

WEALDEN LSP

**Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 11th May 2005
Hailsham East Community Centre 4 – 6.30 pm**

PART 1

1.1 Those attending:

Ian Chisnall – Churches Together in Sussex
Mike Rogers – East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Cllr. Tony Reid – ESCC
Alison Horan – ESCC
Sean Nolan – ESCC
Jeremy Leggett – Action in rural Sussex
John Kelly – WFVS
Sarah Boden – Town and Country Housing Association
Cllr. Nigel Coltman – WDC
Charles Lant – WDC
Aprile Biggs – Environment Agency
Jean Travers – East Sussex Learning Partnership
Ieuan Sherwood – Action in rural Sussex
Tim Sparrow – Chairman
Charmian Allcock – WDC
Caroline Adcock – LSP Co-ordinator

1.2 Apologies for absence:

Fiona Henniker – Sussex Downs and Weald PCT
Ken Stevens – Federation of Small Businesses
C.I. Rex Matthews – Sussex Police

It was also noted that Peter Swann had written to offer his resignation as a member of the LSP and as theme champion for the learning partnership due to pressures of work and other commitments. The learning partnership are currently in the process of considering a replacement.

1.3 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising:

Tim Sparrow apologised for cutting short any items at the last meeting. He explained that the hurry was only in relation to the need to keep to time since the room was due to be used by another group shortly after 6pm.

LDF Update:

Progress with the LDF and delays to preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) are due to WDC facing an action in the High Court to resolve the outstanding issue on the Local Plan together with a reduction in staffing levels. The council assures the LSP that they will be fully involved in the process which will commence once the existing Local Plan has been further resolved.

Health and Social Care issues – WLSP report 10 – circulated with agenda:

Theme champions are urged to look through the actions highlighted in this report and identify opportunities for cross partner activity

Change-up is a government initiative to strengthen the support services supplied to the wider voluntary and community sector (VCS) - services mostly delivered by other VCS organisations and now generally referred

to as 'Local Infrastructural Organisations' (LIO's). The funding allocation from Change-Up for East Sussex is £124K for the themes identified in the Action Plan that has been developed, and an additional £28K to develop BME, Traveller & Faith Group input to determining their

support needs / services. The local Consortia, which will commission work around Action Plan themes, will comprise representatives from 5 statutory agencies, 5 VCS LIO's and 5 frontline VCS organizations plus AirS as the managing agency.

PART 2

2.1 Report of Wealden visit to Malvern Hills LSP and matters arising:

Tim Sparrow explained how the link with Malvern had come about through Nigel Coltman and Maggie Bryan (Malvern LSP) meeting at a conference and realising both districts shared a similar profile. Tim Sparrow, Charmian Allcock and Caroline Adcock visited Malvern LSP earlier this year and met with various members of the LSP. An informal meeting exploring joint issues took place and notes of this meeting are available on request (contact lsp@wealden.gov.uk or telephone Caroline 01892 602743 for a copy of these notes)

A further exchange has been arranged and three members of Malvern Hills LSP are expected to meet with representatives from Wealden LSP on 12th and 13th May. These representatives will also visit the "Making the Link" event on the Friday.

The exchange was well received on all sides and enabled participants to re-assess their views on a wide variety of topics including performance management, added value and developing cross cutting activity, publicity and image, communication with stakeholders and constitutions.

One idea from Malvern which Wealden LSP may wish to consider includes encouraging all LSP members to embark on a challenge which demonstrates their commitment to the community strategy. Malvern LSP members have carried out travel to work plans. Other ideas might include an audit of food opportunities for healthy eating in the workplace or adherence to the environmental pledge to reduce water and energy consumption and recycle waste.

Discussion took place and further ideas were suggested. Jeremy Leggett suggested the LSP should consider adopting something more difficult and challenging to really demonstrate commitment eg finding

sites for travellers.

ACTION

Caroline Adcock to circulate some options.

2.2 LSP Funding and update on current projects

Although some applications had been received the Chairman wished to stress that projects will be selected according to the criteria previously outlined in a letter to all theme champions (and copied to their support officers).

Funding will be approved in order to:

Bring about activity which demonstrates true partnership working, both within the theme partnership and across two or more themes in order to deliver aims of the community strategy.

Develop innovative ways of delivering the community strategy rather than supporting activities which are part of existing commitments or can draw on existing funding streams.

Act as a catalyst in order to get things started which will lever in additional funds and resources from organisations in the public, private or community sector across two or more theme groups.

ACTION

It was agreed that Caroline Adcock should work with applicants to explore ways in which their applications can meet the criteria as fully as possible.

She will also take a more pro-active approach in order to generate ideas.

The deadline for applications has been put increased and is now **20th June 2005**

2.3 East Sussex in Figures

Tim Sparrow explained that he had given an indication to ESCC that Wealden LSP would support the first year's annual maintenance costs of £8,000 in addition to the £2,000 which had been agreed as a one-off capital sum, paid for from last year's Wealden LSP Fund allocation. He felt obliged to offer this commitment as ESCC had approached him a few hours before the final decision had to be taken, explaining that without Wealden's support the whole project would collapse.

Although Wealden District Council had pledged £2,000 per year for the next two years this was subject to other partners contributing towards the balance and currently no other offers had been received.

Wealden LSP has yet to decide how this funding would be raised, either by contributions from individual partners or as an allocation of LSP funding in competition with bids from other applicants.

Prior to the meeting, Fiona Henniker commented that the ESD and Weald PCT would not be able to contribute in the current financial year

but may be able to offer funds for next year, if sufficient notice is given. Ian Chisnall explained that Churches Together in Sussex do not have access to any funding.

The Environment Agency were enthusiastic about the project but are more likely to make a contribution on a county wide basis.

ESCC feel they have already provided a large proportion of the budget and are fully stretched.

Sarah Boden, Town and Country Housing Association, wanted to know a lot more about what her organisation would be getting for it's money such as how often the information would be updated, what access she would get, whether licence fees were involved and how existing data banks (available to paying clients) would dovetail into accessing statistics from the new observatory

The meeting felt that there was a lot of potential in the idea but much had to be taken on trust and could only be proved over time. Concerns were raised however, that if the service proves to be as useful and essential as it claims it needs to be funded in a more secure way with a commitment to the longer term through core funding. Current arrangements could result in a waste of investment if there is a weak link in the complicated funding chain.

ACTION

It was agreed that Caroline Adcock should circulate a request to all LSP members, asking if they would be willing to make a contribution from their own funds towards the current year maintenance costs, a total of £8,000.

An application for LSP funding will be prepared if sufficient money is not forthcoming from the partners. This application will be considered alongside other bids and will cover the first year only, since all bids are based on the fact that future years cannot be considered unless there is a firm commitment that second homes money will become available beyond 2006.

Theme partnership are urged to pass on their data requirements to Caroline Adcock or Ken Stevens in order to make the service as useful as possible.

ESCC are asked to concentrate on promoting the service, explaining its function and working with users to meet their requirements as fully as possible.

Ken Stevens and Caroline Adcock are current members of the Steering Group representing Wealden LSP. Jessica Britton and Cynthia Lyons are also members.

2.4 Report from the LSP Chairs

Tim Sparrow gave a brief outline of the meeting which took place on April 22nd.

Minutes of the meeting can be obtained on request from Caroline Adcock lsp@wealden.gov.uk Tel 01892 602743.

The main points included

The need for specific issues to be considered on a county basis but with all LSP's taking an equal part in a pan-East Sussex event rather than being led by ESSP eg transport issues could benefit from this approach and it may also inform the LAA and LPSA process.

LSP chairs felt there was merit in cross fertilisation of ideas by attending each other's events when possible

Each LSP wanted representation at the ESSP and AIF but not clear how best this could be achieved when those attending were usually representing more than one organisation, each with different agendas. It was generally agreed that good briefing and de-briefing was essential to ensure the objectives of the LSP were taken into account.

Further information on the implications of new initiatives such as the LDF, the LAA and Public Service Boards was required. A suggestion was made that this could be provided by holding a joint event with chairs of LSP's and officers of the respective councils.

Most LSP's in East Sussex had appointed vice or deputy chairs and Tim Sparrow favoured this option in Wealden.

ACTION

Wealden LSP to review it's constitution at a future meeting and include the post of Deputy Chair as an option

Also need to confirm roles and responsibilities of LSP representatives on other bodies such as ESSP and AIF

Capacity issues and effectiveness of theme partnerships at various levels to be investigated. Caroline Adcock is due to meet with John Wheeler of ESCC to consider this in relation to the transport theme. Outcome to be discussed at a future meeting.

Also need to consider roles and responsibilities of elected members and how they fit with the LSP process.

2.5 Report of progress with East Sussex COMPACT

John Kelly gave a brief update on progress with the East Sussex COMPACT. This was a national initiative which was being interpreted at a local level to develop a code of best practice between the statutory and voluntary sectors. East Sussex County Council had produced three out of five codes beneath the COMPACT and were currently working on the other two.

They will be presented to Wealden LSP in November with the aim of encouraging the LSP (through their partner organisations) to sign up to this code of best practice. Wealden District Council has not yet agreed to adopt the compact although some District Councils or Borough in East Sussex have adopted the county council version, albeit with local modifications.

2.6 Report of ESSP meeting

The letter from GOSE was circulated at the meeting and everyone agreed to back the County Council in their dealings with the Government Office in order to develop a bid for an LAA and subsequent LPSA. Concerns were voiced that the capacity of the Government Office is not able to sustain all the bids for LAA status likely to be forthcoming. County councils and unitary authorities are therefore getting together in order to develop joint bids to ensure that they will all have access to the new process and thus be able to draw down money for cross cutting activity. It is important to recognise however, that this is not new money but a streamlined way of accessing it with more autonomy at the local level.

ACTION

Tim Sparrow to draft a letter of support.

PART 3

3.1 Presentation on the Leisure theme

Ian Chisnall, theme champion for the cultural partnership, gave an overview of the work of the leisure theme. He explained how this was started in November 2002 to develop the three strands making up the cultural partnership

Sport

Arts

Walkers, Riders and Cyclists.

Terms of reference were agreed and the partnership has remained a very open and inclusive body with meetings to which all are invited as appropriate.

A recent decision to create a sense of identity and publish a newsletter stimulated a logo competition and the first edition of a newsletter has been printed. It contains articles and news about all aspects of the cultural partnership activity. WDC have paid for the design and printing of the first copy but further funding would be needed to continue this on a regular basis. An application for LSP funding may be submitted.

Ian invited other theme groups to consider joining in with this venture but there was no obvious take up from other theme champions at the present time.

Caroline Adcock explained that with the need to update the website, theme groups will be invited to submit items for their own page and this could include the contents of a newsletter which could then be printed off as a hard copy if required.

Ian Chisnall then spoke on a proposal to develop a multi-use sports centre in Crowborough. He outlined the planning problems which this site faced and the many advantages which this facility might offer to the local community.

Tim Sparrow explained that the LSP was not there to pass judgement on individual projects and could not get involved in the detail of planning issues. However, he pointed out that the aims and objectives

outlined in the community strategy were there as a reference point to be used as evidence for those wishing to justify their proposals. Furthermore, if a particular proposal has been identified by the community as a priority in the action plan, following a thorough community consultation exercise, the Wealden LSP has published a process by which they will offer support for specific projects which harmonise with the objectives of the community strategy. Crowborough is therefore urged to continue with their healthcheck and develop their action plan so that this project can be part of the process which Wealden LSP offers to communities as a vote of confidence in their community action plans. Furthermore, these action plans may be considered as supplementary planning guidance, once the new LDF process is underway.

3.2 **Report on the Environment Theme**

Aprile Biggs explained that the Sussex Environmental Reference Group (SERG) was working well and provided a platform for the Environment Agency and other organisations with a remit covering environmental issues to communicate with LSPs and councils from across East and West Sussex. The East Sussex LSP Co-ordinators group had agreed to send a representative to each meeting on a revolving basis and can take back issues to their own LSPs and respond accordingly.

SERG also hopes to work with and influence the emerging LDFs. There is a need for ALL themes to adopt the aims and objectives of the environment theme as part of their own activity. These issues were a high priority for the community and are not really being addressed as part of the community strategy. It was agreed that an integrated approach is more effective than treating the environment as a theme in its own right.

A small sum of money has been allocated in conjunction with the Sussex Wildlife Trust for projects across the whole of Sussex but this is a relatively small fund. Details on how LSP's can bid for this will follow in due course but is likely to be a competitive process.

Whilst Rupert Clubb remains Environment Theme Champion for Wealden, with all the benefits that a key player can offer, there is merit in appointing a sustainability champion to lobby other theme groups within the Wealden LSP.

The Environment Agency is also keen to offer awareness raising to other theme groups on all aspects of the environment. They are willing to do so at their own expense in a way which suits the other theme partnerships.

ESCC confirmed their support for this approach as members of SERG

ACTION

A copy of the guidance issued by SERG to LSPs will be circulated with the minutes.

Caroline Adcock to explore the potential of encouraging a sustainability champion to take on the role of environmental activist within the LSP. This may overlap with Wealden District Council's review of the remaining Agenda 21 programme and an integration of previous activity in partnership with the LSP.

Caroline to discuss how the EA and ESCC might encourage theme groups to review their actions in the light of environmental objectives.

PART 4

4.1 Presentation of themes at future meetings

WLSP 2005 report 13 was agreed as a template for future LSP meetings but with a degree of flexibility. Transport and Environment were suggested as the themes for the next meeting on 6th July., Housing may be included in the September meeting along with Learning.

November could include Safer Wealden and Prosperity but since neither theme champion was present, this could not be confirmed. The aim is to present two themes per meeting.

4.2 Making the Link

Members were encouraged to attend this event which was taking place at the Uckfield Civic Centre on Friday 13th May.

A resource pack had now been produced in partnership with Action in Rural Sussex and Caroline Adcock thanked everyone for their contributions to the theme sheets which were part of the pack. Copies were circulated to each theme champion and further copies will be made available to all parish councils and community action planning teams across Wealden.

If anyone would like a copy please contact Caroline Adcock.

The pack was well received and held up as a model of best practice for supporting community planning and linking it with the work of the LSP.

Action in rural Sussex had also launched their co-ordinators network and the next meeting was due to take place on 1st June. Seven parishes were already involved with another seven keen to join in future. This is led by Ieuan Sherwood who has also prepared a document identifying themes and cross cutting issues common to most action plans. This will be presented to the LSP in due course and should provide useful input into the community strategy and the LDF. The next task for the co-ordinator's Group will be to identify and support needs arising from those doing action plans.

4.3 Date time and place of next meeting

**Wednesday 6th July 4pm – 6pm
at Hailsham East Community Centre**

