

**EPPING FOREST LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
BOARD MEETING**

Date: 27 September 2007

Time: 2.00 -3.47 p.m.

MINUTES

Present:

David Butler (Principal, Epping Forest College) (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Anne Grigg, (Epping Forest District Council) (Vice-Chairman)
Terry Collin (Learning Skills Council)
Derek Macnab, (Deputy Chief Executive, Epping Forest District Council)
Colin Thompson (Representing Town and Parish Councils)
Councillor Mrs Mary Sartin (Epping Forest District Council)
Councillor Brian Surtees (Representing Town and Parish Councils)
Ray Skinner (Essex County Fire and Rescue Service)
James Warwick (Leisure Services, Epping Forest District Council)

Supporting Officers:

Marina Sherriff (Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership)
Chris Overend (Policy & Research Officer, Epping Forest District Council)
Nina Sadgrove (Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership)

In attendance:

Alice Abida (Luton Local Strategic Partnership – for Minute 3 only).

Apologies:

Stuart Ashton (Essex Police)
Jacqui Foile (Chief Officer, Voluntary Action Eppng Forest)
Alison Cowie (West Essex Primary Care Trust)
Councillor Colin Finn (Essex County Council)
Gay Ellis (Representing Epping Forest District Faith Groups)

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2007, were agreed as a correct record subject to the deletion of the words “on the effects of this” in Minute 9(c) on Page 4.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Epping Forest Health Profile Statistics 2007

In relation to Minute 13 on Page 6, as Alison Cowie was not in attendance, Marina Sherriff undertook to forward copies of the Epping Forest Health Profile statistics for 2007 separately to Members of the Board.

(b) Business and Rural Representation on the Board

With regard to Minute 3 (a), David Butler said he had not yet had the opportunity to contact Duncan Jefford, of SLM, or Stephen Wilkinson of Lea Valley Park Authority regarding them representing their organisations on the LSP. It was also noted that Colin Finn, who had undertaken to pursue the possibility of representation from the rural sector, had submitted his apologies to the Board meeting.

(c) LSP Engagement with Local Town/Parish Councils

Marina Sherriff reported that the arrangements to foster engagement between the LSP and the local Town/Parish Councils were proceeding well. Marina added that a total of nine meetings with local councils had been arranged, with three having already taken place. Volunteers had come forward for each of these meetings and Marina expressed her personal thanks to the volunteers who had come forward. In expressing a word of caution, Mary Sartin expressed the need, wherever possible, for there to be two volunteers in attendance at a meeting. At the meeting she had attended, there had been a late submission of apologies from the other volunteer, and this had made giving the presentation extra difficult. In acknowledging the difficulties this would cause, Marina said that each of the volunteers was given a set “presentation “ to use at the meetings and she undertook to forward copies of this presentation to all members of the Board.

Marina further advised the Board that the LSP had had a “presence” at a number of recent town and community events. At these events, questionnaires had been distributed asking for individuals to identify the three aspects they liked most about the Epping Forest District and the three aspects they would most like to change. The questionnaires had also posed questions about the knowledge of the individuals concerning the LSP and its role. Marina circulated details of the analysis of responses from the Epping Town Show held on 16 September 2007. The replies suggested that a reasonable number of people had heard of both the LSP and the Community Strategy and this, in turn, indicated a degree of engagement, at least.

Derek Macnab added that the possibility of an “exhibition unit” being obtained for use at future community events, with a view to the Council increasing its “professional” appearance and profile, was being looked at. In future it may be possible for the LSP to utilise this resource.

3. ASPIRE 2 PERFORM

Alice Abida of Luton LSP gave a presentation to the Board on the potential use of Aspire 2 Perform by the LSP. Aspire 2 Perform was a system looking at the quality of an LSP’s overall arrangements, and arrangements for the management of performance. The performance results assessed the LSP in a number of different areas, including evidence and need; outcomes, options and priorities; design interventions; commissioned delivery; support delivery; and monitoring, reporting and reviewing. Alice also provided details of the experiences of Luton LSP in using the diagnostic tool. It was noted that the results so far indicated that the Epping Forest District LSP was strongest in the

areas of design interventions and support delivery, whilst weaker in terms of evidence and need.

Alice stressed that the exercise carried out recently had been a “pilot” so comparisons with other LSPs were difficult. Further test results in respect of other LSPs would be produced for the period October to December 2007 and these would remain confidential to the LSP. In reply to a query from Derek Macnab, Alice confirmed that the use of the system was specific to LSPs. Derek also enquired as to how one would find out more regarding the system’s strength and weaknesses. In response, Marina said that the model was being further developed with a view to assessing the individual aspects in more detail. Confirming this to be the case, Alice said that only a short time scale had been available for the pilot so it had been possible to hold only three interviews, whereas between six and eight would have been preferable.

David Butler thanked Alice for her presentation, following which she left the meeting. The Board subsequently agreed that, as it was a complex issue requiring more in-depth assessment, it should be referred to the LSP Steering Group for further consideration.

4. ACTIVE EPPING FOREST

James Warwick gave a presentation in respect of the Active Epping Forest concept. James advised the Board that, through his involvement on the Fit for Life Action Group, he had come to some views about the role of that particular Action Group and the LSP’s approach to this part of its remit. James felt that the Group needed strengthening and resourcing, the first stages of which could be a realignment and re-branding for it to become Active Epping Forest with a re-focusing of its role to become wider, by being an advocate for sport, health and outdoor recreation rather than simply dealing with sport.

James further explained that Active Epping Forest was the Community Activity Network covering the local authority area co-terminous with that covered by the District Council. It was responsible for establishing, developing and delivering action points to support the Network’s vision and support the “delivery system”, for community sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing. It was part of the Sport England mechanism and consisted of a single system of delivery, through which the position and role played by different agencies and organisations in delivering opportunities for sport, health and active recreation were set out. In turn, this provided an opportunity for all the agencies to work together towards agreed shared goals, to reduce inefficiencies and create economies of scale.

Active Epping Forest partners at present included West Essex PCT, School Sports Partnership, Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, the Police, Nacro, Sportessex, SLM, VAEF, Epping Forest College, Essex Association of Boys’ Clubs and the County and District Councils. The intended core outcomes were to increase participation levels in physical activity and bring together partners’ existing priorities and targets. It was also the aim to respond to the needs of the voluntary sector by promoting and delivering education, training and coaching initiatives, consulting people regarding their needs and wants, to act as an advisor to local community and voluntary groups and to promote inclusion and provide equality of access to opportunities and activities.

Resources available to Active Epping Forest included Community Investment Funding of £15,000 per annum on a match funding basis, but with a potential

for start-up funds and the ability to attract and apply for external funding and investment. Potential projects included those in respect of social inclusion, a healthy workforce, the MEND Project for tackling obesity, the Fit as a Fiddle Programme and acting as a club and voluntary forum.

James further reported that Active Epping Forest were working in conjunction with Tottenham Hotspur Foundation on tackling obesity at King Harold School and on a separate scheme at Limes Farm.

Brian Surtees suggested that the involvement of Parish and Town Councils would be very useful and that it would be a good idea to audit the existing provision of Parish and Town Councils. Concurring with these comments, Colin Thompson said that the local councils had resources scattered around the District and sometimes those resources were inaccessible for one reason or another. Colin felt that this was another aspect which should be looked at. Mary Sartin also felt there was a need to make people aware of the facilities that were available in the diverse parts of the district.

James Warwick also felt that local councils could make a very useful contribution and agreed to add them to the list of partners. In so doing, James said that one of the aims was to have a Sport and Activity Directory for the District, which was updated on an annual basis. He said that work had already commenced on that Directory.

David Butler felt that the alignment of Active Epping Forest with the Fit for Life Action Group was the right move at present, particularly bearing in mind the potential for attracting resources. Marina Sherriff pointed out that James Warwick had given a similar presentation at the "Fit for Life" Action Group, at its last meeting, and the Action Group had also felt that the alignment would be appropriate. The Board concurred with these sentiments and asked for Marina and James to put in place the arrangements for that alignment to take effect.

5. LSP STEERING GROUP - 6 SEPTEMBER 2007

David Butler reported on the various issues discussed at the meeting of the LSP Steering Group on 6 September 2007. One particular issue, discussed had been the possibility of the LSP purchasing its own intelligence "gathering" system to assist in performance management. The Steering Group had received a presentation from the Local Futures Group on their system. The Steering Group had been impressed by this particular system and had agreed to look at this possibility in more depth along with a number of other options that had been identified.

The Steering Group also noted that work on the Sustainable Community Strategy should have started but had been held back deliberately, in view of the delay in the finalisation of the East of England Plan. Production of the Plan was now anticipated early in 2008. Nonetheless, the LSP would continue with whatever preparatory work it could in advance of its publication, and that preparatory work would be commencing at the Community Conference on 10 October 2007.

David Butler added that reference had been made at the Steering Group to the £45,000 the LSP had secured through the LAA process, part of which had been used to fund the appointment of Nine Sadgrove, to assist Marina in her role. Reference had also been made to VAEF's Basis application in respect of a Funding Advisor who would also be available to assist the LSP. It was noted that the application had reached stage two of the Basis procedure, the outcome of which was anticipated in the not too distant future.

6. ESSEX LSP CHAIRMEN'S FORUM

David Butler had had to submit his apologies but Anne Grigg had attended the LSP Chairmen's Forum at Southend on 26 September 2007 as the District's LSP representative. Anne Grigg reported on issues discussed at the Forum.

The Board was advised that the Forum was now chaired by Pam Challice. The Board was reminded that the establishment of the Forum had arisen out of the mutual recognised need of the Chairmen of the various LSPs in Essex. At the meeting on 26 September, Malcolm Morley, Chief Executive of Harlow District Council, had given a presentation on a potential future structure for the Essex-wide LSP. The structure suggested by Malcolm Morley had been only one particular view, put forward for further discussion. In the concept he had outlined, Malcolm Morley had seen the Forum as the "core" to the functioning of LSPs in the county. Some of those present at the meeting had supported the idea, whilst others had thought that it resulted in a lack of synergy between the LSPs and the LAA process. Other views put forward were that it did not provide sufficient recognition for local needs and that it was too public sector orientated. Malcolm Morley had agreed to produce a third, revised "paper" on the potential future structure of LSPs in Essex at the next meeting of the Forum, which was being brought forward from its usual date in mid December for this issue to be discussed.

David Butler expressed the view that there had been a change of emphasis on the Forum and it was, to a degree, becoming more formal. Mary Sartin felt that this might be to do with the changing make-up of the Forum which was, at least in part, a reflection of the variety of and changes to LSPs at a local level, some of which were very closely tied in with the local authority, some of which were less so. Concurring with these comments, Marina Sherriff said that some LSPs, (and Luton LSP was a case in point), mirrored the LAA process. Colin Thompson questioned whether the LSP Chairmen's Forum brought any functionality to the LSP process in general. In response, David Butler said that the important point was that the LSPs should determine their own Sustainable Community Strategies and be able to influence the Essex Strategy.

7. UPDATE FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

(a) Epping Forest College

David Butler advised the Board that the works to the new building were now ongoing and were scheduled for completion during 2008. The new development was part of a wider regeneration plan for the area, and Phase 2 of the works included the provision of a Sports Centre. James Warwick was involved in the discussions on that Sports Centre.

(b) Epping Forest District Council

Anne Grigg reported that the Top Management Structure had now been agreed and would be implemented on 1 October. This consisted of a Chief Executive, a Deputy Chief Executive, 5 Directors (Corporate Support Services, Environment and Street Scene, Finance and ICT, Housing, and Planning and Economic Development) and an Assistant Chief Executive. Chris Overend added that the Deputy Chief Executive, each of the Directors and the Assistant Chief Executive would now be asked to determine a structure, taking account of the functions which had been identified as being part of their sphere of responsibility in the new arrangements, whilst taking account of available resources. The intention was for all new arrangements to be in place, with staff in post, by 1 April 2008.

(c) Essex Fire and Rescue Service

Ray Skinner reported that additional funding had been identified specifically to deal with community safety and that an officer with that particular remit for the Epping Forest and Harlow districts had been appointed.

Ray Skinner advised the Board that the service was seeking referrals to its Home Fire Safety Check Scheme whereby vulnerable people could receive advice on fire safety and have free smoke alarms fitted. To help publicise the availability of the advice and free smoke alarms, Ray undertook to forward further details to Marina so that she could, in turn, circulate them to all involved in the LSP. Colin Thompson wondered whether the recent reduced take-up was an indication that many households now had these facilities installed. In reply Ray Skinner said it was surprising just how many people did not have some of the basic safety features such as smoke detectors. He felt that the employment of someone with a specific responsibility to give fire-fighting advice was, nonetheless, a very positive move.

(d) Learning and Skills Council

Terry Collin reported that, at a regional level, the Learning and Skills Council, was in the process of determining its 2008/09 training needs for 14-19 year olds and adults. Terry added it was unclear what the implications were of the recent Government announcement regarding educational training and the extent of the transfer of responsibilities to Essex County Council, Thurrock and Southend Unitary Authorities.

(e) WAVE

David Butler advised the Board that WAVE was the brand name for the new Vocational Education Centre, at Waltham Abbey, funding for which had been approved by EEDA and included within the Investing in Communities Business Plan. The scheme involved two years of capital and revenue funding. The first year was now in place and involved the provision of a shop on Sun Street incorporating signposting and IT facilities (working alongside other partner agencies such as Connexions) and an industrial unit on Abbey Mead where there was motor project

training for 14-16 year olds. The change of use of the industrial until at Abbey Mead also required planning permission. The opening date for the shop on Sun Street was mid to late October, with the commencement of the motor vehicle project anticipated slightly later. David added that the second year provision included childcare aspects and that "hair and beauty" courses have been identified as a need.

8. LSP COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

Marina Sherriff reported progress on arrangements for the Community Conference to be held at Theydon Bois Village Hall on 10 October 2007. Marina reminded the Board that there was no general invitation to members of the public this year and the emphasis would be on partner organisations and service providers. Marina added that the programme included a presentation from Kay Asuni, Policy and Public Engagement Officer at the County Council on the tracker survey highlights and the impact on Epping Forest District, and also from Duncan Taylor of the County Council on the Essex Community Strategy.

Mary Sartin pointed out that the programme, as it stood, did not make reference to the venue. Marina Sherriff undertook to ensure that reference was made to the venue on the final programme.

9. COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Marina Sherriff had circulated copies of a draft proposal for operating a Compliments and Complaints procedure for the LSP and had asked for the comments of individual members of the Board.

Terry Collin thought it was a good document. He suggested two minor amendments, which included the re-ordering of the wording so that it reflected, sequentially, the compliments and complaints procedure, and stated clearly how long after the receipt of the complaint/compliment the matter would be dealt with. The Board agreed with these suggestions and Marina undertook to reflect these in the final document.

10. MEETING DATES FOR 2008

The LSP meeting dates for 2008, provisionally agreed by the Steering Group, were confirmed as follows:

7 February	-	Steering Group
28 February	-	Board Meeting
18 April	-	LSP Away Day
22 May	-	Steering Group
12 June	-	Board Meeting
4 September	-	Steering Group
25 September	-	Board Meeting
8 October	-	Community Conference
27 November	-	Steering Group
18 December	-	Board Meeting

11. LSP WEBSITE

Marina Sherriff circulated copies of a graph, indicating the number of “hits” on the LSP Website for the period June – September 2007. The details were set out for the information of Members of the Board and for comments in relation to the general usefulness of the information being provided in this way. Chris Overend enquired whether it was possible to make the information produced more sophisticated to provide, for example, information in relation to hits on different parts of the website. Colin Thompson said that this would be perfectly feasible and should not add considerably to the costs involved. Colin also expressed the view that it was fairly straightforward to update the website oneself and make the current website more dynamic, given that he felt it had a slightly dated appearance. The Board otherwise agreed that the figures in respect of the website hits provided very useful information and that Marina should continue to produce this information on a quarterly basis. Marina undertook to take into account the comments made and make enhancements to the website where possible and reasonable.

12. FUNDING

Chris Overend had circulated copies of the Statement of Account for 2007/08 as at 19 September 2007. Chris advised the Board that the only change since the last meeting was expenditure of £27.84 incurred in relation to set-up costs for the Inter Faith Forum.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the LSP Board was scheduled to be held on Thursday 20 December 2007 at 2.00 p.m.