

WEALDEN LSP

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 11th January 2006

PART 1

1.1 Welcome and introductions

The following people attended this meeting:

Tim Sparrow – SALC and Chair
Anita Murphy – Eastbourne Downs PCT
Jessica Britton – Sussex Downs and Weald PCT
John Kelly – Wealden Federation of Voluntary Organisations
Ken Stevens – Federation of Small Businesses
Mike Rogers – East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Greg Falvey – Town and Country Housing Association
CI Tony Blaker – Sussex Police
Charles Lant – Wealden District Council - Chief Executive
Cllr. Keith Whitehead
Cllr Sylvia Martin
Charmian Adcock – Wealden District Council – LDP
David Palmer – Wealden District Council – Head of Policy and Review
Alison Horan – ESCC
Gill Cameron Waller – Wealden District Council – Policy and Review
Caroline Adcock – Wealden LSP Co-ordinator

Tim Sparrow, the chair, gave a warm welcome to the new members of the partnership, CI Tony Blaker and Anita Murphy

Apologies for absence:

Rupert Clubb and Aprile Biggs (Environment Agency)
Cllr Nigel Coltman
Cllr Jan Dunk
Mary Clare Deane – Wealden District Council
Kathy Fordham (NFU)
Michael Lunn (resident)

1.1 Minutes of the last meeting

These were signed as a correct record

1.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

1.3 Updates

The LAA

The final draft is due for submission on 20th January and should be with Ministers on 11th February.

Responses from Government Office have not been consistent and some of the stretch targets suggested by East Sussex are not acceptable to GOSE who prefer nationally recognised indicators, even though these

might be less responsive to local problems. Concerns that this prescriptive approach will be even greater in the next round. The Respect agenda also asks for mandatory indicators which may have to be included in next week's criteria. GOSE are not accepting targets suggested by East Sussex in relation to quality parish councils and parish plans since parish plans are only considered as a process and not an outcome. The ODPM focus is on value for money, engaging hard to reach groups and measuring how outcomes can make a difference to these groups. The East Sussex LAA Steering Group consider that Parish Plans are essential building blocks in order to establish whether change is happening. Volunteering is also a high priority but lack of co-ordination across the county means that this is an obstacle for inclusion as an LAA target. More time is required to ensure processes are in place which will allow outcomes to be achieved in subsequent years. This is only the first year of the LAA.

Governance arrangements have yet to be decided by ESSP and the relationship between ESSP and District and Borough LSP's is still subject to debate until the LAA content has been agreed.

ACTION

Wealden LSP to write to GOSE with feedback to make a case for the targets in the draft East Sussex LAA.

Update on the Local Development Framework

Cllr Keith Whitehead and Charmian Allcock gave an update on the process of the LDF. The aim is to complete the spatial development and land use planning document by 2007 and other documents by 2008. Early and meaningful involvement from the community is needed to prepare the statement and supplementary documents. David Phillips, Head of Planning, will attend LSP meetings in future, or delegate to one of his team, as there are many cross-overs between the Community Strategy and the LDF.

The Local Plan has now been approved and adopted on a non-statutory basis, subject to receipt of amendments (approx 40) and this will be on WDC website at the end of January with a hard copy to follow in March. The process should be underway with a full team now in place.

The first document will be the Statement of Community Involvement which will consult on and explain the process for community consultation in relation to future documents. A small group has been drawn up to steer this and a letter has already been sent out to a wide range of organisations including Government Departments. The draft document is due by the end of March and six weeks will be allocated for formal consultation.

Further documents will start from early to mid summer by agreement with GOSE and will provide guidance as a replacement for the Local Plan and Structure Plan. The South East Plan sets out the criteria for housing allocations in Wealden and these plans must provide for the required number of dwellings. Each document will be subject to a public examination and the whole process may be as extensive as a public inquiry.

LAA and LSP contributions have yet to be agreed but it is clear that they

must work closely with the LDF since both require consultation and deal with quality of life issues. Closer working between theme partnerships, theme champions and the LDF could inform topics such as affordable housing, and preparation of the Development Plan Document is due to begin shortly.

Discussion has taken place as to how the relationships should work but all agreed that once the process becomes more tangible this will point the way forward. A sub committee arrangement is likely to be the most appropriate, providing key representatives and representatives of service providers are invited to attend.

Update on East Sussex in Figures

The publication of the latest newsletter is still subject to delay and no-one has yet had a pre-view of website before it becomes live. ODPM is impressed with the product so far.

Update on South East Plan

Consultation is complete and the final document is with ODPM. SEERA recommends 400 houses per annum until 2026, this being a lower figure than the current local plan requirement.

The allocation of dwellings will be decided by the LDF within the general figure of 230 to the South of Hailsham and 170 to the North.

1.5 Update from Theme Partnership meetings since November Arts Sub-Committee

Caroline Adcock, LSP Co-ordinator, attended this meeting and confirmed that the proposed cultural trail was given positive support as a theme partnership project for the immediate future.

Health and Social Care

Jessica Britton confirmed that the pilot project for visiting the frail elderly in Crowborough is now underway.

PCT configuration is still being consulted on but the period finishes on 22nd March. This will create one PCT for East Sussex or 2 PCT's with an East/West split.

Safer Wealden Partnership

CI Tony Blaker explained that he was acting as the LSP representative and is also Vice-Chair of Safer Wealden Partnership. Cllr. Doodes has been elected as the chair

At the last partnership meeting the Community Safety Centre at Hailsham was discussed. This would house Lifeline, (30 employees), the Fire Service, the Safer Wealden partnership and provide meeting rooms and facilities supported by the partnership.

Discussions also took place about the impact of recent mergers and the reduction in police force numbers. GOSE are looking for a reduction in crime figures but this is very hard to achieve in Wealden where crime is already below average. A community based model is still very much the preferred option and increased funding has been made available to employ 40 PCSO's (20 at present) so that all parishes will be covered.

These front line staff will be supervised by constables. Volunteers, Local Action Teams and special constables will also be encouraged to tackle crime and fear of crime at the local level.

PCSO's may be located in the community as there is a move away from police stations to using fire stations, council offices etc. as a base.

Neighbourhood Watch, Pub Watch, Farm Watch and number plate recognition will also be used to target criminals visiting the area from outside.

Key staff supporting the Safer Wealden Partnership are planning to hold regular meetings every two weeks in order to focus their resources on hot issues.

Ken Stevens, Prosperity Theme Champion, offered to feed in concerns about business crime in Wealden.

Mike Rogers of the Fire Service explained that the great strength of the Safer Wealden Partnership is the broader view it has taken with regard to road safety, arson reduction and environmental protection, all of which are referred to in the original Theme Action Plan. This has the full support and backing of the Fire and Rescue Service in East Sussex.

Transport and Access meeting

Main priorities have now been included in revised action plan and proposals for the year ahead.

PART 2

2.1 Wealden LSP – Three Years on WLSP 2006 Report 19

Caroline Adcock presented a summary of this report outlining what the LSP had achieved in the last three years and where it needed a sharper focus. The Chairman thanked her for this important piece of work and indicated that it would provide a very useful framework for future working arrangements.

General discussion took place around the idea of keeping theme partnerships for every theme or tackling them in another way. For instance, theme champions may meet with cabinet portfolio holders, the LSP co-ordinator and others on a regular basis or as needed. The Learning theme has not managed to sustain a partnership and it may be appropriate to add this to the Prosperity Theme. The meeting noted that the need to meet Government targets often takes precedence over the ability to act sensitively to local issues.

There is a need to re-energise the LSP and use it as a more effective vehicle for lobbying and influence. It needs a clear focus and a few specific activities to demonstrate partnership working. Partners need to see the LSP as a useful vehicle to help them deliver their goals. Partners from the various agencies can use the LSP to provide them with a clear steer on spending resources in ways which meet the needs of the community. The dialogue with parishes through parish plans was welcomed.

At the same time as this local review is being discussed, the Government is carrying out a similar exercise in relation to LSP's across the country. An

event is taking place in London on 17th January and Wealden will send a representative and provide feedback.

ACTION

Members are invited to comment on the national consultation document (executive summary circulated at meeting) and send responses to Caroline Adcock

2.2 Key Points arising from Parish Plans

The Chairman thanked Caroline for the extensive piece of work recently undertaken to review completed parish plans and partners were encouraged to take back the key issues relevant to their theme partnership.

2.3 Future Objectives,

This report provides an important summary outlining how the LSP will focus future activity in the immediate future.

The proposals have been produced as a result of the review of the parish plans and reference to the original consultation for the Community Strategy.

Members of the partnership felt that it would be useful to check these out with members of the community, maybe as part of a review of the Community Strategy. It would also be important to obtain views from the hard to reach groups since there was a feeling that parish plans may not be fully inclusive.

ACTION

Theme partnerships are required to consider the proposals for future activity and will be asked confirm their acceptance at the next LSP meeting

2.4 Reduction of Second Homes Funding

An e-mail had been received from East Sussex County Council alerting LSP's to the possible reduction of the county council's share of the second homes funding.

This is currently providing 75% of the total budget – see table below for 2005 – 2006

Police	£9,733	8.6%
Fire	£5,911	5.2%
East Sussex County Council	£84,660	75%
Wealden District Council	£12,734	11.2%
	£113,038	100%

The Fire Service has pledged to continue with their share, as do Wealden District Council. The County have not yet made a final decision and this

will be discussed by cabinet in February. No further information is available concerning the police contribution.
The consequences of this mean that there is limited funding to cover admin support, partnership funding for projects or contributions to Esif

Little benefit was seen from raiding the Community Grants Fund as this is already heavily over subscribed by applications for projects in the District

ACTION

Tim Sparrow agreed to write to all partners and hoped they would respond promptly. Based on these replies he would draft a letter to ESCC to express our disappointment and regret.

PART 3

3.1 Any other Business

Mike Rogers announced the Safe Drive/Stay Alive event which was due to take place in February. Dates are 27th / 28th February and 1st / 2nd March
All members will be invited to attend.
The venue is at Uckfield Civic Centre and is largely funded by Wealden LSP second homes fund.
All relevant agencies will be involved

Another LSP funded event (in partnership with Global Grants) will take place at Hailsham Pavilion on Monday 6th Feb Reception and Drinks 6.30pm Performance 7pm. This is run by Act on It and is entitled Damage 2 Step. It is a drama project which culminates in an evening of performance across the generations; LSP Members and Councillors are invited.

ACTION

To reserve your complimentary ticket please call the Hailsham Pavilion box office on 01323 841414

3.2 Date, Time and Place of future meetings

The next meeting of the Wealden LSP is on Wednesday 8th March at 4pm – Hailsham East Community Centre