

## SSP OMG Plus 14 July 2009: Notes of Meeting

**Present:** Tom Charnock (TC), John Brownlee (JB), Marilyn Beale (MB), Mike Pringle (MP), Steve Henderson (SH), Pam Gough (PGh), Janet Beattie (JeB), Alison Chamberlain (AC), James Griffin (JG), Mark Walker (MW), Chris Sivers (CS), Daniel Rose (DR), Nigel Simpson (NS), Ram Thiagarajah (RT)

**Apologies:** Matt Gott, Fidelma Meehan, Jo Osorio, Mandy Mercer, Jacky Thomas, Cllr Brian Mattock (BM), Martha Parry (MP), Paul Gregory (PG), Stella Milsom (SM), Judith Hawkins (JH),

### Key issues and decisions:

- CPCP – clear message defining roles of Cluster Leads & Cluster Chairs needed.
- Geographical Representative – nomination forms should be received in the next few weeks, we are looking to recruit one representative for each Cluster area for a one year period.

### Discussion and Decisions

1. **Notes of last meeting and matters arising** – Ram asked if his apologies for the last meeting could be noted. Notes will be amended accordingly. Chair welcomed Daniel Rose to the meeting. Daniel is the new Youth Representative for OMG and is the Youth Participation Officer for the National Trust. He is also the Chair of Swindon Youth Partnership and Vice Chair of the Swindon Participation Network.

### 2. **Connecting People Connecting Places** – Cluster Leads

The two Cluster Leads introduced themselves to the group and explained their Council role and where they currently are in the CPCP programme.

**Chris Sivers** is the Joint Director of Community at Swindon Borough Council and Swindon Primary Care Trust, she is also the Cluster Lead for the 'East Cluster' which covers the wards of Dorcan, Parks and Walcot. The Councillors in the area have met and decided on a Cluster Chair, Cllr Kevin Parry. Chris added that she has already met with SWALC, had attended various community meetings and had been on ward walks with Ward Councillors to get a feel for all of the areas. She talked about the 'Big Lunch' event on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July at Liden Community Centre. This will be followed by a 'Big Meeting' on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July from 6.00 to 8.00 pm at the Park South Community Centre, to which all members of the community are invited along to discuss issues and priorities for the area.

Chris added that it may well turn out that the East has separate area meetings in the first instance then look at a way of getting the wards to come together. The learning process needs to be developed and help is needed from the communities to resolve issues and build the working relationships. MB added that it will come down to Neighbourhoods working together.

JB added that the Cluster system and the Big Lunch has proved that some Councillors at first were not keen to be involved. MB added that sometimes you need to go back to basics and run the event on a neighbourhood basis. CS agreed that they had come to that conclusion as the event in Liden might prove to be too big. RT said that the 'Band on the Lawns' event has been held for the last 3 years and is very successful, Lawn Association is behind it's organisation. MB agreed that organising the event is ok but it's the help on the day that is needed. JB added that it's always the same people who come forward to help.

TC asked CS if she felt that she has the range of ages and backgrounds involved in meetings. CS replied that she didn't feel at the moment there is the right amount of representation but that they were working on getting the right people at meetings and looking at what sort of things are going on in communities/wards. She added that Liden was chosen because there was very little there in terms of groups. MB added that it's hard to get people interested in being engaged / involved in their communities. It's about picking up on one big issue and building on it. It's not going to be done by one Connecting People Connecting Places forum meeting. SH asked CS if she thought there was better collaboration between the people and the councillors now? CS added that its still early days, a few have grappled with issues and this is going to be the case across all clusters, at some point there will have to be a cross party discussion and the conversations are already starting with some councillors. CS added that more meetings with groups are needed, where issues can be discussed in more detail. Anti-Social behaviour has been covered with one Community Group and the discussion involved communities, councillors and businesses. CS added that the main issues emerging are Anti-Social behaviour and Clean Streets. RT added that care is needed not

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to ignore the silent majority, and asked if there were plans for the person on the street to meet with the Cluster Lead in a 'Cluster Surgery'. DR asked about Councillor induction and training. CS answered that all new Councillors receive induction training and the Council runs an annual learning and development programme. JG added that there is also a Government Leadership programme '21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor, (information available at: <http://www.21stcenturycouncillor.com> ) which looks at how we work with Councillors and different ways of engagement. JG continued that Swindon is one of a handful of Councils who want to take this forward. The Leader and Cllr Mattock are very passionate about taking CPCP forward, and the backing of Cabinet and backbenchers is crucial to its success.

**Mark Walker** is the Policy & Regeneration Manager in Housing and Social Care at Swindon Borough Council and is the Cluster Lead for 'Town Centre'. He is currently talking to Groups in the area of Eastcott and Central wards. Mark added that he is trying to reflect the needs of the neighbourhoods and work with them to solve issues. It is quite a diverse and complex area where there are lots of activities going on. Mark added that there are similar issues to other areas, they are collaborative in their thinking and Ward Members have a huge wealth of knowledge in their areas. TC asked if his cluster is the most diverse? MW replied that it is quite a diverse area and information gleaned so far is that Eastcott in particular has a low electoral presence. TC asked how was the message getting out. MW replied through the SSP Website which now has a CPCP area, through contacts made at public facing forums and some direct contact has been made. CS added that the public face in each cluster is the Councillor and the Cluster Lead role is the link to enable and support. RT asked how the community is expected to know what is going on and where they can contact their Councillor. He added that Lawn Community Centre is his focal point but that there is no information around CPCP. JG added that the old way would have been to have had a huge launch and publicity drive, but this time we are looking at where the conversations are taking us. We are giving out pieces of essential information to enable residents to better understand the intent. TC suggested a website where a group/network could be established and built. JG added that the challenge is not just for cluster leads to think differently but for the whole organisation to think differently. MB added that she could be used to contact smaller groups as not all people use computers, we need to think about all forms of communication. MP added that perhaps it's the message that isn't clear not the communicating of that message. CS agreed, for her it's about the message. RT added that the message that's needed is about who does what, with perhaps a job description for the Cluster Lead. TC concluded that there are a lot of people interested in CPCP and this needs to be encouraged with information on how /who etc. People need a place where they can lodge their details. Cluster leads need to put down who've they seen and invite those who may have been missed to get in contact.

### 3. **Streetsmart**

Nigel Simpson gave an overview of the Streetsmart project and asked the group what they thought Streetsmart meant. Nigel added that it's a new way of thinking, it's about services such as bin collections, clean streets, better pavements, potholes etc but also about connecting the pieces of information we have from customer requests and linking it to various services. In a way it is building on the Connecting People Connecting Places programme to get a better service for Swindon. Nigel added they are currently looking at an engagement plan for the project to ensure that the Streetsmart message gets out.

Nigel shared his experience of the SBC call centre and how different calls can make different connections. He added it's about keeping the conversations going in the call centre and picking up on information the caller is giving the operator. AC asked how the data is captured, Nigel replied that it is currently held on the database, but is not currently analysed. TC asked about the quality of the call centre staff to deal with making the links. NS is content that the staff will be able to do this. NS added that he is also finding out about what is of high importance for residents through Cluster Leads, Councillors and CPCP. TC thanked Nigel for coming and sharing his vision with the group and invited him back to a future meeting to update the group on progress. Nigel can be contacted on [nsimpson@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:nsimpson@swindon.gov.uk)

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### 4. AOB

- **Geographical Representatives:** AC advised the group that in the next few weeks letters and nomination forms would be sent out by Voluntary Action Swindon for nominations for Geographical Representatives. We are looking for one representative from each Cluster to sit on the OMG Plus group for an initial period of one year.
- **SSP Website:** Information on CPCP is now available on the SSP website. We currently have background information on the project, information on each cluster together with cluster maps. We also have a list of which postcodes are contained within each cluster. The website will be updated weekly as new information is available. The website address is <http://www.swindonsp.org.uk/ssp-index/connectingpeopleconnectingplaces.htm>

### Date and time of next meetings

**Conference : 12<sup>th</sup> October @ STEAM**

**OMG Plus – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009, 12-2, Function Room, Civic Offices**

*(OMG ordinary meeting 8<sup>th</sup> September, Function Room, Civic Offices)*