

SSP OMG Plus 12 March 2009: Notes of Meeting

Present: Stella Milsom (SM), Tom Charnock (TC), Pamela Gough (PGh), Janet Beattie (JEB), Alison Chamberlain (AC), James Griffin (JG), Mandy Mercer (MM), John Brownlee (JB), Martha Parry (MaP), Paul Gregory (PG), Judith Hawkins (JH), Mike Pringle (MP), Marilyn Beale (MB), Steve Henderson (SH), Matt Gott (MG)

Key Issues:

- Concern over Cluster boundaries, extensive discussions took place – JG proposed that we agree to go with the clusters we have now and revisit in 12 months. This met with tacit approval, and a realisation that there was still more work to be done.
- Concern over Council's response to the White Paper (Real Power, Real People)
- Communities felt that the Conference went well, but expressed frustration with the speed of the project development and lack of communication and consultation
- The Community representatives were keen to ensure that previous good work in communities e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal was not lost
- Everyone felt it was important to recognise the contribution of community representatives but also those who hold the budgets and provide the services
- Everyone was keen that Ward Members were fully engaged in the process
- Cluster leads were announced, but are confidential at this stage
- Everyone was keen to be involved in consultation process

Discussion and Decisions

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising – Minutes agreed and signed off as a true record.

2. Connecting People Connecting Places– Wash up from the Conference.

JB enjoyed the conference, improvement on previous ones. CPCP overall view, not put across well, still lots more needed and people want more information. Salford and Leicester are good examples of areas that have been more open with general public, feeling that there is a lack of communication from SBC to communities.

MaP: people appreciated the conference was set up with tables and well thought through. It was good that delegates were sat with people they didn't know. It is felt that Swindon hasn't addressed the Government white paper. The SFCO would like to work with the Borough to take this forward to develop community input.

PG: EAF view is that the Clusters appear to be set in stone with no consultation, this has upset a lot of people. MaP asked at the conference how the clusters were developed? Cllr Mattock advised they are Ward Based.

PG: frustration on some tables, clusters already set, they don't reflect the neighbourhood/community policing structure, if we are going to make it work we need to consult on the clusters and get credibility.

JB: grey table had a few community people, others had service providers, but the tables joined together, point here is that we must get everyone together chatting. General consensus was that people are not happy with the clusters but want to see how CPCP will develop.

JG added that the process is moving forward and if problems are experienced further down the line they can be dealt with and amended if appropriate. Communities will be needed to help the programme move forward, it may not move quickly but the Council will need help to get there.

SM asked if the group wanted to put a lot of effort into discussing lines on a map and the Cluster areas, or should that energy be better used in getting the project up and running. Group agreed

TC added that he had been involved in both conversations and seen both maps, the Council's and SFCO's. A lot of time could be spent discussing all service provider areas and plans but whichever

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map was used it wouldn't please everyone. At some stage in the future we can question the ideal cluster and debate the lines but for now we need to spend time on what CPCP means to local people, local jobs, schools, children, adults. TC asked if there is a way that we can ask the Council to look at the CPCP areas in 12 months time? JG agreed to take the message back to the CPCP programme board.

JH had received negative feedback, no-one could see where the impetus was coming from.

MP: control issue is important, tables at the conference were told what to talk about, but a lot of the tables didn't, and couldn't see where it was leading, people were not positive around her table.

MB: sat at a blue table, but didn't realise there were more than 1 blue table, no-one with her thought they were Community, and asked how can people not with community backgrounds comment on community issues.

TC added that community groups have a vision, but by inviting key strategic people along who hold vast budgets they can be encouraged to listen to the needs of the community.

MB agreed that service providers need to be involved more with community groups and community groups need to be treated as valuable partners.

MB: Concern over the Cluster Forums and the lack of pace in getting the programme off the ground, it's got to be quicker to get people involved.

MB asked if CPCP is supposed to be delivering the Real People Real Power Government paper. JG replied that CPCP is not a direct response to the White Paper, the SSP and SBC don't see it as a driver, it comes from a personal commitment in our leadership to have commitment in the Communities. Humility and the willingness to work together is needed.

JG also asked the group to adhere to some ground rules for the meeting.

PG added that Councillors are democratically elected, demographics don't reflect how the town works and how it can be changed in future, we are stuck with Wards and Parishes but we need a new view.

MB: CPCP concerns over environmental element, and the lack of people in SBC to push this forward. How do community groups back this? TC added that he has an interest in the Climate Change Action Plan and there is concern over the loss of the Sustainability Team, and he would raise at the next Climate Change Steering Group meeting.

SH added that if we are looking at groups with reach, look at Faith, they have reach into all parishes and the Faith Community Demographic can be very helpful.

JB: at the Conference Cllr Bluh said CPCP will kick-off on 1st April, JG corrected this to 1st May.

MG: It is envisaged that the launch will be a soft launch and this is subject to a Cabinet report on 15th April, the link to the report will be sent to the group. JG added that the first year will be spent on fact finding and building relationships. Each cluster will develop independently.

PG: if there's a 'soft launch' – how are we going to communicate with all that might want to get involved? Such as schools. JH suggested a uniform communications plan to get this message out. Discussion over the soft launch, with suggestions of Swindon News, Facebook, TC suggested a Facebook group for each cluster.

SH asked if the Cluster Leads had been appointed yet. JG shared the names of the cluster leads with the group, but added that this information is still confidential and has purposely not been released as the leads need to get established. MG it has been actively decided not to allocate budgets for the 1st year of the clusters to help the Cluster Leads learn about their Clusters in the first instance.

MB: How is an Officer going to manage that meeting with Councillors there? MG replied that it is for the Councillors to manage themselves not for the cluster leads to do it. The relationship will be nurtured and protected in the early days.

JH asked how the clusters are going to be scrutinised and monitored? MG replied that there is a Cabinet report going in April and the Scrutiny role is answered in that. He added that we are in the throws of a bid to the Government for 21st Century Councillor monies that will help us work in a different

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way around engaging members.		
Actions	Who	When
JG to feed back to CPCP team with suggestion of looking at Cluster areas again in 12 months time.	JG	April
Send link to CPCP Cabinet report to OMG Plus group	JEB	April
JG to raise issue with Soft Launch with Communications Team	JG	April
Date and time of next meeting		
Tuesday 14 th April, 12.00 – 2.00 pm. Function Room		