

Minutes
Loddon Shire Council (LSC) Community Workshop
Friday, December 1st 2006
1:30- 3:30 p.m.

At Loddon Shire Council Hall

1. Welcome to members of the workshop

Participants: Carolyn Whitzman (GLOVE), Carolyn Wallace (CASA), Cr Brooke (LSC), Brett Eastwood (Corporate Services, LSC), Trish Rodger (EMCHN, LSC), Colleen Ballard (Centacare), Sue Andrews (CS, LSC), Steve Smith and Dale Lewis (Police, LSC), Julie Simmonds (I+DHS, LSC), Vincent Bartells, Fay L'Hullier, Rick Rafters and Heather Chamberlain (Presidents of the Community Planning), Catherine Zhang (RA, GLOVE)

I'm not really sure what these acronyms mean, but perhaps Trish can write them out?

2. Presentation about the GLOVE Project (Gender, Local Governance and Violence Prevention: Making the Links)

Catherine, write the minutes in past tense eg., Carolyn 'chaired'

The purpose of the meeting (see email)

Carolyn chairs the meeting and gives a brief presentation about the GLOVE Project, which includes 'aims and background of project', 'what has happened so far', 'budget & roles' and 'timeline'. She also raises three questions needed to be answered at the local level:

1. What local resources are there to prevent violence (both within local government and in community organizations)?
2. What kind of measurement tools are there to know the extent of violence in the community?
3. What does the community need from the GLOVE project?

. (The PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded from the GLOVE website, under the 'resources' page, which is <http://www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/research/fund/glove/resources.html>. The updated one will be put online asap.)

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Questions & Comments: Many statistical data from ABS, victimization surveys, social, economic and health cost of violence and fear of violence draw a lot of attention. Also, participants show a lot of interests in some new conceptions and national or international good examples. Rick asks about the ‘gendered mainstreaming approach’ in this project. Brett wonders how do the other three local municipalities work and how to work with them.

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3. Discussion about the roles, responsibilities, resources, and constraints available to of local municipality and each organization in Loddon Shire.

After the presentation, an informal and information sharing discussion is held about the existing issues and programs from different community representatives and local organizations.

(I think , Catherine, that you might want to leave it to Trish and Carolyn to revise the notes based on their understanding. I also think it might be better if it was organized under the headings: what resources, and what are the next steps..

Julie Simmonds (I+DHS, LSC): Supports women who experience violence at present. Realizes it might be a good idea to have some quantitative data, such as how many clients they have and how many people involved in programs. Starts to think about some new programs to provide help and tackle issues.

Carolyn Wallace (CASA): Introduces the responsibilities about CASA and PCP. The most important aspects of the GLOVE Project and community violence prevention is preventing and responding. It is important to provide information and support to vulnerable groups.

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Steve Smith and Dale Lewis (Police, LSC): The police are lack of information about community safety and violence prevention. Have a different definition about domestic violence, which involves more people and has larger scales (I don’t understand this point). The reaction to violence at the police level is a little behind, and currently, they do not intervene until something serious has already happened. (Questions: Carolyn Wallace raises a question about how the local communities see about the police.)

Brett Eastwood (Corporate Services, LSC): Shows a vision of Loddon Community, including both the challenges and opportunities. The importance to build a strong

rural community which has strong networks. (Comments: From Julie Simmonds—the cultural norm of the violence prevention; From Trish Rodger—Should give different considerations about the so-called ‘bad people’; From Carolyn Whitzman—sets an example about an old active woman’s impact to young people’s languages and behaviors.)

Vincent Bartells, Fay L’Hullier, Rick Rafters and Heather Chamberlain (Presidents of the Community Planning): Vincent and Fay provide examples and experiences about violence victims and perpetrators. A community emergency services group led by Fay and other 18 volunteer win the respects and applause from other participants.

However, they have limited knowledge about how and when to intervene properly, which means staff training is needed at the local level. At the same time, this also reflects the violence prevention in Loddon is under funded. Rick argues that men can also be victims of domestic violence. He mentions about bullying at school and also adds that the kids’ behaviors at school reflect their behaviors at home. Heather works on mental health and stresses that currently people who experience mental diseases could get proper information and help. (Comments: Carolyn Whitzman answers why gender matters in both GLOVE project and community violence prevention. Also, she emphasizes the supports to people involved. Cr Brooke expresses the concern about the desire of training.)

Cr Brooke (LSC): Vision about the safe community. Try to provide support to community, community leaders and organizations from the municipality perspective. Think about the influences of good models to other people.

Colleen Ballard (Centacare)?

4. Outcomes of the workshop

Even though community planning is a long process which could not be built in a short period and some of the outcomes could not be measured quantitatively; the two hours’ workshop is informative and effective. Representatives from different interest groups realize the importance of information sharing among different partners. In addition, as the resources for the rural municipality and community are limited and under funded, it becomes more important to build a community network and make good use of the

existing resources. In Loddon, it is fantastic to have a group of warm-hearted and passionate volunteers (from Local Emergency Services) to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week on community issues. However, it is significant for small rural municipality to apply grants, to work on community initiatives and staff training.

Comments and suggestions: Rick suggests having a local publication about community safety which could be distributed periodically.

5. 3:30 p.m. Close of the Workshop. Thanks to all participants.