

## WEALDEN LSP

### Minutes of the Meeting on Wednesday 13th September 4 – 6pm At Hailsham East Community Centre

#### PART 1

##### 1.1 Those Present

Tim Sparrow	Wealden Association of Local Councils and LSP Chair
CI Neil Honnor	District Commander, Sussex Police
Cllr Nigel Coltman	Leader, Wealden District Council
Kathy Fordham	NFU
Nicky McCrudden	Sussex Downs and Weald PCT (for Jessica Britton & Cynthia Lyons)
Teresa Gittins	Action in Rural Sussex
Stephen Kiley	Action in Rural Sussex
Charles Lant	Chief Executive, Wealden District Council
Paul Smith	Environment Agency
Cllr Tony Reid	ESCC (joined the meeting at 16:50)
Alison Horan	ESCC
David Palmer	Head of Policy and Review, Wealden District Council
Caroline Adcock	LSP – LDF Liaison and Co-ordination
Gill Cameron Waller	LSP Policy & Admin, Policy and Review, Wealden District Council

##### Apologies for absence:

John Kelly	WFVO
Ian Chisnall	Churches Together in Sussex
Ken Stevens	Federation of Small Businesses

##### 1.2 Minutes of the last meeting

These were approved as a correct record

##### 1.3 Matters arising

The new support arrangements for the LSP were introduced: Caroline Adcock will focus primarily on liaison and co-ordination between the LSP and the Wealden District Council LDF team, with policy and admin support to the LSP from the Council's Policy and Review Team.

Following receipt of an e-mail from John Kelly outlining matters relating to the demise of the Wealden Federation of Voluntary Organisations, the Chairman expressed his thanks to John for his conscientious input and hoped that there would be suitable representation from the VCS in the future. Thanks were also due to CI Tony Blaker of Sussex Police who was being posted to Hastings. CI Neil Honnor was welcomed as Tony's replacement.

Paul Smith from the Environment Agency was also welcomed, as was Simon Kiley, the new Research and Policy Officer at AiRs, and the other partners and participants introduced themselves around the table.

The Chairman ran through the action points from the last minutes and noted that Alison Horan would arrange to send contact details for the four LAA 'blockheads' for circulation to all partners.

#### PART 2

##### 2.1 Report no 32: Chairman's report on future developments for the LSP

The Chairman introduced his paper by explaining that although the long-awaited White Paper is likely to include guidance on the Community Strategy and LSP, the imperatives of the LDF process are such that there is no time to lose. The LSP has

already committed to aligning its work with the LDF as a key delivery mechanism for the spatial aspect of the Community Strategy. The work undertaken during the summer on revalidating the Community Strategy, in addition to the analysis from village and parish plans, has prepared the way for a draft of the revised Community Strategy to be proposed to partners at the November meeting.

Partners are clear that the LDF needs to take account of the eight themes of the Community Strategy. Creating an effective process to achieve this is not so obvious, as we are breaking new ground. Our eight themes are far from unique among rural Community Strategies, so it will be extremely important to emphasise the Wealden 'flavour' in each case to establish Wealden's distinctiveness. As the LDF is about so much more than 'just houses', we need to consider what additional support we could bring to our table. If need be, the Constitution could be adjusted to achieve this.

During the subsequent discussions on membership the following points were raised:

- NHS PCT – 1 member only will reflect the new structure. This might appropriately be the Director of Public Health.
- VCS – in view of the demise of WFVO, the Community Network Steering Group, which is to continue, should be asked to nominate a representative.
- Transport – not just about roads, also railways. Suggest Rural Transport Partnership, which covers all aspects, including community bus services.
- Learning – important to include all age groups, not just children and young people. Not only 'Education' – wide range of skills / vocational training. Delivery of progress against community strategy theme objectives is not necessarily symmetrical. Even though this theme has not been directly addressed through the district LSP, monitoring of the overarching LAA delivery mechanism could be used to demonstrate progress against district community strategy objectives. Schools are an important aspect of village/parish/town plans and this will need to be reflected in LSP input to the LDF process.
- Children / Young People – the Children's Act has increased the prominence of targeted services for these residents. Should a member of the Youth Parliament be invited to join? This would mirror the Rother LSP approach.
- Leisure – Freedom Leisure to be invited (they are also included under the Heath Improvement Partnership). Important to include all age groups, not just children and young people.
- Safety – should there be a seat on the board for the chair of the Safer Wealden Partnership? Yes in principle – review from time to time. Important to retain valuable participation of Sussex Police and ESF&R.
- Environment – delighted to have the area Environment Agency representative on the Board. It will also be important to involve other players eg AONB and possibly a campaigning organization. Dr Martin Stenning (Uckfield Regeneration Partnership) to be contacted for advice.
- Infrastructure – Water is a key issue: Southern or SE Water.
- Wealden District Council – broaden membership; suggest balance of portfolio holders and backbench members.
- Partners will frequently find that their input is relevant across several theme areas. The potential for cross-cutting approaches can widen opportunities for delivering aspects of the Community Strategy. For example there are close links between health, leisure and learning; access to services, be they health, leisure,

learning, shops etc, is closely linked with transport; the environment theme also has interconnections with many of the others.

Flexibility of membership will be key in addressing LDF issues effectively, and the Constitution allows for temporary co-options as well as adjustment of partner profiles. The consensus of the meeting was to retain a tight core membership, widening the partnership as appropriate by co-option. There is still an element of uncertainty about what the LDF Core Strategy document will cover as no proposals have yet been accepted by GOSE. This is an opportunity for partners to bring forward their own organisation's plans for the future to ensure that they are taken into account in setting out the Core Strategy.

The following table summarises the proposed membership:

<b>Membership Proposals</b>				
<b>Sector</b>	<b>Organisation type</b>	<b>Organisation(s)</b>	<b>No of reps</b>	<b>Notes</b> – from discussions at LSP meeting 13th September 2006
Public sector	District Council	Wealden District Council	3/4	Leader + 2/3 councillors
	County Council	East Sussex County Council	1	Councillor and 'Co-opt' topic specialists as necessary (eg education, highways)
	Local Council	Sussex Association of Local Councils	1	Parish councillor rep via SALC
	NHS (PCT)	East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT	1	
	Police	Sussex Police	1	Wealden Commander
	Fire & Rescue	East Sussex Fire & Rescue	1	Senior area commander
Voluntary & Community sector	Community	Action in Rural Sussex	1	
	Voluntary	Community Network Steering Group	1	Replaces WFVO
	Faith	Churches Together in Sussex	1	
Private sector	Business	Federation of Small Businesses	1	
	Agriculture	National Farmers' Union	1	
Special interest	Environment	Environment Agency (Sussex rep) AONBs Campaigning organisation	1	No permanent seat – co-opt No permanent seat - co-opt
	Learning (Education)	eg from ESCC when need local education policy representation		No permanent seat - co-opt
	Housing	Town & Country Housing Group	1	
	Infrastructure	SE Water / Southern Water Highways Agency Rural Transport Partnership	1	No permanent seat – co-opt No permanent seat – co-opt
	Children & Young People	Youth Parliament Member	1	
	Leisure	Freedom Leisure	1	

Although an appropriate and proactive membership is important, the way in which the LSP is going to approach its LDF work is even more crucial. East Sussex County Council are engaging in the LDF process by creating a cross-departmental group to comment on LDF drafts from the districts and boroughs. Alison Horan is to be part of the group for the Wealden LDF and will co-ordinate closely with the Wealden LSP on this.

The meeting agreed to empower Tim Sparrow in his role as chairman to take the necessary actions to achieve the proposed membership profile.

## **2.2 Report no 31: The LSP and its role in the consultation process for the Wealden Local Development Framework**

The intention is for the LSP to receive very early drafts of LDF documents in advance of formal consultation, and in advance of Wealden District Council Cabinet Sub-Committees. This should allow the LSP to consider them in time to respond with a 'corporate' view, in so far as possible, in line with discussions between the partners. At the time of the meeting, detailed arrangements for consultation with the LSP had not been finalized, and there had been a regrettable situation where the Draft Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment had not been universally circulated to all LSP partners for formal comment. This has now been rectified (18/9/2006), and comments should be sent to [caroline.adcock@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.adcock@wealden.gov.uk) by 2nd October 2006 to allow her time to analyse them and collate a response by the LDF deadline of 9th October 2006.

Discussions are taking place with a range of groups (parish and town councilors, district councilors, architects and planning agents etc) on the potential content of the Design Guide. The LSP will be consulted on this when there is a meaningful draft, with basic illustrations – probably early on in 2007.

In approaching LDF documents in general, there are three main aspects for the LSP to consider:

- How LDF proposals contribute to implementation of the Wealden Community Strategy theme action plans
- Identification of aspects of the Community Strategy which should be integrated into the LDF (gap analysis), including cross-cutting issues and linkages between themes from the Community Strategy (eg access, infrastructure concerns etc)
- How to ensure that spatial aspects of partners' future plans are catered for within the LDF draft proposals

In order to contribute effectively, partners will need to ensure that they are familiar with the Community Strategy theme action plans and the spatial aspects of their organisation's future plans.

Caroline Adcock will take on a key role as the linkage between the LSP and the WDC LDF team. Her remit will broadly be to interpret the LSP and its views to the LDF team, and vice versa. A large part of this is likely to involve the interpretation of draft LDF documents to the LSP Board showing how they link with the Community Strategy themes and Action Plans. This should also enable the partners to envisage more clearly how the LDF proposals will facilitate the spatial aspect of their own organisation's plans. Caroline will also facilitate discussions and analyse and collate the outcomes in a format which will assist their consideration by the LDF team.

As preparation of the Core Strategy is already under way, it is proposed to hold an LDF Core Strategy workshop as the major part of the agenda for the next LSP Board meeting (8th November, 2006). The LSP team will liaise with the LDF team to devise a suitable format and programme which will be circulated to partners in due course.

The timetable for LDF documents will be circulated with these minutes.

## **PART 3**

### **3.1 Updates:**

#### **3.1.1 Carnegie Trust Active Research bid**

A final decision will shortly be made by the trustees. The project is designed to explore how the LSP can engage with parish plan groups on ways to address issues they have raised through their planning processes. A key objective is to find ways of establishing a real link, or 'bridge', between local communities in the form of parishes and more strategic bodies such as the LSP.

#### **3.1.2 Local Area Agreement (LAA)**

ESCC is gathering Q1 monitoring data in areas agreed with GOSE, and the 'annual' refresh is also in progress. Government brought out new guidance earlier in the year which includes some new mandatory indicators, and concerns have been voiced to GOSE that so much central determination of LAA content erodes the local nature of the agreement.

The District LSP has a watching brief on the read-across from the District Community Strategy to the LAA, and to assist in developments where possible.

#### **3.1.3 Biomass**

The Cuckmere Community Bus is moving very positively towards the conversion of the bus to use fuel from oilseed rape, and active consideration is also being given to local sourcing. Wealden District Council are also looking at biofuel options. The LSP has been supporting biomass initiatives, and is pleased to see action starting to take place.

#### **3.1.3 Community Strategy**

Further to the outcomes of the events held during the summer and the village and parish plan analysis, a paper on a draft revalidation of the Community Strategy will be prepared for the next meeting of the LSP Board.

### **3.2 Any other business**

#### **3.2.1 Rural road safety**

Following a meeting with Parish Councils in July, WDC Scrutiny Committee had raised concerns about rural road safety. This had been taken to the Council's Review Board for consideration as responsibilities for road safety lie in large part with ESCC and Sussex Police. It was suggested that the LSP might like to take the concerns forward in the light of new regulations on 'Quieter Lanes and Home Zones' which had recently come into force. The LSP chairman agreed to ask the Safer Wealden Partnership to take this on. It is understood that ESCC have issued a guidance document and intend to hold a county-wide speed seminar or conference in the spring of 2007. Outcomes from this event would inform action plans which would take account of the new regulations.

#### **3.2.2 Lewes and Wealden Health Improvement Partnerships are holding free Benefit Awareness Training sessions:**

Tues 17th October 2006 - 13:10 to 16:30, The Green Room, Uckfield Civic Centre  
Tues 24th October 2006 - 13:10 to 16:30, PCT HQ, 36-38 Friars Walk, Lewes

The training is designed for all paid staff and volunteers who might notice if someone is living in poverty. The three-hour session provides a brief overview of the benefits system, explores why people might be reluctant to claim benefits, considers how you could raise the issue with someone, list the kind of information they will need to

provide on an application form, and let you know where you can refer them to for free help, advice and support.

Places are limited, so please contact Gill Cowley, Sussex Downs and Weald PCT, 36-38 Friars Walk, Lewes BN7 2PB. [gill.cowley@sussexdownsandwealdpct.nhs.uk](mailto:gill.cowley@sussexdownsandwealdpct.nhs.uk)

### **3.3 Date time and place of future meetings 2006 - 2007**

Wednesday 8th November at Hailsham East Community Centre – further details shortly.

**A note of planning meeting dates for the LSP and the WDC LDF Cabinet Sub-Committee is circulated with these minutes.**