

**Social & Community Development Sub-Group**

**22 March 2006**

**2pm – 4pm**

**Retford Leisure Centre**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:**

Steve Brown (Vice-Chair)	Bassetlaw District Council
Jonathan Dawson	NRCC
Richard Edwards	Manton Neighbourhood Manager
Kath Hobart	Tuxford MOI
Ann Jones	NN College (representing Ann Vallance)
Frank Raspin	NCC Community Development
Chris Salter	Age Concern
Liz Whittles	Bassetlaw District Council
Jo Wilson	Bassetlaw District Council

**1. Introductions and Welcome**

SB welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained that he would be Chairing on behalf of Pauline Elliott as she had been unable to attend due to urgent Council business. Members introduced themselves.

**2. Apologies**

Bernard Coleman, A1 Housing Bassetlaw Ltd.; Jackie Collins, Sure Start West Bassetlaw; Pauline Elliott (Chair), BDC; Annie Fletcher, Centre Place; Alison Gimingham; National Trust; Janice Hunt, Bassetlaw PCT; Vicky Rawson, FOYPIB; Malcolm Robson, BDC; Stephen Saddington, Bassetlaw CAB; Nicola Simpson, NCC; Kay Sutton, NN CLSP; Bob Whatley, BDC; Tony Wright, BDC.

**3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**Matters Arising**

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to Bill Brown to thank him for his contribution to the Sub-Group.

SB agreed with RE's comment at the end of section 5 regarding how we consult with our community.

JD noted that the CAB is producing a bid for funding for debt advice workers.

4. **Progress on Key projects in 2005-2006 Work Plan**

Access

JW presented Malcolm Robson's report in his absence, and showed members examples that MR had found from other authorities.

Members agreed that the format of any booklet/ website should be led by the target audience.

Members agreed that a presentation from the company DisabledGo would be useful – potentially at the May meeting.

JD noted that the Destination Trentside group have a website, and asked similar information for that area. They include a facilities guide which incorporates what can be done in the venue i.e. sports activities.

CS suggested that when completed we link to the Link Age website.

RE felt that people's literacy skills need to be taken in to account, and language skills for those who live in the District and do not have English as their main language.

Members agreed that the Ipswich Booklet was a good example.

**Action: JW to pass comments back to Malcolm for action.**

Arts

Members involved in this piece of work had been unable to attend. However, an update report had been produced for circulation with the minutes.

**Action: JW to circulate update.**

5. **LAA Update**

The Sub-Group discussed the final version of the LAA and how the priorities could be delivered locally.

Outcomes 2 and 3 in the Safer and Stronger Communities Section have the most relevance to the Sub-Group.

Outcome 2

For 2.1 and 2.2 where a survey is required to monitor progress it was agreed to go back to previous survey results and attempt to map by postcode.

Members agreed to adopt the LAA outcomes within the new Strategy.

RE noted that the Neighbourhood Advisory Group (covering NR areas and Pathfinders) would be part of the LAA Structure, and a strong voice for NRF areas. He noted the dilemma as this work needed to be neighbourhood focussed but there is also a regional agenda as GO's oversee neighbourhood renewal. He reported that the Pathfinder had reached the end of its first 12mths and was continuing to develop further. The aim was to become a centre of excellence for engagement. He felt there were three key things to consider:

(1) Engagement/ Consultation/ Participation – need a common framework

- (2) All organisations need to engage with their customers – however this leads to a danger of overloading communities with consultation, and disengaging the few who are concerned.
- (3) As part of the LAA the two Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders will need to put in their own Targets/ Delivery Plans

In relation to 2.5, JD queried how people could tender to LSP for support for VCS delivery.

SB responded and noted that Community Engagement was one of the top three priorities for the Council, and previously identified as a weakness through CPA 2003. BDC completed a Best Value Review in 2005, and Scrutiny Select Panel had also reviewed engagement in rural areas. The Panel had looked at Local Area Forums, but this had not been well supported, as North East Bassetlaw Forum was the only one working well in the District. Part of the review had also involved looking at budgets and how they are aligned to Community Engagement. The Council has considered whether BDC money could be better spent when looking at larger community groups who may provide services. SB noted that as a group we needed to be smarter about mapping services/ groups and how we could pool resources.

CS noted that government is pushing the use of VCS but that there is little income within these organisations to support this.

RE noted that MCA are to have a protocol with A1 Housing Bassetlaw Ltd. to reduce duplication in the number of agencies engaging with residents. A1 Housing will have to engage via MCA.

### Outcome 3

In relation to 3.2, JD felt that there needed to be more feedback/ engagement to Parish Plans, and that these were an ideal measure for this area. He also noted that Village Design Statements could be incorporated as supplementary planning guidance.

## **6. Rural Excellence Mentoring Scheme**

SB explained more about the scheme, and the principles of sharing best practice from Beacon and Pathfinder Councils. Our lead contact is Peter Simpson from Hambleton DC. The two issues that will be the focus of the project are Young People and Transport/ Access. The program will run for a year and the aim is to produce tangible outcomes. The Council are currently looking for partners to be involved with the project. The first meeting will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> April to start the scoping of potential work areas.

## **7. Informal discussion on involvement of community groups/ neighbourhood forums/ Parish Councils – How can we improve this now and within the new Strategy?**

RE asked how MCA could contribute to the Active Citizenship Agenda.

It was agreed that the focus of 'Stronger Communities' provided a clearer steer for the group to take forward in the new Community Strategy from April 2007. It was agreed that greater knowledge was needed about how communities are currently linked in to planning and decision making to assess how this could be improved by the new Strategy. Part of this will also involve looking at the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) – for which a report

is needed from BCVS who are charged with delivering this for the BLSP, and how Community groups fit within the BLSP Structure.

**Action: (1) Source an update on the CEN for the next meeting from BCVS.  
(2) SB to meet with BDC officers to look at mapping of current engagement/ community events.**

**8. Update for the next Board Meeting – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

This is to include:

- an update on the Key Projects,
- acknowledgement of the consultation exercises the group has contributed to,
- a report on the Youth Assembly event in February.

**9. A.O.B.**

UNITY Strategy

Bassetlaw District Council is producing a new strategy that combines the existing Rural and Social Inclusion Strategies. It will have a new Community Cohesion strand and a Sustainable Communities Strand. It will align to the three new priorities in BDC's Strategic Plan. It will be brought to this group for consultation.

Community Cohesion

BDC is a partner in the Nottinghamshire Community Cohesion Board to produce a countywide Community Cohesion Strategy. The final version is currently being produced and will be circulated to partners for consultation. It will also form part of the Nottinghamshire Community Strategy

Active Citizenship

Bassetlaw District Council is a member of the Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium on Active Citizenship. Citizenship is at the heart of social inclusion and cohesion. Active Citizens hold society together and build community. ODPM and the Home Office have a wide range of initiatives currently targeting this issue. Local Government is key to this succeeding. The Warwick group has members and officers looking at Leadership, Young People and Community Cohesion as part of the research.

**Action: EW to continue to report to the Sub-Group on progress.**

**10. Dates for 2006 meetings**

17<sup>th</sup> May, 2pm-4pm, venue TBC  
19<sup>th</sup> July, 2pm-4pm, venue TBC  
20<sup>th</sup> September, 2pm-4pm, venue TBC  
22<sup>nd</sup> November 2pm-4pm, venue TBC