



South Northamptonshire VCS Forum
27th January 2010 at South Northants Council Offices

Twenty nine people attended the meeting. See attachment.

Welcome and Introductions

Phil Drage (Chairman) welcomed everyone to the forum. He reminded those present of the dual purpose of the meeting:

- i) to help groups at 'grassroots' level by putting them in touch with one another, to share ideas and good practice
- ii) as a consultation body.

He introduced Bob Purser Churches Officer for New Developments to speak on "Enabling Good Communities". A copy of his presentation is attached as an appendix.

During discussion Bob noted that his work is primarily with new communities but that he would work to promote community life wherever it is needed irrespective of faith. Points from the floor included the importance of local groups to community life and the value of Parish Plans as a vehicle for bringing communities together. (The Chair noted Beth Milne's valuable work in promoting and supporting Parish Plans.)

Community Information Exchange

Pam Tomalin, Northants 50+ Network, gave an overview of the network and its purpose and advised the group that she had brought some information leaflets if any attendees wanted further details.

Mark Rowtree, Northamptonshire Libraries, gave an overview of free one-to-one training courses which were being launched in the Deanshanger area on 22nd March. The courses would be delivered in people's homes by Deanshanger library staff. Mark noted that relevant staffs were CRB checked.

SNC Information Exchange

David Price, Director Community Engagement and Corporate Services, said that two consultation documents were shortly to be issued, on Transport and Climate Change.

A member asked whether these would be sent to Parish Councils, which David will check.

David advised that the waste and recycling collection services had generally been maintained during the recent bad weather. Additionally, there is a proposal to relocate the Council offices to the Moat Lane site which, with the sale of the Springfield site and energy saving features planned for the new building, should mean zero cost. David added that there will shortly be a public consultation on this proposal.

Roger Barford, Aynho Parish Council, commented that the views of residents had been ignored in a recent consultation on affordable housing in the village. DP explained that it was not that the Council did not listen to consultation responses rather that the council endeavours to shape and influence, but cannot stop the growth agenda.

Jan Andrews, Blisworth Canal Partnership asked when the planning committee refers to a parish plan. David Price replied that there is no protocol to look at parish plans but he would take this suggestion back for consideration.

Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Strategic Plan 2010-13

James Dorrill from the Fire Service delivered a presentation on their Strategic Plan, which is available as an attachment.

During questions James said that the service would seek to maintain current staffing levels, despite an increasing population because new houses were built to higher standards and, therefore, posed less of a fire risk.

James agreed to investigate why fire services from RAF Croughton could not be used for local incidents, rather than bringing appliances from Brackley

Dates of future meetings

The next meeting of the Forum is scheduled for 28th April 2010 from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm (venue TBC)

There being no other business the meeting closed at 16.05 pm.