

NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2006

Present: Ruth Bagley – Chief Executive, SHDC (Chairman)
Penny Amraoui – Environment Agency
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council
Ian Curtis – Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Adele Dawson – South Devon College
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
Cllr Mike Saltern – South Hams District Council
Alan Tibbenham – South Hams and West Devon PCT
Cllr Richard Yonge – Leader, SHDC

Apologies: Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council
Cllr Cathy Pannell – South Hams District Council
Howard Toplis – Chief Executive, Tor Homes
Laura Whitehead – South Hams CVS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed Adele Dawson, Head of Employer Engagement at South Devon College, and Ernest Fleck, Personal Business Advisor (South Hams) for Business Link, to the meeting.

2. Minutes of meeting 29 November 2005 – any matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 29 November 2005 were confirmed as a correct record. On matters arising under item 4b it was noted that the issue of an employment and skills working group would be picked up under item 5a: scoping briefs.

3. South Hams Community Strategy – brief update

a) **Affordable Housing** – the affordable housing beacon work was continuing and it was planned to make a bid to Government to improve ways of working as a 'second round' of Beacon work.

The second homes Council Tax money from Devon County Council, which was used for affordable housing schemes, was no longer available to the district. Therefore different avenues for funding were to be explored but these but there would be a reduction in what had been achieved over the last two years. However, it was highlighted that monies previously received by the County and reserved for affordable housing, but as yet not spent, were protected.

- b) **Employment and skills** – objectives which had emerged from the Community Strategy included improving the economic infrastructure and effective communication in the business community. Furthermore, it was noted that these objectives should fit the District Council's corporate priorities, and the emerging Prosperity Strategy.

4. Feedback from South Hams Community Partnership Forum meeting

The Community Partnership Forum met on 6 February 2006, and the general feeling was for approval of the themes. Members of the Group who attended the forum noted the positive outcome of the 'political speed dating' activity, noting that queries of youth initiatives were a common theme. Overall, the following points were highlighted following the activity:-

- further understanding of the rural context required;
- great interest in affordable housing noted;
- number of comments on employment in South Hams received;
- wider communications network required.

5. Progress on the Sustainable Community Strategy 2006 - 2011

The Group was reminded of the major themes which were agreed at the previous meeting and how they integrated with the four scoping briefs which had been tabled and identified the following areas:-

- affordable housing;
- competitive local economy;
- community vibrancy;
- quality built and natural environment.

It was noted that the proposed specialist panels/theme groups could be used to further develop areas identified in the scoping briefs.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- a. the importance of aligning social care and health;
- b. the importance of communication between the groups, especially in light of cross cutting themes;
- c. the importance of identifying a few focused priorities from each theme to develop action plans;

- d. to be aware of possible duplication of action plans with groups/organisations who were developing a similar project and the idea of cohesion of groups with similar interests;
- e. the importance of involving people/organisations with influence and drive;
- f. the need to think about timescales and the use of task and finish groups;
- g. for healthy lifestyles, which currently lay under the umbrella of community vibrancy, to be looked at as a separate theme;
- h. to expand the affordable housing theme outside of the district council's remit to gain a wider understanding from other organisations;
- i. the importance of education as a theme.

It was noted that there was now a need to address various schemes and to begin to develop/look at groupings. It was agreed that the following people would carry out this task:-

Economy:	Alan Robinson
Health:	Alan Tibbenham (to look at Active South Hams)
Environment:	Penny Amraoui (to also bring in AONB, Robin Toogood, and Waste Management, Verity Palk)

6. Local Strategic Partnership: Shaping their Future

The Group received a summary report regarding the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) consultation paper which identified key issues for the future of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). The report noted that issues were wider than those of making LSPs 'fit for purpose' for the new responsibilities being placed on them (not least Local Area Agreements (LAAs)). They were part of the wider debate on future governance of localities, devolution, and a 'relationship of equals' between central government and localities. The consultation examined the future role of LSPs, their governance and accountability, and their capacity to deliver Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- a. aligning targets. The Group felt that collaborative working was, at times, hampered by the sheer weight of central target setting and until the Government resolved this issue, this pattern would continue. Co-operation from Government was essential to the operation of LSPs and strong support for paragraph 17 of the LSP consultation paper, as circulated with the agenda, was noted, highlighting that not only should the Government reduce the number of central targets, but should also take this opportunity to realign the targets.
- b. the division of roles across two tier local authorities and the rural nature of Devon authorities, noting that guidelines to assist in working through tensions would be useful;

- c. accountability of LSPs. A Member of the Group felt that as the LSP had no authority, it could not be held accountable for decisions/actions made and, moreover, they were unable to instruct organisations to carryout requests. In response, it was noted that although the LSP should build its own authority and delegate to relevant organisations, there were concerns with democratic accountability. Democratically the LSP was attended by Councillors representing both the district and county;
- d. the difficulties of developing and driving the effective delivery of the LAA in diverse rural areas and the need for more emphasis to be placed on local cross cutting priorities;

AGREED Kay Dawson to collate comments and respond to the OPDM consultation paper (appendix A, attached, notes response).

7. Commissioning a Patient Led NHS – Future of PCT’s

A presentation was received which advised the Group of planned changes by the Department of Health (DoH) for the delivery of local health services. Three options were proposed by the Strategic Health Authorities (SHA) in relation to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) structure within Devon:

- Option 1: A single PCT covering the administrative area of Devon;
- Option 2: Two PCTs covering Devon with one covering South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon and the other Torrridge, North Devon, Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter;
- Option 3: Three PCTs with one covering South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon, another covering Torrridge, North Devon and Mid Devon and the other covering Exeter and East Devon.

In conclusion, it was stated that the delivery of Health Services within the South Hams faced major changes in the near future with comments being invited on the proposals. Following discussion, it was noted that due to the diverse nature of organisations on the LSP it would be hard to agree on one option and therefore it was agreed not to respond to the proposed changes. However, it was noted that both the county and the district were responding through their respective committees.

8. Devon County Council Strategic Partnership

For information, tabled to the Group was Devon County Council's refreshed Strategic Plan briefing paper. Targets were set up until 2008 for five priority areas, identified as follows:-

- giving Devon children and young people the best possible start in life;
- strengthening Devon's economy;
- celebrating Devon's culture;
- improving Devon's environment;
- promoting independence and choice for Devon's adults.

It was noted that a full version of the Strategic Plan would be available on the county council's website.

9. Devon Compact – Consultation on 3 Codes of Practice

Kay Dawson was to make a response on behalf of the district council, which was to be shared with other organisations.

QUICK ROUND-UP

10. Rural Service Partnership / SPARSE

A paper was tabled explaining the Rural Service Partnership. It was noted that, as members of SPARSE the district council had been asked to raise the profile of the new cross agency partnership through the LSP.

11. Membership up-date – Proposal for 2nd environment representative

The Group was asked to consider whether it would be appropriate to appoint a further representative for the environment to sit on the partnership. One initial thought was for a representative from the sustainable side of the environment to attend whilst a further Member felt that all organisations had a responsibility to consider environmental impacts in the South Hams. A further thought was that any new representative should represent the 'built' environment. It was agreed that this be further considered once the scope and composition of the Environment group had been further developed.

12. Neighbourhood Action Support Project

Roger Grainger and Kay Dawson to consider style of approach of Common Ground to bring back to a future meeting.

13. Possible Future Agenda Items

- Presentation from Totnes & District Community Strategy Group – regarding their action plan and three main priorities;
- Children & Young Peoples Plan / Local Safeguarding Children Board – Alan Robinson been leading issue for district council and would contact DCC to see if someone from Pat Clewer's team could come to the next LSP.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 2 May 2006 at 2pm. The following meeting will take place in mid July – Kat to circulate date.

(meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 8.15 pm)