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SOCIAL FORUM

5 June 2008 – 1.30 pm

PRESENT:

Representing Great Yarmouth Borough Council:
Councillor Peck, Councillor Shrimplin, Miss K Edmonds and Mrs L Crook

Representing Boroughwide Churches Forum:
Peter Payne

Representing Children and Families Network:
Sue Battersby

Representing Community Connections:
Trish Aydin, Helen Crowe, Tony Rosier and Jackie Southern

Representing Great Yarmouth Citizens Advice Bureau:
Marie Peck

Representing Great Yarmouth Community Housing:
Robert Read

Representing Great Yarmouth Community Housing Board:
Mr R King (Tenant Member)

Representing Great Yarmouth Community Trust:
Kate Platt

Representing Great Yarmouth Disability Forum:
Lindsay Seward

Representing Great Yarmouth LSP:
Tim Leonard

Representing GY People:
Alan Ellinson and Michael Hewitt

Representing Great Yarmouth Sports Partnership:
Jim West (in the Chair)

Representing Great Yarmouth Voluntary Sector Partnership:
Paul Cheeseman

Representing Norfolk Constabulary:
Penny Carpenter

Representing Norfolk County Council:
Councillor John Holmes

Representing Rainbow Saver Anglia Credit Union:
Julia Stephenson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Lyn Blizzard, Carol Congreve, Naji Darwish, Rob Gregory and Des McKeating.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 March 2008 were confirmed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

A Member asked for clarification on the comment on page 7 of the previous minutes under Item 11, Flood Plans, that stated that Great Yarmouth Borough Council intended to identify vulnerable people in the Borough as it was felt that vulnerable people would not necessarily remain vulnerable in the future and the Member asked for clarification on how the Borough Council intended to ascertain who was vulnerable at the time of an incident. The Chairman pointed out that Great Yarmouth Borough Council was currently investigating this issue.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Forum was asked to consider the existing terms of reference for the Forum attached to the agenda and the Chairman suggested that a Working Group be set up to revise the terms of reference where there is a need and to ensure that the membership of the Social Forum is up to date.

RESOLVED:

That the Social Forum agreed to a Working Group being set up to look at the membership of the Social Forum which would include Trish Aydin, Tim Leonard, Paul Cheeseman, Lindsay Seward and Jim West.

5. UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUPS

The Social Forum were asked to note the updates from the Working Groups attached to the agenda along with the tabled update from GY Partnership for Health. The Chairman reminded the Forum that if updates were not given from Working Groups they could not be presented to the Forum. A Member asked if the Crime Reduction Manager could give clarification as to whether the criteria for crimes had been amended.

6. COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD

The Tenancy Services Manager for Community Housing gave the Social Forum a PowerPoint presentation informing the Committee that Community Housing was the Council's new facility for managing 6,000 housing properties within the Borough of Great Yarmouth. It was stated that Community Housing was created as a result of a stock options appraisal which had found that residents wished the Council to remain the owner and the manager for properties in the Borough. Community Housing is a separate housing service which offers more focus on tenants and a Community Housing Board was also created. The Council's housing powers were delegated to Dennis Gilbert, the Director of Community Housing. Now that Community Housing is independent it offers more flexibility and a high quality service. The Community Housing Board consists of six Councillors, three tenants and three independent Members. The Board is consulted on how services are run

and they make recommendations on policies and also monitor performance. In order to further increase tenant involvement, Community Housing are now carrying out Housing Panels, creating service delivery work groups and creating the Great Yarmouth Tenants' Forum and are using housing Sounding Boards. The LSP Officer stated that there is a misconception about the rules and the waiting list for housing in the Borough and asked if enough was being done for residents to understand the rules. The Tenancy Services Manager reported that the Equalities and Human Rights Commission had carried out a piece of work on access to housing which had dispelled some of the current myths. Trish Aydin asked how myth busting information was being presented to the wider community and the Tenancy Services Manager reported that this was currently being investigated through the Council's Equal Opportunities Working Group.

7. RAINBOW SAVERS CREDIT UNION

A leaflet detailing information about the Rainbow Savers Credit Union was tabled at the meeting. It was reported that the Rainbow Savers Credit Union Anglia covers every resident in the Borough of Great Yarmouth and was based at the Neighbourhood Management Centre on King Street. It was reported that a Credit Union was a community savings and lending service and people from the local community could join the Credit Union and begin to save regularly. After three months savers could apply for a loan up to three times the amount that they had saved. The Credit Union only charges 1% per month in interest on the loan. Residents were being encouraged to continue to save whilst they were paying their loans to enable them to have larger loans in the future. The Credit Union is a Co-operative organisation and is not run to make a profit but to help individuals manage their money. The Committee were informed that residents could join and make payments at any of the collection points at Neighbourhood Management Centre Community, 143 King Street, Great Yarmouth, NR30 2PQ on Fridays from 10.00 am to 12 pm or at the Priory Centre Café, Priory Plain, on Wednesdays from 10.00 am till 12 pm or at the Seagulls Centre Kitchen, Magdalen Way, Thursdays from 10.00 am till 12 pm. Paul Cheeseman from the Great Yarmouth Voluntary Sector Partnership suggested that the Rainbow Savers Credit Union promotes other services that they are able to provide. The Chairman pointed out that there was a history of Credit Unions which goes back over a 100 years and the Credit Unions are regulated by the FSA.

8. EMPLOYMENT SKILLS ACTION PLAN UPDATE AND WORKING NEIGHBOURHOOD FUNDS

The Social Forum were informed that the Working Neighbourhood Fund and Employment Skills Briefing Paper was available on the Great Yarmouth Voluntary Sector Partnership website. It was reported that Holden McAlister were currently investigating all research available in the Borough to ascertain what business skills and requirements were within the Borough. A new briefing paper would be prepared within the next week and placed on the GY VSP website. The LSP Officer reported that he had attended a training day at Westminster on working neighbourhood funds and had been told that Great Yarmouth would be left to decide how to spend their allocation of money. He stated that the funds could be used on housing for people who have no fixed abode and require a fixed address to gain employment. The funding could also be spent on work in conjunction with the Primary Care Trust on Adult Mental Health issues or transport to then gain access to work. The Social Forum were informed that out of 70 NRF projects, 14 projects had been identified and allocated transitional funding for a six month period.

9. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS (LAA)

The LSP Officer spoke of the sustainable community strategy document stating that this would be finalised in the near future.

The 35 chosen Local Area Agreement indicators had now been finalised, although he was disappointed that there was insufficient sense of place for Great Yarmouth but did acknowledge that seven District Councils indicators all fed into the Norfolk LAA. It was reported that the document was available on the Norfolk Ambition website. Future work would be carried out around the targets to ensure that they were performance managed.

10. HEALTH TRAINERS

Helen Crowe introduced herself as a new health trainer for Community Connections, stating that the team now consisted of a Health Trainer Manager, six generic Health Trainers, one young person's Health Trainer based at GFS Platform and two mobile food store Trainers and that via Community Connections, PCT, GFS Platform and Regional

Health Trainers Hub, their work priorities were set. The Health Trainers encourage vitality in the workplace and to achieve this are working in partnership with the PCT Fit for Business Scheme, they signpost local residents to services available in the Borough. They offer a health trainers qualification which is a City and Guild in Health Training, and they also offer the Royal Institute for Public Health Level 3.

It was reported that 35% of the population in Great Britain eat one or less pieces of fruit and veg per day. Helen gave her contact details as 01493 656372 or on her mobile of 07766797606 or she could be contacted on her email address helen.crowe@communityconnections.uk.

11. GYP/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

(a) Transport Initiative

Tony Rosier reported that in the first year he had worked from the Martham Clip Office looking at transport from Caister northwards. In the first year he had carried out research and monitored services and looked at the residents' needs. He had found that there were reasonable services but the public were not aware of them and he therefore created a guide which had been published in the Village Guide. It was reported that a taxi token trial had now finished and the scheme was aimed at people with bus passes who were unable to access bus services and therefore use taxi tokens to get a taxi. He reported that he now needed to update the local Transport Guide, prepare a Transport Guide for urban areas in Great Yarmouth, pursue the taxi token implementation and roll out the scheme to the whole of the bus pass concession process, investigate the misalignment of subsidy in various areas within the Borough, as some of the services were being under utilised. A flexi bus system should be implemented to link north and south of the Borough. Low floor buses should be advertised on bus timetables and Centre 81 joining the concessionary bus pass scheme would be investigated.

The LSP Officer stated that the Working Neighbourhood Fund could be used for people to access transport to work and asked if the second year of the project could look into working age people getting to work.

Tony Rosier reported that a flexi bus service would look at this along with the Community Bus Service.

Trish Aydin reported that transport was a big issue within the Borough and there was a need to see how this could meet the need of the residents.

Tony Rosier reported that one of the targets for the LAA was to reduce CO² and that by promoting bus services within the Borough this would help to address this issue.

Lindsay Seward stated that in order to access the car link scheme this needed to be booked five days in advance and asked if anything could be done to influence the reduction of this time period.

(b) The GYP Event

Trish Aydin reported that the GY Event held in March was a success and a leaflet on the details of this were tabled. Trish stated that the event had shown there was a lot of local talent within the Borough and asked if there was a way that in the future this could be supported to enable residents to be given a chance to access the next level.

12. MINUTES FROM THE OTHER FORA

Members of the Social Forum noted the minutes attached to the agenda.

13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman explained that the Social Forum itself should submit agenda items which would then be discussed at future meetings.

14. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The date of the next Social Forum Meeting is 4 September 2008 at 1.30 pm.

15. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 3.25 pm.