

DEVON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DSP Partnership Board

16 April 2009

Present:-

Mrs Sally Foxhall (Independent Chair) (attended for items 1- 9)
Ian Thompson (SWRDA) (attended for items 1- 9)
Mr Trevor Smale (Dartmoor National Park Authority) (attended for items 1- 9)
Paul Gompertz (Environment Devon) (attended for items 1- 9)
Councillor James Morrish (Torrige District Council) (attended for items 1- 5)
Councillor Brian Greenslade (Devon County Council) (attended for items 2- 6)
Dr E Moffatt (Faith Sector) (attended for items 1- 9)
Councillor James McInnes (West Devon Borough Council) (attended for items 1- 9)
Chief Superintendent Jo Tennant (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary) (attended for items 1- 9)
Mrs Caroline Rae (DSP Development Officer) (attended for items 1- 9)
Mrs Sara Cretney (LAA Development Officer) (attended for items 1- 9)
Mr Tim Jones (Devon Economic Partnership) (attended for items 2- 9)
Mr John Bunting (Devon Consortium) (attended for items 1- 9)
Councillor Adrian Fullam (Exeter City Council) (attended for items 3- 9)

Also in attendance

Assistant Chief Constable Paul Netherton (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary) (item 4)
Roy Tomlinson (Devon County Council) (item 4)
Mary Ridgway (Devon Strategic Housing Group (item 6)
Maria Bailey (Torrige District Council) (item 6)
Sue Southwell (Rural Housing Enabler) (item 6)

1 **Apologies**

Apologies received from;

Dr David Radford (Devon PCT),
Dr John Chudley (Learning and Skills Council)
Councillor Tucker (South Hams District Council)

2 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2009 be signed as a correct record subject to a minor amendment to Dr Radford's title

3 **Matters Arising**

(i) **Regional Improvement Bid**

This was still being pursued and is likely to be considered by the RIEP board at their July meeting

(ii) **Role of Champions (minute 5)**

It had previously been suggested that there should be a role of sustainable community strategy champions. This champion role would take a more detailed interest in the performance and delivery of Local Area Agreement priorities that related to their chosen or appointed Sustainable Community Strategy theme.

It was felt there was no capacity to undertake this role at present therefore it should be considered at a future meeting.

(iii) **Economic downturn (minute 7)**

Ian Thompson updated delegates that the RDA had been putting together a regional loan fund and that it was being launched later in the week. The loan fund was £10m and was being administered through Business Link.

Delegates agreed it was important to monitor the situation regarding the economic downturn and asked to receive regular reports.

RESOLVED;

(a) that the role of the sustainable community strategy champions be revisited at a future meeting – after the summer break; and

(b) that an update on the current situation with the economic downturn be brought to the July meeting of the Partnership Board.

4 Peninsular Domestic Violence and Abuse Service Model

Delegates received a report on the peninsula's domestic violence and abuse model which mirrored that of the Government's Co-ordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence. It was also the vision of the Chief Constable of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to achieve standardisation and co-ordination. This was based on three elements within a domestic violence family: perpetrator, victim and child and the model had been developed to achieve a greater degree of consistency in service provision across the peninsular and recognise the roles and responsibilities of key statutory agencies.

The vision of the Peninsular was to;

(a) increase the safety of families living with domestic violence and abuse;

(b) to promote their health and wellbeing; and

(c) empower children and young people to live lives free of violence

Delegates heard that to achieve this would require all statutory agencies to respond effectively to the impact of domestic violence and abuse within their mainstream services and the securing of permanent sustainably funded specialist community-based services to supplement the role of statutory agencies.

Roy Tomlinson and Assistant Chief Constable Paul Netherton reminded delegates of the enormous costs (both social and financial) of domestic violence and gave a presentation on the scale of the problem (including statistics) and how it impacted on so many areas. ACC Netherton added that the Constabulary's 'threat assessment' had highlighted domestic violence as the area's greatest threat.

Delegates discussed;

- The problems that were caused with short term funding streams, leading to a 'hand to mouth' existence for many charities and organisations;
- Whether the model had gone through the EINA (Equality Impact Needs Assessment) process;
- That work was ongoing between agencies and some joint policies had been achieved;
- Whilst this was a 'spend to save' approach, concern was raised about the finance aspects given the current economic climate;

- That the specialist community-based services were essential and delivery of these was absolutely fundamental to an effective domestic violence service delivery; and
- That timescales were important and requirements for funding needed to be known before the budget setting discussions commenced.

RESOLVED;

(a) that the Draft Domestic Violence and Abuse Peninsular Model be noted;

(b) that the date of the planned Chief Constable Chief Officer seminar on 18th June also be noted;

(c) that a mechanism be established through its structures to respond to the Policy, practice and resource implications of the Vision so that final decisions on sustainable funding of the Vision be in place for the financial year 2010/11 and onwards.

(d) that the Delivery Board consider this item further following the June seminar (July meeting); and

(d) that the information sheet giving the key statistics regarding domestic violence be circulated to the Board.

5 Post Office Task Force 'Challenging the Cuts' Report

The Board considered a report on the work of the Post Office Task Force which had been undertaken as a result of the Post Office's 'Network Change Programme'. The Network Change Programme had meant that a large number of post offices in Devon were closed and others replaced by outreach services.

The role of the Task Group was to coordinate action in Devon and Torbay and respond collectively to the consultation and subsequent fallout. The partnership working was reported as excellent, with shared information, joint action and, significantly a jointly agreed comprehensive response to the consultation.

The report described the processes and actions taken by the group and the successes and learning from the experience and also recommendations to central government, regional bodies and local partners to help secure a sustainable future for the remaining post office network.

Sue Craythorne (Devon County Council) added that the role of the post office was not only economic but provided a social function too and the work of the task force had resulted in three post offices being saved but a further 16 staying open and being supported by grant aid, with a view to becoming self sustaining in the future.

Delegates discussed;

- That there would be future threats to the Post Office network, therefore it was important to be pro-active and keep gathering evidence in preparation for such an event;
- Whether there was scope for co-operatives and whether they would assist longer term sustainability;
- How the outreach services and supported services were being monitored;
- That there were now several 'community information points' and these were starting to develop;
- The role of the 'connect' initiative and what role it could play in linking up public services; and

- The importance of local action and new ideas to build on community development

RESOLVED

(a) that the report be welcomed; and

(b) that the local recommendations contained on page 2 of the Task Group report (and listed below) be endorsed and further recommendations for local action be made when appropriate.

(i) Devon and Torbay Strategic Partnerships work with the National Federation of Subpostmasters and Post Office Limited to consider what work local government and other local agencies could channel through the Post Office network to help ensure its long term future, and to test its ideas through a number of pilot projects;

(ii) Public authorities in Devon jointly encourage a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act on the future of village shops and post offices;

(iii) The Devon and Torbay Strategic Partnerships take on a 'vigilance' role in respect of community based services; and

(iv) Wherever possible, local government responds positively to community initiatives that strengthen the post office network locally.

6 Housing in Devon

Delegates received a report of an event (21 / 22 January 2009) which was delivered by Devon Strategic Housing Group (DSHG) on delivering affordable housing in a challenging market. This document was the background to a wider agenda item about the issues facing housing in Devon.

The aim of the event was to deepen Local Authorities' understanding of issues faced by their delivery partners (RSLs, Developers and their professional teams) in the current housing market. Speakers had been invited to challenge current thinking and explore possible solutions.

The report set out the potential solutions, which had been identified during the event that could form part of a joint action plan for continued delivery of Affordable Housing in the current housing market as well as areas of potential work needing further investigation. The potential solutions were grouped into themes of partnership solutions, planning solutions, delivery solutions, finance solutions, communication solutions and capacity and skills.

Delegates also received a presentation about housing delivery in the current market. The presentation included a reminder what Devon was trying to achieve in terms of affordable housing provision, the key issues surrounding need, the financial model (and how this might not be fit for purpose), barriers to provision, what was happening in the marketplace and also what might be done better including using new processes and relationships and application of policy and also what was currently being done to achieve aims.

Delegates discussed;

- The current position in Torridge where schemes graded silver and gold appeared not to be moving forward;
- That the reasons for delays had been assessed and analysed and these had included reluctance of landowners to sell and also housing associations becoming more risk averse;
- The position in Torridge with a forthcoming judicial review regarding the development framework and what delegates could do to assist Torridge;

- The role of the Sustainable Communities Act in assisting this work;
- That national policy was not always a 'good fit' for rural Devon;

RESOLVED

(a) that delegates lend their support to Torridge District Council and agreed to assist in whatever way possible. Furthermore, that a briefing paper be prepared (Tim Jones) in order that strong representations might be made at Government level;

(b) furthermore, that a copy of that briefing paper be circulated to the Board and that representations be made at the Strategic Leaders Board (Brian Greenslade)

(c) that the Delivery Board (April) be asked to set up a dedicated Task Force that considers all of the issues highlighted within the report and presentation – and that the Partnership Board set parameters for the review;

(d) that the Partnership Board supports the notion that there needs to be closer links with the District Councils and that this also be considered as part of the Task Force Review; and

(e) That the officer representation on the Joint Housing and Planning Group was not considered to be at a sufficiently senior level, therefore the Board ask that this be reviewed.

7

Update From Other Partnership Boards

Delegates were updated on the work of other partnership tables.

DSP Delivery Board – The draft 'refreshed' LAA was approved by Devon Strategic Partnership Delivery Board on 16 March 2009 (and Devon County Council's Executive on 27 March 2009). The Secretary of State approved the new 'refreshed' LAA on 7 April 2009. A report was circulated which set out the amendments that had been made to the LAA as part of the refresh. An update was also given on the request to Government to reduce the teenage conception target.

An update was also received on the LPSA2 and a report circulated which highlighted that many of the targets reflected Devon Strategic Partnership priorities and a number relied on significant partner input and support. The report also set out the process for allocation of PRG and highlighted those decisions that had been reached so far.

An update was also given on the Resource Hub – which now had a strategic information lead – an officer who had been seconded from the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (since February). A project manager had also been appointed who would commence employment in May.

Delegates discussed whether there was still money available to be allocated from the PRG, as a request had been received in respect of environmental targets. It was also noted that that some of the Districts had also taken the opportunity to refresh their aspect of the LAA.

Devon Futures – A meeting had been held on 15 April 2009 and had included members of the Youth Parliament. This had been a useful meeting and delegates had been impressed with the quality and level of debate. A strong reaction to future visions was that it was crucial to 'keep Devon beautiful'.

A follow-up meeting would be offered as it was important to use this valuable resource with the intention of maintaining an on-going dialogue.

Healthier and Stronger Communities Partnership – The first meeting of the group had been held on 12 March 2009. The vision and terms of reference had been agreed as had the membership. Issues discussed had included the role of the 8 strategic partnership groups operating underneath and performance management. Work was ongoing within the

PCT and ACS to develop a performance management framework and a further meeting was scheduled for June.

Delegates stressed the urgency of this group operating and performing well as it had been raised as an area of concern for future audits.

RESOLVED

(a) that the changes to Devon's Local Area Agreement as a result of the recent 'refresh' be noted;

(b) that the achievement against the Local Public Service Agreement 2 be noted;

(c) that the process for allocation of Performance Reward Grant and the agreements that have been reached so far also be noted; and

(d) that a future report be received on the work of Environment Devon (July or October) and the meeting of the theme group chairs.

8

AOB

No items raised

9

Date of Next Meeting

Future dates were agreed as;

Thursday 16 April 2009 (venue TBC)

Thursday 15 October 2009 (venue TBC)

The meeting that was due to be held on Thursday 16 July 2009 was changed to **Thursday 9th July 2009**. (venue to be agreed)

DSP Delivery Board - 10.30am

Audit Commission - 12.00pm (joint presentation to DSP Partnership Board and DSP Delivery Board followed by lunch)

DSP Partnership Board - 14.00pm

The meeting started at 9.30am and finished at 12.10pm