

Minutes –Unconfirmed
The Central Area Partnership Board
24th November 2011, 10.00 a.m.
Education Centre, Junction Road, Norton Stockton.

Members: Paul Thomas (Chair, Tilery Residents Association), Cllr Jim Beall (Vice Chair, SBC), Cllr M Clark (SBC), Edna Brown (Over 50s Assembly), Insp Steve Young (Cleveland Police), Neville Anderson (Trade Union Council), Fiona Chesters (Rural Representative), Jim Fenwick (Community Partnership), Gareth Rees (Thorpe Thewles Residents Association), David Headland (Salvation Army), Marilyn Surtees (Elm Tree Community Centre), Suzanne Fletcher (Voluntary Sector), Alex Bain (Parkfield Residents Association),
 *Members are representing their nominating body.

Advisors: Sarah Upex (SBC), John Tierney (SBC), Julie Thornton (SBC), Anne Burns (New Skills Consulting), Roland Todd (SBC), Tony Raine (SBC)

Observers: Karen Merrick (SBC)

Apologies: Victoria Cooling (PCT), Kim Staff (SBC), Janet Stubbs (Job Centre Plus), Cllr Nigel Cooke (SBC), Jill Anderson (SBC), Verna Pickering (Community Sector), Cllr Woodhead (SBC), James Hadman (SRCGA), Anne Howard (Primrose Hill Neighbourhood Watch), Tina Williams (Community Partnership),

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1. Welcome and Apologies The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	No
2. Declarations of Interest No interests were declared.	No
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th September 2011 & 27th October 2011. It was requested that Nigel Laws provide information on the provision of disabled parking on the plans for Stockton Town Centre. The minutes were agreed.	No
4. Central Area Communities Fund Evaluation – Anne Burns, New Skills Consulting & Roland Todd, Stockton Borough Council In July 2011, Stockton Borough Council commissioned New Skills Consulting to evaluate the Central Area Partnership Employability Projects funded by the Communities Fund. The focus of the Central Area Partnership projects was on residents of the Central Area of Stockton. The key objectives of the evaluation were to examine what real difference the project has made to the individuals using the service to review the case for continued investment in the project in light of evaluation evidence and to suggest recommendations to shape future service delivery. A number of key tasks were undertaken to inform the evaluation including face to face and telephone interviews and a desk-based review of policy drivers influencing the project. <u>Evaluation of the Enhanced Housing Options Service Employment Co-ordinator</u> The Housing Options Service Employment Co-ordinator was a new post to sit alongside the housing and financial advice provided by the Housing Options Service to individuals in housing need. Due to the specific barriers to employment faced by individuals in housing need it was felt that by providing specific support for homeless people or people at risk of becoming homeless, it would add value to the wider programme. The Central Area Partnership therefore awarded funding to deliver the project on a pilot basis for one year. The project has	Noted

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<p>been operating for over 10 months and has supported more than 100 individuals to date. The majority (68%) were male and relatively young with half of the customers being under 30 years old. Although this is less than half of the target outputs, the evaluation suggests the original targets were over-optimistic and could be reduced. The evaluation suggests that performance is solid. The employment co-ordinator has recently left the project. While the Housing Options Service considers the most effective options for filling the post it will delay some activity. Therefore it is likely that all of the project funding will be utilised, but the project timescales will be extended by a few months.</p> <p>In terms of housing need and employment status, the project has primarily worked with the intended target customer group. However, the majority of customers were in less acute housing need rather than at crisis point. This is consistent with wider research which suggests that individuals who are at crisis point have other immediate priorities and may be less likely to engage in employment (and other) support services. While the majority (60%) of customers were living in the Central area when they first received support, a notable proportion were residing outside of the target geographic area. It is understood that the costs of supporting the individuals who lived outside of the target geographic area were largely covered by the Housing Options Service budget rather than the Central Area Partnership resource.</p> <p>42% of individuals had moved into employment at the time of the survey, however approximately 37% of individuals felt that they would have secured employment even without the project. The evaluation suggests that overall the project is providing a good quality service which is valued by customers. The feedback shows that the project has been able to engage with some clients that may not have chosen to access other services. Customers rated the skills, expertise and personal attributes of the employment co-ordinator highly. It will be important for the project to continue to track customers over the longer term to establish what proportion of individuals are able to sustain employment and remain in their homes. In terms of future provision, there would be a continued need to ensure that at the very least customers accessing Housing Options are referred on to the Work Programme providers and other mainstream organisations.</p> <p>The evaluation research identified a number of key lessons with Stockton Council's Housing Options Service, the Central Area Partnership and other partners may wish to consider when delivering the remainder of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has provided valuable and beneficial support for Housing Options customers and has generated a number of positive impacts • The project is contributing to Stockton's Homeless Prevention Strategy objectives and the wider Communities Fund objectives • A comprehensive package of support, although this can make it difficult to attribute impact • Skills, expertise and personal attributes of project staff • The provision of specific support for individuals in housing need has added value to existing employability services • The project has been well targeted in terms of individuals in housing need • Although the project has perhaps not supported those in most acute housing need or who are in housing crisis, this may increase as 	

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<p>the project becomes more established</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescales for impact • The project has helped to build some capacity within the Housing Options Service and advisers understand the importance of training and employment advice • The provision of support in-house is useful although perhaps not essential <p>Based on the interim findings and key lessons learned, the following recommendations have been developed as part of the pilot phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clearly important that individuals in housing need are given the opportunity to access employment support and advice • Recruit a full-time employment co-ordinator on a temporary contract or secondment basis • Recruit a part-time employment co-ordinator on a temporary contract or secondment basis • Procure a specialist provider organisation to deliver the employment support to Housing Options clients • It is important that the individual providing employment advice possesses very similar skills, experience and personal attributes as the previous employment co-ordinator • Consider developing personal action plans for individuals • Outreach and engagement • Recording client information <p>Beyond the pilot phase, the following recommendations have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a referral service to mainstream employment support services • Provide support through a dedicated employment co-ordinator for all Housing Options customers • Provide support through a dedicated employment co-ordinator targeted at specific Housing Options customers. <p><u>Evaluation of the Viva Volunteers Project</u></p> <p>The decision to support this initiative was linked to a strong body of evidence which indicates that volunteering provides an effective vehicle for increasing individual's employability. The aim of the Viva Volunteers initiative was to provide a centralised, cross-sectored volunteer hub or bureau for all residents in Stockton. It was initially piloted within the areas covered by the Central Area Partnership to increase access to volunteering opportunities and to use volunteering as a route to entering the labour market as well as promoting health and well being. The pilot phase of the project commenced in April 2010 and continued until March 2011 when the central Area funding ended. The focus of the project was on the development of meaningful volunteering opportunities which resulted in tangible outcomes for both individuals and organisations. The original project delivery proposals were built around four key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a new accessible, cross-sectored centralised volunteering hub that supports regional and sub regional strategies 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create new, safe, meaningful and structured volunteering opportunities for residents of Stockton • To provide a managed Corporate Social Responsibility programme for businesses within Stockton • To build the capacity of third sector organisations (TSOs) based within Stockton <p>The project has supported a range of locally based charities, as well as local affiliates of national charitable organisations. Although some third sector organisations benefiting from the project were based outside of the Stockton area, they provided support services to a wide range of disadvantaged and/or vulnerable groups within the borough. During the first year of delivery, the project has focused on supporting third sector organisations rather than working with private sector organisations. However, it is understood that Viva has begun to turn its attention to engaging local businesses as part of the project’s sustainable strategy. The project has successfully engaged volunteers from across Stockton and the majority (77%) lived within the Central Area. A higher proportion of individuals registered with the project were female rather than male with the largest proportion aged between 19 and 25 years old. The majority were unemployed when they registered, although one fifth were in full or part time employment. The project appears to have helped encourage individuals who have not previously volunteered to get involved in activities. The project performed particularly well (exceeding outputs) against the output targets for registering volunteers, providing volunteer opportunities and supporting third sector organisations. It performed less well against the targets for registering volunteer opportunities in third sector organisations and matching volunteers into a placement which may suggest ‘demand’ for volunteers is lower than the ‘supply’. Overall the project has been well targeted with more than half of outputs reported being attributed to the Central Area.</p> <p>Overall, the host organisations consulted thought that the support delivered by the project was highly effective and that it met an acknowledged gap in provision in the Stockton area. It had been highly beneficial in providing a cost effective way of increasing the number and range of volunteer referrals. Similarly, the majority of individuals were more than satisfied with the support they received and were matched with a placement that met their skills, experience and interests. The timescales for matching individuals with organisations was considered efficient and the level of support and training volunteers received varied depending upon the organisation they were placed with and the role they performed. Feedback from the third sector organisations who received capacity building support was more mixed. While the support provided by Viva staff was satisfactory, and on the whole, the assistance provided by the private sector companies was considered to be professional, in some instances the support did not meet the needs and expectations of the organisation.</p> <p>The evaluation findings suggest that the project has successfully delivered the core objective of creating a new accessible, centralised volunteering hub. This has made it easier for host organisations to find volunteers and enabled individuals who had not previously volunteered to get involved in activities. The evaluation research has identified a number of key lessons which Viva, the Council and key partners may wish to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A valuable resource and confirmed need for the service 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project provides an effective vehicle for moving people closer to the labour market • The project has engaged unemployed people from the target areas in volunteering activity although there may be scope to refocus targeting to directly support employability policies • Tracking employment outcomes of clients • Capacity building • Careful planning contributed to a well designed project • Delivery has resulted in reduced costs for third sector organisations and volunteers • Achievement of remaining objectives <p>Evaluation evidence suggests that overall the project is meeting a clear need for a volunteer brokerage service within Stockton and is generation some positive impacts. There are, however, a number of recommendations which may want to be considered in shaping future activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop stronger partnership with volunteer centres in Middlesbrough and Redcar • Consider hosting volunteer forums or workshops on specific topics • Consider tracking employment outcomes and progression routes • There may be scope to focus targeting more directly to support employability policies • Consider modifying the application and matching process • Consider refining the application form • Introduce a mini needs assessment stage to define the scope of the work more precisely • Private sector champions or ambassadors • Develop case studies <p><u>Evaluation of the Employability Pathways Project</u></p> <p>Due to specific barriers to employment faced by young people, the Council and partners felt that by providing specific support in the form of work placements for young adults it would add value to the wider programme. The Central Area Partnership awarded funding to deliver the project between April 2010 and March 2011. The key objective of the evaluation was to examine what real difference the project has made to the young people that benefited from the project in terms of their employability and softer impact such as improved confidence and motivation. The overall aim of the project was to prepare young people for the labour market by improving their employability skills and providing them with practical work experience. As an incentive to create quality placements and to reflect the level of management support that would be required to provide work placements, the third sector host organisations were provided with an allowance of between £240 per part-time placement and £1,000 per full-time placement. The young people received a weekly allowance based upon the hours worked. The</p>	

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<p>project achieved all of its target outputs and created:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 part-time placements providing up to 7 hours work experience per week for up to 20 weeks; and - 8 full time placements providing up to 25 hours work experience per week for up to 40 weeks <p>The project also created 2 Peer Mentoring Apprenticeships posts to provide support to the young people during their placements. All of the third sector host organisations which provided work placements for the young people were based within Stockton and delivered youth projects or services. The young people have moved closer to the labour market and 7 individuals who were interviewed have moved into employment and/or education.</p> <p>The evaluation evidence has highlighted a number of lessons which Stockton Council and other partners may wish to consider if they plan to deliver future employment programmes targeted at young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical work experience has improved the employability of young people • Real work experience for young people during a period when employment opportunities were difficult to come by • Real, paid work experience was attractive to young people • The project provided host organisations with valuable staff resource • The combination of work experience and the opportunity to back this up with an accredited qualification was important for the young people • While many young people who benefited from the project did appear to face some disadvantage, some delivery partners did not have a shared understanding of the intended target client group • The lead organisation could perhaps have taken a stronger co-ordination role • Length of placements • Reasonable unit costs. <p>In terms of future options to consider, the evaluation highlights a number of possible options to explore including DWP Innovation Fund and dialogue with Work Programme providers.</p> <p>It was discussed that the projects have made a real difference to organisations and individuals and there are a number of key lessons which will shape future projects. The following questions and discussion points were raised by the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of case studies in the full reports • It was discussed that without this funding would the outcomes from the projects been achieved. It was noted that some aspects might have happened but would have been small scale 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a comment that the volunteers from Viva were well matched. It was also noted that older people in Elm Tree Community Centre benefited from an IT tutor provided by Viva • The Board agreed that this was the very best thing that the Board has done and the work has been really well done. The projects have worked with some of the hardest to reach people and the results are really good. Confidence and self esteem has been a huge step forward for these people. • The Housing Options project has the resources to fund the post for a further 6 months. Matthew, during his time in post developed capacity with others in the Housing Options Team and developed linkages with some of the other referral organisations. • Jim, as Chair of the sub group thanked the people who have been involved and supported the sub group. The projects have left a lasting legacy, especially with Viva which the sub group had the foresight to see that this was a good idea. It was noted that this has been a worthwhile investment. 	
<p>5. Spaces for Play – Tony Raine, Stockton Borough Council</p> <p>Spaces for Play was established from the 2008 Play Builder Fund with £1m for the refurbishment of up to 23 new play spaces. The fund was an opportunity to rethink how young people play. Over the last 3 years of the programme, £1.2m of additional money has been put into the fund and to date there are 21 new or refurbished play areas. There are 10 principles for designing successful play spaces;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bespoke • Well located • Use of natural elements • Wide range of play experience • Access to disabled/ non disabled children • Meet community needs • Different ages to play together • Build opportunities to experience risk and challenge • Sustainable and appropriately maintained • Allow for change and evolution <p>A lot of work and consultation has been done with community groups, parish and town councils, schools and 'friends of' groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the first spaces developed was Bluehall Recreational Ground in association with the residents group and young people from the local school. • Bishopsgarth Park was completed this summer – although the original equipment had been in for sometime. Worked with the residents group and local secondary school. The Playing Out Fund was able to appoint artists and do workshops and designs with the local children and young people. The Urban Design Team produced a plan and incorporated a lot of natural materials and trees. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redbrook – Roseworth – worked with the local community to develop the site. The site has varied pieces of equipment, some of which has had to be temporarily removed due to the grass being planted on the wrong surface. • Wynyard Woodland Park, Thorpe Thewles and Bowesfield Travellers Site were also discussed <p>The following questions and discussion points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorpe Thewles Park has had a positive impact on the community spirit in the village • Redbrook – there has been difficulties with anti social behaviour but Police, Enforcement and the Youth Service team have been quick to respond and have been out to engage with the young people. Insp Young noted that it does help to have early liaison with the Police. He also noted that need to be careful when looking at surfaces so that they cannot be pulled up. Having Police onboard throughout the process is important. • It was discussed that young people ‘hanging around’ in a group are not always causing trouble so it is important to have spaces for association for these 12-16 year olds who want to go somewhere safe and need legitimate space for them to associate and meet their friends. It was noted that there is a funding stream specifically for 12-16 year olds and GIS are looking at informal sports sites e.g. MUGA’s for these young people and work is currently ongoing. It was noted that in the regeneration of Grangefield Park they are looking at a dedicated space for older children in one part of the park. 	
<p>6. Voice Box Update – John Tierney</p> <p>John Tierney informed the Board that his role is changing to a more dedicated health role so he will not be working on Voice Box in the future. Julie Thornton will now be the contact for Voice Box. Julie informed the Board that she intends to increase participation and develop Voice Box to make it more area wide and across central Stockton. Julie has been working with Voice Box already and has helped to develop the shadow Trust Board. From January have a number of training packages to begin with the young people. Julie informed the Board that Matthew Wilson who is a member of Voice Box is now a Youth Member of Parliament (http://www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/government/mps_meps/) and will be invited to a future meeting of the Central Area Partnership Board.</p> <p>The following discussion and questions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are places for 5 young people from each Young person’s Area Partnership Board on the Shadow Youth Trust Board. • There was a query regarding how young people from rural communities are engaged as they are often spread across a number of schools in the Borough. Julie is to look into how young people are elected onto school councils. • A questions was asked in relation to how Voice Box gets cross area representation. This is done by young people accessing the Stockton Borough Council website and developing and creating their own space on this and also via Facebook and Twitter • The Board agreed that there was a very good presentation by the young people from Voice Box at the last Central Area Partnership 	<p>SU to circulate the link to the youth parliament web pages</p> <p>SU to email JT the forward plan for the Board to ensure that Voice Box is able to feed into the meetings.</p>

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<p>Board meeting, however there was a query raised on how feedback mechanisms could be improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a consultation ongoing on Landscape heritage which Voice Box may be interested in. <p>The Board thanked John Tierney for his work in establishing Voice Box and the progress that this has made. From having no engagement with young people we now have engagement although work is ongoing to improve the feedback mechanisms and there is now a chance to re-energise the work. A number of agencies have used the Voice Box as a consultation body through the Central Area Partnership Board being a pilot for this.</p>	<p>SU to send JT the link to the consultation.</p>
<p>7. 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>Housing & Neighbourhood Partnership feedback – there was a discussion in the meeting regarding asylum seekers in the Jomast properties and things are moving forward with this.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>8. Any Other Business</p> <p>On the 30th December, the Voice Box’s Heritage Project will be showcased at Chill Zone.</p> <p>The Board were made aware of the Healthwatch Consultation. Consultation has taken place with young people via Marion Wilson, youth MP and CESC mechanisms.</p> <p>Fiona Chesters informed the Board of some free training taking place on 8th December 2011. Fiona informed the Board that this will be her last meeting as she is leaving Tees Valley Rural Community Council. The Board thanked Fiona for her contribution.</p> <p>There will be a carol service on 19th December 2011, 6pm at Trinity Church and will highlight the new lighting for the church.</p> <p>Insp Young asked the Board what kind of information that they would like to see in his regular updates to the Board, with the next one taking place at the January 2012 meeting. It was discussed that crimes figures, trends, contexts and initiatives would be useful. Insp Young noted that Operation Diamond will go on indefinitely and will see an increase in visual presence. It was noted that the Town Centre ward makes up for 20% of entire crime for the whole district.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>9. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Central Area Partnership Board will be held on: Thursday 26th January 2012, 10am, Stockton Business Centre.</p>	<p>No</p>