services (including internet access)

- 3.5. **Community Safety:** As a response to Community Safety featuring high in our consultation, the Chairman of the Area Board has requested that the Board hosts a Special Area Board around Community Safety. This has been scheduled for 21 July 2011 at Downton's Trafalgar School.

- 3.6. The purpose of this meeting is to bring together all aspects of Community Safety to ensure that we are making the most of the networks that we have

in our communities. The Board recognises the valuable work that communities undertake. Initiatives like Speedwatch, Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch etc. all help to keep our communities safe.

3.7. The Board also recognises the opportunity for bringing these different types of “watch” schemes closer to form a resource that a community can draw upon to overcome specific community safety issues in their community.

3.8. The special meeting aims to discuss the idea of a “Community Watch” which brings all the different watches under one umbrella, making it easier for communities to respond to the problem at hand and draw upon a pool of residents who are engaged in various community safety initiatives.

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

As per the recommendations

4.2. Legal Implications

There are none.

4.3. Equality and Diversity Implications

There are none.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. That the Board sets aside 10% (£4,103) of its budget to work specifically on projects associated with improving local employment opportunities for its residents. All projects will require approval from the Southern Wiltshire Area Board. Unused funds will be returned to the Community Grant ‘pot’.
2. In order to enable development of this work the Board delegates authority to the Community Area Manager, in consultation with Southern Wiltshire Area Board Councillors, to spend up to £250. All expenditure should be reported to the next Area Board meeting.
3. That the Area Board holds a special meeting on Community Safety on 21 July 2011.

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