

Notes of the Skipton Renaissance Team Meeting

Tuesday 1 August 2006. 6pm, CDC Council Chamber, Granville Street.

Present

John Dawson	Skipton Building Society (Chair)
Jane Gazzard	Craven Voluntary Action (Vice Chair)
Cllr Polly English	North Yorkshire County Council
Cllr Robert Heseltine	North Yorkshire County Council
Cllr Paul English	Craven District Council
Lesley Gould	Skipton Chamber of Trade & Commerce
Sebastian Fattorini	Skipton Castle
Gwynne Walters	Skipton Civic Society
Alan Blackwell	Craven College

In Attendance

Chris Aldred (Notes)	Skipton Town Centre Manager
Roger Newton	MBED Facilitator
Jonathan Kerr	Craven District Council
Lis Moore	Skipton Town Council

Representations from the Public – None.

1 Member of the public and 1 member of the Press present throughout the meeting.

Apologies	Carole Manley	Skipton Town Council
	Chris Harbron	Skipton Town Council
	Mick Hill	Craven District Council
	John Moody	Skipton Civic Society (GW Substituted)
	James Stammers	Yorkshire Forward
	David Smurthwaite	Craven District Council

Notes from Meeting of 5 June– Accepted as a correct record, with an amendment from Polly English that the sum NYCC had allocated for the **Bus Station** for this year, was £50,000 and not £500,000, as stated in the notes..

Matters Arising not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda

Polly English and JK had paid a recent visit to the **Bus Station**. CDC would be carrying out maintenance works to the Toilets (deep clean & redecoration) within this financial year. Agreed a priority schedule for improvements to the lighting (which in turn, would help with better CCTV coverage at night) and existing infrastructures i.e. spending the £50,000 from NYCC. Polly still unhappy as to how £1.5 million available for the Bus Station in September 05 had become £50,000 by March 06. NYCC Officers had been asked to recost £1.5 scheme, looking at utilising existing structures where possible and lower cost fixtures/fittings.

CA clarified NYCC Highways position regarding traffic around **Engine Shed Lane** junction (Ken Martin Email at last meeting). They would not like to see any increase of traffic unless significant improvements took place in infrastructure of the junction and Engine Shed Lane itself.

LG was researching best Banking facilities available for the **Teams Administrated Fund** and would report back to next meeting after meeting between herself, CA and Richard Atkinson of CDC the following week.

Presentation by Andy Shackleton, Chairman SELRAP

(Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership)

“Skipton-Colne Rail Link Reinstatement”

(Several members of SELRAP were present for this item & left after it)

JD reminded members that the Team had previously unanimously voted to support the long-term aims/objectives of SELRAP and as such had sent a letter asking for the reinstatement of the line to be kept in the local transport plan, last year.

SELRAP had been formed in 2001 as a pressure group for the restoration of the Skipton – Colne Rail Link. Railways were accepted as more sustainable, cost effective and environmentally friendly than car travel. Last 20 years had seen Rail Passengers grow by 40% (Leeds – Skipton Passenger usage had increased by 20% in 2003 alone, further 15% in 2004). Coincided with reinvestment in the rolling stock, making a train journey much more attractive - meant that some routes, including existing transpennine routes were up to, or fast approaching capacity. Colne-Skipton route was the natural “missing link” in existing network, linking 2 major economic regions. Additional benefit would be direct rail link from Skipton to Manchester Airport. If link re-established current Colne-Manchester link would have to be upgraded, bringing it’s own economic benefits. Roads take money out of an area; Railways bring money in (national trends). In every single case where a rail link had been re-established, passenger traffic had increased by more than even best of projections. Group had strong support from all local MP’s, local councils (including CDC, Pendle & STC). If political decision to reinstate were taken, group estimated necessary technical work could be done within 6 years – vast majority of line not built upon.

Paul English had available PowerPoint copy of presentation, with many more statistics, if any members wished to access it for their own organisations.

Reports and Questions to Project Champions

CM had prepared written reports on “**Youth Café**” and “**Skipton Hospital**”, which were circulated. As she was not present at the meeting, it was decided that Members would read these reports at leisure and ask any questions at the October meeting.

AB had prepared comprehensive written reports on “**Modernisation and Redevelopment of Craven College**” and “**Creation of Construction Training Facilities (Phase 1)**”, which he spoke to. He agreed with RH that it would be useful to identify a number of sites within the town for future “Educational Development”. He explained to JG the reason for the College offering less “Adult” services than

previously – down to a reduction in funding for this type of course from the Learning and Skills council.

Report from YF RMT Workshop at Great Yorkshire Show (July 11)

RH & JK had both attended. RH found it a good opportunity to network – good that YF wanted to showcase RMT towns on first day of such a prestigious event. They also relented Rural Target Fund - £10,000 for each RMT on an environmental improvement project. RH emphasised this was a reliance and not new monies! JK felt the networking emphasised the quality of our Town Team and problems elsewhere, compared to Skipton.

Report from Community Involvement Subgroup (JG/CM/LM & RN).

Report had been issued at the June meeting, but not enough time to discuss properly. Presented in the format of “Where we are now” and “Where we want/need to be”. Specific problems identified in targeting and getting Young People involved in RMT process. AB concurred this was a common problem – College itself struggled to get a formal, representative, Young Peoples voice. JG felt this shouldn’t stop us trying. RN’s experience was best way to do this was to focus on a specific project. Paul English pointed out that young people didn’t stay young forever and there was a need to link Young People with existing groups. JK felt a need to involve NYCC’s Youth Services, who were currently working on differing methods of consultation and linkage. RH concurred with the need to encourage youth involvement but felt that RMT process was not seen as “cool” to teenagers within Skipton.

JD proposed a “Task & Finish” Group, to work up ways of consultation and liaison with Young People. All agreed that existing members of Community Involvement Subgroup, with AB available to signpost and consult with should produce some ideas for October meeting.

Partnership Skills Programme (MBED Update)

RN could offer, through MBED, a range of Workshops on a range of subjects. However JD and others felt it was unrealistic to expect busy volunteer team members to undertake all day chunks of training at venues a considerable distance from Skipton. RN conscious of this and feeding similar comments back through YF. Paul English felt the time had come for Skipton to concentrate on “Great Delivery” and move up a gear – concentrate on what has been achieved. AB gave example of £100,000 being levered into College developments from YF – the fact that these projects were included within the RMT Business Plan were a significant factor in levering in these resources. AB proposed – and it was accepted – that next Agenda should contain a “What has been achieved” item where we compiled a listing of what RMT had achieved within Skipton so far and what external funding had been generated.

RN had access, through Northumbria University to £5000 worth of training in “**Participatory Appraisal**”, which he would like to involve Young People within Skipton, concentrating on a specific topic – could be Youth Café, Bus Station, anything. All agreed that this may be a good way of getting involvement from Young People and that Community Involvement Subgroup should reconvene to look at specific targets and logistics to ensure this happened in Skipton this autumn.

RN gave notice of a **Great Towns Event in Harrogate** on **Saturday 11 November**, 10.30 – 5pm, with the theme of “Sustainable Communities & Funding”. The guest speaker would be the TV Personality Johnny Ball (“Think of a Number”).

Firth Street Mills Update (Paul English)

PE was still concerned that he didn't have enough capacity personally to deliver this process – really needed a Project Manager. RN had visited Mill with PE and was investigating if MBED could offer any practical assistance. Since last meeting an article had appeared about the project in the Craven Herald – PE had received 3 positive responses and 1 negative (worried about Parking issues). The clock was ticking on Objective 2 funding, which officially ran out in December, although there may be alternative ERDF funding available.

Update on Business Plan (CA)

As indicated in an article in the Craven Herald the previous week, CDC & HML were investigating the possibilities of developing a joint Office Site on land owned by CDC, off Gargrave Road. This was still at a very early stage. The South Skipton Employment Zone, as featured in the RMT Business Plan, was also still an option, but the Gargrave Road site had the advantage of already being in CDC ownership.

Update on Weirside Garden Project / Rural Target Fund (CA)

CA had until end of the month to submit initial application form to NYCC, who were administering this fund on behalf of YF. Very detailed application procedure and monitoring form had been received from NYCC. Hopefully, a stakeholders meeting could be convened within the next few weeks, prior to submitting the application.

Belle Vue Mills Oral History Project (CA)

Craven Museum were hoping to develop a programme that would record some of the memories of former workers at Dewhirsts/Belle Vue Mills, with the aim of staging an exhibition at the Museum and possibly partially on the Belle Vue Mills site, when it was redeveloped.

Rural Academy (JK)

CDC, the College and other partners were working on an exciting feasibility study, but were not in a position to make any potential plans public, as yet.

Update on CDC Local Development Framework – Ruth Parker

Ruth, from CDC's Planning Policy section gave an illustrated update, emphasizing the Issues and Options Consultation, just completed (June / July 06) - next important stage would be a 6 week Preferred Options consultation, to be undertaken in Autumn/ Winter 2006. Adoption was likely to be late 2007/early 2008.

Paul English commented that LDF would be more flexible than existing Local Plan, which had been drawn up in 1999. GW expressed concern regarding the process – she considered it a lessening of local democracy, as certain core elements in the planning process would be dictated by policy of the unelected Regional Assembly and in some cases by central government.

Next Meeting – Tuesday 3 October, 6pm, Room E1, Aireville Campus, Craven College.