

WEALDEN LSP

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd February 2005 at Hailsham East Community Centre

PART 1

1.1 LSP Members attending:

Tim Sparrow (SALC and LSP Chair)
Cllr. Nigel Coltman (WDC Leader)
Rupert Clubb (Environmental Agency -Environment theme champion)
Mike Rogers (Fire Service)
Ken Stevens (FSB - Prosperity theme champion)
Teresa Gittins (AirS)
John Kelly (WVS)
Cllr. Tony Read (ESCC - Transport theme champion)
Julia Brown (Eastbourne Downs PCT)
Fiona Henniker (Sussex Downs and Weald PCT – Health and Social Care theme champion)

Councillors and officers in attendance:

Jessica Britton (Sussex Downs and Weald PCT)
Lesley Barakchizadeh (WDC Head of Environmental Services)
David Phillips (WDC Planning)
Charmian Allcock (WDC Chief Executives Department)
Mo Hemsley (ESCC)
Alison Horan (ESCC)
Cllr Mrs. Pam Doodes (WDC)
Cllr Keith Whitehead (WDC)
Laura Treneer (Princes Trust)
Paul Treadgold (ESCC)
Ieuan Sherwood (AirS)
Caroline Adcock (LSP Co-ordinator)

1.2 Apologies from Members:

Ian Chisnall (Churches Together; Leisure theme champion)
C I Rex Matthews (Police; Safer Wealden theme champion)
Peter Swan (Beacon College; Learning & Skills theme champion)
Cllr. Mrs. Margaret Kirkpatrick (WDC and standing in for Housing theme champion)

1.3 Brief Report on COMPACT

John Kelly outlined the rationale for this report and explained that it provides an aid to encourage best practice and helps voluntary and community groups work with statutory agencies. He explained that Wealden District council had produced a similar compact some years ago but the one recently produced by East Sussex County Council was more comprehensive. The full document, together with a summary, is available on the web site. www.

AGREED

Wealden LSP endorses the idea behind the East Sussex COMPACT and encourages members to get their own organisations to sign up and adhere to this best practice guide / code of conduct.

Brief Report on Consortium

John Kelly explained how the Government was seeking to strengthen the Action Plan drawn up by VOICES by bringing in representatives from the statutory sector to endorse and support the plan. The document had previously been put together by the

voluntary sector and was more or less approved by the Government subject to ratification by LSP's and statutory agencies.

The aim of this programme is to strengthen the ability of the voluntary and community sector to deliver more effectively and make them fit for purpose. This is a national programme entitled Change –Up and most of the benefits will be at the national, regional, sub-regional or even county level. Extra funding is less likely to filter down to the district level

AGREED

Wealden LSP are happy to endorse the Action Plan which the consortium have put together. LSP representation on this consortium will be considered if necessary, providing resource constraints allow .

PART 2 Discussion

2.1 Chairman's Report

Tim Sparrow presented his first report to the Wealden LSP and comments were invited.

Members were supportive of the aims and objectives outlined. Cllr Read felt that it was critical to embrace change and facilitate communities in adapting to it, whilst maximising the benefits which any new development might bring.

Rupert Clubb suggested that change provides an opportunity to improve and enhance, not only physical infrastructure but also cultural and behavioural aspects of community life eg attitudes to recycling, careful use of resources, reduction in anti-social behaviour. Building cohesive and successful new communities must take this into account.

Ken Stevens and Cllr. Nigel Coltman also offered supportive comments and reiterated that actions are best achieved by sharing and communicating

Charmian Allcock explained that Wealden had previously been selected as a case study for Idea and a write up of the final article was now published- see attached.

LDF Update

Presented by Lesley Barakchizadeh – Head of Environmental Services

Lesley gave a resume of the new planning process which Wealden were introducing in line with Government requirements.

The key players included:

David Phillips (WDC Planning Officer) Charmian Allock (Chief Exec – consultation) and Cllr Keith Whitehead - cabinet member with remit for sustainable development

The new process was complex and had a more bottom up focus with considerable involvement from the community.

The Statement of Community Involvement is an important document outlining who, how and when the stakeholders will be consulted in relation to each of the plans including the core strategy, the supplementary planning guidance and the individual planning applications.

Timetables are very tight and preparation of the SCI will commence next month. The draft is due to be published in August followed by a 6 week consultation period from August to September. The revised document will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in January with a public inquiry expected from April onwards

A project group will be set up in March to take this forward and will include representation from the LSP. Authorities can decide to what extent the general public are involved providing a minimum level is reached. Wealden plan to exceed this but are aware of the need to balance resource requirements and the tight timetable

The content of the LDF includes a core strategy which must be integrated with the SE Plan. It replaces the Local Plan and is also subject to a 6 week period for consultation

before the draft is submitted to the Secretary of State. A public inquiry is then held before the plan is adopted.

Additional plans will also be drawn up to cover specific topics and they will add value to the main strategy. Topics include an affordable housing plan, housing and business allocations document, and a range of supplementary planning documents such as urban design guidance, landscape and bio-diversity guidance, review and re-appraisal of conservation areas. Each plan will be subject to their own consultation arrangements and timetables and must consider a range of options before selecting the preferred one.

Parish Plans may also become part of supplementary planning guidance providing they follow the 6 week statutory consultation period and are in line with the core strategy for Wealden.

Comments raised by members included concerns over the tight timetable and whether issues would get rushed through. There was a need to take into account views expressed by the community if consultation is an important aspect of the new planning process. Lesley confirmed that the presentation to the community representatives on 13th May networking event would concentrate on what the LDF might mean for them and how Parish Plans could contribute to the supplementary planning guidance.

Concern was raised that the LSP would be used too widely as part of the LDF process. Whilst members wanted to be involved there was a need to recognise that resources and time were limited and that LSP input must be directed to ensure maximum effectiveness.

2.2 Presentation on Health and Social Care

Jessica Britton, Sussex Downs and Weald PCT gave a comprehensive overview of how the health and social care theme group has reviewed their action plan. She explained that the key document behind the action plan was the Strategic Health Improvement Programme which contained a number of key aims and objectives for the period from April 2005 - 2008.

- Promoting independence
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Social inclusion
- Carers
- Strengthening local accountability

This was overlaid by the local health priorities including

- Smoking cessation
- Access to benefits and financial advice
- Accident prevention
- Food and Health
- Exercise

The review of the existing Action Plan included identifying successes to date such as:

- Introduction of expert patients scheme for chronic patient management
- GP waiting times reduced
- Introduction of Medicines at Home scheme
- Improved infrastructure at Surgery in Stone Cross
- Setting up Wealden Business website eg for food and safety,
- 10% increase in homes connected to Lifeline in last 3 years
- Child equipment loan scheme
- Smoking cessation schemes set up.
- Launch of draft involvement strategy for older people
- Setting up Wealden Community Network

Once the aims and objectives in the revised Action Plan were agreed the group identified key priorities and now seek to engage other members in their delivery.

JOINT WORKING IS KEY TO THE DELIVERY OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO GIVE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS THEIR FULL CONSIDERATION WITH A VIEW TO SHARING ACTIONS:

Health and Community Services at Ridgewood Rise, Uckfield

Additional services are being developed at this site. This will include health and social services but what other community services could be included eg transport, community services, housing?

Promoting Independence

A pilot scheme is being developed in Crowborough and this will provide home visits to vulnerable elderly people in order to ascertain their needs, Although this will identify health and social care it could include a number of other services which partners may wish to engage in eg smoke alarms, home safety issues, volunteer help, transport needs,

Carers

There is a need to identify and support carers across the district, many of whom are not known to the statutory agencies. Other agencies can help in the distribution of leaflets and raising awareness to encourage them to seek support.

Promoting Health Lifestyles

Partnership working can provide opportunities to deliver some key messages such as smoking cessation in the workplace, increasing smoke free areas, improving diets, local food production and marketing, child safety equipment loan scheme.

Reducing Obesity in Children

Efforts should be made to reduce the number of vending machines, provide healthier snacks and get the community involved in supporting best practice. Schools, colleges and public buildings are well placed to contribute to this aim

Strengthening Accountability

There is a need to ensure services are delivered in line with the needs expressed by the community and to do so in conjunction with other agencies and LSP theme groups.

Tim Sparrow thanked Jessica and praised the health and social care group for their excellent presentation and review of the Action Plan.

Members were generally supportive of the aims and objectives of partnership working but no ideas or offers of help were raised at this stage.

AGREED

List of ideas for joint working itemised above.

Members to consider how they could add value to these ideas by developing joint projects or working with health and social care to deliver more effective outputs.

Please forward your ideas and offers of help to Jessica.britton@sussexdownsandwealdpct.nhs.uk

Follow up of shared activity to take place at future LSP meetings

2.3 Making the Link

Caroline Adcock explained the rationale behind the production of this leaflet and a mock up was handed round to illustrate how the final product might look.

The feeling was expressed that the LSP should not be promoted as an organisation in it's own right, rather that its partners were the agencies to which the public might relate. However there was general support for the concept of the leaflet as a means

to explain the LSP. Members felt it would be useful when dealing with other partners including parish and town representatives.

AGREED

The leaflet will be printed. Any changes to the final text must be sent to Caroline by the Thursday 4th March 2005

2.4 LSP Funding

Funding for the next financial year could not be confirmed until the second homes money available in 2005/2006 is finalised. Although some other councils in East Sussex were expecting a reduction, Wealden had been given an indication that the sum was likely to be similar to last year ie £101,000.

Charmian Allcock explained that at least £39,000 of this was committed to cover the costs of the LSP Co-ordinator working on a two year contract.

A total of £10,000 would be carried forward from the current year to provide grants to parishes wishing to undertake a parish plan. The LSP may consider adding further monies to this pot if the demand outstrips the supply, which is currently anticipated.

Tim Sparrow agreed to set up a small sub-committee to look at how the parish plans support money should be allocated and will advise the LSP as to whether additional sums might be needed.

AGREED

Firm figures on money available to be presented at the next meeting of the Wealden LSP

Tim Sparrow to set up sub-committee to decide on criteria and arrangements for allocating existing £10,000 and recommend to LSP whether additional monies are required.

Recommendations of sub-committee to be circulated in the near future. If you wish to comment please contact Caroline Adcock by 10th March

Letters and applications forms to be sent out to all Parish Councils in next few weeks Once details have been agreed.

PART 3

3.1 East Sussex in Figures

Paul Treadgold, officer from ESSC leading the initiative, gave a brief resume of the East Sussex in Figures project. Considerable information was circulated prior to and during the meeting and members who wish to find out more can visit the website on www.essc.org.uk

To summarise, the project offers a data observatory which is a comprehensive, web based intelligence system with easily accessible, up to date information, for East Sussex. It promises to be flexible, easy to use and will filter out data for small areas such as parishes, comparing this with statistics for other areas and identifying changes over time.

The business case was also outlined and Paul stressed the need to proceed with the project now or lose the grant funding altogether. Considerable funding was on offer from the ODP, providing the timetable could be met. This means that the observatory must be in place by September 2005 which requires a decision by the end of March. ESSC have already invested much officer time and would lose money if the project does not proceed.

Most of the members felt the data observatory would add value to their work, provide a means of measuring performance more accurately and was an opportunity not to be missed. The issue was one of funding since the LSP had very limited access to funds of its own and these could not be guaranteed. Whilst the meeting accepted the

setting up costs of £2,000 could be met by the LSP second homes fund there was a lack of support for the ongoing maintenance costs of £8,000 per year, especially when the LSP does not have a responsibility for auditing in its own right. The chairman suggested that individual partners should seek to cover these costs and Cllr Nigel Coltman indicated that Wealden may well consider a contribution on the basis that the data would provide a useful tool for the District Council

AGREED

Wealden LSP to provide £2,000 as a one off cost for setting up the data observatory. Paul Treadgold to circulate each of the LSP members requesting support for the project and seeking a contribution towards funding the annual maintenance costs. Members are urged to respond promptly in view of the tight timetable ie decision required by end of March 2005.

3.2 Report on GOSE conference

See WLSP 2005 Briefing Note 1 attached.

3.3 Representation on the AIF

Members encouraged to examine each of the AIF theme groups and consider whether current representation is sufficient.

Any member who wishes to engage more closely with the AIF to contact Caroline Adcock

3.4 Any other business

Consultation on South East Plan

Members urged to respond to the consultation and attend one of the consultation events taking place in next few weeks

Wealden Community Grants Process

Wealden DC had decided to streamline their grant making process by collecting all grant funding together and using the same application form and process for allocations across the board. Applicants will be asked to explain how their project meets the aims and objectives of the Community Strategy and this was welcomed by the LSP. The District Council was congratulated on adopting LSP objectives within its own framework.

3.5 Date, time and place of future meetings

No change to details previously circulated.

**NEXT MEETING IS ON WEDNESDAY 11th MAY
At Hailsham East Community Centre**

Looking forward to seeing you there!