

**Minutes of the Southern Area Action with Travellers Meeting
on Monday 26th February 2007 at 10:00 a.m.
in the European Room, Moylinn House, Craigavon**

Present: Aidan Brannigan, NIHE
Barbary Cook, CDHN
Fergal O'Brien, N&M HSS Trust
Fionnuala McAndrew, SHSSB
George Thompson, C&B Community HSS Trust
Gerardette McVeigh, C&B Community HSS Trust
Jacqueline Connolly, ATSG
Jim Maye, SELB
Kieran Shields, SELB
Dr Louise Herron, SHSSB
Paula Smyth, NMTP
Martin O'Neill, SHSSB
Kathleen Burns, CAWT
Sinead Hughes, ATSG
Stella McLoughlin, N&M TP
Valerie Maxwell, SHSSB

Apologies: Aiden McCullagh, C&B Community HSS Trust
Carolyn Agnew, Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust
Chris Cunningham, NIHE
Eamon McKeown NIHE
Kathleen O'Kane, NIPPA
Lyn Donnelly, SIHP
Martina Marshall, Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust
Raymond Murray, NIHE
Seamus Donnelly, An Tearmann Project

Introductions were made by all partners at the beginning of the meeting.

Minutes of Last meeting

Minutes of previous meeting were agreed as accurate.

Action Points

Following a letter to Newry Planning Department, a meeting has been set up for Thursday 15th March 2007 with the Traveller Support Group.

A meeting is to be held with Joe McConville from DEL for 16th March 2007 – to be confirmed.

Fionnuala McAndrew has written to the Chief Medical Officer of OFMDFM and the DHSS to highlight Traveller health needs and the need for secure funding.

Update on New Traveller Accommodation & Progress on Accommodation in Each Area

Aidan Brannigan reported the following:

Coalisland Group Housing Scheme – Consultation and design work on hold pending successful completion of electrical improvement works. There has been a seven week delay on electrical improvement scheme but it is hoped to have this completed soon.

Newry Group Housing Scheme – The Newry programme scheduled for 2007-08, may slip to 2008/09 as planning approval will be required.

Transit Site – There is still no formal site for Craigavon & Newry. There are ongoing objections to the emergency site at Legahory Green, Craigavon, as noted in last week's issue of the Lurgan Mail. The estimated start date for the site is July 2007 but NIHE will endeavour to bring it forward. Planning Service has given approval for two years.

NIHE met with Planning Service on 22 February 2007 to discuss a number of sites in the Newry and Craigavon areas. It has been agreed that an opinion will be sought from Planning Service at pre application stage as to whether or not there would be any impediments to planning approval. Aidan Brannigan advised that he would be meeting with Conor McArdle to discuss two potential sites in the Craigavon area after the SAAT meeting.

Action: Conor McArdle and Aidan Brannigan to meet regarding options for sites.

Aidan Brannigan outlined what amenities would be provided on the emergency site and referred to the DOE Design Guide. He noted that no electricity would be installed or a play area. He also noted that there still was a problem regarding horses being left to roam and that this would need to be addressed.

Discussions followed over concerns about the electricity and play area. Fionnuala McAndrew asked if the NIHE could reconsider the provision of electricity following residents complaining about the noise pollution from the generators. Aidan Brannigan said that he would need to check if the provision of electricity would require an amendment to the planning application already approved. Fionnuala McAndrew said that she had written to the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive previously about this matter. She agreed to forward a copy of this correspondence to Aidan Brannigan for investigation. She also agreed to write again to the Housing Executive on this matter. **Action: Fionnuala McAndrew to forward copy of letter to Aidan Brannigan and to write again to NIHE on behalf of SAAT. Aidan Brannigan to investigate planning application.**

We agreed to look at the possibility of establishing a play area on the Monbrief site. Mr McArdle to look into this matter and report back.

The Newry site – It is proving really difficult to get a site. Planning Service opinion was that the proposed site(s) would not receive planning approval due to proximity of sewage works and nature conservation area and also one proposed site being on a protected route. Discussion followed over possible alternatives. It was felt that this needs to be followed up at a local level and that Newry needs to be rezoned. **Action: Aidan Brannigan to email Fergal O'Brien with details and contact points.**

It was suggested that it would be a good idea to invite Dr McBride CMO to the partnership meeting. It was decided that a localized meeting will take place first, then an invitation could be extended to the partnership meeting.

Barbary Cook suggested that the DOE Design Guide be tested through the Equality Commission and suggested a small group be formed to take this forward. This was agreed. **Action: Conor McArdle to speak with Paul Noonan.**

1-Year Action Plan

The group agreed to the next meeting being a workshop and maybe then look at a 2-year action plan. In light of RPA there may be value in having a 2-year plan. Kieran Shields cautioned against a 2 year plan in view of RPA. It would be difficult to commit beyond 1 year given pending changes in organisations' structures. **Action: Martin O'Neill and Valerie Maxwell to organise the workshop.**

The SAAT Plan was distributed for everyone to look at and encouraged to get back to Martin O'Neill with any amendments. The group suggested changes to the layout. **Action: Martin O'Neill will amend and send out to all for approval.**

Fergal O'Brien reported to the group the importance of having preventive work on the ground and staff gave an example of a serious incident regarding a Traveller family and criticised how the local Housing Executive /PSNI in Newry had handled the situation. F McAndrew suggested that organisations should use the learning from such incidences to review their procedures.

Martin O'Neill referred to the recent Statistical Profile document that was circulated. He advised that the document was still in draft form and asked all agencies to forward comments. A further draft will be issued to all partner agencies for comment before finalising the document.

The Action Plan (5th Draft) – Valerie Maxwell updated the group on the plan. Further information is needed on the mapping. Clarification is needed on the site at Coalisland, one set of information is from An Tearmann and another is needs assessment for the town of Coalisland. It was suggested that at the workshop this be agreed and what information is needed and its usage. (Page 13 – total number of Agencies) was noted for attention. All partner agencies were to consider the most appropriate representative from their organisation to attend a workshop.

Any Other Business

Conor informed the group of a play taking place on Thursday 3rd May 2007 in Lurgan Town Hall at 2pm by Actor Michael Collins. He extended an invitation to all. The play is open to the public but suggested it was more suitable over 16's.

Users Forum on Tuesday 20th March 2007. A Native American will be speaking at this meeting about "Seven Generation" work. Conor will be attending and will give feedback at next meeting.

Needs Assessment Update – Aidan Brannigan advised that the NIHE had met with Derek Hanway and Bridget Quirke (UCD) on 16 February 2007. The contract for the All Ireland Health Study has not

yet been signed. Derek Hanway is to meet with local Traveller Support Groups on 9 March 2007 to discuss the capacity within the Traveller community for peer research. Aidan advised that the NIHE want to be in a position to decide by May 2007 on method of research irrespective of capacity within the Traveller community. It is hoped to carry out the needs assessment in Oct/Nov 2007. He will come back with an update.

Issue on Horses – Aidan Brannigan referred to the planning approval for the emergency site at Legahory and the negative impact the issue of horses would have on managing the site. He emphasised that a condition of the licence to occupy the site prohibited the keeping of non domestic pets. He suggested that SAAT assist Craigavon Traveller Support Committee in looking at initiatives in South Dublin County Council for dealing with horses. He also suggested that the Social Enterprise model should be investigated further. He agreed to pass contact details for South Dublin County Council to Conor McArdle. **Action: Aidan Brannigan to pass on contact details to Conor McArdle.**

Jacqueline Connolly reported that the SAAT information on the SAAT website is considerably out of date. Martin is to look at improving this situation.

Conor McArdle expressed his thanks to Aidan Brannigan on behalf of SAAT for all his hard work, time and commitment and wished him well in his future career.

Dates for Next SAAT Meeting in 2007

- Tuesday 29th May 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in the European Room, Moylinn House, Craigavon
- Wednesday 12th September 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in the European Room, Moylinn House, Craigavon
- Tuesday 20th November 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in the European Room, Moylinn House, Craigavon