

To: Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership

From: Marina Sherriff, Community Strategy & Partnerships Manager

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006

Title: New Local Government Network LSP Conference 2006: Shaping the Future of Local Services, Wednesday 14th June 2006, Barbican Centre, London EC2 and Local Government Association Conference – Local Strategic Partnerships: Ready to Govern?, Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2006, Smith Square, London SW1

## 1.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 This report has been written to provide LSP members with an overview of the discussions and presentations that took place at these conferences and to outline the recommendations that were made.

## 2.0 PROCEDURE

- 2.1 Evidence for this report was collected in the following ways:
- 2.1.1 Note taking by Marina Sherriff and Chris Overend
  - 2.1.2 Copies of presentations

## 3.0 CONFERENCE CONTENT - Shaping the Future of Local Services

### 3.1 Session One – Shaping the Future

#### Shaping the Future of LSPs

*Cllr Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart OBE, Chairman, Local Government Association*

#### Keynote Address

*Phil Woolas MP, Minister for Local Government & Community Cohesion, Department for Communities and Local Government*

### 3.2 Session Two - Governance

#### Panel Discussion

*John Findlay, Chief Executive, National Association of Local Councils (NALC)*

*Carol James, Head of Strategic Projects & LSP Co-ordinator, Bolton LSP*

*Toby Blume, Chief Executive, Urban Forum*

*Dr Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive, Darlington Borough Council*

### 3.3 Session Three - Seminars

- *Outcomes from the DCLG Consultation*
- *Sustainable Community Strategies*
- *LSPs and Neighbourhood Engagement*
- *The Impact of Local Area Agreements*

### 3.4 Session Four - Accountability

#### Panel Discussion

*John Hemming, MP for Yardley*

*Cllr Sir David Williams CBE, Vice Chair, Improvement Board, LGA*

*Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)*

### 3.5 Session Five - Capacity

#### Closing the Skills Gap

*Professor Peter Roberts, Chair, Academy for Sustainable Communities*

#### Capacity Building

*Henry Peterson, Consultant to the Local Government Association*

### 3.6 Session Six - Seminars

- *Two-Tier Authority Working*
- *Lyons Inquiry: Lessons from LSPs*
- *Better Performance Management*

3.7 Briefing papers on the majority of the above are available on request from Marina Sherriff.

3.8 Hard copies of presentation slides available, on request from Marina Sherriff, on the following:

- Sustainable Community Strategies: Case study from Manchester LSP
- Sustainable Community Strategies: Case study from Basingstoke and Deane LSP
- Engaging with Rural Communities – South East Cornwall LSP
- The Impact of Local Area Agreements – Department for Communities & Local Government
- The Impact of Local Area Agreements – London Borough of Waltham Forest
- Closing the Skills Gap – Academy for Sustainable Communities
- Capacity Building – Local Government Association

- Better Performance Management - Department for Communities & Local Government
- Two-Tier Authority Working – Lancashire County Council

Also available are speaker biographies.

#### 4.0 CONFERENCE CONTENT – LSPs: Ready to Govern?

##### 4.1 Session One

###### The LGA Vision for LSPs

*Cllr Sir Simon Milton, Chairman, LGA Improvement Board*

##### 4.2 Session Two

###### The Government's Proposals in the context of the White Paper

*Catherine Doherty, Department of Communities and Local Government*

##### 4.3 Session Three

###### Political Leadership in LSPs

*Stephen Bullock, Elected Mayor of Lewisham and Chair of Lewisham LSP*

*Cllr Margaret Eaton, Bradford Metropolitan Council*

*Dorothy Thornhill, Elected Mayor of Watford Borough Council*

##### 4.4 Session Four

###### Community & Voluntary Sector and Neighbourhood Involvement in LSPs and approaches for effective partnership working

*Neil Cleveley, Director of Information and Policy, National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service*

##### 4.5 Session Five

###### LSPs in Two-Tier areas and city regions

*Louise Richardson, Head of Policy, Stockport City Council*

*Sally Richardson, Senior Policy Officer, Lancashire County Council*

- 4.6 Notes taken at this conference are available on request from Chris Overend.

#### 5.0 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CONFERENCES

5.1 There are many changes in the near future for LSPs. Shared objectives, achieved through partnership working, will solve problems, giving more power from Government to Local Authorities and helping the Government become more 'joined up'.

5.2 There were mixed thoughts among those in attendance as to whether the Council should lead or chair LSPs but a duty to co-operate from all members and accountability is crucial.

5.3 LSPs need to bring major players together, be inclusive and have solid neighbourhood structures. Youth councils and interfaith forums were highlighted as necessities to community engagement.

5.4 Generally, it was thought that it is important for people to know about their LSP in order to be involved and engaged. Local initiatives bring people in.

5.5 VCS engagement is particularly difficult – the sector is complex and groups need time for deliberation.

Predictability with LSP funding is essential, as is sharing finances between partners.

5.6 The role of the LSP needs to be clearer as does the role of Councillors within LSPs – some are engaged, some are not.

5.7 LSPs need to define their own structure – there is no ‘one size fits all’.

5.8 LSPs will need a different set of skills when making the shift into delivery e.g. implementation, negotiation, performance management. LSPs will also require sustainable community strategy skills and knowledge or they will struggle to engage their communities. LSPs are the way forward but are not yet ‘fit for purpose’.

5.9 Capacity is a big problem for LSPs and few are resourced for the new role of delivery that they will be undertaking. Staff support is limited and turnover is high.

5.10 Establishing clear roles and responsibilities in two-tier areas can be problematic. A county partnership can address issues that have no clear ownership as well as regional issues.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Once the results from the consultation paper ‘LSPs: Shaping their future’ has been published, the LSP should hold an away day to plan for the way forward, building on the Partnership Improvement Plan, for example:

6.1.1 LSP structure and membership

6.1.2 Performance management

6.1.3 Delivery

6.1.4 Local initiatives

6.1.5 Finance

6.1.6 Partnership agreements

6.1.7 Accountability

6.1.8 Skills shortages

6.1.9 Admin support

6.2 Discussions should be held on re-establishing the Epping Forest Youth Council. Also, looking at an Interfaith Forum and other means of engaging local people.

6.3 The LSPs VCS representative, working with the Community Strategy and Partnerships Manager, should explore ways in which the VCS can become more involved with the LSP and make recommendations.

6.4 The LSP should continue to develop its relationship with GO-East, the regional LSP network, Essex County Council and the Essex Partnership, retaining its strong presence at meetings and events.

6.5 The LSP should discuss developing its relationship with both district and local councillors, particularly Portfolio Holders and Scrutiny, and how this can be achieved.