

Minutes of a Meeting of the North Warwickshire Area Committee held on 8 June 2005 at the Magistrate's Court Building, Sheepy Road, Atherstone

Present: -

Members of the Committee

Councillors

Ray Sweet (Chair)
Anne Forwood
Peter Fowler
Richard Grant (Vice Chair)
Colin Hayfield
Joan Lea
Brian Moss
Mick Stanley

Officers

Trevor Brice, Deputy County Fire Officer
Dave Clarke, County Treasurer
Susan Gooding, Area Manager, Chief Executive's
Adrian Litvinoff, Area Manager, LHTS
Dave Hewston, Station Officer, NW Area Risk Team
Ian Marriott, Principal Solicitor, Chief Executive's
Ann Mawdsley, Senior Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's
Janet Neale, Partnership and Area Working Team, Education
Alistair Rigby, Community Partnership Officer, Chief Executive's
Joanne Roberts, Administrative Assistant North Warwickshire, Chief Executive's
Kathy Robinson, Community Safety Manager North Warwickshire, Chief Executive's
Martin Stott, Deputy Director, PTES
Chris Williams, Rights of Way Officer (Legal Orders), PTES
Estyn Williams, Manager, Road Safety Unit, PTES

Also in Attendance

Davina Key, Community Development Worker
14 Members of the Public attended.

1. General

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Cllrs Moss and Mick Stanley who were new to the Committee and had replaced Cllrs Forsyth and Smith who had been served the County and Borough for many years.

The Chair also welcomed Kate Wilding and Emma Stanley of the Warwickshire County Council Voice 4M.

(1) Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Anne Forwood declared a personal interest as the County Council appointee on the North Warwickshire CVS.

(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 30 March 2005 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the North Warwickshire Area Committee meeting held on 30 March 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Page 7 – 12. Countywide Bus Shelter Advertisement Agreement

It was noted that PTES were in the process of consulting District and Parish Councils through the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils on awarding a Countywide Bus Shelter Advertisement Agreement.

2. Public Question Time

1. Mr David Studd of Polesworth put the following question to the Committee:
“Why does it appear from the letter from Chris Fossey, that we would need crashes causing fatalities at worst and serious injuries at best before any action is taken regarding this crossroads, when it has been raised a number of times over the years by our parish councilors. When the road safety department have the opportunity to preempt fatalities and injuries with action why does it appear yet again that they want to sit on their hands, and is this yet another indication of neglect by the County Council of the villages under their care?”

The Chair replied that the County Council did not neglect Parish Councillors or any service users. He reported that he had spoken to Mr Norris about this problem and he was waiting for Mr Norris to revert with a date to meet with approximately six residents to discuss the best way to resolve the issue. Cllr Mick Stanley and a representative from PTES would attend the meeting.

The following points were made:

1. The budget for local safety schemes in casualty reduction is £700,000.
2. Hot spots are identified where six or more injury accidents have occurred in the previous three years, with the current

list standing at 56. To consider other areas, there would need to be an increase in budget or the hotspots would have to be ignored.

3. Area Committees received separate budgets of £40,000 for transport related schemes.
 4. The Polesworth Parish Council had pushed for action to be taken at these crossroads and the Parish Council could be approached to part-fund any improvements.
2. A question was received from Mr Pausey about the mobile phone mast near St Edwards School in Coleshill and the effect of this on children at that and other local schools.

The Chair reported that Cllr Fowler had held discussions with the County Education Officer and the County Solicitor and a meeting would be held with parents and Legal Services to look at the best way to progress the issue. It was noted that O2 had carried out an inspection, which had shown the emissions from the mast to be below the recommended safety level guidelines.

3. Reducing Road Casualties in North Warwickshire

The Committee considered the joint report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy and the County Fire Officer looking at the problem of road casualties in Warwickshire and North Warwickshire in particular.

Estyn Williams highlighted the following points:

- i. Countrywide targets had been set by Government and Warwickshire had adopted their target to reduce fatal and serious road casualties by 40% to below 426 by 2010 and expected to meet this target a year early by 2009.
- ii. New “stretching” targets had since been proposed by the Department of Transport. Warwickshire’s target under the new proposals would be to reduce fatal and serious casualties to below 360 by 2010. Discussions had been held within PTES and it was agreed that PTES were unlikely to achieve the stretch target without working in partnership with other departments and agencies and a realistic plan was needed.
- iii. The main focuses in reducing road casualties were education, engineering and enforcement.

Ade Mallaban made the following points from the Fire and Rescue perspective:

- a. The Fire and Rescue Service now had a statutory duty to respond to road traffic accidents.
- b. The Service was working more in partnership with other departments to address issues.
- c. The pilot scheme with PTES was to try to address driver behaviour. The Service was also looking at working with various other partners including the private sector.

During the ensuing discussion the following issues were raised:

1. Statistics were available on drivers in accidents who were drunk. It was suspected that the use of legal and illegal drugs was a problem, but there was no hard evidence.
2. Members welcomed the multi-faceted approach being taken to tackle the problem and to make roads safer for children and users.
3. There was a provision for the Fire and Rescue Service to charge for special service calls. This was rarely taken up and then usually only for occurrences like chemical accidents.

Resolved

That Members note and approve the pilot project proposed to reduce the risk of casualties in North Warwickshire.

4. Introducing the new Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Strategy for 2005-8 and the role of the new Area Community Safety Manager

Kathy Robinson introduced herself to Members and gave a presentation on her role as the new Area Community Safety Manager for North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth and the North Warwickshire Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Strategy for 2005-08.

The following points were highlighted:

1. The Crime and Disorder Act was introduced in 1998 giving Local Authorities the duty to reduce crime and disorder in their own localities with partners such as Police, Fire and Rescue Service, PCTS etc.
2. In October 2004, the Cabinet approved the County Council Strategy to reduce crime and criminality.
3. The County run a number of projects around domestic violence, anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood watch and race equality.
4. Offender management was a new approach aiming to target people committing crime and providing support packages with the aim of reducing criminality.
5. The multi-agency way of working in North Warwickshire was very strong and was showing positive dividends. Over the past year crime in North Warwickshire had reduced by 18%.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- i. Members supported the strategy and the good work being done in this area.
- ii. There was some disillusionment resulting from calls made to police reporting minor crime with no response. Kathy Robinson offered to follow up any specific incidents with the Police and to continue to raise the profile of North Warwickshire with them.
- iii. Kathy Robinson agreed to set up a closed-door session with the Police Commander and Members to discuss problems.
- iv. Young people were often perceived to be a threat but in many cases were victims themselves and the problems with resources, lack of activities and intolerance towards young people needed to be addressed.

Resolved

That the North Warwickshire Area Committee approve the Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Strategy 2005-8.

5. Area Community Learning End of Year Progress Report 2004/05 and the Area Community Learning Plan 2005/08

The Committee considered the report of the Area Community Learning Partnership summarising progress made in the development and production of the North Warwickshire Area Community Learning Plan for 2005/08 as well as reporting on progress made during 2004/05.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were raised:

1. It was difficult to monitor the effectiveness of the Community Learning Plan, but the following did give some indication of success:
 - surveys showed increases in literacy levels
 - parent engagement
 - monitoring the number of calls made to the 2 numbers provided in the publicity promotion campaign.
2. Hard to reach groups were targeted by the agencies working with them.
3. Advice would be sought from the Community Development Forum on how to deal with those groups, which were not being targeted such as 20-30 year olds and 45-54 year-old unemployed men.
4. The Partnership were looking at information guidance, particularly regarding progression routes to assist users.
5. Members agreed that the report showed that progress had been made in tackling underachievement in North Warwickshire and thanked officers for the work that had been done.
6. The targets outlined in the 2005-08 Plan were realistic targets within existing resources and outlined the initial 12-month focus of a three-year plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress made in the development of the Community Learning Strategy and multi-agency Community Learning Plan for North Warwickshire be noted.
- (2) That the Area Committee endorses the multi-agency Community Learning Plan for North Warwickshire 2005/08.
- (3) That the Area Committee agrees that the focus for initiatives to be funded from the Well-being Fund in relation to Lifelong Learning should be the furtherance of the priorities identified in the North Warwickshire Area Community Learning Plan 2005/08.

6. North Warwickshire Area Performance 2004/2005 and Area Business Plan 2005/2006

The Committee considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive outlining performance against actions proposed in the 2004/2005 North Warwickshire Area Business Plan. The report also introduced Members to the new Area Business Plan 2005/2006.

Members noted their appreciation that their previous comments had been incorporated and for the work done on the Area Business Plan. They noted that Plan was a working document.

Resolved

That the North Warwickshire Area Committee

1. note the progress made against milestone targets contained in the 2004/2005 Area Business Plan and
2. agree those actions and milestones contained in the new 2005/2006 North Warwickshire Area Business Plan.

7. North Warwickshire Well-being Fund (2004/05 mid-term reports

The Committee considered the report of the County Solicitor and Chief Executive detailing progress after six months of three Well-being commissions agreed by Members at November 2004 Area Committee.

Alistair Rigby reported that all three projects were doing well, and while there was some slippage with the Area Community Learning project, all three were expected to conclude satisfactorily.

Resolved

That Members:-

- note progress on each Well-being commission for the first six months.
- Acknowledge, where applicable, project slippage and support revision to programme to allow for successful completion of project.

8. North Warwickshire Well-being Fund (2004/05) Snap it Safe Project

The Committee considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive outlining the end of year report detailing progress of the Snap It Safe project, commissioned by the Community Safety Theme Group of the Community Partnership and supported by the Well-being Fund.

Alistair Rigby outlined the following points:

1. An allocation of £20,000 was made in November 2003 by Area Committee to support a joint initiative with North Warwickshire Borough Council and Government Office West Midlands.
2. £10,000 was allocated to the recruitment of the Young Person's Safety Officer from April 2004 – March 2005 on a one year contract.
3. Groups of young people were involved in the project across the Borough to identify and photograph over 140 areas in their communities that concerned them. These were passed on to relevant agencies to action, 26 of which were traffic related and passed to PTES.
4. The five winning projects selected by a consultative panel including two young people were awarded a share of £10,000 from Well-being Funds. Significant progress had been made on each of the projects although none of the money had been spent to date.
5. The North Warwickshire Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership were thanked for making funds available to fund the post of Young Person's Safety Officer for 2005/06 to enable the project to continue.

Members commended the excellent project and agreed that the voices of the young people should be taken on board.

Resolved

That Members

- Note the outcomes of the last 12 months of the project and support proposals to continue the project and post of Young Persons' Safety Officer.
- Maintain support for the five winning projects of the Snap It Safe project which have £10 000 of Well-being funding allocated to them.
- Acknowledge support of PT&ES department in its contribution towards addressing issues raised by Young People through the project.

9. Community Development Worker – Social Inclusion Funding

The Committee considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive informing the Area Committee of the continued progress of the above project which was in its third year of Social Inclusion funding.

Davina Key, Community Development Worker gave a slide presentation to Members of photographs taken of some of the 113 groups she worked with to access £206,000 in funding.

Members thanked Davina for her dedication and excellent work.

Resolved

1. That the Area Committee notes, with pleasure, and supports progress made by the Community Development Worker and the Assistant Community Development Worker during November 2004 – April 2005 of the project as detailed in Appendix A of the Report.
2. To allocate £30,000 from the Social Inclusion budget for year 2005/06 to support both workers in their roles.
3. To nominate a second Area Committee representative, as a replacement for former County Councillor Forsyth to join the Community Development Worker steering group and to notify Susan Gooding of their nomination.

9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings

The Committee agreed the provisional items identified for future meetings with the following inclusions:

14 September 2005
Traffic Schemes within Villages

10. Any Other Items

There were no other items.

11. Reports containing exempt information

The Committee agreed that members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the agenda item mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972".

Members of the Public left the meeting.

12. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of the North Warwickshire Area Committee held on 30 March 2005

The exempt Minutes of the Meeting of the North Warwickshire Area Committee held on 30 March 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

Date of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 20 July 2005 at a venue to be confirmed.

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Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 8.35 p.m.