

Social & Community Development Sub-Group

Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership

24 March 2004

2.00pm – 4.00pm

Council Chamber, Retford Town Hall

Attending:

Pauline Elliott (Chair)	Bassetlaw District Council
Lisa Birch	Longhurst Housing Association
Bernard Coleman	Bassetlaw District Council
Jackie Collins	Sure Start West Bassetlaw
Dennis Creaghan	Hallam Housing Society Ltd.
Alison Gimingham	National Trust
Jo Lindley	Bassetlaw District Council
Vicky Rawson	Focus on Young People in Bassetlaw
Sharon Stoltz	Bassetlaw PCT
Cllr Carolyn Troop	Bassetlaw District Council

13 Apologies

Hamish Adams, NCHA Ltd; Gillian Blenkinsop, BDC; Steve Ellis, South Yorkshire Housing Association; Stephen Saddington, Bassetlaw CAB; Andrew Tatham, BCVS; David Timcke, National Trust; Bob Whatley, BDC; Elizabeth Whittles, BDC.

14 Introduction and Welcome

Pauline Elliott welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that everyone introduce themselves for the benefit of new members and guests.

15 Minutes of last meeting held 21 January 2004

Minute 3

Jo Lindley noted to members present that the figure relating to monies received by the Arts Council in Nottinghamshire was incorrect. The third paragraph within minute 3 should read as follows:

In 2003/04, Nottinghamshire has received £500,000 in funding support to a number of regularly funded organisations. In addition through the new partnership agreement system with local authorities for 2004-2006 there will be £640,000 extra to work with the Local Authorities in the East Midlands, which includes a specific allocation for North Nottinghamshire. This additional funding is to be spent under 4 priority themes:

- The Creative Economy
- Vital Neighbourhoods
- Healthy Communities
- Engaging Young People

The favoured theme for North Notts is 'Engaging Young People'. This information would be passed on to the Youth Assembly and relevant partners.

In relation to the comments at the last meeting regarding the integration of Arts across the Sub-Groups, Sharon Stoltz informed the group that the PCT and Bassetlaw Hospital had a Joint Falls Prevention Strategy. The key aims of the Strategy were falls prevention and rehabilitation, and they were already working on projects similar to the dance project in Ashfield, within the Bassetlaw area.

She also reported that she had been contacted by a Manton GP regarding the Neighbourhood Pathfinder, and that they wished to be more engaged with the developments that would be taking place in Manton through the Pathfinder.

Minute 10

Sharon noted to the Group that the event Vicky Rawson was been working on through Focus on Young People in Bassetlaw, was actually being organised on behalf of the Health Sub-Group, and was also sponsored by the Sub-Group.

16 Presentation by Bernard Coleman (Head of Housing & Technical Services) on the Development of an ALMO

Bernard Coleman gave a verbal presentation to members present on the current situation for Council Housing within the District, and provided details on the potential development of an ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation) for the area. He also circulated a selection of publications which provided information on the proposed transfer, and an explanation of alternatives available for current council tenants. The funding which would be levered in through an ALMO would enable the necessary redevelopment work to be carried out to ensure all homes meet the Decent Homes criteria by 2010.

Currently the Council acts as a Landlord and sets all related rates, for tenants who have the security of being a council tenant. However, if the bid for an ALMO is successful the Board of the ALMO would be the decision making body, not the Council.

The ALMO would operate a ballot to elect tenant representatives every 3 years, and this would involve a full ballot of all tenants. All Board members will be given skills training, and assigned a job title/ person specification. As part of this remuneration for all Board members including childcare costs and replacement of lost earnings for attending ALMO meetings/ functions would need to be considered.

Dennis Creaghan representing Hallam Housing Society Ltd., agreed the key purpose behind changing over to an ALMO was to ensure we can drive up standards of Bassetlaw Housing, and noted that the Housing Society gave full support for the ALMO bid.

Bernard confirmed that there would essentially be minimal disruption to the actual structure of the Housing Service within the Council as the operational structure had already changed as the result of a recent Best Value Review of the Service. The Service has also recently achieved ISO 9001 accreditation

which is a recognised customer service standard, and he confirmed that during the following week the service would begin working towards Charter Mark status. In addition the service already consults with 'working groups' of tenants on current operating standards and potential structures/improvements to the housing service.

If the bid is successful then the section of Housing Services which would transfer to form the ALMO would undergo a re-branding exercise. A company name has already been registered in preparation for the transfer to an ALMO, as it must operate completely separate from the Council.

Sharon Stoltz queried what would happen with housing adaptations as the Council are responsible for grants at the moment. Bernard confirmed that the ALMO would be responsible for repairs. He informed members that Bassetlaw DC allocate £213,000 to adaptations, with extra money being received from Central Government. The Council currently receives no additional funding from NCC or the local PCT/ NHS. The Council has 10 properties to prevent bed blockages as part of an agreement with local health providers, however only one has been used to date. The Council provides 24 warden-care to designated properties and was the first authority to sign a protocol with the NHS and NCC as to the service provision expected.

Lisa Birch representing Longhurst Housing Association questioned what percentage of council housing within Bassetlaw currently failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. Bernard confirmed approximately 55% failed the criteria.

Jackie Collins queried the effectiveness of the tenants meetings being held and whether they were representative of general opinion. She noted that in her area of work – Carlton/ Langold the meetings were in the evening leading to feedback from mainly elderly people. Bernard confirmed that they were ensuring that meetings were held in the morning and afternoon for that reason. In addition a postal/ internet/ phone ballot will be held to ensure as many tenants as possible respond. This will be supplemented further by a survey of 500 houses to assess if the information regarding the ALMO is getting across to residents.

Dennis Creaghan from Hallam Housing Society Ltd. asked whether Bassetlaw was being considered against any other 'standards' other than the Decent Homes criteria. Bernard noted that they were working towards a Decent Homes 'Plus' standard, ensuring that all improvements repairs were in line with today's expectations and demands. An example would be the number of plug sockets in a kitchen and space to allow for a number of appliances. Key aims of the ALMO will be to ensure:

- energy efficiency;
- double-glazed units;
- high security doors;
- loft insulation;
- wall insulation; and

modernisation of the majority of current heating systems, all of which should lead to a SAP energy rating within the 80s.

Any queries regarding the ALMO should be directed to Bernard at the council offices, tel: 01909 533433. Alternatively tenants can also contact LIBRA

HOUSING who are operating as the Independent Tenant Advisor, tel: 0800 085 0026.

17 **Presentation by Alison Gimingham on the National Trust 'How an organisation like the National Trust can contribute to the local arts and culture agenda'.**

Alison gave a PowerPoint presentation to the members present and provided a detailed account of the current focus of the National Trust (NT), highlighting work being carried out at the present. The NT has recently undergone a restructure which has led to Alison's current role within the newly formed Community Learning & Volunteering unit. In addition the NT now have a Policy Officer for each region facilitating more involvement in the local community and ensuring site developments are in keeping with local needs and issues.

The East Midlands Region has four times more members than some of the top football clubs have season tickets holders, proving the continued popularity and interest of NT properties. Within Bassetlaw there are 2 sites:

- Mr Straw's House – this site is used predominantly by groups for adults and children with learning difficulties and is also a good educational site for small children. The site has strong links with Worksop Library.
- Clumber Park – this site attracts over 1 million visitors per year. Originally the site of a stately home and once this was demolished by the family, the Park was seen as the 'People's Park', a theme which the NT are keen to maintain. The Park is famed for its summer concerts and Clumber Show.

Within the District the NT has links with Worksop Priory Primary School, and has recently made links with Bassetlaw District Youth Assembly to consult with local young people on the potential for developments at Clumber Park. The NT would like to make more of the link between the Park and Bassetlaw and are assessing the feasibility of setting up a study to look at the image of Clumber Park and the potential of upgrading the facilities. At a local level the NT would like to get more involved in health provision, and makes links with local GPs and walking schemes for exercise referrals. This provides a variety of cross-cutting links to the issues addressed by BLSP Sub-Groups, including:

- Obesity
- Cardiac health
- Mental health
- Transport alternatives/ access to green space.
- Promotion of Sport – Cycle Hire/ Walking/ Cricket Club/ Orienteering.

However, one of the key issues for the development of Clumber Park is access via public transport links.

Across the country the NT run a variety of history interpretation activities through arts, poetry, and crafts courses for adults, in addition to portrait classes. They can also now provide 'live' interpretation of history through their new site 'The Workhouse' at Southwell. The site looks at life for the poor and the work they carried out during Industrialisation. In particular they are currently linking this new site to the activities carried out by E2E (Entry to Employment). Projects are also under development to use the site as a

resource with the local travellers community, and to encourage use of the site by businesses for team building events and local voluntary work.

A recent success for NT through community-arts is the formation of a choir in the Grantham area 'The National Trust Out of Silence Choir'. They have produced their own CD, and were involved in a recent project at Clumber Park. The choir have also become involved in educational projects within Bassetlaw and worked with Ordsall Hall School during April 2003 to produce songs with some of their GCSE students. As discussed at the last meeting, Alison noted that the NT would be keen to get a local Arts Officer and would fully support any bid for funding.

The NT have recently worked with 'The Big Issue', the magazine published by the homeless, looking at citizenship and the comparisons between rights today and in the past.

They work with many theatre groups and have recently formed their own graduate theatre group in partnership with Derby University called 'Stepping Stones'.

The NT are currently working to expand the involvement of 13-25 year olds in NT activities. An event was held at Portland School through a partnership project with Connexions, and the drama group 'Stepping Stones' are touring local schools with a variety of drama productions including discussion workshops. A number of the Sheffield schools are involved in arts projects and through the Sheffield Children's Festival, Hardwick Hall now displays a quilt produced by children attending the courses. Alison noted to the group that there was also a new funding stream from the Heritage Lottery Fund which is relatively easy to access, called Young Roots. Through the work with Bassetlaw District Youth Assembly, there is the potential to develop a project through Young Roots which could assist in the redevelopment of Clumber Park.

Alison thanked the group for their time and gave contact details for further information.

18 Update on Manton Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder

Pauline Elliott gave a brief update on the current situation with the Pathfinder. She reiterated that the Pathfinder would have funding for a total of 7 years, with this year being an administration year. Key milestones to complete this year are the formation of a Management Board, and production and ratification of a Delivery Plan.

Lisa Birch attending on behalf of Longhurst Housing Association commented that she wasn't aware that we had been successful with the bid. Pauline noted that it had been widely published in local press and information circulated to partners, however she would ensure that the Housing Association would be contacted following the meeting to involve them in current developments. In particular Lisa felt it was vital that their Warden for the Manton area was involved.

Pauline also brought it to the groups' attention that a Sub-Group had been set up to look at employing staff to support the implementation and delivery of the Pathfinder. It had been agreed that the Co-ordinator would be a Council

employee, but would essentially be working on behalf of the Management Board.

An Easter Fun Day had been planned for 3 April, and would be used as a Community Engagement Event. One activity that would enable involvement of young people was a 'Big Brother' style video area where they could put their views across.

19 A.O.B.

19(a) Feedback from LSP Board meeting January 2004

Minutes of the last Board meeting were circulated to members for information. Pauline Elliott gave a brief summary of items discussed for members present. A copy will be circulated with the minutes for those not in attendance.

19(b) Update on Bassetlaw District Youth Assembly

Jo Lindley highlighted the update circulated with the agenda and gave a brief verbal update as to the current projects members were working on. She confirmed that they were involved in the organisation of the event being planned by Vicky Rawson for the 28th April.

19(c) Debt Advice Update

Jo Lindley gave a brief summary of a recent meeting held to discuss further progress of this area of work.

Members also noted the following projects/ activities currently taking place:

- Jackie Collins informed the group of Sarah Lloyd an advice worker based in Mansfield with the organisation Shelter, providing advice for their clients. She operates within the District.
- Lisa Birch noted that Longhurst have their own database for staff to enable clients to be signposted to the most appropriate help/advice.
- The magazine 'Touch Base' was in circulation nationwide and provided contact information and advice from numerous national debt advice companies.

Members present agreed this was a key issue for the Sub-Group to address in light of recent press coverage, and it was paramount to address all aspects of debt including credit cards.

19(d) Update on Focus on Young People in Bassetlaw Event (28th April 2004)

Vicky gave members a brief update on the plans for the event. There were currently 62 organisations signed up to attend across a variety of areas to provide and advice and information, including the following:

Connexions	PCT
Bassetlaw District Council	Focus on Young People in Bassetlaw
Housing Agencies	Bassetlaw Studio Project
NCC Youth Service	Education/Training
Health Providers	Social and Cultural Groups
Miners Welfare Band	BMX Track
Angling Association	Trampoline Club
FREED – an agency providing food education And many more!	

The event will open at 12.30pm and the first session will be for service providers and those working with young people. This will run until 2pm and will be a 'soap box' session for people to talk openly about concerns/ daily work. The event will then be open to the public from 2pm-7pm. Vicky noted that schools could not bring groups during the day but would be promoting the event within schools. 10,000 leaflets would be distributed locally to promote the event. Tracey Powell from the Guardian will be running an article the Friday before the event and information will be included in the 'What's On' Guide. Trax FM and Radio Sheffield are involved and will be there on the day.

20 Dates and times of future meetings

12 May 2004, 2pm – 4pm, Manton Community Centre, Shrewsbury Road

21 July 2004, 2pm – 4pm, BCVS Meeting Room, Dukeries Centre, Worksop

22 September 2004, 2pm – 4pm, Assembly Room, Worksop Town Hall

24 November 2004, 2pm – 4pm, Council Chamber, Retford Town Hall