

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD
AT QUAY HOUSE, KINGSBRIDGE ON MONDAY 8 MARCH 2010**

PRESENT:

Vaughan Lindsay – Dartington Hall Trust (SHSP Chair)
Alan Robinson – South Hams District Council
Cllr John Tucker – South Hams District Council (SHSP Vice Chair)
Cllr Anne Ward – South Hams District Council
Cllr Debbie Morris – Dartmouth Town Council
Cllr Tony Whitty – Totnes Town Council
Cllr John Binns – Kingsbridge Town Council
Tina Henry – NHS Devon
Howard Toplis – Tor Homes
Supt Sarah Sharpe – Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Emma Handley – Voluntary Sector Forum representative
Richard Stratford – South Devon College (for Adele Dawson)
David Shephard – Federation of Small Businesses
Paul Sadler – Environment Agency
Kate Cantwell – Devon County Council
Cllr Bill Hitchins – Dartmoor National Park Authority (for Jo Rumble)
Jo Doney – South Hams District Council (note taker)
Amanda Harvey – South Hams District Council

David Lillington – Dartmoor National Park Authority
Lee Bray – South Hams District Council

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council
Peter Tansey – Business representative
Lesley Hughes – Ivybridge Town Council
Jill Davies – South Hams Community and Voluntary Services

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

3. INFORMATION SHARING - PARTNER UPDATES

Representatives presented their update reports (as previously circulated). Partner Updates from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, South Devon College and Dartmoor National Park Authority were also circulated at the meeting.

- **Devon County Council**
Devon Futures Partnership. It was agreed that a short presentation be given to a future SHSP meeting regarding the findings of the Partnership and of any pertinent issues for the South Hams.

- **Environment Agency & Environment South Hams**
Green Travel Plans. Some representatives expressed a need for a Green Transport Co-ordinator who could lead in co-ordinating plans across organisations, as well as co-ordinators within organisations.

The Federation of Small Businesses informed the meeting that the NFU (National Farmers Union) had received an increase in enquiries from farmers interested in renting their land as allotments.

- **Federation of Small Businesses**
Representatives were asked to lend their support to the creation of a publicly owned Post Bank to be operated through the Post Office Network, to provide an alternative source of funding and banking facilities, particularly in rural communities. It was agreed that the Chairman would write a letter of support on behalf of the Partnership. The representative agreed to forward a copy of a recent press release on this initiative.
- **Ivybridge Town Council**
In response to the Traveller issues referred to in the update, Supt Sharpe highlighted that the Chief Constable would be meeting with Gary Streeter MP and noted that it was likely to be a challenging summer.
- **NHS Devon & Active South Hams**
Adventure Sports Hub Sport England bid. Cllr John Tucker (SHDC) was able to advise the Partnership that South Hams had been one of the eight recently announced successful applications out of a total of 92 bids and would attract £1 million in funding. The Active Villages Project had been successful in attracting Lottery funding.
- **South Hams District Council**
Shared Services. It was agreed that the issues relating to establishing a shared Local Strategic Partnership with West Devon would be considered at the next Partnership meeting to be held in June 2010.

Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan 2009-2011. The Chairman emphasised that this was a key document for the Partnership and representatives were reminded to keep Amanda Harvey informed of updates.

- **Totnes Town Council**
Low Carbon Challenge Fund. Transition Town Totnes had been successful in its bid for £650,000. It was agreed that an update on this be presented at the next SHSP meeting in June 2010.
- **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary**
Force Day of Action – 23 June 2010. Supt Sharpe informed that the Force ran two action days per year when all officers and staff were mobilised. They were keen to work with Partners on the confidence agenda and anti social behaviour and if Partners had any ideas for the action day then they should contact Peter Dale at South Hams District Council.

RTA Arterial Road Closures. David Shephard expressed concern about the costs and loss of business when main arterial route roads were closed due to road accidents. In response, Supt Sharpe appreciated the frustration but stated that shortcuts could not be taken when evidence was being collated and officers endeavoured to set up diversions as soon as possible. However, it highlighted that the best approach was to focus efforts on preventing accidents and in that respect the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) was currently working with driving instructors to impart safer driving messages to new drivers.

Community Speed Watch. The Partnership was informed that this was a scheme whereby volunteers were trained and equipped to monitor and record vehicle registration numbers of speeding drivers in their locality. Speeding drivers would then be sent a letter the first time they were recorded as exceeding the speed limits. If they were recorded a second time, they would be visited by an officer and if they were recorded a third time, they would be prosecuted.

- **South Devon College**

Apprenticeships. It was noted that the private sector was providing up to 90% of the places for apprenticeships. In response, representatives of public bodies stated that whilst vacant posts were considered for an apprenticeship, in reality, the entry level skill requirements for many posts was a barrier. Furthermore, most public bodies were experiencing cuts in income and were reducing planned recruitment. David Shephard noted that small businesses were not only undertaking the cost of training young people, but were also having to educate them in basic literacy and numeracy skills.

4. PRESENTATIONS

(1) South Hams Local Development Framework (LDF) Update – Site Allocation Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Lee Bray, Head of Community Regeneration, South Hams District Council

Lee Bray informed the Partnership that the authority had made good progress, being the first in the country to adopt its core strategy in 2006. The Sherford Area Action Plan and the Affordable Housing DPD had also been adopted. Next steps for the Framework would be the publication of the five site allocation DPDs for Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Totnes and the Rural Areas. These would be published in April and there would be a six week period for representations. Examinations by the Inspector were scheduled to begin in September with anticipated adoption in spring 2011. It was important to note that the Inspector's final report would be binding and the Council would have to adopt the DPDs accordingly. He went further to say that the SHSP had a significant part to play in assuring that the LDF was 'joined up' and that the development site proposals would be deliverable.

In discussion, Cllr John Binns (Kingsbridge Town Council) expressed concerns that with regard to affordable housing, new developments could have as little as 15% which were affordable and that most new homes e.g. in the Kingsbridge area were likely to be built for the retirement market which was a matter of great concern.

Lee noted that the viability of developments was going to be very difficult for the next few years, but that the Authority had to be resolute and hold firm to its plans and targets and continue to negotiate hard.

Cllr Debbie Morris (Dartmouth Town Council) expressed concerns that the proposed Community Hub at Townstal might further split the community and that the Town Centre would become a museum piece. Lee Bray assured that connectivity was vital for Dartmouth to be viewed as one community and that the Hub had to relate well to the town as a whole. It was a strongly distinctive vision which responded to the outcomes of several strands of engagement which had been undertaken.

It was asked what levers the authority and its partners had to improve the outcomes for affordable housing. In response, Lee Bray advised that there were a number of possible ways to address the issue. The Authority had adopted policies which required all developments of two or more homes to contribute to providing affordable homes, either on site or through a financial contribution. Second Homes Council Tax and central government funding could add to that, supporting the viability of development schemes with significant affordable housing provision. The Authority was also open to new ways to deliver affordable homes and was working with others to advance innovative schemes in a number of locations. The current economic conditions made delivery of affordable housing very challenging, but the evidence of need remained very strong and it was important to take a long-term view, which the DPDs were designed to do.

(2) Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) Local Development Framework – David Lillington

David Lillington informed partners that the National Park Core Strategy Development Plan Document had been adopted in April 2008 and covered the period from 2006 – 2026. The strategy established the broad aims for spatial development in the DNP, defined key sustainability objectives, provided strategic policies needed to achieve the aims, conformed to the Regional Spatial Strategy and had regard to the themes of the Community Strategies covering the National Park. In addition to the Core Strategy, the DNPA had to produce a Minerals and a Waste DPD and a Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Strategic Policies provided a framework to determine planning applications so it was hoped that subsidiary policies would not be required.

It was discussed that the DNPA LDF operated like an exception site in terms of housing allocations and that emphasis was put on local occupancy. The Chairman of the DNPA noted that the DNPA LDF was one of the two current LDFs in the area for which the Partnership was responsible.

It was agreed that a copy of both presentations would be distributed after the meeting.

5. HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY (HCA) SINGLE CONVERSATION – FUTURE INVESTMENT IN THE DISTRICT

Alan Robinson informed that the 'HCA Single Conversation' in essence was about joint working on investment priorities for housing, regeneration, infrastructure and community activities.

Four single conversations were taking place across Devon; Exeter Growth Point, Torbay, Plymouth and the Rest of Devon.

The overarching aim was to produce an Investment Plan. Locally, it was intended that a live document would be produced and hosted on the Council website, which could be updated and populated annually. Alan Robinson stated that it was important to note that this would be a key 'bidding' document and Partners were asked to review the document to ensure that nothing had been omitted as all future investment requirements needed to be captured as evidence for future bids. The document would be presented to the Executive (SHDC) in April or May 2010, before being submitted to the HCA. It was asked how the 'Single Conversation' differed from the Total Place. In response, Partners were informed that the 'HCA Single Conversation' was focused on future capital funding, whereas 'Total Place' was about more effective use of revenue funding undertaken by a range of agencies in an area. Alan advised that 'Total Place' would be a future agenda item, but that it would be premature to schedule it at this time as a number of initiatives were being trialled.

6. DEVON COUNTY EDUCATION CONTRIBUTIONS ON EXCEPTION SITE HOUSING SCHEMES

Alan Robinson outlined that in the current climate, the viability of new developments was becoming increasingly challenging. The question had started to be asked whether in the case of exception sites (which were 100% affordable to meet local demand), it was counterproductive to stipulate an education contribution fee as a planning obligation. SHDC had therefore taken the decision to prioritise affordable housing over other council priorities and this was set out in the Council's adopted Planning Obligations SPD. Following discussion, the partnership gave its broad support to this decision, though Kate Cantwell did want to highlight Devon County Council's campaign to fight for extra educational funding per child, as current funding was less than many other areas in the country.

7. PARTNERSHIP WORKING OPPORTUNITIES WITH ENERGY ACTION DEVON

Alan Robinson updated Partners on Energy Action Devon, a charity which aimed to address issues of fuel poverty and energy efficiency. Partnership opportunities presented themselves across a number of key Sustainable Community Strategy themes, including Affordable Housing, Community Vibrancy and Competitive Local Economy.

Emma Handley informed the meeting of a fuel poverty project being carried out by the South Hams Citizens Advice Bureau.

The report provided the website details and partners were asked to draw attention to the information with their stakeholders

8. DATES & VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (All at 2.00 pm)

Monday 14 June – Upper Gate House, Dartington Hall

Monday 13 September – The Watermark, Ivybridge

Monday 13 December – Dartmoor National Park Offices, Parke, Bovey Tracey

ACTIONS ARISING LIST

SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – 8 MARCH 2010

Updates request	Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan: To be regularly updated	All representatives
Updates request	HCA Single Conversation Review document for omissions	All representatives
Information request	Information on the joint DNPA, HogCO & ESH community food growing event at Parke to be provided to the FSB	Paul Sadler
Information request	Both presentations to be distributed after the meeting	Amanda Harvey
Letter	Post Bank – Letter to be written in support of the initiative on behalf of the SHSP	Vaughan Lindsay/ Amanda Harvey
Future Agenda Item	Low Carbon Challenge Fund June 2010 Meeting	Cllr Tony Whitty (Totnes Town Council)
Future Agenda Item	Shared Services - Joint LSP with West Devon June 2010 Meeting	Alan Robinson
Future Agenda Item	Devon Futures Future Meeting - tba	Vaughan Lindsay/ Paul Sadler
Future Agenda Item	Total Place Future Meeting - tba	Alan Robinson