

## **GREATER AYLESBURY LOCAL AREA FORUM**

### **NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY AT 6.30 PM IN MEZZANINE ROOMS 1 AND 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY**

#### **PRESENT –**

Mary Baldwin (Buckinghamshire County Council) in the Chair;

Bill Chapple (Buckinghamshire County Council/Aylesbury Vale District Council), Chester Jones (Buckinghamshire County Council), Joan Poole (Aylesbury Vale District Council), Steve Kennell (Buckinghamshire County Council/Aylesbury Vale District Council), Diana Amies (AOTRA), Joanna Rose (Weedon Parish Council), Glyn Thomas (Watermead Parish Council), Sue Severn (Watermead Parish Council), Jo Ungar (Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust), Chloe Willetts (Buckinghamshire Council), Jenny Hunt (Stoke Mandeville Parish Council), Andrew Tipping (Stoke Mandeville Parish Council), Steve Patrick (Aylesbury Vale District Council/Aylesbury Town Council), Inspector Bob Gregory (Thames Valley Police), Freda Roberts (Buckinghamshire County Council)

#### **Officers**

Ian Barham, Nigel Brooke (Aylesbury Vale District Council), Anne James, Colin Perrotet, Ann-Marie Davies, Madeleine Howe, Paula Buck, Ian Reed, Freda Ackroyd, Gina Bruce, Karen Adamson, Clive Parker (Buckinghamshire County Council)

#### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from David Thompson, Alan Sherwell, Brian Robson, Keith Gray, Neil Gibson, Keith Turner, Jenny Puddefoot, Jenny Bloom, Steve Lambert and Sue Chapple.

#### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman, Mary Baldwin, welcomed members to the meeting and explained the suggested format for the evening.

#### **PRESENTATION BY STEVE ORCHARD “WHERE WE ARE NOW AND HOW WE GOT HERE”**

Steve Orchard took members through his presentation which focused on the history behind the “Getting Closer to Communities Initiative” and the establishment of the Local Area Forums. Steve gave his view on the potential benefits to residents, members, employees and partners and the opportunities that lie ahead.

## **PRESENTATION BY NIGEL BROOKE “WHAT GOOD MIGHT LOOK LIKE”**

Nigel Brooke’s presentation focused on multi-agency partnership working and democratic engagement between the Parish, Town, District and County Councils. Resident involvement at the local levels is very important in terms of making and influencing decisions and strategy. Consultation was also key. Nigel spoke about the model of engagement and the roles of the Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs), the Greater Aylesbury Local Forum, the Aylesbury Vale Local Strategic Partnership and the Buckinghamshire Strategic Partnership. Nigel also explained the thinking behind Levels 1 and 2.

## **PRESENTATION “WHO ELSE NEEDS TO BE HERE”**

This presentation focused on the importance of partnership working within the Local Area Forum and who should be involved. Useful items and events, to date, were described. The presentation also suggested some things that had not worked so well including early confusion about the role and remit of the Forum; lack of relevant officers attending LAF meetings; poor attendance at earlier meetings; meeting date clashes and also the timing of meetings.

## **PRESENTATION “KEY ISSUES ALREADY IDENTIFIED”**

Anne James and Paula Buck took members through their presentation which outlined issues already identified, the Needs Assessment and issues emanating from the 2007 Residents Survey.

## **WORKSHOP SESSIONS**

An open workshop session was held to explore how the Forum could operate more effectively to develop joint working between 3 tiers of local government in the greater Aylesbury Area and to operate as the link between level 1 community consultation groups including the Neighbourhood Action Groups and the Local Strategic Partnership.

The Forum provided the opportunity for small workshop groups to discuss the key issues for the Greater Aylesbury relating to the following topics

- Education
- Decent & Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Services for Young People
- Services for Older People

Bullet Point Issues from the feedback from the Workshops were :-

## **Education**

- North v south-ferrying of children is an issue causing increasing congestion. Need for improved local schools ie at primary level
- Working with Children's Centres
- Do we need to look at different models for the Upper Schools (Super Head and Collegiate ?)
- Local people should benefit from any schools built
- School staff and need for key worker housing
- Changes in 14-19 education is a big challenge
- Child Care-nursery and early years provision
- Lack of funding to resurrect old excellence. Need to get Heads and Chairmen of Governors together to discuss the best way to move forward.

## **Decent and Affordable Housing**

- What does affordable housing mean? (5 times minimum wage @ £5.41 an hour)
- Older versus new market
- Mixed tenure
- Big business moving out of the area
- What can Council's do about affordable housing etc
- Levels of property

## **Economic Development**

- Concern about Aylesbury becoming a dormitory town
- Attempts being made to make the Town more attractive ie floral displays
- Keeping the identity of Aylesbury the place..local businesses
- Plans for a Centre of Excellence; role of the College
- Empty properties, shops etc
- Larger employers working with the Town Council
- Involvement with the Bucks Economic Partnership

## **Services for Younger People**

- Image problem, can be negative
- Is this fair and right ?
- Do all young people want to engage with activities ?
  - Youth cafes developing, Police Community Support Officers, light touch signposting
  - How best to make use of resources and assets
  - Should we review joint working ? Do agencies sometimes inadvertently get in each other's way ?
  - Is type of consultation the best ?
  - Do we make best use of resources ?
  - Transport outside of school hours is a problem. Do we make best use of facilities ie Dial-A-Ride

- Should venues be made available to other agencies at same or less cost?

### **Services for Older People**

- Common issues...urban versus rural ie transport getting to a bus route in rural areas can be difficult
- Getting a GP's surgery can sometimes be very difficult
- Insufficient budget
- Carers' time = 1 hour 15 minutes a day
- A directory of who does what in terms of local authority functions is necessary, particularly in the light of the advent of the contact centre
- Need to promote a local contact point ie pub, village shop etc

### **FEEDBACK AND PLENARY- IAN BARHAM AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ian Barham led the feedback and plenary session.

As part of the feedback on each of the sessions a number of consistent themes emerged which it was hoped could be considered more fully at future meetings of the forum:-

- Removing Barriers to Partnership Working
  - Future One Stop Shop
  - Forum for Strategic Planning consultation
  - Focus less on ownership – more on quality of services provided
- Celebrating Innovation & Challenging Conventions
  - Schools “Super Head Teachers”
  - Innovative Housing Design
  - Entrepreneur Centre
- Sharing Knowledge
  - Consultation feedback
  - Schools Excellence in Aylesbury
- Maximising Resources
  - Extended Schools programme
  - Transport Services
  - Sharing Buildings
  - Multi Purpose Community Buildings
  - Providing package of support for Key Workers
- Building Communities
  - Inter-generational Working

Developing & Celebrating unique identity of the town  
Developing “community link” services

- Celebrating Success
  - Cycle Aylesbury
  - Youth Cafes
  - Visibility of PCSO's
  - “In Bloom” Initiatives & Awards
  - New Theatre Development

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is now scheduled for Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30 pm at the AVDC Gateway Offices – Steve Patrick (AVDC/ATC Member) to Chair.