

**Note of Wealden Local Strategic Partnership meeting 4 September 2009,  
Wealden District Council offices, Hailsham.**

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**Present:**

Ian Chisnall – Chair, Churches Together in Sussex  
Richard Allum - Sussex Police  
Tom Beasley - Highways Agency  
Cllr Pam Doodles – Leader, WDC  
Tracy Evans - Downland HA  
Cllr Linda Francis – Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council (representing southern parishes)  
Cllr Roy Galley – WDC Councillor  
Teresa Gittins – Action in Rural Sussex, Director of Policy  
Mark Rist - East Sussex Fire and Rescue  
Sue Shoemith - South Downs CVS  
Ken Stevens – Federation of Small Businesses  
Richard Watson - PCT  
Cllr Chantal Wilson – WDC Councillor

**In Attendance**

Gill Cameron-Waller – WDC, Policy and Partnership Manager  
Alex White – WDC, Policy Officer  
Tom Stuart, WDC, Policy Officer  
Nigel Eveleigh - WDC, Planning Policy Manager

**Apologies:**

Cllr Gerald Carter - Polegate Town Council (representing town councils)  
Jeff Hart – Freedom Leisure, Managing Director  
Alison Horan - East Sussex County Council  
Charles Lant – WDC, Chief Executive  
Lisa Compton – PCT  
Julia Pope - Sussex Police  
Peter Minshull - Highways Agency  
Cllr William King - Maresfield Parish Council (representing northern parishes)  
Marie Tomblin – Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services  
Cllr Di Phillips - WDC Councillor  
Martin Small – South Downs Joint Committee  
Debbie Matthews - South Downs CVS  
Adam Chugg - Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services  
Joanna Hodgson – Environment Agency  
Cllr David White – WDC Councillor

**1. Welcome and introductions**

Ian Chisnall welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

Local Development Framework - see item 5 below

Rural Issues - see item 6 below

## **3. Economic situation in Wealden.**

A paper updating members had been circulated prior to the meeting. Alex White pointed out some headline points - relating to job seekers allowance claims and changes to house prices. Overall there are, as yet, no signs of a strong economic improvement in the district.

Pam Doodes said that Wealden District Council has secured funding to provide placements for six Wealden youngsters to get a taste of working for a local authority. The six posts will be located across the council and placements will last for six months.

Teresa Gittins said that research conducted by AiRS indicated that young people want to find jobs in their local communities but a key difficulty was identifying and supporting employers who can provide placements. AiRS have put in a bid to the East Sussex Recession Fund to take this forward.

EAVS have also secured funding through the Future Jobs Fund to support a new post.

## **4. Update on flu pandemic**

Richard Watson updated members on the current situation. Infection rates in Wealden are in line with the national average and the infection remains mild in most cases. An increase in cases is expected in the autumn. The PCT should be the first point of contact for the public with regard to flu friends - a question was raised as to whether the public are aware of how to contact the PCT. Pam Doodes said the council would ensure there is appropriate information on the flu section of its website.

**Action: Alex White**

## **5. Local Development Framework Core Strategy consultation**

Ian Chisnall explained that a draft response had been circulated taking account of discussions at the last meeting. This had been amended in light of further comments from members and submitted on a pro-tem basis pending final sign off by the Board today.

Alex White explained where the final response differed from the draft and suggested a couple of areas where the points made could be strengthened. After discussion it was agreed to amend the response to make stronger

arguments in relation to: environmental capacity, especially with regard to waste water; the need for affordable housing; the 'vision' for the integration of employment and housing options; and support for an ageing population with regard to end of life care and the 'soft' support available through village and church hall facilities.

Pam Doodles said the council was grateful for the involvement of the LSP in the process - the input and engagement was really useful.

Nigel Eveleigh outlined the next stage of the LDF process - reports would be prepared for the council's LDF Board and sub-Committee - and suggested that the LSP's ongoing involvement to 'test' the emerging option would be welcome.

A crucial issue will be the infrastructure delivery plan - this will set out in detail what infrastructure will be in place to enable future development. Wealden District Council had been invited by the Planning Advisory Service to take part in a pilot with three other local authorities to help prepare infrastructure delivery plans. The Council had asked for and received support from East Sussex County Council and the LSP to take part in the pilot - Ian Chisnall had agreed on behalf of the LSP. The delivery plan will also ultimately help with achieving priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Action: Gill Cameron-Waller**

## **6. Rural issues**

Pam Doodles said that rural issues were a high priority for the Council. She is working to raise the profile and to try and influence regional and national policy. Wealden currently holds the only district council seat on the South East Rural Board - Pam represents the Council and is able to voice a different perspective on rural issues to other members.

Gill Cameron-Waller circulated a paper explaining the purpose and roles of both the Rural Board and Rural Forum. At a local county level, AiRS, the WARR partnership and the East Sussex Rural Partnership provide a lead, however, there is no specific body at a district level to lead on rural issues - which is where (and why) the LSP has a role.

Ian Chisnall asked if any partners had 'rural proofing' strategies or policies in place. Teresa Gittins said AiRS had prepared a rural-proofing guide - she will circulate this to members. In discussion partners were clear that rural provision of services is different in kind and raises different issues - particularly with regard to geographical dispersal.

Tom Stuart updated members on the progress of the project on rural deprivation. The project is at the data gathering stage. A paper was circulated setting out the data currently publicly available - Tom hoped this

would help to prompt thoughts on what questions and issues need to be addressed through the second phase of the project. Tom will email members with further information in the next few days.

**Action: Tom Stuart, Teresa Gittins**

## **7. Progress through Partnership**

Alex White explained that PtP had recently announced a further round of funding for LSPs. This would again be subject to completion of self-assessment forms. He suggested that the LSP follow the same procedure as last year, with a small group of Board members meeting in October to complete the self-assessment process. Linda Francis volunteered to again be part of the small group. Alex will email members asking for further volunteers.

**Action: Alex White**

## **8. AOB**

Members were reminded that:

Wealden District Council is holding a housing summit at 9.30 on Wednesday 16 September at Uckfield Civic Centre.

A seminar on the role of the LDF in the planning and delivery of the local and sub-regional investment objectives will take place at the Council's offices in Hailsham at 9.30 on Thursday 10 September. Anyone wishing to attend should let Hana Ferguson know - email [hana.ferguson@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:hana.ferguson@wealden.gov.uk).

The LSP website is being redesigned - members were asked to provide up to 100 words setting out the role of their organisation in the LSP for inclusion on the new website. This could include a biography and/or personal photograph if members wished.

A LSP special event had been pencilled in for 24 November. This would probably be a wide ranging meeting involving a range of wider partner organisations and stakeholders. Further details will be provided in due course.

Dates for meetings in 2010 will need to be set soon. If there are any particular days or times of the week that members would wish to avoid could they let Alex White know.

Richard Watson said that, as a result of internal reorganisation, he would be changing roles and this would be his last meeting as LSP representative. Ian thanked Richard on behalf of the LSP for all his work as a member of the partnership.

### 9. Next meeting

The next meeting of the LSP will be at **2pm** on **Tuesday 10 November 2009** at **Uckfield Civic Centre**.

### Future Board meetings

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Topic/Focus</b>
10 November, 2pm	Uckfield Civic Centre	Review of year

### Special Event

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Topic/Focus</b>
24 November	TBC	Stakeholder forum