

Note of Wealden Local Strategic Partnership meeting 18th November 2008, Heathfield Community Centre.

Present:

Ian Chisnall – Chair, Churches Together in Sussex
Richard Allum - Sussex Police
Adam Chugg - Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services
Cllr Pam Doodes – Leader, WDC
Cllr Linda Francis – Willingdon & Jevington Parish Councillor
Joanna Hodgson – Environment Agency
Alison Horan - East Sussex County Council
Cllr William King - Maresfield Parish Council
Charles Lant – WDC, Chief Executive
Cllr Di Phillips - WDC Councillor
Richard Watson, PCT
Cllr David White – WDC Councillor
Cllr Chantal Wilson – WDC Councillor

In Attendance

Gill Cameron-Waller – WDC, Policy and Partnership Manager
Alex White – WDC, Policy Assistant
Lucy Dixon-Thompson - LAA Engagement Officer, East Sussex County Council
Fiona Berry - WDC, Sustainability Coordinator

Apologies:

David Chaffey – Assistant Housing Services Director, Downland HA
Lisa Compton – PCT, Director of Patient and Public Engagement & Corporate Affairs
Nigel Eveleigh – WDC, Planning Policy Manager
Kathy Fordham – NFU Representative
Cllr Roy Galley – WDC Councillor
Teresa Gittins – Action in Rural Sussex, Director of Policy
Jeff Hart – Freedom Leisure, Managing Director
Neil Honnor – Sussex Police, Wealden Commander
Cllr Barrie Murray - Uckfield Town Council
Neal Robinson – East Sussex Fire and Rescue
Martin Small – South Downs Joint Committee
Ken Stevens – Federation of Small Businesses
Marie Tomblin – Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. Action points from the last meeting were addressed as follows:

Ian Chisnall updated members on the action point relating to theme champions for the SCS. Jeff Hart had agreed to pick up the Culture / Leisure theme and East Sussex County Council had confirmed that they are happy to continue to cover the Transport theme. The Learning theme still had no obvious lead. Alison Horan suggested that someone from ESCC could attend meetings on an ad hoc basis to update members on specific topics relating to education. It was agreed that this would be helpful. However, there was still a need to try and seek creative engagement with those involved in education in the District.

Pam Doodes and Gill Cameron-Waller had attended the first meeting of the Rural Board for the South East on 14 November. This inaugural meeting had gone very well and augured well for the future work of the Board. The LSP was in a privileged position in having a seat on the Rural Forum. Ian Chisnall had put his name forward as a pro-tem measure. Volunteers to act as permanent representative would be welcome.

Revised Constitution - see item 4 below

SCS action plan - see item 5 below

Progress through Partnership - see item 6 below

Ian Chisnall explained that in light of the CAA event held on 27 October a provisional follow up meeting had been arranged for Friday 6 February 2009. This would provide an opportunity for a small task and finish group representing key agencies and interests across East Sussex to come together specifically to reflect on the new CAA framework and take forward engagement with the Commission. The issue would be discussed further at the next joint LSP Chairs and Coordinators meeting on 18 December.

2. CVS

Adam Chugg explained that at the last LSP meeting there had been a useful debate about the combined roles of South Downs and EAVS. He had asked for this agenda item to update members on the position of both organisations.

Trustees of South Downs and EAVS had been considering how best to deliver services and in April 2008 decided to formally explore the option of a single organisational structure. Any final decision will be for the membership of both

organisations. An 'inform/consult/decide' process is currently underway - consultation will be over the period 1 December 2008 - 2 March 2009. The intention is to make the consultation as inclusive as possible and allow other community groups to comment on proposals. Both South Downs and EAVS would welcome feedback. A final decision is expected by the end of March with any changes implemented during 2009/10. A move to a single structure would be intended to help improve delivery and increase opportunities for engagement across Wealden.

Adam provided a brief outline of the East Sussex Compact (a written understanding between voluntary, community and statutory bodies in East Sussex) which had recently achieved a national excellence award. Copies of the summary guide had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Further copies and the full document are available through Alison Horan at East Sussex County Council.

3. Spotlight on the Environment

Fiona Berry gave a presentation on the impact of climate change for Wealden. National targets have been set that require local authorities to seek to adapt to climate change. These targets (NI188 in particular) also require that LSPs are involved in the process. Although detailed guidance is still being prepared it was felt important to engage with the LSP at an early stage to facilitate discussions on how best to work with partners on these issues.

In discussion it was recognised that climate change issues are beginning to move up the agenda for many partners. However, there was as yet little detailed consideration of how best to tackle the challenges faced. The LSP was an ideal forum to begin to address the issues - in particular to explore the role of and engagement with parish councils, VCS agencies and businesses as well as to share information and best practice.

Ian Chisnall asked that members give some thought to how the LSP might best engage and that the issue be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: All members

4. Revised constitution

Ian Chisnall tabled a revised draft taking account of the points made in discussion at the last meeting. Members agreed to formally adopt the revised constitution.

William King thanked the Board on behalf of local councils for widening the membership to include town and parish councils.

5. SCS Action planning

Gill Cameron-Waller introduced Jo-Anne Kett of Sector Management. Jo-Anne has been appointed as consultant to assist the LSP in developing an action plan for the SCS. Jo-Anne explained that she had had some discussions with some members and has begun to draw together the information received. She asked that theme champions complete the summary forms she has sent and stressed that there is no need to complete every box - basic information will be sufficient to move on to the next stage of the process.

Ian Chisnall thanked Jo-Anne for attending the meeting and pointed out the importance of her work for the partnership as a whole. He was confident that work was proceeding in the right direction. He suggested that if anyone needed assistance with the process they contact either Gill Cameron-Waller or Alex White.

6. Progress through Partnership

Ian Chisnall explained that a small group of members had met in October to complete the Progress through Partnership (PtP) self assessment forms. This had been a valuable exercise and helped to highlight what the LSP had achieved. There were two questions posed by PtP in relation to delivery and impact that he wanted to highlight to enable all members to consider examples of success. The questions (5.9 and 5.10 of the self assessment form) asked for examples of where the LSP had achieved more collectively than would have been achieved by individual organisations; and what barriers had been overcome by the LSP.

In discussion members suggested a number of different examples, including 'Wheels to Learn'; ESFRS 'Life Courses'; and the W4Y youth website. It was also felt that the engagement of partners within the LSP itself was a measure of success and helped to facilitate cultural and organisational change within each partner organisation.

A remaining challenge for the LSP was to engage with those areas less well represented at meetings - learning, business and infrastructure issues in particular. It was recognised that it may never be possible to engage as fully as one would like across all areas and that strategic engagement on key issues may provide a more fruitful approach.

7. Local Development Framework

Gill Cameron-Waller explained that as a result of numerous changes to the LDF process it had been difficult to engage with the LSP in recent months.

WDC had recently strengthened support for the LDF team and a number of issues were coming to the fore which would enable the LSP to engage more closely in the process. In particular a suite of workshops were planned over the next two months to develop options for the core strategy. LSP members were invited and encouraged to take part. This series of workshops would help to bring all up to speed with the evidence base and enable people to begin to feed in to more specific options for public consultation in May - June next year. The workshops will take place on 21 November, 15 December and 14 January. Further details of the workshops will be sent to members.

In discussion it was recognised that this was an opportunity to influence thinking from an early stage and help to shape the core strategy. The proposed activities will build on the clear link between the LDF and the SCS which was established at the beginning of the year, and the role of the LSP in shaping the future for Wealden.

Gill Cameron-Waller will be attending all the workshops and will provide feedback at the next LSP meeting. This is not a substitute for partner involvement, rather a safety net for those partners who are unable to attend all, or even any, of the workshops. Further thought is being given to how the LSP can helpfully be involved in the LDF process, particularly in relation to parish and town councils.

Action: Gill Cameron-Waller

8. Future planning

Ian Chisnall explained that he, Pam Doodes, and Gill Cameron-Waller will meet to plan out the likely issues that the LSP should address during 2009. Immediate issues that came to mind were rural issues, the LDF, climate change, local highways & transport issues, education & skills and business & employment. He asked that members let him or Gill Cameron-Waller know of any other issues or key milestones they would want to see considered or addressed.

Action: All members

9. AOB

Charlie Lant informed members that he was in the process of preparing a report for WDC Cabinet about the impact of the economic downturn for Wealden. Current information was sketchy and it was difficult to obtain accurate information down to District level. He is trying to draw together indicators for Wealden and highlight 'Wealden stories'. He would be grateful for any further information from members - either anecdotal or 'hard' data, statistics etc - on the impact on their organisations. He intends to share the

information with the LSP and suggested that the issue become a standing agenda item.

In discussion it was recognised that there were many potential deleterious consequences for Wealden. However, it would be important that positive aspects are also reflected - for example how innovative responses may help alleviate the impact of recession. Ian Chisnall asked that members send any information they have to Charlie Lant.

Action: All members

East Sussex County Council are undertaking an Accessibility Strategy Local Assessment for Hailsham and Eastbourne. An online survey is open from 5 November - 17 December. Partners who wish to take part can access the survey via the ESCC website at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting of the LSP will be at **10am** on **Wednesday 21st January 2009** at **Heathfield Community Centre**.