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CENTRAL AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Forum held on 25 July 2011 at 7.00pm at the Town Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

**Derbyshire Dales
District Council**

Councillor Barrie Tipping (in the Chair)

Councillors Sue Burfoot, Ann Elliott, David Fearn, Lewis Rose, OBE, Geoff Stevens and Jacque Stevens.

David Wheatcroft (Chief Executive), Peter Foley (Director of Community Services), Les Warren (Leisure Officer – Strategy and Development) and Ros Hession (Overview & Community Engagement Officer)

**Derbyshire County
Council**

Cath Walker (Senior Policy Officer) and Paul Jameson (Local Area Forum Liaison Officer)

**Derbyshire Dales
Council for Voluntary
Services**

Jonathan Simcock (Development Worker)

**Derbyshire
Constabulary**

Inspector Bryan Hall and Sergeant Nick Reason

**Derbyshire Police
Authority**

Netta Christie

Members of the Public

Patricia Leake (DDCVS and resident), Colonel D Walton (Lady Fair), A J Mumby, Sheila Burton and Diana Dakin (Matlock Hospital League of Friends) (5 in total)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Barrie Tipping introduced the Members and officers from the participating authorities and welcomed everyone to the Forum.

COMMUNITY FUNDING

Derbyshire Dales District Council

A PowerPoint presentation on Derbyshire Dales District Council's Village Hall and Community Fund grant schemes was running prior to the Forum. Application forms and further details were also available.

Grants were available under the Derbyshire Dales Village Hall grant scheme for:-

- Improved access, toilet and car parking to provide to aid compliance with Disability Discrimination Act
- Energy efficiency measures
- Improvements to facilities to reduce crime and disorder in and around the venue
- Urgent works that might jeopardise efficient running of community centres

Only charitable organisations are eligible to apply for grant aid and the applicant must be able to demonstrate that 60% of the Hall's use is by not for profit making organisations. The relevant parish or town council must be prepared to match 20% of the grant awarded.

£46,450 had been awarded under the Village Hall Grant Scheme since 2009, beneficiaries included:

- Birchover Reading Room
- Shirley Community Space
- Great Longstone Village Hall
- Thorpe Village Hall
- Elton Jubilee Field Community Building
- Tansley Village Hall

Grants were available from the Community Fund grant scheme for:-

- Improving health and education
- Local conservation and improvement projects
- Running Costs incurred in providing locally based services
- Advice and counselling services
- Sport development
- Holiday play schemes

Grants ranged from £200 to £3,000 and £19,061 had been distributed since the scheme was introduced in 2009. Beneficiaries included:-

- Ashbourne Community Transport
- Derbyshire Mental Health Carers
- Greenaway Workshop
- Tansley Film Club
- Clifton Cricket Cub
- Baslow Senior Citizens Club
- Tideswell Community Arts Festival

Derbyshire County Council

Cath Walker introduced the County Council's recently launched Community Action Grant scheme.

Grants (of up to £1,000) were available to groups to run projects that improve life in their local community.

The County Council is inviting charities, community & voluntary groups, sports clubs and social enterprises to apply for funding.

Groups must be formally constituted, however help was available from Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services for those coming together for the first time to help them set up a constituted group.

Community Action Grants cannot be awarded to profit-making organisations or individuals.

The County Council were hoping to fund a wide range of different projects from different types of organisations. Suggested types of projects included:-

- Play or sports equipment
- An event for teenagers
- Set up a community litter picking group
- A local food fair or festival
- An arts or local history project
- A sporting event
- Transport or training
- Setting up a club for carers
- Promoting a community website

A grant may pay for:-

- Buying and hiring equipment
- Hiring a venue
- Travel (such as getting people to an event)
- Training fees
- Materials for your project
- Publicity costs for your project.

Organisations were being encouraged to submit their applications on line which would be considered by a panel consisting of County Council officers and representatives from the voluntary sector. Applications could be made anytime until 14 December 2012 and would be considered approximately every three months. The deadline for the first round was 29 July.

Information packs together with an accompanying letter from Councilor Andrew Lewer, Leader of Derbyshire County Council, were available.

The County Council very much appreciated the involvement of the Council for Voluntary Services across the county and Jonathan Simcock highlighted assistance that could be provided by the Derbyshire Dales CVS.

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues raised as follows:

- In response to a question from Councillor David Fearn as to how much funding would be allocated in each round, Cath reported that approximately £30,000 would be available in each round. Applicants that were unsuccessful may be advised to re-work and re-submit their application to a future round.
- Jonathan Simcock emphasised the role of the Council for Voluntary Services to support voluntary groups which included assistance in applying for grant aid. He also advised that the work of the CVS included promoting other grant schemes and that they also have some schemes of their own such as a health promotion one.
- Sheila Burton queried the eligibility of luncheon clubs which were associated with churches. As long as the clubs are for the community, they would be eligible for grant aid. Cath also signposted Mrs Burton to funding available for luncheon clubs through other schemes under the umbrella of Adult Care – Keith Moakes was the officer contact.

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – SPORTS ACTIVITIES & LEISURE FACILITIES

Les Warren gave a presentation on sports development, summer activities, the successful GP healthy referral scheme and the opening later this summer of the £12 million Arc Leisure Matlock.

The annual leisure services survey had revealed that:-

- Over a quarter of adults in Derbyshire Dales are active for 30 minutes three or more times each week
- Over 73% of adults are satisfied with sports provision in Derbyshire Dales
- 92% of our customers feel we offer value for money
- Nearly 8% of adults volunteer their time regularly for sport in Derbyshire Dales
- 98% of our customers would recommend our service to others

Over £9.5 million of external funding had been brought into Derbyshire Dales for sport and active recreation in the last five years. The Derbyshire Dales had the healthiest population in Derbyshire and produced consistently good results.

Les went on to explain what activities and initiatives are on offer, this included:-

- Holiday Activity Programmes
- Active Health Referrals
- Learn to Swim programme
- Five / 60 (Five fruit and vegetables and 60 minutes of exercise a day to help reduce obesity in children)
- 50+ Activities
- Walking for Health
- Active Lifestyles Programme
- Village Games
- Community sports
- Involvement in National Family Week

In addition, the District Council's leisure facilities are used to host events such as Shrovetide 2011, awards & presentation evenings, wrestling competitions and sports awards.

The presentation concluded with details of the new Arc Leisure Matlock which is to open later this summer. The £12 million leisure centre will house an 8 lane competition standard swimming pool with moveable floor, a sports hall, a 50 station fitness suite, studio (for dance, martial arts, zumba etc) and café. The Centre has already won an award – National Innovation Award for the Most Sustainable Remediation Project.

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues raised as follows:

- In response to a question from Diana Dakin, Les explained that the GP Referral Scheme is funded by NHS Derbyshire. The schemes run for 12 weeks and the participants' levels of fitness are tested at the beginning and end of the scheme with an aim to improve overall fitness through exercise.
- Councillor Burfoot made a plea for new outdoor leisure facilities / play equipment which she felt had declined around the Dimple area. Whilst she welcomed the opening of Arc, there was also a need for outdoor facilities for children of all ages. She had received a letter, which she also believed had been sent to Councillor Rose, from a ten year old girl making the same plea.
- In response to a question from Sheila Burton, Les advised that Arc was expected to open this summer and that the District Council hoped to be able to announce an opening date in the next few weeks.
- Colonel Walton asked how membership of clubs could be increased through publicity and if the Council's Sports Club Directory was such an avenue? Les would not wish to see the Directory expanded too much and become unwieldy, however, he was happy to explore ways of promoting clubs.
- Mr Mumby asked if Arc would be self funding. David Wheatcroft explained that the budget for Arc was equivalent to those for Matlock Lido and the former Sherwood Hall centre. Therefore, Arc would attract no additional costs and it was hoped that income may be increased through marketing.
- Mr Mumby went on to ask what percentage of users of Arc would pay for use of the facilities. David Wheatcroft explained that the District Council has a concession scheme so for example children or senior citizens may be granted a reduced rate. Peter Foley added that very few users would have free use.

QUESTION TIME

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor to representatives from the participating authorities and issues were raised as follows:

Traffic roundabouts in Matlock and Hall Leys Park

- Mr Mumby complimented the District Council on the attractive planting out of the roundabout near Sainsburys.
- Councillor Stevens thanked Mr Mumby for his compliments and assured that they would be passed on to the staff concerned. He also added that the District Council

was in receipt of sponsorship for the island and were actively seeking sponsorship for other areas.

- Councillor Tipping was pleased to advise Mr Mumby of the announcement that the Hall Leys Park had received the Green Flag Award for the fourth consecutive year.
- Mr Mumby went on to express concerns that the blue & white arrow signs around the Crown Square island may be too big? David Wheatcroft advised that Derbyshire County Council would have dictated the sign specification.

Taxi Rank, Firs Parade, Matlock

- Colonel Walton asked what progress was being made to remove the obsolete and unused taxi rank on Firs Parade in Matlock – an issue that had been ongoing for two years. Councillors Tipping and Stevens advised that the Town and District Councils have approved removal of the rank and the matter now lays with Derbyshire County Council to progress.

Attracting coaches to Matlock

- Colonel Walton recalled some 40 or 50 years ago, a lot of coaches being attracted to Matlock. He felt that Matlock was not now considered as a coach friendly town and asked if signs to encourage coaches could be investigated. Councillor Tipping advised that this was something that could certainly be looked at.

Matlock Market

- In response to a plea, by Colonel Walton, for improvements to Matlock market to be looked at, Councillor Tipping advised that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were currently undertaking a Review of the District Council's Stall Markets.

Glass recycling

- Sheila Burton urged the District Council to initiative a scheme whereby glass bottle are returned to supermarkets. This was an issue that had been raised at Matlock Town Council and, whilst she appreciated, something that probably required a national impetus, something had to start somewhere. Councillor Rose undertook to ask the Local Government Association if they knew of any such schemes.

Housing issues

- Mr Mumby asked if Matlock had achieved its targets for affordable housing and shared ownership properties. The simple answer was 'no' and Mr Wheatcroft advised that targets were rarely met as demand outweighs supply. The District Council has applied for 284 to be built across the district, but is unlikely to be unsuccessful in its bid. The District Council is currently talking to private landlords to see if they are still prepared to invest in properties in the Derbyshire Dales. Mr Wheatcroft went on to advise that properties cost about 25% more to build in the Dales, hence less houses are build with available funding.
- Mr Mumby further went on to discuss flats on the A6 Matlock. He understood that only one had been sold under the shared ownership scheme and that 14 remained empty. The asking price of £149,950 he felt to be too high. He understood that they were now to be let as social housing and estimated a loss of £1 million and asked who would stand the cost? Mr Wheatcroft explained that the cost would be borne by Dales Housing who were in quite a strong position as they had high value assets which could be used to borrow against.
- Peter Foley added that there needed to be a balance between shared ownership and rented accommodation.

- Mr Wheatcroft advised that renting a property may be the best option for some, particularly in the current economic climate when it can be difficult or impossible to borrow from building societies and banks.
- Mr Mumby suggested that some people who can afford to buy properties, may chose to rent all their life hence reducing the number of properties available to rent for those most in need.
- Mr Wheatcroft replied that the government had recognised this and one of the proposals in the Localism Bill is that tenancy may be structured and a time limit imposed for tenants to find a property to purchase.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Tipping thanked everyone for their participation and highlighted that subsequent Central Forums would be held on 28 November 2011 at Arc Leisure, Matlock and 26 March 2012.

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm