

WEALDEN LSP

Minutes of the meeting which took place on 23rd November 2005 in the Green Room, Uckfield Civic Centre from 4 pm

Those present and apologies for absence:

LSP Members

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| Tim Sparrow | Chair |
| Cllr Tony Reid | East Sussex County Council |
| Paul Taylor | Wealden Citizens' Advice (representing CVS pp John Kelly) |
| Cllr Pam Doodes | Wealden District Council (replacing Cllr Nigel Coltman) |
| Mike Rogers | East Sussex Fire and Rescue |
| Ieuan Sherwood | Action in Rural Sussex |
| Ian Chisnall | Churches Together in Sussex |
| Ken Stevens | East Sussex Federation of Small Businesses |
| Kathy Fordham | NFU |

Others

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| Alison Horan | East Sussex County Council |
| Gary Pearson | East Sussex Fire and Rescue |
| Cllr Margaret Kirkpatrick | Wealden District Council |
| Cllr Roy Martin | Wealden District Council |
| Cllr William King | Maresfield Parish Council |
| Charles Lant | Wealden District Council |
| Charmian Allcock | Wealden District Council |
| Jeremy Leach | Wealden District Council |
| Josh Martin | Hailsham Community College |
| Alex Downs | Hailsham Community College |
| Emily Williamson | Hailsham Community College |
| Chris Denyer | Hailsham Community College |
| Nigel Bullock | Beacon Community College |
| Philip Ayres | Action in Rural Sussex – Rural Transport Partnership |
| Michael Lunn | Uckfield resident with special interest in sustainability |
| Gill Cameron-Waller | Wealden District Council |

Apologies

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| Fiona Henniker | Sussex Downs and Weald PCT |
| Jessica Britton | Sussex Downs and Weald PCT |
| Rupert Clubb | Environment Agency |
| Cllr Nigel Coltman | Leader, Wealden District Council |
| Di Writer | Eastbourne Downs PCT |
| Sarah Boden | Town & Country Planning Association |
| Cl Rex Matthews | Sussex Police |
| John Kelly | Wealden Federation of Voluntary Organisations |
| Sean Nolan | East Sussex County Council |
| Caroline Adcock | LSP Co-ordinator |

Part 1 Updates

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record. The meeting expressed its appreciation of the significant contributions to the partnership from Cl Rex Matthews and Sarah Boden who have both to resign from the LSP for professional reasons. In future Sussex Police will be represented by Cl Tony Baker, and the co-option of a new housing representative remains to be agreed.

- 1.1 Matters arising – there were no specific matters arising from the minutes. Updates were provided on the following ongoing topics:

Progress with revisions to action plan for transport and access theme

A meeting to discuss implementation of the plan will be held in early December. In preparation for this, the issues raised at the previous themed meeting have been collated into bullet points. They range widely in scale and it was suggested that they be circulated in advance of the December meeting so that each organisation can identify its top three priorities, identify any additions, and rank them bearing in mind the financial implications of some of the larger scale projects.

Action point: Jonathan Wheeler to provide list to partners.

Local Area Agreement

ESCC sent the first draft to GOSE at the end of September. The feedback received varied in relevance and is being worked into a second, fuller document due at GOSE on Wednesday 30th November. There had also been an interim deadline for more detail on stretch ('reward') targets. Currently 15 have been proposed, and it is likely that only 12 or so will be maintained depending on negotiations with the government office. There is a strong focus on value for money but ESCC believe that the East Sussex LAA is relatively robust in comparison with others in the region, with good prospects for on-target sign-off from government ministers at the end of February 2006. It will be important for the LSP to look in more detail at the next draft (which will be circulated by ESCC) and at how, as an organisation, it supports the LAA package.

Action point: LSP to circulate 2nd draft of the LAA on receipt from ESCC

Local Development Framework

Wealden District Council have now received a favourable outcome from the judicial review process which awarded costs and precludes any further appeal. However, there are difficulties in establishing a realistic timetable for progressing the LDF because of severe staffing difficulties within the Council's planning department. The revised draft Local Plan now requires approval from Full Council which could be achieved by 14th December. The hope is to increase attention on the LDF from January 2006. A special Parish Conference on the topic is planned for 16th February, and GOSE, being sympathetic to the delays brought about by the judicial process, may suggest short cuts to the consultation process. It will nonetheless be important to fulfil community expectations, including full consultation with the LSP, since the LDF is the 'spatial interpretation of the community strategy.' It was observed that it would be helpful if the LDF process takes account of work already done by Parish and Town Councils.

Action point: Item for update at the January LSP meeting

- 1.2 **Report from theme champions following meeting on 4th November 2005**
In general this was a very positive and encouraging meeting and the Theme

Champion topic will be addressed in greater detail at the January LSP meeting. Two key points to note:

- The theme partnerships are working well in their own right as more-or-less autonomous communities of interest, supported by the LSP but not controlled by it. There is a need to explore the relationships and issues around funding.
- Theme Champions agreed that the LSP needs to reconsider its objectives and focus on a small range of key cross-cutting strategic objectives from those which already exist.

1.3 Report on progress with the East Sussex in Figures data observatory

Members had not received the most recent newsletter, but Mike Rogers and Ken Stevens were impressed with what they had seen and heard at the last Project Board meeting. The observatory is being constructed around LSP-style themes, ODPM is pleased with progress, and funding has been secured and an individual appointed to drive the project forward. This is another example of highly effective partnership working in East Sussex. The observatory is due to be launched in January.

Action point: LSP to locate and circulate newsletter

1.4 East Sussex Fire Authority – Risk Management Plan Consultation

Gary Pearson (ESFR) presented the new ESFA Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2006/07. It has been developed using new nationally distributed software known as Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC). This software combines three years' local historical incident data with anonymised Census 2001 data to allow predictive modelling based on planned responses to each type of incident. This represents a significant shift in approach with proportionate emphasis on prevention and likely need. ESFA would welcome any comments and observations. Copies of the plan are available at www.esfrs.org, where there is also an on-line questionnaire. Comments can also be sent by e-mail to irm@esfrs.org and the closing date is 22nd December 2005. Implementation of the plan will start from 1st April 2006.

- 1.5 **A Compact for East Sussex:** This consultation draft, which was commended to individual partner organisations seeks to formalise the principles governing partnership working between local public sector organisations and the voluntary and community sector. Its objectives mirror those of the LSP and the Community Strategy. Comments please by 24th January 2006. The full document is available at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/partnerships/downloadcompact.htm and the contact is Vicky Lawrence at ESCC Tel: 01273 482036 E-mail: vicky.lawrence@estsussex.gov.uk Post: County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes BN7 1SW

Part 2 Projects

- 2.1 Report on LSP funded projects:

Wheels to Learn: The objective is to facilitate take-up of Level 2 (GCSE-level qualifications) by those aged 16+ through the provision of individual mopeds for the duration of the course, as access and costs of transport to learning

have been identified as significant barriers. Based on a successful scheme in Surrey, the Wealden Skills Partnership is entering a pilot phase at a cost of around £15,000 with six speed-limited mopeds (30 mph) on loan from the Surrey scheme. Four community colleges in Wealden have signed up for the project which will begin trials in January 2006. Students on the scheme will lease the mopeds at a cost of about £40.00 per month, with a rebate of £20 per month on completion of the training course. They will also be required to attend road safety training. For the initial trials, students will join the Surrey training scheme, but in the future the *Safe Drive Stay Alive* project could fulfil this need, and it would be beneficial to link up these local initiatives. Funding is key to the sustainability of the project. A successful pilot can be a strong marketing tool, and there may be possibilities for sponsorship once employers learn about the opportunity. Ken Stevens (East Sussex Federation of Small Businesses) offered his organisation's communication channels as a means of promoting the project within its membership. This project is another example of cross-border partnership working and sharing good practice.

Youth Matters website: Members of the project team, including four students from Hailsham Community College, gave a lively presentation to demonstrate that the www.w4y.co.uk website is finalising preparations for a January launch. Young people have been directly involved in the design and content of the site and have also paid particular attention to the development of practical and eye-catching marketing materials. There may be potential to develop the prototype on-line questionnaire facility as a means for gathering information about the views of young people in the area. All LSP members were encouraged to get proactively involved in the launch of this exciting initiative.

Parish Plans and Co-ordinators Network: A written report is with the LSP Co-ordinator and will be circulated in due course. Highlights from the first year include:

- a network of 13 representatives from communities throughout Wealden who meet on a regular basis to share ideas and best practice in alignment with the LSP theme groups. The next meeting is scheduled for 15th December.
- *Making the Links* event, held in May, with the workshops subsequently rolled out to participants in more detail.
- Creation of a resource pack to assist in bridging parish plans into the theme groups.
- Creation of a database to capture and categorise information coming out at community level. Actions arising from parish plans should be publicly available, although for data protection reasons personal and contact data will be restricted.
- 50% of parishes in Wealden have Parish Plans and there are links to many of them from the Action in Rural Sussex website – a higher proportion of parishes in Sussex as a whole have plans than elsewhere in England, and the analysis of these will usefully feed into the LDF process, at least to begin with in the District of Wealden.

Year 2 will see more emphasis on implementation of plans, with a focus on how priorities can be moved forward in partnership with the LSP theme groups in ways that are appropriate for the specific locality. Three levels of support

are envisaged: a poster-format chart, a work pack giving more detail and links to further sources of information and a workshop / conference approach such as the *Projects for People* event in Battle on 21st January 2006 which is designed to cover both the Rother and Wealden areas. Links with the LSP theme groups will be strengthened by working closely with the LSP Co-ordinator, and the Co-ordinators' Network will continue to meet regularly throughout the year. Analysis is already under way to identify common themes which may be emerging from the parish plans and the LSP. Once this is complete it will be circulated and may helpfully feed into the annual LAA refreshment process. A key aspect is to ensure that planning processes feed into practical projects and activities which are recognised as constructive outcomes by the community as a result of effective communication. Similarly, it will be important to facilitate linkages between parishes who want to undertake certain projects and 'experts' or professionals who can assist them, for example in accessing funding, or with specific skills.

Action point: LSP Co-ordinator to circulate Parish Plans and Co-ordinators' Network Report

Part 3

3.1 Any other business

LSP Funding: East Sussex County Council have indicated that they are unable to guarantee further financial support for the LSP from as early as April 2006. Service amputations are currently under consideration at the council, and will be dependent upon the final shape of the ESCC budget which should be determined by February 2006. Under its three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy, Wealden District Council is still proposing to support the LSP with funding, as are Sussex Police and ESFR, but any loss of funding, whatever the source, threatens the continued viability of the LSP – a partnership which is vital to the future of the area. The way in which the LSP should support itself financially needs urgent attention. The initial way forward is for the LSP to be very clear about what it needs to achieve and how to achieve it. East Sussex as an area demonstrates excellent partnership working in comparison with near neighbours, and this should give leverage to arguments in 'high places' for the continuation of support which has shown real practical return on investment.

Buddy LSP: The Chairman of the LSP and Charmian Allcock from Wealden District Council ran a one-day seminar for Shepway LSP (located east of Rother) to share best practice and help them develop their thoughts on community engagement processes.

Community consultation: The Chief Executive of Wealden District Council made a presentation on *Councillor Engagement in Community Planning* at a recent Local Government Chronicle seminar. Wealden's approach and experience in this area is still seen as innovative and of considerable interest even though the project took place some time ago.

3.2 **Date, time and place for next meeting:** Wednesday 11th January 2006, in accordance with the agreed schedule, at Hailsham East Community Centre.