

NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD AT SOUTH DEVON COLLEGE, PAIGNTON ON MONDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2007

Present: Vaughan Lindsay, Dartington Hall Trust (Chair)
Matt Bell – Devon County Council (for Roger Grainger)
Steve Brown – Devon Primary Care Trust
Adele Dawson – South Devon College
Hugh McCahill – South Hams VSF
Jo Rumble – Dartmoor National Park Authority
Paul Sadler – Environment Agency
Tony Steer – Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Pete Tansey – Business Representative
Cllr John Tucker – Leader, SHDC
Cllr Anne Ward – SHDC
Laura Whitehead – South Hams CVS

Others also present and participating (non-voting):

Amanda Harvey – SHDC (for Kay Kilgallon)
Alan Robinson – SHDC
Howard Owens – South Hams Volunteer Centre

Apologies: Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council
Kay Kilgallon – SHDC
Howard Toplis – Chief Executive, Tor Homes

1. Apologies and minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2007 were confirmed as a correct record, and the list of apologies was noted. The Chairman also welcomed Howard Owens of the South Hams Volunteer Centre to the meeting.

2. Defining Future – Group Discussion on Possible Joint Actions

Members were asked to divide into two groups and identify a number of projects that the Partnership could achieve in the next 12-18 months. The projects had to be considered achievable, in line with the strategic priorities and issues which the group were keenly interested in delivering.

Following lengthy discussions, the Partnership agreed upon the following projects and nominated a champion for each:

- a) The Skills Pledge. This was a means of recognising businesses which were committed to training their staff and employing apprentices. The aim was to promote the Pledge to encourage businesses to sign up. The Partnership decided that the nominated champion would be Adele Dawson.
- b) South Devon Excellence Awards. The Partnership agreed to sponsor an

award for each of the Partnership's strategic priorities, to be presented at the award ceremony in November 2008. The Partnership agreed that the nominated champion would be Adele Dawson.

- c) Sustainable and affordable housing demonstration site. This project would aim to demonstrate a range of housing options that are both sustainable and affordable. This could be constructed at Dartington and would show that the Partnership was willing to take a lead in addressing some of the affordable housing problems. Despite the involvement of the SHSP partners the need to acknowledge the independent role of the Council as a planning authority was referred to. The Partnership agreed that the nominated champion for this project would be Alan Robinson.
- d) A series of conferences on topics which share best practice on community initiatives. These could include how to create and develop a car and bike sharing scheme and improve footpath provision. It was agreed that the nominated champion for this project would be Paul Sadler.
- e) Improve community planning and engagement. Encouraging Partners to explore best practice and potentially adopt a uniform process to improve the way in which Partners respond to and feedback on community planning issues. The Partnership also hoped to encourage greater community engagement. It was agreed that the nominated champion for this project would be Amanda Harvey.

Members were asked to inform Amanda which project they wished to be involved with. Progress on the projects would be a standing item on future agendas.

Action Agreed:

- All Partnership members to inform Amanda of which project they wish to be involved with.
- Project champions to outline project charter for each initiative for the next meeting, outlining aim, milestone and outputs.

3. Information Sharing – Partner Updates

Each Member was asked to provide a brief verbal update on their progress, issues and achievements from their briefing papers:

South Hams District Council

The Partnership was informed that the pilot project of having a shared Chief Executive was due to be reviewed by March 2008.

Devon County Council

The Members were informed that an announcement regarding Exeter's bid for unitary status was expected imminently.

The Devon Strategic Partnerships would be responsible for delivering the Local Area Agreement (LAA) in a transparent and effective manner. Work

was undertaken to profile the priorities of the towns in Devon which would form part of a regeneration action plan.

Devon and Cornwall Constabulary

The Partnership was informed that currently there were two Basic Command Units which were proposed to be reduced to one, which would be responsible for policing the whole of Devon with the exception Plymouth. The Partnership was assured that the change would not affect the current service level.

South Hams CVS

The Partnership was informed that the service was currently trying to establish more efficient working methods on a countywide basis (for example staff training) whilst maintaining local contact.

South Hams Voluntary Sector Forum

Members were informed that the Forum was trying to improve access to services by engaging with the Community Strategy. The Forum was also trying to resurrect the South Hams Access Group.

Environment Agency

The Partnership was informed that the Environment Agency was investigating the idea of a 'shared hub' which would result in employees not having a specific designated office space, but encouraged to use shared resources.

Dartmoor National Park Authority

The Partnership was informed that the Authority's Management Plan would be published on 12 December 2007.

4. Joint Working – Progress on Delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy Themes

a) Affordable Housing

Members were informed that funding to deliver the National Affordable Housing Programme was estimated to be in the region of £80 to £100 million for the whole of the Plymouth sub-regional housing market area.

A Member requested an update on the progress of the Community Land Trust projects.. The Partnership was informed that work was ongoing but that Community Land Trusts were proving to be very complicated to administer in terms of governance, local capacity and funding. Those Parish Councils which had demonstrated great interest in progressing affordable housing sites in their areas appeared to be moving more towards considering exceptions sites as an avenue for delivery rather than a Community Land Trust. A report would be circulated in due course.

b) Competitive Local Economy

Work promoting e-procurement was still on-going. The Partnership was informed that there were potential issues regarding Objective 2 Funding and

the 'clawing back' of funds, which could have a detrimental affect on some projects.

A Partnership Member expressed the concern that due to all funding being issued through the LAA, rural issues, particularly in South Hams, may not be as high a priority as hoped.

The Partnership was presented with a letter that registered the Partnership's concern at the potential effects of Post Office closures. The Partnership concluded that the content of the letter should be more pro-active.

Action Agreed:

- Vaughan to contact Michael Cozens, South Hams District Council's Economic Development Officer, to draft a more pro-active letter to be circulated to the Partnership and then sent to the Post Office.

c) Environment South Hams

In addition to the report Members were asked to note that funding for community-led planning was due to conclude in March 2008.

d) Community Vibrancy

I. Community Planning

The Partnership was informed that there had been a slight delay in the final production of The Communities In Action Database, which would now be populated in February 2008.

III. Volunteering

Partners will be invited to a meeting about employee volunteering in January 2008. The aim of such a meeting would be to support partners in setting up employee volunteering practices within their own organisations.

IV. Active South Hams

Members noted that work was underway to ensure that sport and physical activity were featured in the new LAA for Devon.

V. Awareness Raising

A copy of the Migrant Workers Handbook was distributed to all Members. The Handbook had been produced in nine languages and ideas for where it could be distributed were sought.

5. Potential Funding Opportunity – Greater Dartmoor LAG Proposal

The Partnership considered a report that detailed a possible funding opportunity that could be secured from the Rural Development Programme for England. The Expression of Interest would be submitted before 31

December 2007 and, if successful, the full application would be submitted before 23 May 2008.

Action Agreed:

- Amanda to draft an outline project pro forma for the relevant projects discussed and agreed in item 2 above and to circulate to project champions before submitting it.

6. Presentation by Howard Owens, South Hams Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator, on Volunteer Centre Progress

Howard informed Members that there were currently 9 Volunteer Centres across Devon all of which had an accredited programme. The Centres' core functions were brokerage, marketing, building good practice, developing opportunities, policy response and strategic development.

It was noted that 50% of the population volunteer at some point through the year, creating an estimated economic value of £38.9 billion. Most volunteers were motivated by the desire to improve things or help people. The notion of employer volunteers has spread nationally and internationally, however Shelter suggested that around 74% of employees were unhappy about the limited opportunities to undertake voluntary activity. In summing up his presentation, Howard concluded that volunteering was of great benefit to the community and volunteers themselves.

7. Possible Future Agenda Items

The Chairman requested that if anybody had any items they would like placed on the agenda to please contact either Amanda or himself directly.

8. Proposed dates of future meetings

The Chairman felt that the venue for the Partnership should vary between the Partner agencies from meeting to meeting. Therefore it was agreed that the venue for the next meeting would be held at Dartington Hall. The Partnership also agreed to pilot a conference call style meeting on 12 May 2008.

Action agreed:

- The Chairman and Pete Tansey to arrange the workings of a conference call meeting.

- 25 February 2008 at **2 pm** – Dartington Hall
- 12 May 2008 at **2 pm** – Conference Call
- 21 July 2008 at **2 pm** – Follaton House

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