

**Note of Wealden Local Strategic Partnership meeting 10 November 2009,  
Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield.**

---

**Present:**

Ian Chisnall – Chair, Churches Together in Sussex  
Monica Akehurst - NFU  
Lisa Compton – PCT  
Cllr Pam Doodles – Leader, WDC  
Tracy Evans - Downland HA  
Cllr Linda Francis – Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council (representing southern parishes)  
Cllr Roy Galley – WDC Councillor  
Jeff Hart – Freedom Leisure, Managing Director  
Cllr William King - Maresfield Parish Council (representing northern parishes)  
Charles Lant – WDC, Chief Executive  
Sheila O'Sullivan - PCT  
Mark Rist - East Sussex Fire and Rescue  
Sue Shoesmith - South Downs CVS  
Ken Stevens – Federation of Small Businesses  
Cllr David White – 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  
Peter Griggs - WDC, Head of Public Health and Community Development  
Diana Carlick - WDC, Cultural Services Officer

**Apologies:**

Cllr Gerald Carter - Polegate Town Council (representing town councils)  
Teresa Gittins – Action in Rural Sussex, Director of Policy  
Alison Horan - East Sussex County Council  
Julia Pope - Sussex Police  
Garry Frostick - Highways Agency  
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 Chantal Wilson – WDC Councillor

## 1. Welcome and introductions

Ian Chisnall welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Monica Akehurst who has taken over from Kathy Fordham as NFU representative and Sheila O'Sullivan who has taken over from Richard Watson (PCT).

## 2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Economic situation in Wealden - see item 3 below.

Flu pandemic - see item 4 below.

Local Development Framework - see item 5 below.

Rural Issues - Pam Doodles said she and Gill Cameron-Waller had attended a meeting of SPARSE (a partnership of the most rural local authorities in England) on 6 November to discuss the SPARSE manifesto for 2010 and beyond. A wide geographical spread of authorities were at the meeting and each faced similar issues in delivering services in rural areas. The two main issues raised were access to broadband and transport. Pam had fed the views of Wealden District Council into the discussions, which she hopes will be reflected in the published manifesto.

Tom Stuart circulated a paper setting out issues for the deprivation project. Some gaps remain and need filling - any suggestions and general feedback would be welcome. Work is underway with 3VA on liaison with the voluntary sector, consultation with around 250 organisations is planned.

**Action: All - to provide feedback to Tom Stuart**

## 3. Economic situation in Wealden

Charles Lant said hard evidence of recovery from the recession had still to be identified - though this may be partly due to the time-lag in data becoming available. He mentioned that SEEDA have recently produced a summary of the situation for the South East overall (copy circulated with these minutes). Their general conclusion was that a gradual recovery is underway across the South East.

Ken Stevens mentioned that FSB members are having particular difficulty with the current revaluation of business rates. Many are facing unexpected - and therefore unplanned - increases. A key issue was the timing of the increases - if implementation could be phased businesses would be better able to manage their cashflow. Charles Lant said it was important that businesses were aware of how and whether they could challenge the increases. Advice would be put on the WDC business support webpages.

Funding via the Future Jobs Fund was not as clear cut as initially envisaged - the eligibility criteria are much more restrictive in practice than expected. It is not clear whether the fund will adequately tackle the issues faced. Charles Lant said WDC would revisit their own criteria and check for potential bureaucratic barriers.

Pam Doodes asked what the LSP could do to help younger people in particular. Sue Shoemith suggested that the Connexions local manager could come to a future meeting to update the Board on the situation facing 16-18 year olds and the measures being put in place to assist them.

**Action: Alex White**

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

Sheila O'Sullivan updated members on the current situation. Infection rates in the South East are decreasing. The NHS is coping with increases in hospital admissions. The vaccination programme was underway for priority groups. The infection remains mild in most cases.

Lisa Compton offered to forward a fact sheet on the vaccination programme to answer some points of common concern and dispel some commonly held misperceptions (now circulated with these minutes).

**Action: Alex White**

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

Roy Galley updated members on the current situation. There had been a healthy response to the consultation exercise and analysis of this is underway. The timing of publication of the Core Strategy has been amended slightly and is now planned for June 2010.

A common theme among the responses to the consultation had been the issue of infrastructure and a key task now was to prepare the Infrastructure Delivery Plan alongside the Core Strategy. Gill Cameron-Waller reminded members that 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 such plans. Work on the pilot project was underway but is still at an early stage. The project will run until September 2010. The issue of infrastructure will be discussed at the LSP event on 24 November. Further updates on the progress of the project will be provided to the Board at future meetings.

**Action: Gill Cameron-Waller**

## **6. Annual Health Report**

Lisa Compton introduced the Annual Health Report 2009/10 which focuses on the health and wellbeing of older people. Wealden has a high proportion of older people (22% of the population is over age 65 compared with 17% regionally) and appropriate delivery and provision of services - including a strategy for carers - were key issues. An important message for partners arising out of the report is how to work together on health promotion issues and how to improve quality of life. Discussion on these points would continue through Health Improvement Partnerships. Sheila O'Sullivan said that she was intending to assess and revise the work programme of the HIMP and would report back to the LSP Board in due course.

## **7. Progress through Partnership**

Alex White tabled a draft self-assessment form and outline proposals for bids to the PtP central fund. These forms have to be completed to access PtP funding. He reminded members that the self assessment had been prepared following discussions with a small group of Board members. The form was heavily prescriptive and was perhaps more appropriate for county-level LSPs. The Board approved the draft self assessment.

There is up to £6,000 available for the LSP to fund activities identified as important through the self assessment process. Proposed bids were: £1,000 to be pooled with other East Sussex LSPs to fund county-wide activities; £3,000 to support a project to map out businesses in Wealden; leaving £1,000 to be spent on a further activity. It was agreed that any bid should be for a clear outcome, not merely a meeting or an awayday.

**Action: Alex White**

## **8. Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan**

Alex White tabled a draft report to enable the Board to monitor progress of the action plan. Theme leads updated the Board on progress within each theme. Some general points on improving the monitoring report were suggested: Alex will amend the draft.

**Action: Alex White**

## **9. East Sussex in Figures**

Alex White informed members that the ESiF website was being updated and a more user-friendly site would be up and running from the end of November.

## 10. Walking Project for 2012

Diana Carlick outlined a project to promote walking - and in turn improve health - within Wealden. The intention is to invite communities to take part in local led health walk events. The aim is to offer residents in every Parish Council area the opportunity to take part in at least one walk event by 2012, which could be organised by any interested group or organisation. Health Walk events will take place across the District, with a target of 15 events in 2010 with further events to follow in 2011 and 2012. LSP members would be welcome to provide feedback , suggest ideas and to work together to coordinate and organise events.

## 11. Next meeting

The next meeting of the LSP will be at **10am on Thursday 28 January 2010 at the Council offices in Vicarage Lane, Hailsham.**

## 2010 Board meetings

| Month     | Date 2010 | Time        | Venue                                          |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|
| January   | 28        | 10 - 12 .30 | Council offices,<br>Vicarage Lane,<br>Hailsham |
| March     | 24        | 2 - 4.30    | Uckfield Civic<br>Centre                       |
| May       | 12        | 10 - 12.30  | Heathfield<br>Community<br>Centre              |
| July      | 7         | 2 - 4.30    | Polegate<br>Community<br>Centre                |
| September | 8         | 10 - 12.30  | Council offices,<br>Vicarage Lane,<br>Hailsham |
| November  | 17        | 2 - 4.30    | Uckfield Civic<br>Centre                       |

## Special Event

| Date        | Venue                  | Topic/Focus                                                                          |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24 November | Boship Hotel, Hailsham | Sustainable Community<br>Strategy, Local Development<br>Framework and Infrastructure |