

Winsford and Rural East Area Partnership Board

13 January 2010

Present

John Salt (Chair) – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Councillor Brian Clarke – Cheshire West and Chester Council
Emma Coxon – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Jonathan Griffiths – GP, Chair of Vale Royal Practice Based Commissioning Consortia
Barbara Johnson – Job Centre Plus
Mark McLoughlin – Partnerships Inspector, Cheshire Police
Ewan McHenry – Winsford and Rural East Area Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Chris Mitchell - Connexions
Councillor Keith Musgrave – Cheshire West and Chester Council
John Reilly – Principal, Mid-Cheshire College
Graham Roberts – Weaver Vale Housing Trust
John Stephens – Director of Childrens and Young Peoples Services, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Also in attendance

Jill McQuaid – Chair of Wincap
Jane Binyon (Democratic Services)
Councillor Charlie Parkinson (Cheshire West and Chester Council)(Observer)

Apologies –

Alison Armstrong – Cheshire West and Chester Council
Police Inspector Dave Snasdell
Sue Lowe – Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (PCT)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair (John Salt) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked them for attending in the current adverse weather conditions, and thanked Wincap for hosting the event. Partners then introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Agreed: That the minutes of the last meeting, held on 20 October 2009, be approved as a correct record.

NB: The Chairman referred to Minute 9 (Any other Business) and reminded members that Police Inspector Dave Snasdell's invitation was still open for individuals to join him on an evening tour of duty. Any members wishing to do so could contact Inspector Snasdell via email:

david.snasdell@cheshire.pnn.police.uk, or by telephone: 01244 612574.

3. Key Priorities Update

Ewan McHenry submitted progress reports prepared by the lead officers for each of the three Task Groups set up in respect of

- Children and Young People
- Jobs and Enterprise
- Adult Health and Well-being

NB: A copy of these reports is attached to the minutes.

The following items were highlighted, and members were advised that the next steps would be to determine timescales and performance measures and management to set against the actions identified in each report.

(i) Children and Young People

Lead officer – Chris Mitchell: Connexions

The three main achievements to date had been –

- Successful application had been made for funding to deliver a Family Intervention Programme in Winsford.
- Additional Youth Club provision being delivered in Tarporley
- Winsford Gravel Grippers BMX Club was being re-invigorated with support from Councillors and volunteers.

Potential future actions included –

- Early intervention programmes for young people (14-16 year age group) at risk of becoming NEET. There was poor take-up in Winsford (10%) by young people in respect of the YES (formerly Castle project) and efforts would be made to engage a greater percentage of this age group in the project.
- The Princes Trust programme would be starting in Winsford in 2010, and the 16-25 years age group would be targeted.
- Ongoing development of Winsford Learning Zone, due for completion in April 2010

The report highlighted the main risks to be managed, namely the need to tackle teenage pregnancy through a partnership approach. The engagement of all partners was critical to the implementation of delivery pathways, and the support of the APB was sought for this approach.

Chris Mitchell gave an update from Connexions, who have in place interventions and performance measures for 'pre' NEET (14 – 16 year olds) and NEET (16 – 18 year olds) levels in Winsford. Connexions now needed to work with other agencies to ascertain their respective

inputs to this problem, to identify, in simple terms, the current situation locally regarding the 'pre' NEET and NEET age groups and action currently being taken to address this issue, and to determine a series of proposed measures that could be carried out in partnership to make a positive difference to the current situation.

Chris went on to report that the Princes Trust was proving a popular scheme in Winsford, where it was over subscribed. Connexions was in discussion with CWC/LSC regarding the type of provision that was needed by this sector of the local community, eg Princes Trust provision, apprenticeships etc. The Chair acknowledged this as a good example of effective partnership working between Connexions and local partners.

The Chair referred to the local Princes Trust scheme – he considered it important that transport costs should not be a deterrent to any young person wishing to access the scheme.

Action

Chris Mitchell to report on the current situation regarding access and transport costs in respect of the Princes Trust project in Winsford, with a view to the APB considering providing financial support to individuals from its budget.

Action

Chris Mitchell to provide information in a simplified form on the number of NEETs in the target area, together with a proposed series of measures by the Task Group on actions to improve this situation, and this information be provided to elected members for feeding into the Area Working website, Community Forums, and the APB.

(ii) Jobs & Enterprise

Report prepared by lead officer – John Reilly: Mid-Cheshire College

Achievements to date included –

- Discussions were ongoing with partners to ascertain participation in local activity in those wards where 25% of residents were in receipt of benefit.
- Participation in the Winsford Regeneration Planning event in March 2010

It has been identified that there are 4 wards within Winsford & Rural East where 25% of the working population were claiming benefits. It has also been noted that these wards are in close proximity to thriving business parks. Partnership working would continue between Job

Centre Plus, Cheshire West and Chester and managers of the business parks to access employment opportunities at the business parks for people living in these wards. The lack of transport links was considered a barrier to accessing these jobs, and Job Centre Plus would be looking at initiatives to improve these links.

The Chair referred to the Future Jobs Fund, and his wish to see a high percentage target of Winsford residents benefitting from the Fund.

Barbara Johnson explained that this fund was targeted at the 18-24 year age group. A new district manager had recently been appointed who was in the process of compiling information about the figures for each local office.

Action

Cheshire West & Chester, Job Centre Plus and Connexions to work jointly to try and target appointments under Future Jobs Fund to residents of those neighbourhoods in Winsford & Rural East where more than 25% of the working population are unemployed namely :

- **East Winsford L3**
- **Winsford Central L2**
- **West Winsford L2**
- **West Winsford L3**

It was suggested that Gadbrook Park be added to those business parks to be targeted for employment opportunities.

John Reilly submitted an update on Winsford Learning Zone – Mid Cheshire College campus. He outlined the history of the partnership, and thanked the partners, listed below, for their financial commitment to the project:

- North West development Agency (£1.77m)
- Cheshire County Council (£1m)
- Vale Royal Borough Council (Donation of land for the new college)
- Learning & Skills Council (£0.96m)
- University of Chester ((£0.3m)

NB: Mid-Cheshire College had provided balance of the £9.6m project.

He outlined the curriculum focus, which would provide a wide range of courses.

In the 14-19 year age group, Mid-Cheshire College would provide opportunities for more than 450 full-time students, as well as offering courses for 14-16 year old pupils from the Winsford High Schools. The following curriculum areas would be provided:

- Beauty Therapy
- Public Services
- Health & Social care
- ICT
- Uniformed services
- Hairdressing
- Child Care
- Apprenticeships

In the 19 plus age group, the College would offer adults nationally recognised qualifications, eg Access to Higher education programme, Basic Skills, Higher Education and Teacher-training programmes, adult education courses, plus provision for adults with LDD, apprenticeships and Train2Gain programmes.

Construction work on the project was proceeding on schedule and to budget. It was the intention to take over the facility by the end of April 2010. A series of open days and taster events would take place throughout the summer term to raise awareness locally. The new intake would join the College in September 2010.

It was hoped that the new facility would not only stem the loss of young people to South Cheshire College, but would also attract more young people into Winsford.

Councillor Clarke asked about the provision being made for parking.

John Reilly responded that it might be possible to use some land on the opposite side of the A54 for parking and in the event overspill parking is available at the marina. He acknowledged that parking was an issue, with rising demand by students for parking, and the provision of parking facilities would need to be rationalised, despite measures that were already in place to discourage car use and encourage use of public transport. He also pointed out that CWAC were being most helpful in this respect, and in the improvement of the infrastructure and the fringes of the site, to support the new facility.

Councillor Musgrave asked what help was given to students to find work after finishing their courses. John Reilly outlined the careers and vocational advice given, and advised that the destination of every student was monitored and although it could not be guaranteed that every student would find employment in the area of their study some 96% of the college's students had gone to a positive destination in terms of further training, employment or voluntary work, a very high rate compared to the national average.

The Chair asked that the college make every effort to employ Winsford residents wherever possible, and also to make the college a 'healthy living' facility in every possible respect. John Reilly advised that the college would be judged by Oftsted on the latter point, which the college

took very seriously. On the former point, it was suggested that, whilst acknowledging the legislative restrictions, local advertising of certain posts was helpful in ensuring jobs went to local people. John agreed to look at the profile of his staff in this respect.

Action

Barbara Johnson and John Reilly to provide an analysis of the local situation regarding the Future Jobs Fund, including gaps in provision, and proposed measures to support agencies in the task of getting young people into work in the local area, such information and proposed action to be for submission to the Community Forums as well as the APB.

Graham Roberts pointed out that Weaver Vale Housing Trust had 6 placements and he was keen that as many of these as possible were filled by Winsford residents.

(iii) Adult Health and Well-being

Report prepared by lead officer – Jonathan Griffiths: Central & Eastern Cheshire PCT

Actions taken to date included:

- Local theatre production on subject of alcohol consumption and risky behaviour to parents and young people at Verdin and Woodford Lodge High schools
- Travellers Womens Health Day at The Edge, Winsford
- Social marketing campaign undertaken regarding Smoke Free Homes

Potential future actions included:

- Participation in a Salt Cellar Project within take-away outlets in Winsford (a simple idea whereby the size of the salt cellar tops was reduced, thereby reducing the amount of salt consumed)
- Promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption through community allotments and other sustainable initiatives – partners and funding were being sought to develop such initiatives in West Winsford
- Delivery of local services to support those wishing to stop smoking

Ewan McHenry highlighted the need to strengthen the partnership support for this task group, in terms of the provider arms of the health services, to help drive forward the initiatives identified.

Members referred to the issue of fluoridation of water, and the need for the APB to consider such issues, and their wider health implications for the local community.

Members also highlighted the need for greater engagement with the Central and East Cheshire Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Action

The Chairman to take up the issue of the engagement of the PCT at an appropriate level

4. Neighbourhood Management in West Winsford

Report prepared by Paul Hickson –West Winsford Neighbourhood Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Actions taken to date included:

- Local community groups supported and reformed – community groups were now active on all three of the housing estates in West Winsford, and support was being given for them to deliver in those areas
- Development of local youth provision
- Support for a number of local community events
- Development of Neighbourhood Action Plan

Future steps would include:

- Co-location of Neighbourhood Manager at other community venues across West Winsford
- Support of the new Community Engagement Officer to deliver key projects across West Winsford.

Ewan McHenry drew the APBs' attention to two issues:

- The absence of any plan for a second 'booster' place survey for the West Winsford MSOA was a matter of concern. This would have a negative impact on Neighbourhood Management as it was intended that surveys would be used to measure the impact of Neighbourhood Management in the area.
- The co-location of agency staff at community venues was crucial, and would be fundamental to the success of Neighbourhood Management in West Winsford.

Action

The issue of the re-instatement of a booster place survey for West Winsford to be considered at the meeting of the LSP Thematic Leads/APB Chairs' meeting on 18 January 2010.

Graham Roberts highlighted the need to keep the focus of delivering services on the specific area of West Winsford, there being a danger that resources would be ineffective if spread too thinly.

Graham went on to make specific mention of the high level of financial hardship and deprivation in general and fuel poverty specifically on the housing estates concerned, where recent adverse weather had led to a significantly high number of burst water pipes because residents were not able to keep their houses heated, despite the provision of cold weather payments.

Members also acknowledged the need to balance the priority of the APB to target the West Winsford area, as the area of greatest need, whilst also supporting the needs of the rural areas of Winsford and Rural East.

Emma Coxon reported that Cheshire Fire and Rescue would be holding a Safety and Confidence Day on 17 February 2010.

The Chair reported that it was proposed to undertake some 1000 home fire safety checks in the area – he would be holding discussions on how to deliver this initiative on a partnership basis, and would report back to the APB in due course.

Action

Chair to report further to APB on Fire and Rescue Service Home Fire Safety check initiative.

5. Safer and Stronger Communities

In the absence of the lead officer, Police Inspector Dave Snasdell, there was nothing to report.

6. Winsford Community Action Project

Jill McQuaid, Chair of WINCAP (Winsford Community Action Project), together with Mark Baker (Volunteers Manager with 16-25 year-olds) and Rachel Rasthbone (Volunteers Manager with under 16 and over 25 year olds), gave a brief presentation on the activities and achievements of WINCAP since the Community Asset Transfer of the Winsford Centre (The Edge) from the Council in August 2009.

Much of the action had been undertaken through volunteers, there being a strong team co-ordinating numerous and wide-ranging activities for the benefit of the local community.

The Connect V Wincap project worked with young volunteers throughout Winsford, many of whom had gained volunteering qualifications in a range of areas such as first aid, counselling, sport for disabled children, youth work and Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Wincap's Connect and Enterprise Coach projects had organised a number of open days on local housing estates, and the following organisations were acknowledged for funding some of the activities – Muir Housing, Weaver Vale Housing Trust, Riverside Housing Association, Connexions, Co-operative Store, Fire Service and Winsford Town Council.

The following initiatives/events were highlighted –

- BandEdge project for young musicians
- Winsford Festival
- Cleanup of Over estate
- Greenfields Impact Day
- Kick It Out Football Project
- Back to Basics fashion event
- Comic Relief
- Dragons Den event
- ICE Project to keep children and young people engaged in sports activities and away from anti-social behaviour throughout Winsford during the summer holidays
- Cotswold House Gardening Project

Wincap were proud that the Winsford Centre had been chosen by Cheshire Voice/Northern Network of Travelling People and Homespaces as their base and to provide activities and services for the community in Cheshire and beyond, and local Gypsies and travellers frequently used the building.

New projects starting included On Track, working with offenders, and re-opening of the Cyber Café to enable local people to access computers and basic computer training

The Chair thanked Jill for her most interesting and informative presentation, and members showed their appreciation for the sterling work which had been carried out at the Centre to engage with the local community for the provision of local services and facilities.

A Member asked whether there were any plans to extend these excellent initiatives to other areas of Winsford. Jill responded that the volunteer co-ordinators already carried out some work at Wharton Library, and she would like to take the BandEdge project over there, but lack of transport was currently a problem.

The Chair reported that an annual Christmas Carol Service was arranged by the emergency services. He offered to make the necessary connections and arrangements to provide a forum for a young persons' band to perform at the event the following year.

Action

Chair to co-ordinate provision of forum for BandEdge to play at next emergency services Christmas Carol Concert.

7. Any Other Business

Councillor Parkinson raised the point that issues of concern arising from Community Forum meetings, which were considered not to have been dealt with satisfactorily at that level, ought properly to be raised at the APB.

The APB agreed with this principle, and John Stephens advised that it was his role, as Director responsible for this Area, to instigate appropriate action to address situations when the process for area working did not seem to be operating as it should.

Councillor Parkinson went on to report on 3 specific issues raised by local residents (Traffic/highways issues at Woodford Lane, Abbots Way, and Meadow Bank) which he considered had not received a satisfactory response.

Action

Ewan McHenry and John Stephens to refer the specific issues now raised to the appropriate officers at Cheshire West and Chester Council for further consideration and to ascertain whether they were dealt with in accordance with the processes for area working.

8. Duration of Meeting

The meeting began at 9.30 am and ended at 11.10 am.