

MyShotley.com steering group inaugural meeting, weds 200906, queen's head, erwarton, 7.30pm notes

1. Present

- Marianne Brame
- Graham Brown
- Mel Matthews
- Jeremy Peters (chaired)
- Kevin Smith
- Graham Steel

2. Apologies

- Brigitte Gualde
- Stephen Howard

3. Background

- For context, JP summarised the history of MyShotley.com – including its inception in November 2004 as essentially a consultation tool to aid the Parish Plan process, run by the Parish Plan Steering Committee; and its successful evolution and growth into a large and frequently updated news and information site receiving 3000 visitors per month and much positive feedback; but with no group to give a steer or accountability.
- There is a continuing commitment to the ethos of 'by and for the community'

4. Purpose of group

- To become an independent group of volunteers to steer the development and content of the community website, MyShotley.com
- To have the following tasks:
 - To be a collective steer for site, advising on content and review
 - Identify and prioritise enhancements required
 - Review the current business model – develop a business plan
 - Consider whether to remain advertising-free
 - Secure resources for developing the enhancements and promotional activity
 - Establish governance arrangements, ownership, copyright, editorial control
 - Establish Terms of Reference
 - Review partnership relationships, including with Noticeboard, Parish Council and Parish Plan Implementation Board
- The timescale for re-launching the site should be generous in order to get it right. In two phases – (1) new core site by c

Spring 2007 and accepting advertising; (2) participation of other organisations; (3) possibly increase commercial revenue whilst retaining independence

5. Governance arrangements and business model

- Discussed options.
- On the basis that this group would take the ownership / steering role, it favoured the site remaining independent, seeking the increased funds it requires in order to develop, from Parish Council and other sources.
- But also to start accepting paid advertising, partly in order to give local businesses vested interest in site's success. Some merit seen in the Parish Council owning the site, partly due to insurance and liability issues (for more consideration).
- Partnership with Noticeboard has increased – scope for further development, such as producing in interchangeable format, to be explored.

6. Enhancements

- Group agreed that at this stage in its life the site now requires:
 - Revised navigational and site structure to make it clearer and reflect evolved purpose and content. Group sees the existing news update frequency, and depth of content, to be key strengths to retain.
 - Freshen up or review of the design, despite current branding, design and logo viewed as effective. Existing use of photos was also seen by group as a strength of the site.
 - The home page to include up to date news and mixed content faster loading, but retaining visual strength
 - Review of the logo – perhaps with a competition in association with local schools and youth. New logo would be launched with re-launched site.
 - Improved promotion to maximise the asset. To erect small posters, and / or considering something more permanent. And on internet (more domains, and better search results). To consider more innovative promotion such as incorporating into village welcome signs, and more involvement of local organisations via success stories or via village hall bookings.
 - Additional functionality, including:
 - Quickpolls and more extensive surveys
 - Newsgroup / mailing list (to replace current manual list)
 - Forums
 - Noticeboards (no relation)
 - Guestbook
 - Optional registration
 - Enabling contributed pages or more interactive contributions, especially from older young people and primary school. Potential links from the curriculum
 - Enabling local organisations to upload content to 'their' pages, perhaps through electronic submission | review | approval facility.

- Involvement of new after school youth club,
- Adding a blog, Podcasts, video....?
- Agreed that, due to lack of sufficient technical skills and capacity within the group to enhance interactive functionality, the group would raise funds and consider approaching local web developers to work very closely with the editor and group on at least some of the enhancements required.
- Agreed need to retain full control over outcomes, therefore developer would need to be chosen carefully, and with a tight brief / specification.

7. Points for action prior to next meeting.

- Look for / print good examples of home pages of other sites (*all*)
- Make shopping list of specific features of other sites suitable for potential inclusion on MyShotley (*all*)
- To make initial informal approaches to local, known web developers (*all*)
- Review in depth meaning of visit / hit stats (*JP / KS*)
- Revise content of About Us page on the site – describing this group's work and seeking views and ideas from site users (*JP*)
- Write similar article for Oct/Nov issue of Noticeboard (*JP*)
- To explore further the best options for governance and accountability, including looking at good practice elsewhere (*GS*)
- To submit initial bid for monies into Parish Council budget making process (*GS/JP*)

8. Next meeting

- Agreed as 1 November 2006, 7.30pm, Erwarton Queen's Head

JP 230906