

HONITON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM

Notes from Inaugural Meeting of the Community Engagement Forum held at the Beehive on Thursday 15th September 2016 at 7pm

16/09 Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Anne Mountjoy (CAM) – Honiton Town Council member (Co-Chair)
 Ali Eastland (AE) – Devon County Council Locality Officer
 Alex Gibson (AG) - East Devon District Council Housing Officer
 Danielle O'Donoghue – (DO) Honiton resident
 Jo O'Donoghue – (JO) Honiton Youth Group Trustee
 Lorna – (LP) The Project co-ordinator
 Andy Mackie – (AM) Leisure East Devon Honiton centre manager
 Andrew - Leisure East Devon Area Manager
 Selena Burroughs (SE) – Head of Sixth Form at Honiton Community College
 Luke Chamber (LC) – Sixth Form Student
 Tia James (TJ) - Sixth Form Student
 June Brown (JB) – Senior Voice representative
 Norman Amey (NA) – Honiton Community Church
 Cllr Roy Coombs (RC) – Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Member and Honiton Town Council member
 Duncan Sheridan-Shaw (DSS) – Tesco Community Champion
 Tony McCollum (TM) – Honiton Chamber of Commerce
 Cllr Ashely Delasalle (AD) - Honiton Town Council member (Co-Chair)
 Sarah Jenkins (SJ) - Honiton Town Council Deputy Town Clerk
 Chetna Jones (CJ) – Honiton Town Council Town Clerk

16/10 To note apologies received

Apologies had been received from Marilyn Adhamy (MA) – East Devon District Council Benefits Office, Jane Reading (JR) - East Devon District Council Tenants and Communities Manager, Barry Simmonds (BS) – Director of Honiton Community Complex

16/11 Update on Honiton's Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Roy Coombs provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan and informed the group that a questionnaire will be distributed to every household through the local newspaper.

Sarah Jenkins urged groups to get involved and encourage their members to complete the questionnaires. There will be various open meetings as well as an opportunity to speak with Steering Group members at locations such as Tesco's Foyer and The Beehive. Poster will be made available and any help with displaying them will help with publicity. There will be various drop-off points around the town where the completed questionnaires can be left and the questionnaire can be completed on-line.

16/12 To receive a presentation from Sixth form students regarding Honiton community College's chosen charity Mary's Meals, The Backpack Project

The Backpack Project is a simple way of helping children in countries like Malawi and Liberia get the best out of school.

Very often children don't have even basic things like pens and notepads to allow them to make the most of their education. The aim of the project is to fill a backpack such as an old school bag with some everyday educational items. Mary's meals will then send these filled backpacks to children who really need them, which will enable them to attend school and gain an education that can help them escape from poverty when they grow up.

Items suitable include:

Backpack

Notepads

Pencil case with pencils, pens, crayons, erasers, rulers and sharpeners

Towel

Shorts or skirts, t-shirts, dresses and flip-flops or sandals (suitable for children aged between 4 – 12 years)

Small ball e.g. tennis ball

Spoon

Simple toiletries such as soap, toothbrush and toothpaste

Second-hand items were fine as long as they were in good condition.

The Students were given for this to be a town project with groups such as Tesco's and LED offering to provide collection points. The aim was to start week commencing 10th October in recognition of National Porridge Week. It was agreed that the students will circulate information regarding collection as well as provide clear guidelines.

16/13 To discuss future projects for the group to consider taking on in order to make a difference at a local level involving local needs

Members of the group were keen to have an aim and sense of achievement from these community meetings and try and address the needs of local people.

Time was needed in order to develop an idea and determine how it could be implemented and delivered and it was agreed that members be invited to submit their proposals along with the skills needed to complete this task.

An outline of proposals should be submitted to the Town Clerk no later than Monday 31st October. The Town Clerk will then collate all the proposals and send to all the members in order that each may select their favourite 3. The 3 proposals with the most votes will be invited to submit their detailed proposal at the next meeting and one project will be chosen for the group to take forward.

16/14 Reports from local organisations

Cllr Anne Mountjoy confirmed that the Tourist Information website was available with details of many local events. The website details were www.visithoniton.com

Ali Eastland confirmed that locality funds were available.

Alex Gibson confirmed that as part of her remit as Housing Officer she helped with a small youth group at Heathpark.

Jo O'Donoghue confirmed that the Honiton youth group was a thriving club which was continually growing.

Lorna from The project confirmed that parent/carer support groups met in Axminster on the 3rd Monday of each month between 6.30 – 8.30pm and more information was available on their website and Facebook page.

Andy Mackie confirmed that LED were keen to be involved in the community and support local groups/projects. LED currently supported and provided funding to various outreach projects associated with sports as well as having links with health organisations.

Selena Burroughs – The Community College were also keen to take an active role with the community and currently held weekly focus group meetings and would like to extend invitation for guest speakers.

June Brown - Senior Voice members would be keen to attend debates with the school's focus groups. A public meeting had been arranged on Neighbourhood Plan in September.

Norman Amey – Honiton Community Church were keen to acquire premises in order to provide various community services such as youth and Mum & Toddler groups. It is hoped if they are successful in acquiring more space there will be rooms available for hiring at reasonable rates.

Honiton Community Action trust were needing £2,000 in order to keep the Food Bank open.

Cllr Roy Coombs confirmed that Glen Conservation Group were keen to reach out for more members to attend their weekly Tuesday morning volunteering sessions. The aim is to introduce weekend sessions as well. The Glen Conservation group hope to attain Green Flag status.

Tesco Store worked closely with several community projects. The forum was advised that the Tesco foyer was available to organisations wanting to promote their work and that volunteers would be keen to hear from people requiring help on any projects that would benefit the local community. They also hold regular book sales with funds going to local charities. Tesco takes part in the Fairshare Scheme which enables charities (currently used by 7) to take away out of date/imperfect food which would normally be thrown away.

Tony McCollum – the role of Chamber of Commerce was not well known. The Chamber provided the flags in the High Street as well as working with the Town Council to deliver Christmas Lights and cheaper parking. There have been a number of changes within the Chamber with a strong committee now in place. The Chamber were keen to support the Independent shops as well as work closely with the youth. The Chamber were in the process of identifying a charity that they will support for the year.

Cllr A Delasalle – Tesco had provided several hours of “manpower” to the museum enabling them to carry out vital work towards protecting the many unique and priceless artefacts.

United Charities provided help to many pensioners struggling to live on very low income as well as families through their hardship fund. If anyone knew of someone that would benefit from this then they should make contact either with Cllr Delasalle or with the Charity directly.

16/15 date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 15th November, 7pm at Beehive.

16/08 To close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm