

Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday 24th September 2008

7.30pm at the Thirsk Children's Centre

Minutes

Present

Peter Walker (Chair); Ted Naisbitt; Cllr. Gareth Dadd; Geraint Williams; Bill Austin; Angela Hall; Peter Cole; Mark Haynes & Lawrence Monaghan.

Apologies

Mick Jewitt; Linda Gibbon; Gillian Gill; PC Kev Brookes; Richard Rowling; Alison Cramb; Tony Jordan; Freda Roberts; Cllr. Ellen Storm; Jan Marshall & Colin Musgrave.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Peter welcomed Lawrence Monaghan, Area Youth Work Team Leader (Hambleton South) to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held 20th August 2008

Agreed as a true record thereof.

3. Actions & Matters Arising

- Cllr. Dadd welcomed Peter's attendance at future Parish Council meetings in the Whitestonecliffe, Thirsk & Carlton Miniott Wards.
- Peter W. reported that Superskills Construction Training had recently been awarded LSC contracts to deliver construction apprenticeships (10 places for 16-18 yrs olds and 6 places for 19+) and the Train to Gain initiative which includes Skills For Life provision.
- Disappointment was expressed at the decision not to have a hairdressing facility at Thirsk School. It is understood that hairdressing will be delivered from two sites in Northallerton (Northallerton College and the Allertonshire School.)
Action Point: Peter C. to clarify with Ros Sands the criteria for identifying the most appropriate sites for the delivery of specific diploma 'lines'.
- Peter W. confirmed that discussions had taken place with Mark since the last meeting to consider how to progress improvements to Thirsk Station and plans to develop a café culture in Thirsk Marketplace. This work is ongoing and feedback is being sought on the cafe culture proposals from Thirsk Town Council and retail outlets.

4. Finance Report

Peter confirmed that Alison was in the process of drafting a Finance Report. In Alison's absence it was agreed that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

5. Thirsk Contact Centre

Group members considered the draft letter in support of a contact centre. It was agreed that the issue be raised at the next Thirsk Area Forum meeting to be held on Tuesday 28th October 2008. Members supported the concept of enhanced access to services and integrated service development in line with the NYCC 'No Wrong Door' policy. It was noted that a letter of support for such a facility had been sent to Peter Simpson, Chief Executive of Hambleton District Council, on behalf of the Older People's Sub Group of the Local Strategic Partnership. A copy of this letter has also been sent to the NYCC Chief Exec. **Action:** Peter C. to contact Robin Mayer at NYCC for details of the various contact centre 'delivery models' being considered across the County. Cllr. Dadd to feedback the outcome of the Area Forum and any actions agreed by elected members at the TRI meeting to be held on Wednesday 19th November.

6. Thirsk Skate Park

Lawrence provided an update on progress and confirmed that approximately £80k had been secured to deliver the project. The land is owned by NYCC who have granted a 5-year lease for the proposed skate park. Lawrence confirmed that the Thirsk8 Park Committee has submitted a bid to the Community Safety Grant Scheme which, if successful, would cover the cost of a Contaminated Land Survey. Lawrence agreed to provide further updates on the project once the results of the survey are known.

7. Project Update

• Rural Arts North Yorkshire

Angela provided an update on Phase 2 of the redevelopment of the Clerk's House, the aim of which is to promote community access to the arts. Angela confirmed that Yorkshire Forward and Arts Council funding has been secured and that as a result a lift to the first floor will be installed along with training rooms and a media suite. A public appeal ('Hands Up for the Arts') is to be launched to raise a further £50k for arts resources.

Angela outlined plans to employ a co-ordinator with a business development remit to develop a 3-year project to increase social & learning opportunities and engage with vulnerable groups and the private, community & voluntary sector. It is hoped that the project will establish links between the creative/land-based & construction industries to promote cross-cutting media. Focus Group consultation is already underway and it is hoped the project will start in April 2009. Angela is seeking community 'buy-in' to this project, along with endorsement from organisations such as TRI and help with fundraising.

• Hambleton Renaissance Business Plan

Mark presented a report on those Thirsk projects which appear in the Hambleton Renaissance Business Plan circulated prior to the meeting.

• Carrs Field

Peter circulated an email from Tony Jordan confirming that at present 'apart from general autumnal jobs...there are no firm plans in relation to Carrs Field that need to be discussed at TRI.'

8. TRI Sub Group Updates:

• Thirsk Events Group

Geraint presented a Thirsk Festival Report and proposed that thanks to Colin Musgrave be minuted for the considerable effort put in to co-ordinate and run this year's Festival¹. This proposition was seconded by Ted and endorsed by all TRI members. TRI members also thanked Geraint for his commitment and support for this year's Festival.

Geraint sought TRI member's views on an outline proposal to establish a Thirsk Festival Company to run a festival primarily as a commercial venture. The purpose of the company would be to organise a five-day festival and attract investors in return for a share of any profit. Geraint reported that three such investors have been sourced. The festival company would offer support and help to those fringe festival activities whose main purpose is to raise funds for charitable organisations.

Concern was expressed over the use of the Thirsk and Thirsk Festival 'brand'. It was suggested that other festival 'operational models' exist which the role of the public, private and community sectors.

Action: Peter W./Geraint and Colin to meet to consider a way forward and to agree a suitable delivery model. Feedback and any actions agreed at this meeting to be reported at the next TRI meeting.

Peter W. outlined a proposal to host a single-themed Thirsk Comedy Festival to develop over a period of 5 years. Angela confirmed that RANY would be interested in hosting such a festival.

Action: Peter C. to co-ordinate a meeting between Peter W. and Angela to discuss the opportunity to host a Comedy Festival. Feedback and actions agreed at this meeting to be reported at the next TRI meeting.

• Tourism Group

Peter C. reported that at the recent meeting of the Tourism Sub Group held a decision had been taken not to produce a third edition of the 'What's On Guide.' It was agreed at the meeting that the focus should be on ensuring that the visit-thirsk.com website remains well-populated and up-to-date.

• Thirsk Safe Group

Peter C. reported that the focus of the last meeting attended by Sgnt. Hannan and PCSO Carrie Watson was to identify gaps in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme operating across Thirsk. Thirty-five Schemes operate across the area (15 in Thirsk & Sowerby with a further 20 in the surrounding villages.) To date the following villages are without Neighbourhood Watch Schemes:

Dalton
Felixkirk

Balk
North Kilvington

Hutton Sessay
Boltby

Kirby Knowle

¹ Thanks were also expressed to the British Legion Band

A meeting between Bill, Peter C. and Chris Fields, Manager of the Hambleton Community Safety Partnership, is to be held on Wednesday 8th October to discuss the co-ordination of a family-focussed 'Community Safety Awareness' event to be held in Thirsk in Spring 2009. The next meeting of the Group is to be held on Wednesday 3rd December.

9. Any Other Business

- 'Not in My Neighbourhood' Community Safety Consultation

Peter C. circulated details of the 'Not in My Neighbourhood' Community Safety Consultation event to be held at 7pm on Thursday 16th October at the East Thirsk Community Hall. Peter W. confirmed that Superskills Construction Training will cover the cost of venue hire.

- **Thirsk Webcam**

Ted raised concerns that had been expressed over the future of the Thirsk Web Cam. TRI members agreed that the web cam project provides a valuable 'tourism resource' and should be supported. **Action:** Angela and Ted to liaise with Charles Sutcliffe to explore the possibility of relocating and hosting the Web Cam to ensure that this resource remains available.

- **Thirsk Clock**

It was reported that the lease held by Thirsk Clock on premises owned by the Nationwide Building Society is up for renewal. **Action:** Peter W. to clarify the Nationwide's Social Responsibility Policy and feedback any decisions taken over the future of The Clock at the next TRI meeting.

- **Networking For Business in Thirsk**

TRI members supported the proposition presented by Peter W. to host two initial 'free to attend' business networking events at a total cost to TRI of £700. The events are to be held at the Thirsk Rural Business Centre and will complement the recently-established Business Forum being co-ordinated by the District Council's Economic Development Unit. It is anticipated that future events will be self-sustaining.

- **Higher Level Learning in North Yorkshire**

Action: Peter C. to co-ordinate a response to a request from Colin Bailey (the North Yorkshire Learning Partnership's Adult Learning & Skills Co-ordinator) for evidence to support a bid for a 'University North Yorkshire' to deliver higher level learning provision.

10. Dates for Future Meetings:

- Wednesday 22nd October at the Old Courthouse, Rural Arts North Yorkshire
- Weds 19th November at 49b Market Place, Thirsk
- Weds 17th December at 49b Market Place, Thirsk