

Minutes –Unconfirmed
The Central Area Partnership Board
29th September 2011, 10.00 a.m.
Education Centre, Junction Road, Norton Stockton.

Members:

Cllr Jim Beall (Vice Chair, SBC), David Headland (Salvation Army), Jim Fenwick (Community Partnership), Neville Anderson (Trade Union Council), Marilyn Surtees (Elm Tree Community Centre), Cllr M Clark (SBC), Tina Williams (Community Partnership), Verna Pickering (Community Sector), Cllr Nigel Cooke (SBC), Fiona Chesters (Rural Representative), Edna Brown (Over 50s Assembly), Suzanne Fletcher (Voluntary Sector), Anne Howard (Primrose Hill Neighbourhood Watch)

*Members are representing their nominating body.

Advisors:

Sarah Upex (SBC), Kelly Smith (SBC), Tony Beckwith (SBC), Graham Clingan (SBC), James Hadman (SRCGA), Emily Harrison (Cleveland Police – attending for Insp Young), Jill Anderson (SBC)

Observers:

Roy Parker, Karen Merrick (SBC)

Apologies

Paul Thomas (Tilery Residents Association)

Insp Steve Young (Cleveland Police), Gareth Rees (Thorpe Thewles Residents Association), Victoria Cooling (PCT), Kim Staff (SBC), Janet Stubbs (Job Centre Plus), Alex Bain (Parkfield Residents Association)

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<p>1. Welcome and Apologies The Vice Chair, Cllr Jim Beall welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	No
<p>2. Election of Chair of the Partnership The Board agreed that Paul Thomas would continue to Chair the Partnership. His term of office will run for 2 years.</p>	
<p>3. Declarations of Interest Cllr Clark declared an interest in Item 6 as he had submitted the Grangefield On Line application Tina Williams declared an interest in Item 6 as she works for an organisation with a bid into the fund.</p>	No
<p>4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th June 2011. The minutes were agreed.</p>	No
<p>5. Early Intervention Grant (EIG) Consultation – Tony Beckwith, Stockton Borough Council Stockton Borough Council currently spends £7.5M per year providing Early Years Services for families and the 12,000 pre-school children in the Borough. This money is spent on a range of things including delivering a wide programme of activities though the network of 11 Children’s Centres across the Borough. In December 2010 the government announced the introduction of a new grant</p>	

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<p>to Local Authorities called the Early Intervention Grant (EIG). This grant replaced a number of other separate grants which were used to fund a wide range of activities including Early Years Services. This new grant is 25% less than the grants it replaced therefore all services covered by the grant are being identified to look at the best way to cope with the reduction in funding. The consultation looks specifically at the Early Years Service funded from this grant. New ways of working have been identified that will ensure that the services are in place to help our children, and especially the most vulnerable, get a good all-round foundation in their early years. The document contains a set of proposals and 2 key principles to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refocus service on areas of most need - Look at how to deliver the service in the future and work more closely in partnership with local organisations <p>The maps used in the consultation and the table which focuses on those most in need were highlighted, which form the basis of the new approach to target investment.</p> <p>There are a number of consultation methods being used including; a freepost envelope to return the questionnaire, drop in sessions, online, consultation points and an effort will be made to get in touch with families with pre-school children via providing information at Children’s Centres, nurseries, clinics, GP surgeries and schools.</p> <p>The following discussion took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose greater degree of outreach work and effort to find families who are most in need of the services but are not accessing them • There was a discussion about what to do for those families who do not want to come forward and how to get them to fill in questionnaires. It was noted that from some of the special events that have been held, have had a number of families attending who had not used the service previously, however do understand that it is difficult to target these families. • It was discussed that nursery provision should be brought back and that community groups could help inform the process of this and community input was important • There have been 600 returned questionnaires to date, with this figure expected to reach 700 by the end of the consultation • It was suggested that in the future, any documents like the questionnaire could be looked at by a community/residents panel • There was a concern regarding the way that the map was drawn and that it might be confusing to some. It was also noted that some areas look they are deprived when they are not and vice versa. • If an independent organisation takes over a number of family services where is the accountability? This will be done in 2 main ways; firstly via a Stockton Borough Council specification, contract with the provider and through monitoring and secondly children’s centres are subject to inspection by OFSTED. There is also an advisory board for each centre. 	

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<p>Through effective planning and management the 10 Strategic Objectives can be addressed. The network comprises a tiered hierarchy of green corridors and river corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary green infrastructure network • Secondary green infrastructure network • Urban and rural ‘green grids’ <p>The following discussion took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the website enables you to view an interactive map and you can load up different layers of information • It was discussed if proposed housing sites would conflict with green corridors and the Strategy. In the Strategy where you would have housing development and if you did develop, how would you enhance existing green infrastructure as part of that development. It is recognised that green infrastructure needs to be incorporated into development but it is not a block on development • There was a discussion regarding impending legislation and presumption of development • It was noted that one of the housing plans goes over a market garden on Yarm Back Lane, however it was noted that potential sites are not yet decided <p>The Green Infrastructure Strategy is available to view online at www.stockton.gov.uk/greeninfrastructure</p>	
<p>7. Update on Crime Levels in the Central Area – Emily Harrison, Cleveland Police</p> <p>The Board were informed that crime is still reducing on a month on month annual comparison. Violent crime and drugs in Stockton Town Centre compared ward on ward is one of the worst in the country. However a number of factors can be associated with this including transient population, increasing population and families living below the poverty line.</p> <p>A number of key crime areas were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft and Shoplifting - This is a hot spot issue and there is a partnership approach including ‘Shop Watch’ in Stockton Town Centre. • Operation Tranquillity – on Friday and Saturday nights a number of dedicated officers are located outside nightclubs, pizza shops and taxi ranks and this presence has assisted in a reduction in violence and violent activity • Domestic Violence – this is remaining static. Most violence that occurs has witnesses or is captured on CCTV, however domestic violence occurs within the home and is not witnessed. A funding initiative with HARBOUR will work with the top 10 families affected by this to tackle issues through integrated partnership working to reduce repeat calls. 	Noted

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Gold Group is meeting this month to discuss issues and focus resources on target areas • Bike thefts – there is an initiative at Stockton Police Station whereby if you bring in your bike you will receive a free bike lock to help reduce the number of pedal bike thefts. It was discussed that many sheds and garages are left unlocked so need to push communities to take proactive measures to secure items. It was noted that PCSO's go into local schools and make young people aware of the free bike lock scheme and the importance of locking their bikes away. • Metal theft is a nation problem. There is a proposal to parliament to bring in regulation as this is widely a cash in hand industry. There is a metal theft team at Cleveland Police and British Transport Police are heavily involved in terms of cable theft from train lines. The team have worked extensively with scrap metal dealers. There is currently a petition to government to stop cash transactions. If 100,000 sign the petition then it could be raised in Parliament. • Crime in rural areas was discussed. A 'Farm Watch' Scheme which works on a similar basis to the 'Shop Watch' Scheme. To join up to this rural residents need to contact their local Police office. Redmarshall Church has had a big lead theft problem and the person responsible for this has been arrested. <p>The Cleveland Police website has a breakdown on every ward across the borough http://www.cleveland.police.uk/my-neighbourhood/stockton.aspx</p> <p>It was suggested that an update on Crime Levels in the Central Area is programmed into the forward plan for the Board on a regular basis.</p>	<p>SF to forward this petition to SU to circulate.</p> <p>SU to liaise with SY to programme updates.</p>
<p>8. Central Area Communities Fund Update – Kelly Smith, Stockton Borough Council</p> <p>As previously agreed by the Central Area Partnership Board, the remaining Communities Fund allocation of £6,099 was made available to groups within the Central Area to bid into. The funding had a number of requirements such as the activity must increase employability, maximum bid would be no more than £1,000, only one application per organisation, could not fund wages for current or new positions and it had to be spent by 31st March 2012.</p> <p>The sub group received four applications which they appraised and sought clarification where needed. The projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grangefield on Line which will provide the Grange Estates Residents Association with the funding to purchase computer equipment, allowing the association to apply to become a UK On Line Centre. Providing regular training/advice sessions for residents and use this as a springboard for further work with voluntary/statutory organisations to increase local people's employability • Colour Our World which is part of a wider environmental scheme for the Newtown area. The scheme will work with students from Stockton Riverside College and young offenders nearing the end of their custodial sentences to provide winter hanging 	

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<p>baskets for properties in the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lets Make Up is a project for ladies of the BME community in central Stockton. The project will offer this community the opportunity to gain ‘hands on’ experience in beauty therapy by engaging experienced workers/tutors to oversee training and a work placement • The final application is for Bridges gardening service which helps carers of alcohol and drug misuse who struggle to maintain their own gardens due to their caring commitments. The funding will be for fencing and spraying courses for the gardening apprentices. There are still some outstanding queries on the application so no final recommendation has been made. <p>The Board agreed to fund all four of the projects, subject to the outstanding queries from the Bridges project being submitted. The remaining allocation of £2,099 will be given back to the main Communities Fund.</p> <p>MS offered help from Elm Tree to Grangefield as they are a Stockton On Line centre.</p> <p>It was noted that an evaluation of the Communities Fund is underway and Jim Beall, as Chair of the Sub Group, has been asked to be part of this. The final report will be presented to a future meeting of the Central Area Partnership Board.</p>	<p>The Board agreed to fund the four project applications.</p>
<p>9. Community Asset Transfer Update – Sarah Upex, Stockton Borough Council</p> <p>The final Community Asset Transfer Strategy was presented to the Board and details of the consultation process to date was highlighted, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with representatives of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) • Presentations to Area Partnership Boards • Members seminar • Visibility of Strategy on the Council website <p>During the consultation process, it was stressed that the purpose of the Strategy was for the Council to have a strategic approach to asset transfer and to work proactively to ensure that this works for the benefit of the community and the Council. Part of this planned approach was to have a clear process for dealing with ad-hoc approaches from organisations.</p> <p>The consultation has resulted in significant levels of feedback and this has been considered in finalising the Strategy. Many of the comments reinforced the points included in the Strategy and recognised that the Council was being proactive in responding to the Localism agenda and that there are potential benefits to all concerned. There were however some concerns and the Strategy has been revised with the main amendments being:</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document has been restructured with National Framework brought to the beginning • Clarification that the Strategy relates to the Voluntary and Community Sector and not other public bodies • Clarification that the Strategy includes land as well as buildings. This was added with the caveat that where they are required for Council purposes they would not be available • Where a building is currently subject to lease arrangements, including those awaiting renewals: No third party could take ownership or transfer the asset without agreement of the current leaseholder. Given this point, there would be no requirement or benefit of advertising such a property to a wider market for transfer • 3 years for a business plan was considered potentially difficult for some VCS organisations and this has been reduced to 2 years • The need for any prospective transferring organisation to demonstrate robust consultation with users of the building, organisations involved in the management of the building, the wider local community and ward members • Strengthening of governance requirements • The timescale was considered unachievable and this has been amended accordingly <p>The consultation process identified a significant level of interest in support to the VCS to support organisations potentially wishing to explore transfer. The Council itself would not be able offer direct support due to potential conflicts of interest, however a workshop was organised for all interested parties on 26th July 2011, where over 20 organisation participated and were provided with relevant support contacts and networks. There will be a workshop on 27th October 2011 on Commissioning and TUPE and further workshop support on marketing and business planning is being considered to increase the knowledge and expertise in the sector and to support organisations during and asset transfer processes.</p> <p>MS noted that comments were taken on board and were listened to in the consultation and was pleased that the change she suggested is in the final document.</p>	
<p>10. Feedback from other Partnerships from Board Members</p> <p>The thematic template for the Board was circulated and an update provided for the thematic partnerships.</p> <p>Tina Williams provided feedback from the Safer Stockton Partnership. Some of the highlights from the meeting included questions being asked following a Communities Fund report about if the training was good enough and if it had given people enough skills for the job market. There was a crime and disorder report which said that due to the economic climate it was likely that there would be a rise in crime and disorder. Domestic violence is high in deprived areas and the Partnership has asked to start looking at why this is</p>	

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<p>the case. A report on drug users and offending behavior will be presented to a future Safer Stockton Partnership meeting.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding members being able to be represented on sub groups of the Children’s Trust Board. James Hadman informed that SRCGA are currently looking at opportunities for representatives to feed into these sub groups. Tina Williams asked how many children are in the looked after system due to drug and alcohol related issues. Tony Beckwith said that he would take this question back to the Children’s Trust Board and inform us of the response.</p> <p>There will be an election for the Housing & Neighbourhood representative from the Board at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was requested that an item be brought to a future Board meeting on the new Health & Wellbeing arrangements.</p>	<p>SU to program this into the Forward Plan</p>
<p>11. Any Other Business SU informed the Board that Tees Achieve can offer a number of free training courses. If you would like further information, please contact SU.</p> <p>Tees Valley Rural Community Council are holding a Village Voices Event on Rural Broadband and anyone is welcome to attend.</p>	
<p>12. Date of Next Meeting The next meeting of the Central Area Partnership Board will be held on: 27th October 2011.</p>	<p>No</p>