

Multi-agency Community Forums
Community Committee, Agenda Item 9

Committee: COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item

Date: 22 JANUARY 2009

Title: MULTI- AGENCY COMMUNITY FORUMS

9

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Summary

The purpose of the report is to update members on the outcome of the January 2009 round of Multi-agency Community Forums.

Recommendations

That Members note the report and receive questions raised at the January forums. Members recommend that representations should be made to East Herts District Council regarding that authority's intention to reduce funding for the Bishop's Stortford CAB as detailed in item 4 of this report.

Background Papers

Publicity material for meetings

Impact

Communication/Consultation	The forums are a way of all agencies joining forces to provide effective consultation. Uttlesford Futures, the Local Strategic Partnership represents a wide range of agencies and the forums are an ideal vehicle to support partnership consultation.
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	Forums are open to all sections of the community.
Finance	None
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	None
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

1. The third round of the Multi-agency Community Forums was held on the 6 and 8 January for the North and South respectively. The multi-agency panel for

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both of the forums comprised representatives from Essex County Council Highways Department, Essex Police, West Essex Primary Care Trust, Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford, and, of course, the District Council, represented by the Chief Executive. As members are aware, the format for the meetings is for agencies to make a short presentation or announcements to the meeting to update people on current initiatives. There is then the opportunity for questions to be put to the panel. After that the meeting breaks into workshop sessions where the panel members join individual groups to discuss specific issues as required. During the workshop sessions forms are completed with questions that require formal responses from the agencies. Finally, the panel reconvenes and there is another opportunity for questions. (The forms are collected, questions collated and, subsequently, sent out to the agencies for a written response to be provided. The responses are circulated to the attendees and posted on the website.)

2. The agencies provided feedback as usual but the main presentations were:

Highways - Road Safety in the District presented by Elaine Beckett, Area Road Safety Officer and Rose Johnson, Uttlesford Road Safety Officer.

Uttlesford District Council Budget Consultation, presented by John Mitchell, Chief Executive.

Uttlesford Community Safety Consultation presented by Gaynor Bradley, Community Partnerships Manager.

As this was the last scheduled round of the pilot forums in 2008/09 attendees were also asked to complete a questionnaire to seek their views on the future of the forums. Questionnaires have also been sent to town & parish councils, all attendees to date and will be published in Uttlesford Life. A report on the outcome will be presented the Council meeting in May to seek Members' views on the way forward.

3. At the North Forum held in the Council Chamber, Saffron Walden, members of the public/parish council representatives attended. A number of UDC Councillors also attended. Attached at Appendix 1 is the list of questions raised and answers given at this forum. Two questions addressed to the District Council were
 - Low level at which aircraft could be flying over Saffron Walden - despite CAA and Government policy that aircraft should not over-fly centres of population below 7000 feet aircraft are to be vectored over Saffron Walden at a height of 5000 feet above sea level. The District and County Councils should ask for assurances against vectoring and over-flights. The Director of Development responded that Uttlesford District Council did reply to the consultation from NATS who had also consulted residents. The message sent to NATS had included concern for the effect on rural communities. Further meetings had been arranged with NATS to discuss arriving aircraft.

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- Why has UDC stopped gritting car parks - Swan Meadow, at their offices and old peoples homes? The response suggested that not gritting would incur less legal liability than gritting.
4. At the South Forum held in Mountfitchet Maths & Computing College, Stansted Mountfitchet, members of the public/parish council representatives attended. A number of UDC Councillors also attended. Attached at Appendix 2 is the list of questions raised and answers provided at this forum. Two of the questions addressed to the District Council at this meeting were
- Proposed Eco Town - Councillor Morson asked the Chief Executive to clarify some of the issues regarding this matter and the Local Development Framework. The Chief Executive explained that the economic situation is different to when this proposal was first mooted. The principle of an eco town relies on the value released from the land being sufficient to enable the provision of the social, amenity and physical infrastructure that would support a vibrant community. There are now instances being reported, for example, where land is worth less with planning permission than without it. There are, therefore, uncertainties about the eco town and we await the Government's conclusions. Regarding the LDF, this has now been set back, as we are awaiting the outcome of consultation on the Government's planning policy. We cannot proceed until we know the government's intentions, or indeed the developer's intentions. We will present the new timetable for the LDF to the next Environment Committee. It is likely there will be further consultation in September/October.
 - Bishop's Stortford Citizens Advice Bureau – Councillor Sell stated that for those living in wards in the south of Uttlesford, the nearest Citizen's Advice Bureau is in Bishop's Stortford. Uttlesford has a representative on the board and partly funds this CAB. It has been reported that East Herts District Council is cutting its funding, this is therefore of concern to Uttlesford, and we should make representations to East Herts. The Chief Executive said this point is noted and will be passed to Community and Housing Committee. Uttlesford contributes to the Bishops Stortford CAB and Officers will not be proposing any cuts to this or the Uttlesford CAB when the budget is due to be agreed by the Council.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Forums not attended by partners or community	Low	high	Clear communication with partners and good level of publicity.