

BOARD MEETING OF THE SOUTH DERBYSHIRE
LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Held at the Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote
on 13th January 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Local Authority Sector

Frank McArdle (Chief Executive, South Derbyshire District Council), Evadne Robbins (Derbyshire Association of Local Councils), County Councillor Joyce Sanders, District Councillor Heather Wheeler and District Councillor Barrie Whyman, M.B.E. (Vice-Chair)

Other Public Sector

Nina Ennis (Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire Primary Care Trust), Chief Superintendent Tony Hurrell (Derbyshire Constabulary) (Chair), Karen Jones (Trident Housing Association) and Clare Williamson (Learning and Skills Council).

Private Sector

Susan Bell, O.B.E. (National Forest Company) and John Oake (Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust).

Voluntary/Community Sector

Reverend Bob Hollings (Churches Together), Graeme Royall (South Derbyshire Citizens' Advice Bureau), Jo Smith (South Derbyshire CVS), Helena Stubbs (Derbyshire Rural Community Council) and Glenys Williams (Old Post Regeneration Association).

Also in Attendance

South Derbyshire District Council

Ian Reid (Deputy Chief Executive), Kevin Mason (Economic Development Officer), Malcolm Roseburgh (Community Regeneration Officer), Peter Woolrich (Policy and Best Value Officer) and Neil Betteridge (Principal Democratic Services Officer).

Derbyshire County Council

Jane Cox (Partnerships Co-ordinator).

South Derbyshire CVS

Dawn Robinson.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillor John Wilkins, Simon Caines (Connexions Derbyshire), Jeff Dolby (Environment Agency), Karen Bradley (Toyota UK), Sharon Forton (Derbyshire Chamber), Graham Keddle (Nottingham East Midlands Airport) and Maria Hallam (GOEM).

LSP/38. **CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT TONY HURRELL (CHAIR)**

District Councillor Whyman, M.B.E. referred to the award of a Queen's Police Medal to Chief Superintendent Hurrell in the New Year's Honours and Board Members expressed their congratulations at this prestigious award.

LSP/39. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

John Oake declared his position as Chair of the Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust.

LSP/40. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 9th December 2004 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

LSP/41. **DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY – CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Peter Woolrich, the District Council's Policy and Best Value Officer, advised that between September and December, an extensive programme of consultation had been implemented. This included a questionnaire via the Citizens' Panel (which had attracted a 62.9% response), direct circulation of the Strategy to partners and other key stakeholders, presentation to a Forum Meeting and to those stakeholders unable to attend, CVS co-ordination of 'Hard to Reach Groups', presentations at the District Council's Area Meetings and the Parish Council Liaison Meeting and Direct Mailing to each parish council/parish meeting. More direct internal consultation had also been held with Managers and the District Council's policy committees and it had been publicised on the Council's website.

Board Members considered summaries of the individual responses to the Draft Community Strategy together with a broad analysis of the Citizens' Panel response to the questionnaire, at Area Meetings and at the Coffee Club. It was noted that individual agenda items for this Meeting detailed the response from some of the Hard to Reach Groups and the Thematic Group Chairs. Unfortunately, three of the Thematic Group Meetings would be held after this Meeting but their conclusions could be presented at the Forum AGM.

Generally, the Strategy had been well received and supported and it was acknowledged that responses had been tailored to reflect particular organisations or individual perceptions and local needs. In this context, major service providers were concerned that the actions were too many, often reflecting programmes already underway, would unduly raise public expectations of delivery and had resource issues. Parish councils were generally concerned at local issues and provision. Public response had confirmed that provision of local services, access to services and tackling anti-social behaviour were obvious priorities and generally supported the priorities listed in the Thematics. However, the specified actions needed to be considered in the light of that already undertaken and should concentrate on where added value could be provided.

The Chair advised that it was important to acknowledge all respondents, justifying the final decision on the Strategy but it was vital that an

appropriate document could be presented to the Forum AGM on 27th January 2005 for partners to consider.

LSP/42. **CONSULTATION WITH HARD TO REACH GROUPS ON DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

It was reported that following the agreement of the LSP Board, the South Derbyshire CVS, supported by People Express, had been tasked with consulting Hard to Reach Groups on the Draft Strategy. The definition of these groups was very broad, being those people who had traditionally not had an opportunity to comment either on how or what services were delivered or to contribute to the planning process.

Dawn Robinson of the South Derbyshire CVS made a detailed presentation on the consultation and it had been necessary to use a variety of methods to engage people. One to one semi-structured interviews had been held, together with small group sessions where a range of participatory approaches were used. Whilst a draft document had been used as a basis for all the consultation, depending on the groups/individuals involved, a flexible approach had been taken to stimulate discussions, whilst ensuring that the recording of information was accurate and attributable. Due to the very short timescale available together with the pre-Christmas period and the consultation closely following the Crime Audit meant that some of the identified groups could not be accessed. However, the enthusiasm and interest shown by those who were consulted emphasised that the quality of information obtained was more important than the quantity.

It was considered that this consultation should be regarded as the beginning of the process rather than the end and various other groups needed to be consulted. The network of people willing to contribute should be supported and maintained and their participation fully encouraged.

With regard to the findings, the consultation with hard to reach populations had given overall positive support to the general priorities identified in the Draft Strategy. There was little to dispute in overarching terms but there was a need for substance in terms of detailed action planning that provided relevance for particular communities of interest or geographical location. This would enable people to identify fully with the Strategy and its objectives and remain convinced that the Strategy would have an impact on the communities to which they belonged.

Concern was expressed that many issues would not be fulfilled due to prohibitive targets.

LSP/43. **REPORTS OF THEMATIC GROUPS**

Peter Woolrich, the District Council's Policy and Best Value Officer reported on the meetings of the Thematic Groups held to date. It was noted that there were still three groups yet to meet and following all the group meetings, the draft action areas would need to be presented to the Forum AGM for consideration of priorities. Notes of the group meetings would be circulated to all Board Members in due course prior to the Forum AGM. Action areas would be considered thereafter by the Thematic Groups for approval by the Board. It was acknowledged that GOEM would require the inclusion of a section in the Community Strategy on accountability and performance

management and in this regard, it may be necessary for a performance management sub-group to be established.

LSP/44. **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LSP FORUM AGM**

At previous Meetings, it had been agreed to hold the Forum AGM on Thursday, 27th January 2005 at the Mickleover Court Hotel to allow sufficient time for feedback from consultees on the Draft Community Strategy to be evaluated. These had now been provided as part of the agenda for this Meeting, although some of the Working Groups had yet to meet to discuss matters relevant to their themes. Arrangements for the Forum AGM had now been formally publicised and this process had included the distribution of flyers, public notices, direct invitations to partners and parish councils and a notice on the District Council's website.

The draft agenda was outlined and it was suggested that a large proportion of the morning should be devoted to finalising the Community Strategy together with priority actions for inclusion in the action plan. It was suggested that the consultation on the Draft Community Strategy should focus on a presentation of the Board's considered response to the consultations and two break-out sessions should focus the thematic responses (three themes each session). The agreed conclusions would then form the basis for the preparation of the final Strategy and action plan to be agreed by the Board at its Meeting on 17th March 2005.

RESOLVED:-

That the proposals for the Forum AGM be approved.

LSP/45. **VIBRANT ECONOMY WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

It was reported that at its Meeting held on 10th January 2005, the Vibrant Economy Working Group had approved the following terms of reference:-

- (1) To meet at least quarterly and more regularly if required.
- (2) To identify and attempt to secure sources of funding to match projects related to the Vibrant Economy theme of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy.
- (3) To make recommendations to the SDLSP Board on the utilisation of funding from DDEP and other sources.
- (4) To monitor, review and contingency plan in respect of the 2004/05 SDLSP Business Plan (and future plans) including reallocation of finances where necessary.
- (5) To receive quarterly updates from South Derbyshire District Council on any relevant SDLSP related schemes, programmes or projects.
- (6) To prepare and finalise a 2005/06 Business Plan on behalf of the SDLSP for submission to DDEP, to include working up initial project proposals.

- (7) To ensure initial project proposals and the finalised business plan contribute to the Vibrant Economy theme of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy.

The Group had noted that the Partnership would need to establish some generic terms of reference to apply to all theme groups when established.

RESOLVED:-

That the above interim terms of reference for the Vibrant Economy Working Group be approved, pending additional generic terms of reference applicable to all Partnership Working Groups.

LSP/46. **BUSINESS PLAN 2004/05 UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. LSP/34 of the last Meeting held on 9th December 2004, Malcolm Roseburgh, the District Council's Community Regeneration Officer, presented a report on progress on the 2004/05 Business Plan. The six projects within the Plan had been previously detailed to Board Members and the Council had been issued with a formal contract from the DDEP. In turn, individual funding agreements had been issued to the lead partners of projects containing standard terms and conditions together with appendices detailing financial and output targets based on their approved submissions.

With regard to contingency planning, it was reported that the Vibrant Economy Working Group would consider an increase in grant of £12,500 to the National Forest Business Grants project and a project proposal for a tourist information facility at Sharpe's Pottery requiring £12,500 of DDEP grant. If approved, these amounts would cover the shortfall caused by the loss of the Swadlincote Regeneration Route project.

RESOLVED:-

That progress on the 2004/05 Business Plan be noted.

LSP/47. **BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

It was reported that further to initial discussions in September, the District Council had received confirmation in early December that the DDEP Board would offer the South Derbyshire LSP a grant of £150,000 for the financial year 2005/06. This comprised of £90,000 capital and £60,000 of revenue funding and must be at least 50% match funded with a minimum total project value of £50,000. Projects must contribute to both the LSP's Economic Development Strategy and to the DDEP Tier 3 Outputs and complete the spend by 31st March 2006. With regard to the timetable for project submissions, initial proposals were required by 28th February and full applications by 30th April 2005. The timetable, context and criteria for submissions were all highlighted and reinforced in a presentation to the Board on 9th December 2004.

In order to comply with the guidance and meet the prescribed timetable, the Board had agreed to reconvene the Vibrant Economy Theme Working Group with a task of realising a Business Plan for 2005/06. At the first meeting in December, the Group had considered several project ideas, which were then considered further at a second meeting early in January, enabling the Group to identify and prioritise projects that needed to work proposals to the

Expression of Interest stage. The projects were prioritised according to their potential to deliver economic development outcomes and Tier 3 Outputs, attract match funding and fit with the priority issues and actions within the Draft Community Strategy and community consultation. A brief description of the projects was outlined together with other potential projects originally identified but not requested at this stage to be progressed to Expression of Interest status.

The Theme Group intended to research other opportunities for funding outside of DDEP grant and, where possible, match these projects and others to those sources. DDEP had indicated that where there was a shortfall in regional LSP spend or in general DDEP spend, there was scope for bringing forward additional projects. The Vibrant Economy Theme Group was scheduled to meet again on 3rd February 2005 to review progress.

District Councillor Whyman, M.B.E. referred to the Community Partnership Scheme operated by the District Council and considered that it would be useful to provide details to the Board for information. He expressed concern at the minimum total project value of £50,000 imposed by DDEP and considered that this would reflect adversely on smaller projects. Councillor Whyman felt that these projects should not be restricted and he intended to pursue this at the DDEP Board. He advised that partners needed to inform their contacts of the timetable requirements on funding availability.

RESOLVED:-

That progress on the 2005/06 Business Plan be noted.

LSP/48. **LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS – BRIEFING NOTE**

It was reported that the Government had selected 21 areas, including Derbyshire to pilot Local Area Agreements (LAAs). The initiative was considered by the Government as a significant step towards greater devolution and stronger leadership of local communities. The LAA prospectus established the general principle that agreements would be outcome-based, enabling local authorities and their partners to deliver national outcomes in a manner that reflected local priorities identified in Community Strategies. It was aimed to provide increased freedom and flexibility to identify local solutions to local problems and to prioritise spending to achieve outcomes identified in the LAA.

The LAA would rationalise the numerous area-based funding streams and the raft of associated targets into one agreement. The LAA could include as few as 30 targets compared to the 600 plus targets being monitored in some areas. The approach would build upon the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) framework, with Central Government setting high level outcomes from national PSAs and floor targets. Some would be non-negotiable but it was understood that mainly, the outcomes, indicators and targets would be agreed locally based upon Community Strategies.

The Government expected all those organisations responsible for managing the key services within the LAA framework to work collectively to make a success of the pilots. In two-tier areas, the County Council had been designated by the Government to lead the partnership process. This policy framework was linked closely to the Treasury's wider moves to streamline decision-making with Regional Government Offices taking the lead in the

negotiation process. The Government had identified a list of ring-fenced funding streams which potentially, could be negotiated into the LAA and expected the agreement to be structured around three strands, namely children and young people, safer and stronger communities, and healthier communities and older people. The Government was keen to see LAAs signed off by mid-February 2005 with a commencement date of 1st April 2005. However, much of the detail still remained unclear and the Government was intending to issue an advice note.

The LAA concept concerned vision and leadership. The key issue was to decide what high level outcomes and targets it was wished to achieve and then consider the funding plan. In the short-term, most of the area-based funding streams identified were committed, but the overall aim was to integrate and influence funding streams which would help to make a real difference to the delivery of national and local targets. The Government expected LAAs to be progressed through county-wide LSPs and the Derbyshire Partnership Forum (DPF) would oversee the process. The importance of building on existing structures was recognised. Partners had agreed that the County Council's Chief Executive should convene a small group, representative of the key agencies, to progress the work utilising the sub-structure of the DPF and the Derbyshire Community Strategy "Champions". Partners had also agreed that it would be beneficial to develop a fourth strand of sustainable communities into the LAA. This would mirror the CPA shared priorities, link the work of the District LSPs, help engage SSPs and link the "Rural Pathfinder" initiative designated for Derbyshire Dales, High Peak and parts of Staffordshire. The work undertaken to develop Community Strategies by LSPs, the second PSA, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategies, the Drug and Alcohol Action Team Strategy and the Children's Strategic Partnership would help in constructing the LAA, given the complexities and the very tight timetable.

The necessity to provide a commitment to this initiative was recognised by Board Members along with the difficulties that would be faced.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted and further progress reports be submitted in due course.

LSP/49. **NEWS FROM PARTNERS**

The Chief Executive advised that he had recently received a letter on behalf of the Governors of Foston Prison, which he had recently visited with District Councillor Whyman, M.B.E. on behalf of the LSP. The Governors wished to engage with the LSP and it was suggested that a future Meeting could be held on the premises to consider specific areas.

Helena Stubbs of the Derbyshire Rural Community Council advised that many people were unaware of the services offered by the Community Council. She reported that the East Midlands Network had issued a pamphlet which was fairly comprehensive and explained the main activities of the organisation. This publication was available for any Board Member interested.

LSP/50. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Dates of future Meetings were agreed as follows:-

- Thursday, 17th March 2005
- Thursday, 19th May 2005
- Thursday, 7th July 2005
- Thursday, 28th July 2005 (Forum)
- Thursday, 15th September 2005
- Thursday, 24th November 2005
- Thursday, 19th January 2006 (Forum AGM)

T. HURRELL

CHAIR

The Meeting closed at 12.05 p.m.