

EPPING FOREST LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Date: 9 June 2009

Time: 2.00 - 4.00 pm

MINUTES

Present:

Mrs D Collins	Epping Forest District Council
C O'Connell	West Essex Primary Care Trust
K Brown	Essex Federation of Small Businesses
Q Buller	Representing Epping Forest College
G Ellis	Representing Faith Groups
J Foile	Voluntary Action Epping Forest
Mrs A Haigh	Chair of Epping Forest Faith Forum
R Skinner	Essex Fire and Rescue Service
B Surtees	Parish/ Town Councils
C Thompson	Parish/Town Councils
S Williams	Essex Police
D Macnab	Deputy Chief Executive, Epping Forest District Council
C Skinner	West Essex PCT
Y Wetton	Essex County Council
J Wright	Epping Forest College

Presenting Items:

John Gilbert	Chair of Epping Forest SCP (CDRP)
John Preston	Chair of Credit Crunch Task and Finish Panel, Director of Planning and Economic Development, Epping Forest District Council
Caroline Wiggins	EFDC Safer Communities Partnership
Angela Canham	Community Transport VAEF
Lonica VanClay	ECC, Head of Locality Commissioning
John Houston	PSP Manager, Chair of Communications Task and Finish Panel

Supporting Officers:

Tom Carne	EFDC PR and Marketing
Colin Rowell	LSP Administrator
David Wright	LSP Administrator

Apologies:

D Anstey	Lee Valley regional Park Authority
J Dagley	City of London Corporation
Mrs A Grigg	Chair of Sustainable Communities Theme Group, Epping Forest District Council
L Hand	Job Centre Plus
P Thomson	City of London Corporation
A Cowie	West Essex PCT

1. BMG REPORT - PRESENTATION ON THE RESULTS OF PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH COMMISSIONED BY THE LSP.

Members adjourned to the Council Chamber for a presentation of results from the Epping Forest Place Survey carried out by BMG and jointly commissioned by the LSP and Epping Forest Council (EFDC). The presentation, which was also attended by officers and members of EFDC, looked at residents views about their area as a place to live, key priorities for improvement and how satisfied they were with a range of public services. Over 1,300 residents took part in the survey, and while final results have yet to be confirmed by the Audit Commission, the presentation picked out a number of areas which will need to be addressed in the developing Community Strategy.

2. WELCOME/ NEW MEMBERS

The Chairman introduced and welcomed new Board members, Jeannie Wright from Epping Forest College and Keith Brown from the Federation of Small Businesses to their first meeting. The Board had previously requested that additional representation from the areas of business, skills and education should be sought. Representation from Jobcentre plus (Liz Hand), the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority (David Antsey), and a Secondary School Headteacher (representative from the 14-19 Year Group to be confirmed) has been secured.

The Chairman asked the meeting to formally endorse the new members and this was **agreed**. John also pointed out that Clive Snell was happy to continue as a representative from the Business community on the Board.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies which had been received were read out by John Houston. Yvette Wetton stated that due to the elections she was sitting as deputy whilst a new ECC representative was nominated, it was hoped that the new representative would be in place by the next meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (26/02/2009)/MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting (26th Feb 2009) were **agreed** as a true record.

John Houston highlighted one item on the Matters Arising document marked as Red, namely the setting up of the Healthier Communities Theme Group which would be discussed later on the agenda. All other items are progressing well.

5. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (CYPSP). PRESENTATION ON REVIEW OUTCOME

Lonica Vanclay gave an overview of the role and current structure of the CYPSP. The CYPSP Board is concerned with the strategic planning, commissioning and performance management of children's services and through the Local Delivery Groups and themed subgroups facilitates the coordinated delivery of children's services provided by statutory and voluntary organisations. CYPSP structure and membership mirrors the LSP, with a CYPSP Board, Coordinating Group and a number of sub groups all with membership from key local agencies. This structure is under review and may change in the future. Lonica gave an overview of each of the Delivery Groups within the structure. Over the last year, the CYPSP has focused on

strengthening its commissioning work. The next year will focus on performance management and measuring activities against expected outcomes.

Lonica explained the review that is underway into the Children's Trust approach. This review reflects Government indications that Children's Trusts should be strengthened as well as Essex County CYPSP's own wish to improve consistent provision of service outcomes across the County. The conclusions of the Children's Trust commissioning review should be presented in September 09. The emerging view is that future commissioning will be led through 4 or 5 groups, perhaps based on PCT boundaries in Essex, rather than the current 11. There is also a review of how children's services are delivered across the County, looking at how provider organisations can work together more effectively. The review of the delivery of services will last until November 09.

The Children and Young People's Plan is being revised and one outcome of the reviews will be a heightened expectation that local plans align much more closely with the overall (County) plan.

The Chairman reported that a meeting had taken place that morning between the Chairman, Derek Macnab, John Houston and Peter Martin and Graham Tombs from County to discuss CYPSP developments. Concerns were expressed that local needs should be reflected in any restructure and resources not be lost to Epping Forest.

Brian Surtees pointed out that the presentation did not contain any reference to Voluntary Sector, Faith Groups or Town and Parish Councils. He said there was a need to drive activity and thinking down to that level and sought assurance that this was happening. Lonica stated that there was such representation on CYPSP sub groups and on the Board, although Town and Parish Councils are not represented on the CYPSP Board. Brian Surtees also asked for an explanation of 'activity effective intervention'. Lonica explained it as identifying activities that make the most significant impact on particular outcomes. Ann Haigh gave an example, where 'Action for Children' are setting up activities in the Loughton and Buckhurst Hill area in conjunction with Children's Centres, of which Ann is Chair of the Board. **Ann will take the requirement to link in with the CYPSP review back to the Children's Centre Board.**

Action 01

John Houston gave feedback from the successful CYPSP Away Day held on 18th May 2009. He said there was a great deal of anxiety expressed at the Away Day about the impact centralising CYPSP commissioning could have on local resource allocation and the ability of local groups and schools to effectively influence the agenda of a much larger West Essex CYPSP, and to deliver what is best for Epping Forest District.

Lonica stated that local needs would be reflected in any joint commissioning activity.

6. UPDATE REPORT FROM LSP STEERING GROUP

John Houston reported that the minutes from the most recent Steering Group (28th May 2009) were not available as yet **but would be circulated for information with the minutes from this meeting.** Minutes of the Steering Group on 4 April had already been circulated. He reported that all key activities were on track. The LSP had also sponsored a successful seminar run by EERA on Skills and Worklessness which had been held in Epping.

Action 02**7. UPDATE REPORTS FROM THEME GROUPS ALSO IDENTIFYING ANY STRATEGIC ITEMS****7.1 CYPSP**

Caroline Skinner gave a CYPSP update based around the minutes of the last CYPSP Board which had been circulated to members. She said that the Away Day had been very useful. She restated the observation that local views and needs are not missed in any new CYPSP structure. The relationship between the LSP and CYPSP is an area that is developing and better connections are being made. To that end, the LSP will be a standing item on CYPSP Board meetings, and the LSP Manager will attend. Caroline stated that projects are to be monitored more closely in future but that monitoring should be proportionate to the size of the project.

There is a meeting on 12th June to review all current bids for funding. **A process will be introduced to allow for young people to feed into the bid evaluation process and Board activities. This new process will be preceded by a briefing to young people to explain how they can provide feedback.**

Action 03

CYPSP is to join with the LSP in the stakeholder event which will be pulled together to consult on the developing Sustainable Community Strategy and **possibly run one of the workshops.**

Action 04

There was discussion at the recent CYPSP Board meeting about Children's Centres. It was recognised that virtual centres can be of benefit, with more effort focused on out reach work rather than management and administration.

Waltham Abbey is a particular focus, the PCT and CYPSP are looking at initiatives that would benefit young people in the area.

Caroline gave an overview of the volunteer breast feeding program. This is joint PCT / CYPSP programme providing volunteers to help and support newly breastfeeding mothers. **Caroline will feed back on project progress as part of the standard CYPSP update to the Board.**

Action 05**7.2 Safer Communities Partnership**

John Gilbert gave an update on the work of the partnership based around the minutes of the last SCP Strategy Panel meeting. The overall picture was of decreasing levels of crime. Crime is down by 8%, personal assault is down, theft, burglary and stealing from cars is of concern. There are still concerns about the perception of crime. The Safer Communities Partnership will be looking at ways of better publicising the results of its efforts to ensure people understand that crime is going down. The partnership will be looking at how the police can better engage with the public to ensure they deliver what the community wants. This will be done via existing local neighbourhood panels.

John said that work was underway on NI35 (combating violent extremism) with the police. **An application is being made to government for funding to help with engaging the local Muslim community in particular.**

Action 06

Keith Brown said that there has been an increase in business related crime and asked whether local business could be represented on the SCP. John responded by saying that local business groups had been invited to the last SCP co-ordinating group, but were unable to attend, although their participation would still be very welcome. **Keith agreed to look into this.**

Action 07

7.3 Healthier Communities

The Chairman expressed her disappointment that this group, which the Board had agreed would be Chaired by Alison Cowie, has yet to meet. It was reported by Catherine O'Connell that Alison Cowie is very busy and that there were capacity issues within the PCT due to the large amount of effort being focused on swine flu. Catherine, Alison and John Houston are to meet to establish a way forward for the group. **Catherine offered to circulate information on the status of swine flu preparedness to board members and this was agreed.**

Action 08

7.4 Sustainable Communities

This group has not yet met, but as agreed, priority had been given to establishing quickly the Credit Crunch Task and Finish Panel which will provide the basis in terms of representation for the emerging Sustainable Communities Theme Group. John Preston reported progress from the Task and Finish Team which had met twice, copies of the minutes of the first meeting had been circulated to members, **copies of the last meeting would be circulated with the LSP Board minutes.** This group includes members from local business and voluntary and statutory groups including the Chamber of Commerce and Citizens Advice Bureau. John gave a brief update on some initiatives already being undertaken by the partners, which include:

- Essex County Council – initiative on Bank of Essex
- CAB – more advice sessions
- Job Centre Plus – new schemes to give advice in advance of redundancy
- Voluntary Action – provision of information on volunteering
- Car Parking Charges held for a year by EFDC.

Action 09

John reported that a key message emerging from discussions was, if you need help, ask for it and ask early. There is a sense from those people in the team who can provide help that individuals are not asking early enough. There is a lot of information available, key websites where support is identified are Government Direct and Business Link.

The team is looking at providing better signposting locally to sources of help and support from a wide range of groups, a co-ordinated guide to go to partner websites and also an LSP badged insert for the Forester.

Brian Surtees picked up on the problem of people asking for help too late. He said that this was very common, it is less cost effective and less likely to be helpful. He emphasised that publicity could alleviate this problem. He also highlighted the issue that CABs were struggling for funding at a time when their services were most needed. Brian asked how such front line services could be better funded.

The Chairman said that the council has provided the CAB with all they have asked for to-date.

Brian Surtees said that there is a large network of town and parish councils and he felt a syndicated article sent to town clerks would help with publicity. GP surgeries and libraries were suggested as a good place to provide targeted information. Other areas mentioned for targeting included, business magazines, church magazines and links from partner websites. Keith Brown pointed out that Business Link now has a confidential helpline. **It was agreed that these suggestions will be fed back to the Task and Finish Team.**

Action 10

8. UPDATE REPORTS FROM TASK & FINISH TEAMS

8.1 Sustainable Community Strategy

Derek Macnab updated Board members on proposals for taking the project forward. Producing the Strategy, which was a statutory requirement on the partners and would inform the key plans of the district council and other statutory agencies. A written report to the Board set out some of the key requirements of the strategy and options for its production. The current strategy has been in existence for around 5 years and is in need of a refresh. An initial scoping meeting for the new strategy has taken place. Derek emphasised the key link between the SCS and the Local Development Framework (LDF). The SCS is an aspirational document outlining priorities of the local community and the key challenges to be met. The LDF is one of the delivery vehicles to help achieve the priorities. Due to the nature of the district (rural and local communities) there will be an element of localism in the SCS. An initial project plan has been drawn up. It was noted that there is a lack of an overall data picture, bringing key facts and figures together from a wide variety of sources. Steps are being taken to rectify this, Essex County Council (ECC) are supporting the data collection programme, **with MOSAIC being purchased** as a source of improved profiling and ward level data. The development phases of the SCS will be

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- Initial research/data gathering
- Key partner consultation – to ensure the new SCS influences strategies of other relevant agencies
- Public Consultation – ECC will provide up to £10,000 to support this work.
- Community Conference – to ratify the outcome of Public Consultation
- SCS to be adopted by LSP Board in December 2009

Action 11

One of the suggestions contained in the report from the SCS Task and Finish Team was a mini Board awayday to discuss the key themes/targets which should be included in the SCS. The Chairman asked members if they were keen for an Away Day in autumn 2009. Colin Thompson said he was in favour, this was supported by Jacqui Foile. Derek stressed the difference between an LSP Away Day, for the LSP Board to review how it works and develops and a Community Conference where the

LSP would open up to the wider public to discuss the SCS. The Chairman suggested we might be able to do both on the same day. Brian Surtees said that a Community Conference would need to be very flexible (possibly evenings and weekends) and would need to be very well publicised in order to attract the maximum participants.

John Houston outlined ways that we might engage people at the public consultation stage, suggestions were supermarket days, targeting particular groups such as young people, use of existing survey data and trend information. He suggested that the conference could be a stakeholder conference to allow the draft SCS to be challenged in detail to ensure the right areas to be addressed have been identified. Caroline Skinner suggested that MOSAIC could help identify what style of communication fits what types of group across the district. **It was agreed that the Board should hold its annual Awayday in the autumn** to review how the LSP is working. **That preparations for a Stakeholder conference in the autumn should be started**, and that a **wide ranging consultation plan for the SCS should be drawn up**, involving partners which would ensure local people/groups/stakeholders had an opportunity to influence its contents. A decision on holding a mini Board Awayday should be taken by officers after a consultation plan has been agreed.

Action 12, 13, 14

8.2 Communications Task and Finish Team

John Houston gave an update around a written report which examined issues and options for opening up better two way channels of communication between the LSP and its constituent parts and the wider community, and joining up communication activity wherever possible. The brief from the LSP was to move very quickly to make recommendations to raise the profile and therefore accountability of the LSP.

The team has agreed to produce an introductory leaflet, which sets out who the LSP is and what it is trying to achieve. Press releases are now being sent out to publicise LSP activity such as webcasting of meetings, lead officers to support each theme group have been identified and progress is being made on ensuring the current LSP logo is carried on partnership activity and material.

Discussions are underway around setting up a joint, multi-agency citizens panel. This would involve setting up a Panel of over 1,000 residents to help the partners consult on key issues more efficiently and effectively. Currently organisations consult individually and issues of duplication emerge. **The Steering Group has asked John Houston to look at this and consult with partner agencies** on cost and feasibility with a view to establishing the Panel if funding and support can be found among sufficient partners.

Action 15

Discussions have also begun around establishing an LSP magazine based on the Forester. This would also be a joint funded, multi-agency project to publicise the LSP but also the activities of individual agencies involved in the LSP such as EFDC or the PCT. This has been strongly recommended by the Steering Group as an initiative which could help reduce costs, give agencies the ability to cost effectively get their messages to local people and give local people a much more comprehensive product than is currently available. However in order for this initiative to be successful it again will require sign-up from enough partners for it to be financially viable. **John will be finalising costs and undertaking discussions with Partners, with a view to establishing the magazine as quickly as possible, if enough partners sign up.**

Action 16

Updating the LSP logo. Currently the LSP logo is made up of a leaf and over 60 letters if the website address is included. This reduces the impact and clarity of the logo when placed on material. Task and Finish team members have been looking at a new logo and/or a shorter name to aid better promotion of the partnership and its work. In order to reduce potential costs initial work has been kept in house. Quentin Buller from Epping Forest college has helped with design work for the new logo and ideas for change were circulated among members. Final decisions on the new name and logo will be taken by the Steering Group in consultation with Board members.

It was also agreed that the Communications Task and Finish Team would **produce a special post Board meeting briefing paper** to inform key stakeholders of decisions.

Action 17

It is anticipated there will be one more meeting of the task and finish team. **Final approval for name and changes to the logo will be brought to the Board for approval.** Colin Thompson made the point that a lot of what the LSP does is intangible. He pointed out that when we try to publicise the work of the LSP, it should be based on tangible results. There was general agreement on the need to take these projects forward where possible and enhance the profile and accountability of the partnership. Final decisions on communications projects will be taken by the Steering Group to enable progress to be made ahead of the Boards next meeting in September

Action 18**9. UPDATE ON PRG PROJECTS**

The Steering Group has agreed that each of the projects funded by Performance Reward grant in Epping Forest should have an opportunity to present an update on their work and progress to a Board meeting. This followed an initial suggestion from the Local Area Agreement (LAA) project team which has just been established to manage and monitor the delivery of LAA funded schemes locally. The first two projects to present were community safety and community transport.

Caroline Wiggins gave an update on the theatre project for older people run in conjunction with Essex Police and University of 3rd Age (U3A) called Feeling Good, Feeling Safe. The programme is going well, running throughout the summer. Leaflets have been produced. A Safer Communities website is currently under development which will have links to all partner websites. It will also contain information about the latest SCP campaigns. Two lots of funding have been received from the LSP, £20,000 for publicity and information material and £35,000 towards CCTV refurbishment and renewal.

Angela Canham gave an update on two Community Transport projects. The first is to ensure that primary school pupils can access after school clubs. This project was due to start in September of this year, but has started in April with Shelley Primary School. 11 children are being taken to this club. A Tuesday evening club is proposed but has no children yet.

The second project is designed to help get young people, parents and carers out into the community. This project is due to start in the next week and will run once a week.

The Chairman thanked Caroline and Angela for their updates.

10. LSP MANAGER UPDATE (VERBAL REPORT)

John Houston stated that all expected financial contributions from funding partners had now been gratefully received.

John informed the Board that an audit of Performance indicators had been undertaken to confirm the range of PIs the partnership had signed up to, and should be monitoring, and identify how the monitoring information would be compiled. **The indicators that have been signed up to are being reviewed** in order to focus on a more realistic set of PIs. John has taken a seat on the Essex Performance Management Group to get a County wide view on best practice, and a **final list of indicators and targets for the LSP to focus on will be confirmed** following the agreement of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Action 19, 20

The LSP manager is now meeting regularly with LSP lead officers from Harlow and Uttlesford with a view to coordinating and linking up activity wherever appropriate. A potential joint bid for Local Improvement Advisor support from EERA is being discussed to get advice on developing shared services, performance management and maximising our access to funding streams.

As agreed the LSP Away Day will be planned for autumn 2009. John invited members to suggest additional items for the days agenda, or suggestions for keynote speakers. **Comments to be fed back by end of June.** Brian Surtees asked the meeting how any theme from a speaker or session would be disseminated to the local level. **John suggested we look for an LSP that is renowned for doing 'localism' well and tap into their expertise.**

Action 21, 22**11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Next meeting – 24th September 2009
Following meeting – 17th December 2009

Two dates for 2010 are
18th March 2010
17th June 2010

12. AOB

Colin Thompson asked if the LSP was now on a more secure financial footing as previous minutes had identified expenditure significantly outstripping income. John Houston confirmed that these underlying issues had now been addressed.

The Chairman welcomed Sheila Jackman and apologised for not doing so at the beginning of the meeting. Sheila is the first member of the public to attend for some time.

13. IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Board received a short update from Simon Williams on the Prevent Strategy.

CHAIRMAN