

Meriden Parish Appraisal Steering Group

Minutes of meeting held 31 January 2008 at Heart of England Club

Present: Sharon Tuersley, Ian Tuersley, Paul Lee, Mel Lee, Iain Roxburgh, Clive Jones, Michael Dawkins, Julie Hall, Lis Willis, Joanne Hope, Lesley Markham, Kevin Hunt, Lyn Hunt, Angela Edkins

1. Iain welcomed Lesley to the Steering Group and thanked her for her support. The group were particularly pleased to have a representative from the Millison's Wood area of the Parish.

2. **Apologies:** Tessa Roxburgh, Rosie Weaver, Gerry Russell, Jacqui Fisher

3. **Minutes of the last meeting:** With a correction to Dr Camm's name the minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the previous meeting.

4. Update on workshops

- **Methodist Church:** The coffee morning was very successful and Mel provided a brief report on the participants' suggestions. These were very similar themes to the previous workshops.
- **Monday/Wednesday club:** Lis is still to progress
- **Toddler Group:** Lis attended the group and provided a brief report; again the themes were broadly similar.
- **Businesses:** Iain previously circulated a letter intended for all local businesses. Mel did have some presentation style changes and will email these to Iain. He also reported that there was likely to be some funding available from Business Link, approximately £1000, to help with a business-only questionnaire.
- **Packington Estate:** Gerry was not present to report.
- **Sports Clubs:** Mel is having difficulty getting the necessary information but she will continue to pursue it.

5. PCT & "Estates Strategy" and Meriden Surgery

Joanne stated that Meriden and Balsall Common will remain as separate surgeries and they will not be amalgamated under the new 'Estates Strategy'. Joanne confirmed that there had been several minuted discussions with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) which acknowledge that they are in agreement with this.

Joanne then provided a detailed and comprehensive report on the progress with their plans and problems with the Balsall Common practice, including different sites, provision of services and continual development within the PCT. She assured us that once Balsall Common was underway, attention would be focused on Meriden, however she did comment that the Financial Director had been quite pessimistic on the length of time it could take to get further funding. Moreover, we are in competition for funding with areas of the borough that are perceived to be less well off than Meriden. On a positive note, if the surgery could show that their plans would bring services into the community, in line with PCT plans, then they would stand a better chance of getting further funding sooner.

A discussion regarding the questionnaire and its links to health, transport and the housing development followed.

Joanne will forward the Estates Strategy Solihull CT Interim Report to the Steering Group.

Action: Joanne

6. 13 February Open Meeting

The priorities for the meeting include:

- More volunteers – crucial to collect the questionnaires
- Provide an understanding of the questionnaire
- Report to the community on what we've been doing and what we're planning to do.
- Volunteers to pilot the questionnaire on a household basis and over a wide age range.

A discussion about the content of the meeting followed, this included the use of small discussion groups, a Parish map with pins to identify the areas where we need volunteers and how we can ensure that the whole community can feel part of the Village Appraisal and become involved. Several of the group volunteered to help set up the room, make tea etc. at 7pm before the 7:30pm start.

7. Household Questionnaire

The group congratulated Iain on the work he's done so far on the questionnaire.

Iain did reiterate that we need to look carefully at the questionnaire in light of the topics and issues that have been raised at workshops already, are we exploring the right areas etc. He stated that we should avoid adding too many more questions to the survey and Ian T made the point that we need to check that the questions asked provide answers that are useful and can be worked with.

Iain reported on his visit to High Wycombe, he stated that he was impressed with the company and their record with over 20 Village Appraisal questionnaires. He circulated a quote from the company that exceeded our current budget. However, he did state that we could look for further funding from DEFRA, AWM and other such organisations or sponsorships from companies.

Ian T and Iain visited Phil Greenaway at Esos, a Meriden based company who have experience in web based surveys but no specific experience with Village Appraisals. Phil has also provided a quote that amounts to a £3000 sponsorship from the company. However, it will mean that some of the data inputting will need to be completed by the Steering Group and volunteers.

After a lengthy discussion regarding the merits of both companies, web based versus paper questionnaires and some clarification of what each would entail, a vote was taken and Esos was declared the company that we would use for the questionnaire.

8. Appraisal Finance and Budget

This item was not discussed because of time constraints

9. Promotion and Publicity

- Newsletter distribution – thanks to Paul for his mail drop list, the newsletters were distributed at the weekend. Sharon pointed out that access to the Firs was problematic and this should be taken into account when we deliver the questionnaires.
- Displays in the Library and The Centre are going ahead for next week
- Deadline for Meriden Mag is 5 February, time is limited now so just a short piece.
- Council Tax letter – A4 sheet **Action: Rosie & Iain**

10. Iain has previously circulated the correspondence between himself, Paul Watson and Mike Swallow, on a positive note they have confirmed that the prospective developers have been notified of the possible meeting on 19 March 2008. Ian T has been in contact with Caroline Spelman and it was suggested that she be invited to this meeting, Julie will write on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: Julie**

11. Any Other Business

Lis reported that she had been contacted by David Peplow from Community Transport Link. They hire mini buses at very reasonable rates with or without drivers and this may be useful for some of our activities. Iain said that he thought a visit to some Parish Councils who have gone through the

Appraisal process may be a useful exercise.

12. Date and time of next meeting

28 February 2008 at 7:30pm in the Heart of England Club