

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD
AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON TUESDAY 2 MAY 2006**

Present: Ruth Bagley – Chief Executive, SHDC (Chairman)
Penny Amraoui – Environment Agency
Steve Brown – South Hams and West Devon PCT
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council
Kay Dawson – Community Development Officer, SHDC
Ernest Fleck – Business Link, Devon and Cornwall
Roger Grainger – Devon County Council
Hugh McCahill – South Hams CVS Forum
Alan Robinson – Strategic Director (Community), SHDC
Vic Rosati – South Hams and West Devon PCT
Katie Shears – Community Development Assistant, SHDC
Tony Steer – Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Alan Tibbenham – South Hams and West Devon PCT
Howard Toplis – Chief Executive, Tor Homes
Laura Whitehead – South Hams CVS
Cllr Richard Yonge – Leader, SHDC

Also in attendance for the following items:

Item 5: Our Sherford – JP Sanders (SHDC) & Norman Butlin (DCC)
Item 6: Children and Young People Plan – Pat Clewer (DCC)
Item 7: Local Area Agreement – John Smith (DCC)

Apologies: Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council
Ian Curtis – Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Adele Dawson – South Devon College
Cllr Cathy Pannell – South Hams District Council
Cllr Mike Saltern – South Hams District Council

1. Minutes of meeting 28 February 2005 – any matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

Under matters arising it was noted that following consultation on the future delivery of Primary Care Trust's (PCT's), the Strategic Health Authority had opted to recommend Option 1: a single PCT covering the administrative area of Devon.

2. South Hams Community Strategy – Brief Update

a) **Affordable Housing** – the need to continue using the second homes Council Tax monies to drive forward affordable housing initiatives was noted, with those housing schemes in East Allington, Kingsbridge and the plans for Bonfire Hill in Salcombe being highlighted as successes.

Reference was also made to the Housing Corporations' allocation for 2006/2008, the progress of the Housing Market Assessment and the additional Beacon Funding which will be used to explore new ideas arising from the Affordable Rural Housing Report.

- b) **Employment and skills** – the shortage in the number of available premises was noted. Although, it was noted that talks were progressing with landowners for development opportunities both for employment and housing schemes. Two bids had been put forward for Objective 2 monies but there was concern that the Council would lose out on funding due to higher priority projects across the region. Reference was also made to the availability of Redundant Building Grants.

3. **Progress on the Sustainable Community Strategy 2006 - 2011**

The first draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy was out for consultation with a response deadline of 30 June 2006. The draft strategy was available on the Council's website with an online questionnaire linked. Contact had been made with partners Public Relations people to establish links between websites directing people to the online questionnaire. Paper copies of the strategy and questionnaire were available in all South Hams libraries, community internet access points, town halls and partners reception buildings. A first newsletter had been drafted and would be circulated to partners, Community Partnership Forum, town and parish councils and others shortly.

a) **Focus on Community Vibrancy**

Emphasis was placed on the opportunities for community activity and volunteering with the importance of involving young peoples (under 35's), not only in relation to community vibrancy but also in the electoral process. The Group was informed that East Devon District Council had already implemented a volunteering in the community initiative.

Kay Dawson, Roger Grainger and Laura Whitehead to progress.

Healthy Choices - Steve Brown tabled a scoping brief from which the following aspects were highlighted:-

- working in partnership with Leisure Centres to promote physical activity;
- through partnership working, provide consistent and timely public education messages to employers and the public, particularly targeting the most vulnerable;
- healthy lifestyles day for employees to include health check-ups (such as checking cholesterol levels and blood pressure etc);
- opportunities for working with the preferred bidder, Tone Leisure, for the leisure transfer of South Hams District Council owned Leisure Centres;
- the importance of considering needs under the diversity drive;

- health walk projects, training opportunities and role of volunteers.

The Group noted its support for advancing the initiatives as laid out in the scoping brief.

ACTION: Steve Brown and Howard Toplis to liaise regarding getting healthy lifestyles information out to Housing Association contacts/users.

b) Affordable Housing

Under the affordable housing scope, two key priorities were identified:

1. to increase the supply of affordable housing for local people to create balanced, viable communities. A paper was tabled to the Group which noted that the proposed idea was to review the LSP and other related partner assets to explore development opportunities which could include affordable housing as well as improve service provision for the partner agency as part of a mixed use development. It was **agreed** that each organisation would put forward a contact name who was able to help analyse their assets;
2. to assist a wide range of vulnerable residents to be able to live independently and ensure that housing, care and support was provided as a seamless service. The idea behind this proposal was to improve the speed and effectiveness of discharge of vulnerable people from hospital by joining up vulnerable person services.

The Group supported these two proposals. It was **agreed** that the next steps were for each organisation to nominate a representative to help develop an action plan for the two priorities.

c) Competitive Local Economy

The difficulty in identifying specific projects for the partnership as a whole to progress was noted. The provision of employment land / infrastructure was fundamentally the role of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and therefore an aspect for the district council to pursue, with key partners outside the SHSP

However, it was felt that the combined procurement power of the organisations in the Partnership could be utilised to support local businesses to adopt and therefore the development of a procurement strategy could be the way forward. A Member of the Group noted their concern over the legislative powers of the various partners and how these respective powers could be interpreted. It was **agreed** that each

partner approach the relevant officer of their organisation to look into procurement issues/opportunities.

Further to this discussion, a partner also noted that as employers of significant numbers of staff, their combined efforts in promoting local food sourcing to staff / volunteers could be another project to pursue. This links to reducing food miles, i.e. a knock-on environmental benefit.

Action: Partners are to consider how they could get involved in promoting local buying to staff / volunteers

A further initiative which highlighted was that of the National Enterprise Week (week commencing 13 November 2006). The idea of which was to engage schools and businesses to promote the enterprise culture. The importance of involving young people was emphasised. Partners were to consider if/how they could get involved.

d) Environment

With regards to environmental issues, the following points were noted:-

- World Environment Day Event being organised by Environment Agency (with others) to be held in conjunction with Kingsbridge farmers market on Saturday 3 June 2006;
- The cross-cutting theme of the Active South Hams initiative;
- The waste disposal project being developed at Salcombe Harbour to promote recycling.

It was **agreed** that environmental aspects be discussed in depth at the next meeting.

4. Our Sherford

J.P Sanders, SHDC's Head of Customer Service, and Norman Butlin, DCC, presented to the Group the project plan for developing customer access to shared services in the new community of Sherford. The Group was being asked to endorse the outlined approach and to promote/encourage the method.

During the presentation, the following aspects were highlighted:-

- a) what could be achieved, with integrated infrastructure and co-ordinated multi-agency working;
- b) the key partners which included the developers Red Tree, South Hams District Council, Devon County Council, South Hams CVS and Plymouth City Council;
- c) the importance of the Sherford vision for the community to enjoy easy, effective and efficient access to a full range of services from the

- start of the development and information provided by a partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations;
- d) the phased approach with the initial stage to be online communication. As the project develops the idea is to engage with the business community and finally the development of a community site with the objective that it will become community run and owned.

Whilst in support of the approach, a Member noted their concern for its seemingly introspective nature and felt that outlying villages should be incorporated. It was **agreed** that at its next meeting the partnership would receive a further update with a business plan.

5. **Children's and Young Peoples Plan / Local Safeguarding Children Board**

Pat Clewer, Devon County Council, updated on the Children's Act 2004 and what the implications had been for the partners. The Act noted a number of aspects including a duty to co-operate to improve children's well-being (i.e Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) and Children's Trust), and a duty to co-operate to improve children's safeguarding. A separate Children's Services had been established and there was to be an integrated inspection framework for Devon.

The CYPP was developed following countywide assessments of what were considered to be the priorities. The fundamental reason for the plan was to bring together those priorities which involved partnership working. The Plan included LAA (Local Area Agreement) priorities, LPSA (Local Public Service Agreement) targets, a shift towards prevention and the integration of local services.

During discussion, reference was made to:-

- a) the newly constituted LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board). The Board had been set up to focus on the risk and danger to young people. It was noted that those living in deprived areas were 11 times more likely to get injured highlighting the relationship between poverty and health;
- b) the difficulty of engaging young people in the housing issues;
- c) concerns over funding opportunities;
- d) the development and the intended implementation of a Common Assessment Framework.

In conclusion, a Member of the Group felt it would be useful to receive a summary of the arrangements and how the various organisations interlink.

6. Local Area Agreement – Improving SHSP understanding

As a reminder, the Group was informed that Devon had been chosen as one of the authorities to pilot the development of LAA's. An LAA was a three year deal between the Government and the County around its priorities and their delivery. The reasons behind its development were identified as follows:-

- to improve partnership delivery and align resources;
- to build on accountability;
- local focus and flexibility;
- simplify external funding and performance monitoring regimes;
- focus on outcomes;
- improve quality of life.

Four core areas, with the cross cutting themes of regeneration and housing, had been identified as Safer & Stronger Communities, Children & Young People, Healthier Communities & Older People and Economic Development & Enterprise.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- a) the opportunity to readdress and, if needs be, reassess the contents of the LAA on an annual basis;
- b) concern over funding and resources and how they were to be distributed throughout the County, especially in terms of priority needs. In response it was noted that there was a minimum entitlement and that partners should agree on priorities, establishing which services to build and invest upon. Furthermore, the reallocation of certain funding strands was suggested;
- c) the importance of identifying tangible outcomes;
- d) the need for clarity on how the various strands of the LAA interlinked and what was pertinent to each organisations/LSP.

In conclusion, it was noted that documents relating to the LAA were available on the Devon County Council website.

It was **agreed** that the SHSP had to decide which aspects of the LAA it should become involved in and build into its local action plans.

7. Devon Compact Update

Work had been carried out on the three codes of practice and a question was posed as to what extent should the codes compel partners to work or just encourage.

It was agreed the Ruth Bagley continue in her role as the statutory champion of the compact and Laura Whitehead continue in her role as voluntary champion.

8. Possible Future Agenda Items

- Totnes & District Strategy Group to give presentation (15 Mins max);
- LAA Follow-up item: where and how SHSP should engage – to abstract each LAA theme and decide a way forward;
- Our Sherford – business plan.

9. Future meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 18 July at 5pm. The following meeting was arranged to take place on Monday 25 September at 2pm.

It was also confirmed that the next meeting of the Community Partnership Forum will take place on Wednesday 27 September at 10am, at Ivybridge Town Hall.

On conclusion of the meeting, thanks were extended to Vic Rosati for all his work during his time on the Partnership. It was noted that this was Vic's last meeting as he was soon to retire. The Partnership wished him luck for the future.

(meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 5.00 pm)