

## **NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON TUESDAY 18 JULY 2006**

**Present:** Ruth Bagley – Chief Executive, SHDC (Chairman)  
Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council  
Kay Dawson – South Hams District Council  
Roger Grainger – Devon County Council  
Hugh McCahill – South Hams VSF  
Cllr Cathie Pannell – South Hams District Council  
Alan Robinson – South Hams District Council  
Cllr Mike Saltern – South Hams District Council  
Tony Steer – Devon and Cornwall Constabulary  
Robin Toogood – South Devon AONB  
Laura Whitehead – South Hams CVS  
Cllr Richard Yonge – Leader, SHDC

**Apologies:** Penny Amraoui – Environment Agency  
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council  
Adele Dawson – South Hams College  
Ernest Fleck – Business Link, Devon and Cornwall  
Alan Tibbenham – South Hams and West Devon PCT  
Howard Toplis – Chief Executive, Tor Homes

### **1. Minutes of meeting 2 May 2006 – any matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

Under matters arising it was noted that the Children's and Young Peoples Plan was now available on the Devon County Council website.

### **2. Totnes and District Community Plan – presentation by Tom Maughan, Chairman of Community Strategy Group**

The Group received a presentation from Tom Maughan, Chairman of the Totnes and District Community Strategy Group, which detailed the work of the organisation highlighting the Totnes and Community Plan. The Community Action Plan was a document devised to co-ordinate improvements and to inspire action at a local level. Tom circulated a paper which summarised processes, scope, what potential there was and possible actions to pursue. It was noted that one project currently being implemented was a festival for the town, which had been organised to take place over a period of ten days during September 2006. Depending on the success of this festival, it was anticipated that it become either an annual or biannual event.

During the presentation, the following points were highlighted:-

- a) The need for provision of a facility for young people. Tom highlighted this aspect as being of major importance. It was noted that the current youth club only had capacity to hold 50 young people and was not open on a Friday night. As an interim solution, funding had been secured to work with Devon Youth Services and the leisure centre, opening its facilities to young people for use on a Friday night. A long-term solution was to identify an existing premise which could be converted into a functioning youth centre more appropriate to Totnes' needs;
- b) Exploiting the potential of tourist income in partnership with Dartmouth. It was hoped that funding could be secured for a Dart Business Support Officer to promote the use of the river linking the two towns;
- c) concerns over the lack of available funding opportunities to address heritage issues. Tom informed the Group that funding streams had declined and there were many historic buildings in Totnes in need of repair and maintenance;
- d) the difficulty in getting volunteer workers.

In conclusion, Tom stipulated the importance of partnership working in progressing projects. Furthermore, he extended his thanks to officers at both the District and County Councils for their assistance on various issues.

Those around the table reiterated the importance of an effective youth centre and noted a similar project which had recently been completed in Ivybridge. The lack of available funding was highlighted and it was **AGREED** that those around the table should consider what streams of funding may be available.

Kay Dawson then proceeded to update on other community based planning issues, in which she directed attention to the paper which had previously been circulated to the Group. Kay identified the following aspects from the paper:-

- i. community planning activity across the district to date;
- ii. a proposed community planning database, where the LSP were invited to support a project which would develop a database holding information on all community planning activity across Devon, funded primarily by Devon Renaissance;
- iii. a Community Involvement Policy, to be included as an appendix to the Sustainable Community Strategy, re-affirming the partners commitment to community involvement in decision-making and the development of services that meet local people's needs;

- iv. a Bridging document. In order to clarify how community-based plans sit in conjunction with various partners documents, in particular the Sustainable Community Strategy, various town and parish contacts had been drafting a 'Bridging Guide'. It was hoped that all parties could work towards delivering this in future. One element of delivery would be the proposed community planning database above, another would be for SHSP to provide a response to each town / parish plan as it was produced. A sample draft response had previously been circulated for information, it was agreed that further responses be circulated to the Group for comment, especially looking for where generic comments could be used to aid the process – **Kay Dawson to ACTION.**

Following discussion, the Group **AGREED** the following 7 actions as identified in the circulated paper:-

- 1.) to note progress on community planning activities in the district to date;
- 2.) to champion the community planning database project to local community planning group;
- 3.) to nominate a local coordinator/steering group member (**KD**);
- 4.) that once the community planning database had been developed, to utilise it;
- 5.) to include a Community Involvement Policy statement as an appendix to the new community strategy;
- 6.) to note progress on the Bridging Guide;
- 7.) to note the role of a response to an individual community plan and agree to contribute to completing such a response where applicable.

### **3. South Hams Community Strategy – Brief Update**

- a) **Affordable Housing** – new schemes in Bonfire Hill, Salcombe and St Barnabas, Dartmouth were highlighted. Reference was also made to the transfer of Belmont Villa, Ivybridge to support those with mental health issues. Furthermore, following a query regarding monies for sheltered housing, it was noted that the creation of 'Life Time Homes' was being investigated, and may attract County Council second homes Council Tax funding to support greater independence for vulnerable people as part of general needs affordable housing schemes.
- b) **Employment and skills** – it was noted that the Council's draft Prosperity Strategy, which was to be adopted by full Council on 28 September 2006, was available for comments on the Council's website. Currently, positive economic news noted that work had commenced on site at Langage Energy Centre. Negative economic news noted that Imerys had announced 800 redundancies (80 at Lee Moor). A meeting had been offered with Imerys to include the South West RDA, the District Council and Devon & Cornwall Business Council. Furthermore,

a recent review of Assisted Areas had noted that Bickleigh & Shaugh and Sparkwell were no longer eligible for assisted funding.

A Member of the Group noted that a dilemma in analysing the economy and income levels was whether those who lived in the area or those who work in the area were assessed. This was especially significant in an area like South Hams where the difference was considerable. It was noted that the average wage in the South Hams was a critical factor and it was important to get this message across.

#### **4. Progress on the Sustainable Community Strategy 2006 - 2011**

##### **a) Draft Document Process**

The deadline for comments on the draft strategy was 30 June 2006, although comments were still being received. 35 responses from the online questionnaire had been received with various comments. It was noted that feedback to those who responded was to be through various media including newsletters, press, emails etc. It was suggested that any useful comments received were to be incorporate into the strategy, and then circulated to the Group – **Kay Dawson to ACTION.**

##### **b) Environment**

A paper was considered which briefed the Group on the Quality Built and Natural Environment aspect of the Strategy. Robin Toogood highlighted the table, as circulated with the agenda, which demonstrated how the Partnership could add value and where priorities its lay. During discussion, highlighted was the suggestion of the establishment of an Environment South Hams Panel to promote joined-up working, along with the suggestion that each organisation around the table establish internal environment systems to show leadership. In relation to the latter of the two, it was noted that environment systems could operate on two levels. The lower level would be putting across simple messages such as turning off lights. The higher level was more comprehensive and would involve further exploration, with ideas such as carbon foot printing noted. Some partners had already achieved significant improvements in their environmental management and should consider setting themselves more challenging targets. It was also noted that organisations should investigate how they might go about this. Following discussion of the paper, minor amendments to the wording were made.

## **AGREED**

- i. Revised wording of priority areas;
- ii. The setting up of an Environment South Hams Panel to refine Action Plan, drive implementation and report back to LSP;
- iii. The specific regeneration projects mention under priority area 15 be reviewed in light of all potential projects in all community-based plans (town and parish);
- iv. The organisations around the table further explore ways to establish internal environment systems at the most appropriate level to their organisation;
- v. Approach presented in draft Action Plan.

### **c) Community Vibrancy**

In relation to Community Vibrancy it was noted that the new Volunteer Centre project was now up and running (but in its early days) and Howard Owens was now in post. He would be looking to develop the potential Employee Volunteering aspect in due course.

Links were also made between the volunteering opportunities priority and the Quality Environment theme area, where there was potential to look at developing projects to encourage involvement in environmental activities especially linked to projects identified in parish plans.

It was **agreed** that Community Vibrancy be discussed in depth at the next meeting, with an action plan being presented to the Group.

### **d) Healthy Choices**

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Group.

### **e) Affordable Housing**

At the last meeting of the Group two key priorities were identified:-

1. to increase the supply of affordable housing for local people to create balanced, viable communities;
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.

Alan Robinson informed the Group that a meeting had been scheduled for 5 September 2006 in the anticipation of progressing these priorities.

f) **Competitive Local Economy**

One project identified was that of bringing people together to explore possibilities of local purchasing and reiterated from the last meeting was the combined procurement power of the organisations around the table. Alan informed the Group that a meeting had been scheduled for 6 September 2006 to look at issues related to the Local Economy. He felt that it might be useful if each organisation nominated someone related to procurement or procurement law to attend.

The group was reminded that the purchasing power of the partners employees should also be an area to investigate in future.

**ACTION** – Alan Robinson in circulate invitations to both the meetings relating to Affordable Housing (5 September 2006) and Competitive Local Economy (6 September 2006).

5. **Local Area Agreement Follow-up Item**

It was noted that due to the number of apologies received for this meeting, this item be postponed to the next meeting in order that more partners be available for discussion.

It was suggested that some partners may find it useful to look through the summary table circulated, to identify key outcomes areas linked to their priority areas in the meantime.

6. **Update on PCT Position and Implication for SHSP**

Ruth reminded the Group of the move to have one single PCT for Devon. Ruth noted that she had been in contact with other LSP's in Devon to determine how it was felt this onetier structure would impact on the LSP process in terms of local knowledge and understanding. The feeling was that a division was being created between the patient and the provider.

**ACTION** – Ruth Bagley write to the PCT to stipulate how critical it was to retain a link for local arrangements.

7. **Update on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP)**

It was noted that the merger of the South Hams CDRP, West Devon CDRP and Teignbridge CDRP was about maximising progress and combining resources. The first meeting of the merged partnerships had been scheduled for September 2006. It was therefore noted that a further update would be available at the Group's next meeting.

## 8. Update on Our Sherford

Following the previous meeting of the Group, where a presentation was received regarding the project plan for developing customer access to shared services in the new community of Sherford, Alan Robinson updated the Group noting the technological infrastructure, use of the website and community resources. In discussion of the draft action plan, as circulated with the agenda, it was felt that an extra column be added entitled 'actual progress'.

## 9. Possible Future Agenda Items

- LAA follow-up item;
- Devon Compact;
- Adoption of the Community Strategy;
- Community Vibrancy;
- Migrant workers.

## 10. Future meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on **Monday 25 September 2006 at 2pm**. The following meeting was arranged to take place on **Tuesday 5 December 2006 at 5pm**.

(meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 7.20 pm)