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**Sent:** Tuesday, August 05, 2003 4:09 PM  
**Attach:** [Minutes - 22 July 2003.doc](#)  
**Subject:** MSP Minutes - 22 July 2003

Dear MSP Board Member

Please find attached the minutes from the Board meeting on 22nd July. **The next Board meeting will be on 16th September at 3pm at the Assembly Rooms in Frome.** Papers will be circulated in the week before the meeting.

Please note that from today I will be out of the office until 26th August. If you have any urgent MSP related queries in the meantime, please contact Stuart Merritt, Service Manager - Policy and Partners [merritts@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:merritts@mendip.gov.uk) 01749 341312

Best wishes

Sara

Sara Skirton  
Community Planning and Consultation Officer  
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## The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Minutes of the meeting of The Mendip Strategic Partnership held on Tuesday 22 July 2003 at 3.00 pm in the Town Hall, Glastonbury.

- |                    |                   |   |  |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| PRESENT:           | Ron Ballantine    | - | Chairman   |
|                    | Inspector Ashford | - | Avon & Somerset Police                                     |
|                    | Penny Baker       | - | Mendip Association of Chambers of Commerce                 |
|                    | Cathy Bakewell    | - | Somerset County Council                                    |
|                    | Peter Chapman     | - | Mendip Housing Limited                                     |
|                    | Penny Church      | - | Citizen Advice Bureau (Vice-Chair)                         |
|                    | Gaynor Clarke     | - | Jobcentre Plus   |
|                    | Nick Cottle       | - | Somerset Association of Local Councils                     |
|                    | Kathryn d'Inverno | - | Mendip Social Forum  |
|                    | Richard Dixon     | - | Mendip Environment Forum                                   |
|                    | Graham Livings    | - | Victim Support   |
|                    | Cllr. Ken Maddock | - | Mendip District Council                                    |
|                    | Zena Pollard      | - | Mendip Economy Forum                                       |
|                    | Ian Wallace       | - | Young Somerset   |
|                    |                   |   |  |
| PRESENT FOR ITEM 3 | Elaine Pugsley    | - | NCH  |
|                    | Helen Johns       | - | Somerset Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership |
|                    |                   |   |  |
| OFFICERS PRESENT:  | Peter Grainger    | - | Somerset County Council                                    |
|                    | Derek Hooper      | - | Mendip District Council                                    |
|                    | Graham Jeffs      | - | Mendip District Council                                    |
|                    | Roger Kershaw     | - | Somerset County Council                                    |
|                    | Sara Skirton      | - | Mendip District Council                                    |
|                    | Jill Temple       | - | Mendip District Council                                    |
|                    | Ros Wilkins       | - | Mendip District Council                                    |

<b>Agenda Item Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Ian Bennett - Strode College  Malcolm Lythgo - Environment Agency  Jim Shearer - Avon &amp; Somerset Police</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Public Participation</b></p> <p>None</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Presentation on Childrens' Services Developments in Mendip</b></p> <p>Elaine Pugsley thanked the Board for allowing herself and Helen Johns to give a presentation. She explained that she was a Link Project Manager for a number of Childrens' Support Projects across Mendip and South Somerset. She gave a detailed explanation of the projects that had been set up across Mendip. She pointed out that she was unsure whether there was a representative from the MSP linking to the local Children Services Planning Group and queried whether there was a gap at District Council level.</p> <p>Helen Johns explained that her role was implementing the developmental work around the National Childcare Strategy. She was employed as a Childcare Adviser by Somerset County Council and worked in Glastonbury at the Social Services Office. Packs were circulated around the table giving details of the Childcare Providers in Mendip which totalled 233. She explained the organisational work that she was involved with and advised that the age of the children that she worked with ranged between 0 – 14 years. The Board noted that funding and sustainability was a very big issue.</p> <p>The Mini Sure Start Programme had taken over from Take A Break and was a family support programme. Funding had been received from Glastonbury SRB to develop a volunteer service to befriend families in Glastonbury. The aim of the Mini Sure Start programme was to initiate with neighbourhood nurseries. Childcare, early education and family support were all integrated to form the shape of a classic Childrens Centre.</p> <p>In response to a query from the Chair it was noted that funding went directly to the Partnership at present although in the future it would be going to County Council. There were other funding initiatives such as the Childrens Fund and a significant amount of funding for 5 – 17 year olds had been awarded to Barnadoes.</p>

	<p>The Chief Executive of Mendip District Council explained that there was a large amount of money available from the Council to put into a project but although a site had been identified at Windmill Hill, Glastonbury, planning permission had not yet been submitted. He explained the background relating to the site and planning application. The funding would be lost unless a project was operational by the end of March 2004. It was technically possible to achieve and would be further helped if the Board felt able to support the principle. He suggested that maybe a letter could be sent to the relevant statutory bodies conveying MSP support which could result in a positive outcome.</p> <p>Nick Cottle advised the Board that the residents living near to the proposed site had raised environmental and other concerns. He felt that there would be stronger opposition to the proposal than was at first thought.</p> <p>The Chair pointed out that input from Parish and District Councillors might help to progress the application and a positive attitude would assist.</p> <p>He thanked Elaine Pugsley and Helen Johns for their presentation and wished them every success in all that they do. He referred to their request for a Member of the MSP to be a representative and explained that all representation of Outside Bodies was currently under review. He advised them that there is a County Strategic Partnership and suggested that they might wish to discuss representation on that Body.</p> <p>Graham Livings felt that it would be useful for the presentation to be given to the Parish Councils.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting dated 20 May 2003</b></p> <p>Agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>Graham Livings drew attention to the subsequent decision made about the closure of Street Job Centre.</p> <p>Gaynor Clarke advised that operations in Somerset had needed to be reviewed which resulted in the Street Branch closing. They were currently looking at an alternative delivery to provide a better service and were investigating outreach facilities in the Street and Glastonbury area.</p>

	<p>Richard Dixon asked whether the Protocol for the Partnerships in Somerset had been agreed. Sara Skirton advised that it had been agreed and would be circulated to Members of the Board.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Task Group Progress Reports</b></p> <p>Sara Skirton advised that there had been no meetings of the Task Groups. At the last Board Meeting it had been agreed to merge the Employment and Education and Skills Group.</p> <p>Graham Livings felt that momentum had been lost. As the Chair of the Transport Task Group he wished to commence some initiatives. With regard to transport he reported that he had wished to take on board a whole spectrum of businesses but was unable to do so as a lay person. Chairs of Task Groups should be able to integrate with outside businesses. Education – this provided a unique opportunity. Across Somerset the Partnerships should bench mark that they challenge Somerset to come up with its own indigenous University.</p> <p>Cathy Bakewell explained that the existing Colleges in Somerset work in partnership with Universities. FE colleges have their own HE graduations each year. A virtual University is underway but not a specific University.</p> <p>Ian Wallace pointed out that many people educated at outside Universities do not come back to Somerset resulting in loss of expertise in the County.</p> <p>Cathy Bakewell advised that a University in Somerset would be very popular and greatly benefit the local economy. However it was important to be realistic as to whether that could be achieved. Proposals at the moment are achievable. There was also a lack of jobs in Somerset to attract students with degrees.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Board would ask the Somerset Strategic Partnership to investigate the possibility of a University in Somerset.</p> <p>As a Member of the Transport Group Richard Dixon wished to thank Mendip District Council Officers for their support and hoped that they would continue to support the group. He welcomed input from other members of the Partnership to help deal with specific enquiries.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he felt that the Task Groups were slipping at present, but acknowledged that it was holiday time. He hoped</p>

	that they would be strongly working again in the Autumn.
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Parish and Town Councils and the MSP</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked Nick Cottle for his report and drew Members' attention to the Issues to Consider.</p> <p>2.1 It was agreed that the Minutes of each MSP would be circulated to every Parish Council. The MSP needs to take on board that it is sensible for it to ask Parish Councils for information whenever local issues are being considered. It would be useful to discuss a compact which states that the MSP discusses with the Parish Councils whenever its plans affect the area of the Parish Council and Parish Councils inform the MSP of issues in their Parish Plans.</p> <p>2.2 The comments made above would assist. It was agreed that it was important that as many Parish Councils as possible were electronically linked. It was also important for hard copies of documents to be sent out to the Parishes for those that were not electronically linked.</p> <p>The MDC Village Liaison Director advised that 22 out of the 52 Parishes in Mendip were electronically linked. 5 Clerks communicate electronically to their Parish Councillors. Some funding was available to improve electronic links and it was intended to undertake a comprehensive survey to ascertain which Parish Councils were electronically linked. There are issues with training but the potential to improve communications is significant.</p> <p>2.3 The comments relating to the "Cake" consultation were agreed. Work must be undertaken to bring in organisations represented on the Partnership Board. It must also be extended out.</p> <p>2.4 This initiative will bring Parish Councils up to certain standards and give great opportunities for Parishes.</p> <p>2.5 Parish Councils should be encouraged to produce their own plans to slot in with Community Plans.</p> <p>It was agreed that a covering letter be sent with the Minutes of this meeting to all Parishes explaining the exact position of the MSP so that they are aware that they will be consulted whenever anything is happening in their area.</p>
	<b>Voluntary Sector Infrastructure in Mendip</b>

Ros Wilkins gave a verbal report as follows:  
In 2002 a major review of Voluntary Sector Grants took place leading to applications from major organisations that provide services to Mendip's community to apply for funding for 2003-04 and beyond. This review took into account the result of the Hannah Reynolds report which had been commissioned by the Voluntary Sector. Hannah Reynolds acknowledged the added value that the Voluntary Sector gave and made all aware that the sector was seriously under funded in Somerset.

Following the closure of VAM at the end of May 2003 Officers from County and District have met to discuss how support can be offered to the circa 800 organisations operating within Mendip. There is currently no single organisation providing infra structure support to a range of large and small voluntary sector groups operating in or providing services across the District.

There is a broad consensus amongst the major funding partners that a new service should provide the basic infrastructure support advice and information role of "helping" others across the sector. This can range from basic information on how a group can be formed, constituted and registered to providing updates on changes in legislation, funding and training opportunities on offer. They act as an oracle of information, a "one stop shop" for the sector.

Officers have had discussions with National Association of the Council of Voluntary Services (NACVS) and representatives of the Voluntary sector on how a new a new service could be provided using the resources that are currently earmarked.

Written confirmation has been received from Somerset County Council confirming the contribution to this initiative. Cabinet has also confirmed Mendip District Council contribution. Ros has been able to secure 3 laptops on long term loan from County to help with this initiative

Following contact with the Active Communities Unit of the Home Office the council has submitted a project outline. Initial feedback is positive and it has been suggested that matched funding for an initial development year plus three additional years is possible. This potentially would attract matched funding into Mendip

The PCT, Mendip Housing Ltd, Learning Skills Council and the Community Fund of the Lottery have also expressed an interest in this initiative

	<p>This is a constantly emerging initiative. The initial phases will solely concentrate on the guaranteed funding of £39k.</p> <p>It is intended that the new service will be up and running by October 2003. The service will be run by County and District Officers and will be in constant liaison with NACVS. At the initial stage there will be contact with the voluntary sector. It is important to secure funding. Various organisations will be approached to form a Working Party. She asked for a volunteer from the Board to sit on the Working Party.</p> <p>Graham Livings announced that he would like to ensure that heartfelt thanks goes to Jilly Edwards of the former VAM from the MSP for all the work she carried out and her contribution to the Board. This was agreed.</p> <p>It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Penny Church be nominated to sit on the Working Party.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Shepton Mallet Market and Coastal Towns Initiative</b></p> <p>Zena Pollard reported that Shepton 21 were very frustrated as a Community Group that they had still not received a response from the RDA who are running the project. When they knew the outcome they would report back to the MSP and consult the Parish Councils.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Somerset Strategic Partnership</b></p> <p>The Chair circulated an SSP paper entitled “Vision for Somerset: Shaping the Future” and explained that the paper went to a meeting on 18 July to be approved and endorsed. He took Members through the paper which reflected the priorities for the SSP for the next 25 years.</p> <p>Roger Kershaw advised that the Vision Statement had originated from a number of workshops comprising all Members of the SSP. He explained the table at Appendix B and stated that the next stage for the SSP is to develop clear actions. These will be developed through Working Groups and will be put into the Community Strategy which will develop over the next couple of months.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the document be put onto the next Agenda of the MSP and be discussed at that time.</p>

	<p>In response to a query relating to whether the SSP website was up and running, Roger Kershaw explained that a website is being developed and will be launched with the Vision for Somerset document. When the website is developed and emerges with the Vision the Community Strategy will have detailed information relating to specific projects. All partners and LSPs will be contacted advising when the website is going live.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Community Engagement Programme – feedback</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that the Board appreciated the enormous amount of work put in by officers and in particular the amount of work carried out during the evenings and weekends. He wished to thank Sara Skirton and her team.</p> <p>Sara thanked everyone for the number of people involved from the Partnership. The total number of people who took part was 1004. Masses of data had been collected which was currently being put together into a report. The information would contain the district wide picture, urban and rural splits and by location. She gave Members a flavour of the data that had been collected under the various themes and advised that she hoped to have a full draft report available in two weeks.</p> <p>The Chair expressed his strong appreciation to Mendip District Council for supporting the initiative and suggested that perhaps it should be repeated along the same lines in 4 – 5 years time so that comparisons could be made. Ian Wallace suggested that a report should be written on the process and Sara confirmed that the methodology would be included within the report.</p> <p>Members of the MSP agreed that the professionalism shown by Mendip District Council officers should be congratulated.</p> <p>It was also agreed that it was important that the raw data should be interpreted correctly.</p> <p>Sara Skirton suggested that people who have an interest in particular themes might wish to get together with officers to work on this.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>MSP Project Plan</b></p> <p>Sara took Members through the chart and pointed out that the project plan was not currently being followed. She advised that it might be timely to produce a revised detailed project plan in the Autumn and ensure that the Task Groups have a programme of</p>

	<p>work.</p> <p>Once a full report is available from the “Cake” consultation exercise the action plan would be back on target.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that the Action Plan should be updated at each meeting to ensure targets are being met.</p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>Review of Board Membership</b></p> <p>Sara explained that at the last meeting concern had been raised about the attendance figures. It had been agreed that membership should be reviewed annually and it was up to the individual groups to agree their representation.</p> <p>She also advised that she had been approached by Pastor Fowler of Elim in Wells, Elaine Pugsley of NCH and Mark Holden of the Youth Service to sit on the Board.</p> <p>Discussion took place as to whether the whole area of representation should be revisited or the current membership be looked at and added to if necessary. It was important to recognise the groundwork that had been carried out. Some Members felt that the membership should be looked at to see which sectors were not adequately represented. There was enormous scope for co-option onto the working groups for people with specialist skills.</p> <p>Richard Dixon queried whether looking at what the SSP and other LSP’s did would be able to help. Roger Kershaw advised that the SSP had had similar discussions regarding representation and the Boards could come together through a Co-Ordinators Group. He suggested a twice yearly conference or a smaller Management Board.</p> <p>The issue of substitutes was discussed and it was agreed to have named substitutes wherever possible, although it was noted that where a sector was represented by more than one person substitutes were not necessary.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Board for their comments relating to a Faith Group Representative and a Child Care representative.</p> <p>Sara explained that she had been in discussion with Pastor Fowler of Elim in Wells who would discuss possible representation in MSP with the Churches Together network. Pastor Fowler had advised that they would only be able to represent the Christian Faith. 75%</p>

	<p>of people surveyed claimed to be Christians. He would however come back to Sara for a further discussion.</p> <p>Some Members of the Board felt strongly that there should be a representative for the Faith Group but there were concerns that all faiths should be represented and not just the Christian Faith.</p> <p>The Chair advised the Board that it was not up to them to decide the representation and members should await the comments from Pastor Fowler. It could then be pointed out that there was reasonably strong feeling that all Faiths should be represented.</p> <p>Sara referred to the SCC Youth Service and explained that she was hoping that Mark Holden, Senior Youth Worker would give a presentation to the Board at the next meeting. This prompted discussion as to whether a representative from that sector should be on the Board. Inspector Ashford suggested that the Youth Officer be invited to attend as an officer from Somerset County Council. Zena Pollard felt that he should also be included in the Working Groups.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that Elaine Pugsley be invited to represent Childcare Groups and this was seconded. He also pointed out that he had been in the Chair for one year and as it was initially agreed, the Chairmanship should be reviewed at the next meeting.</p>
<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>Budget Report</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that the current available balance held by Mendip District Council on behalf of the Partnership is £15,887.43.</p> <p>He drew the Board's attention to the request in the report for the Partnership to fund up to £2,000 for the consultation exercise recently completed.</p> <p>The Board agreed this request.</p>
<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Cllr. Ken Maddock, the new Leader of the Council and thanked him for attending part of the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Maddock explained that since 1 May 2003 there had been a change of administration in Mendip District Council and he advised the Board that following investigation into the existing services there were a number of proposed changes, the most significant being a review of the Senior Management Team. The calendar of meetings had been reduced by 40 out of the existing 140 and this</p>

	<p>would result in savings in excess of £80,000, enabling a reduction of 2% Council Tax. The culture of the Council also needs changing.</p> <p>He advised that he had received a letter from the Chairman and his view of the Partnership was that if it could help in achieving the Vision and delivering Priorities the Council would continue to give its support. He would reply in writing to the Chairman.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Cllr. Maddock for coming to the meeting and emphasised that the Partnership would do as much as possible - within their remit, objectives and vision – to improve the lives of the people of Mendip and hoped that the Board could continue to work with Mendip District Council. The Board was still in its early stages but it was hoped that priorities could be delivered.</p>
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b></p> <p>Noted.</p>

The meeting finished at 5.45 pm