

BOARD MEETING OF THE SOUTH DERBYSHIRE
LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Held at the Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote
on 17th December 2007 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Local Authority Sector

District Councillor John Harrison, Frank McArdle (Chief Executive, South Derbyshire District Council), County Councillor Clive Moesby, District Councillor Kevin Richards and District Councillor Heather Wheeler (**Chairman**).

Other Public Sector

Melanie Alsop (Learning and Skills Council), Vicki Price (Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust) and Chief Superintendent Jack Russell (Derbyshire Constabulary).

Private Sector

Colleen Hempson (East Midlands Airport) and Clive Keble (The National Forest Company).

Voluntary/Community Sector

Gill Farrington (Swadlincote District 50+ Forum), Graeme Royall (South Derbyshire Citizens' Advice Bureau), Jo Smith (**Vice-Chairman**) (South Derbyshire CVS) and Glenys Williams (Old Post Regeneration Association Limited).

Also in Attendance

Stuart Batchelor, Neil Betteridge and Mike Roylance (South Derbyshire District Council), Wesley Downes, Mick Evans and Faye Nicholls (Derbyshire County Council) and David Crookes (Learning and Skills Council).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Christine Barker (Derbyshire Association of Local Councils), Karen Bradley (Toyota UK Limited), Nick Chischniak (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce) and John Oake (Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust).

LSP/18. **DISTRICT COUNCIL SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE**

The Chairman advised Board Members of the recent senior management restructuring at the District Council involving the departure of the Deputy Chief Executive and the Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration. This had created a more streamlined structure to face the challenges ahead.

LSP/19. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th June 2007 and of the Special Meeting held on 12th July 2007 were taken as read, approved as true records and signed by the Chairman.

LSP/20. **MATTERS ARISING**

Further to Minute No. LSP/8 (1) of 12th June 2007, Vicki Price advised that there had been a slight delay on the development of the Health Needs Assessment report. This was now virtually completed and would be available shortly.

LSP/21. **DERBYSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT – 2008 ONWARDS**

Wesley Downes, Policy and Research Officer at Derbyshire County Council made a presentation to Board Members on this matter. He advised that Derbyshire had been chosen as one of 21 first round pilots. The current Local Area Agreement (LAA) was from 2005 to 2008. The new LAA from 2008 onwards involved the delivery of better outcomes faster. There were 198 national indicators for local government and its partners and LAA's would be the only place where central government would agree targets with local authorities. There were 35 improvement targets and there was a duty on the County Council to produce the LAA along with a duty on partners to co-operate. There was an explicit link to the Community Strategy and the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Future funding arrangements were outlined, indicating that there was no specific funding for specific targets. An unringfenced area-based grant replaced the LAA grant and in reality, there appeared less funding for more work.

Derbyshire had been chosen as a pilot for a feasibility test and consideration would be given to national priority, local priority, consultation, performance etc. A Derbyshire Partnership Forum workshop was held on 14th December 2007 and indicators would be negotiated along with the development of targets.

Frank McArdle emphasised the importance of outcomes and outputs and website links would be provided to Board Members on the 198 national indicators.

RESOLVED:-

That the presentation be noted.

LSP/22. **NATIONAL FOREST AND SOUTH DERBYSHIRE LEADER AND BEYOND**

Clive Keble, Chief Officer – Land and Project Development at the National Forest Company made a presentation to Board Members on this issue, which involved the development of a sustainable future for the National Forest. The initiative was based around local action groups developing and implementing a Local Development Strategy in a coherent geographical rural area (maximum 150,000 population) via a locally delegated, “bottom-up” approach. EMDA had created a £12 million LEADER funding initiative to

assist rural communities in improving the quality of life and economic prosperity of the local area through small-scale innovative projects.

Board Members were reminded of the administrative boundaries of the National Forest covering over 200 sq miles and including over 7 million new trees, woodland cover from 6% to 18%, 625 new forest sites covering 5,500 hectares and a tourism economy with approximately 7 million day visits. South Derbyshire represented 25% of the forest area, being approximately 50 sq miles. South Derbyshire contained 24% (47,011) of the forest population of 200,047. Over 25% of new woodlands were situated in the District together with Rosliston Forestry Centre and Poppy Wood.

The LEADER initiative involved the development of the woodland economy to secure the management of woodlands and provide commercial opportunities for woodland owners; the development of sustainable tourism, including the accommodation stock, joint visits, high environmental standards, quality service, local produce and transport options; improved accessibility within and to the area; the retention of community identity and character; and addressing these issues in an integrated manner to help the National Forest Company and partners provide a leadership role to develop practical approaches to creating sustainable communities.

The strategy to be developed would be balanced between meeting identified economic and social needs in rural communities, market towns and former mining villages and exploiting the great potential and unique opportunities provided by the creation of the National Forest to change the landscape and develop communities in the 21st century in a truly sustainable manner. It was noted that although the population of the National Forest was 200,047, this included Burton-on-Trent, which was not included in the proposed LEADER area. The population of the proposed area was therefore 144,010.

Representation on the initiative involved 7 from the public sector, 4 from the voluntary sector and 4 from the private sector. Membership would rotate at years 2 and 4 to ensure engagement of all partners. The National Forest Company, as the managing partner was the secretariat for the partnership and accountable body. If agreed by the partnership, the National Forest Company would provide the Chair for the Partnership Board. A Project Officer would be hosted by the National Forest Company and proportions of existing National Forest Company posts would support the programme.

Activity areas included diversification into non-agricultural activities, creation and development of micro-enterprises, encouragement of tourism activities, conservation and upgrading of rural heritage, training and information, co-operation and comprehensive and integrated all activity areas.

Support was requested for the bid along with assistance with the Local Development Strategy. Consideration was also given to involvement on the Board and the Council or LSP were requested to sign up to the Local Strategy document by mid January.

RESOLVED:-

That the LEADER bid be supported by the LSP and a place be taken on the Partnership Board.

LSP/23. **VISIONING DAY – 14TH FEBRUARY 2008**

This important event would be held on 14th February 2008 and the Strategic Co-ordination Group would consider the brief for the Visioning Day at its Meeting on 28th January 2008.

LSP/24. **2007/08 COMMUNITY PLAN MONITORING REPORT**

This would be circulated prior to the Meeting of the Strategic Co-ordination Group on 28th January 2008.

LSP/25. **2008/09 COMMUNITY PLAN ACTION PLAN**

The District Council's Head of Leisure and Community Development advised of the need for an action plan for next year and the Chairmen of Theme Groups were requested to discuss actions within their Groups to agree actions for next year's plan.

LSP/26. **DDEP/VIBRANT ECONOMY – EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

It was reported that the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP) provided funds to the South Derbyshire LSP for the support of economic development projects that contributed to the objectives of both organisations. The LSP had agreed a three-year Investment Plan with DDEP for the period 2007-10. Approximately £200,000 of DDEP funds would be invested in South Derbyshire each year through the Investment Plan. A range of projects were already being delivered or were under development, but a significant amount of available funding remained. In this regard, approximately £150,000 of capital and £35,000 of revenue remained unallocated over the period April 2008 to March 2010.

The LSP was trying to support a range of projects with DDEP funds, which were outlined to Board Members. Some of these were awaiting final approval. In view of the timescales, the process of identifying projects for 2008/09 was already underway and the deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest had been set as 17th December 2007. Typically, there was a minimum grant of £25,000 and a maximum level of DDEP funding of 50% of the total value of the project.

It was proposed that projects would be appraised by the Vibrant Economy Group on 25th January 2008 in terms of their contribution to LSP and DDEP objectives and their ability to deliver. This meeting would be open to all interested parties. With regard to LSP priorities, it was proposed that projects would be assessed against the LSP's Community Strategy. Projects identified as priorities for the coming year would then be invited to submit a full application for DDEP to appraise, with a view to commencing in April 2008.

RESOLVED:-

(1) That the priorities already set out in the Community Strategy 2005 – 2010 be used to guide the allocation of DDEP funds in 2008/09.

(2) That the Vibrant Economy Group be authorised to appraise applications for funding support.

LSP/27. **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

It was reported that the Government had produced guidance on the development of Sustainable Community Strategies within its consultation document “Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance”. Although the current South Derbyshire Community Plan ran until 2010, work would need to begin shortly to develop a new strategy in line with the Government’s guidance, which was attached to the report.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Government guidance on Sustainable Community Strategies be noted.***
- (2) That a report be submitted to a future Meeting identifying a project plan for the completion of a future strategy.***

LSP/28. **BUDGET**

Board Members were reminded that the District Council acted as the accountable body for the South Derbyshire LSP and considered a report on the current financial position. There was currently £23,427 in the LSP’s reserve fund which would be carried over to next year if not spent in the current financial year. In addition, the LSP had £9,180.43 unspent in the current financial year, which would be lost if not spent by 31st March 2008. The LSP had also received £6,250 from Derbyshire County Council and it was understood that this funding had to be spent on projects in 2007/08 that met general eligibility criteria outlined to Board Members. Details of projects supported with Derbyshire County Council funding together with examples of unsuccessful applications were also provided.

Chief Superintendent Jack Russell advised that he had secured the appropriate funding to enable him to provide between £80,000 – £100,000 to the Leisure and Community Development Service. It was also advised that since the report was prepared, £3,000 had been received from the Learning and Skills Council, which also needed to be spent by 31st March 2008. Faye Nicholls advised that Derbyshire County Council would wish to receive copies of any bids for assessment purposes.

The budget report was welcomed and it was noted that this matter would be an ongoing agenda item for future Meetings.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That Theme Group Chairmen be requested to consider where the available funds could facilitate the achievement of actions in the current SDLSP Action Plan 2006 – 2008 together with actions that will contribute to the Community Strategy and which can be delivered in 2007/08.***
- (2) That the Strategic Co-ordination Group be requested to consider and prioritise the proposals received early in the New Year.***

LSP/29. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was reported that the Strategic Coordination Group would be considering future Meeting dates for the remainder of the year.

LSP/30. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) East Midlands Airport – Access Project

Colleen Hempson referred to the closure of the Swadlincote bus depot which had contributed to the withdrawal of the airlink 69, in addition to the service costing more than the income received. Services would be withdrawn from Swadlincote shortly but there would be a stopgap service for a period of one month. Negotiations had been held with Leicestershire County Council to consider alternatives but at the present time, costs were well in excess of budgets.

b) Partnership Event – 19th January 2008

Vicki Price advised Board Members of a partnership event on 19th January 2008 at the Green Bank Leisure Centre through the Healthy Community Group. The South Derbyshire healthier website would be launched and it was also hoped to raise awareness on local services and partnerships to improve health.

MRS. H. K. WHEELER

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 11.00 a.m.