

**DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
17 FEBRUARY 2004**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Kent Thameside Local Strategic
Partnership held on Tuesday 17 February 2004 at the Civic Centre,
Gravesend.**

Present:

Vivienne Foulds – Learning and Skills Council
Jay Edwins – Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT
Patricia Jefford – Gravesham Borough Council
Meradin Peachey – Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT
Chris Waite – Kent Thameside Association
Sue Free – Dartford Borough Council
Graham Harris – Dartford Borough Council
Ian Lindsay – Kent Thameside Delivery Board
Kenneth Lawrie – Dartford Borough Council
David Anstey – Groundwork Kent Thameside
Councillor Ann Allen – Kent County Council
Christopher Woodley – Gravesham Borough Council
Suzanne Kemmenoe – Land Securities
David Williams – Gravesham Borough Council
Dev Sharma – North West Kent Racial Equality Council
Michael Pead – North Kent Chamber of Commerce
Nigel Turley – North West Kent Council for Voluntary Services
Ann Komzolik – North West Kent College
Superintendent Martin Hewitt – North Kent Police
Andrew Ireland – Kent County Council, Social Services
Alistair Jefford – Kent County Council, Strategic Planning
Councillor Michael Snelling – Kent County Council
Tony Allen – Learning and Skills Council (item 3 only)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jean Morgan, Sevenoaks District Council, Kenneth Leadbeater, Leader of Dartford Borough Council and John Burden, Leader of Gravesham Borough Council

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2003

It was noted that Mr J Edwins should have been included on the list of those present. Dev Sharma requested that his point about the need for there to be widespread consultation on the development of the Community Forum (item 7) should be included in the minutes. Other than this, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 October 2003 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Kent Thameside Strategic Area Review

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Tony Allen from the Learning and Skills Council gave a comprehensive presentation on a paper on the Kent Thameside Strategic Area Review and welcomed any feedback.

Councillor Snelling asked if these reviews would impact on funding for Grammar Schools and was advised that there was no direct threat.

There was discussion around the issue of population and skill level fluctuations within Kent Thameside and in particular how the Learning and Skills Council engages and with the growth agenda. Graham Harris commented that the Strategic Area Review did not seem sufficiently visionary given the ambition and vision for the area. Tony Allen requested that partners attend stakeholder meetings and maintain a dialogue with the Learning and Skills Council to address this issue. It was also felt that there was a need for Kent Thameside to engage with the Learning and Skills Council through the voluntary sector.

4. Taking Forward the LSP

Kenneth Lawrie outlined proposals from Gravesham and Dartford Borough Councils to revitalise the LSP.

Meridan Peachy was disappointed that the NHS is not represented on the Kent Thameside Delivery Board and Jay Edwins was also concerned that there was no representation from the voluntary sector.

It was noted that Councillor Burden is on the Delivery Board and will sit as the LSP representative on this.

It was also noted that the regeneration framework strategy of the Delivery Board was still being developed. Once this had been finalised and the role of the Delivery Board clarified, the LSP may be able to make a case for having another community representative on the Board in future.

It was suggested that research be carried out into other successful LSPs to provide some guidance as to how they operated. It was also noted that the complexity and history of partnership in the area might make comparisons difficult.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the commitment of both Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils to developing a strong, well-resourced and effective Local Strategic Partnership for the area be noted.

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- (2) That the proposal to rename the LSP and the Community Strategy as the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership and the Dartford and Gravesham Community Strategy, be agreed.
- (3) That the proposal for Councillor Mrs Ann Allen to become Chairman of the Local Strategic Partnership and for Councillor John Burden to become the LSP's official representative on the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, be agreed.
- (4) That partners give consideration to any resources they are able to provide in support of the work of the Local Strategic Partnership.

5. Partnership Arrangements in Kent Thameside

Ian Lindsay presented the report which set out proposals for taking the LSP forward and clarifying strategic partnership arrangements, with the aim of establishing appropriate reporting and communication lines between the range of partnerships that exist in the area. He also pointed out that the District Councils were concerned to ensure that the thematic groups underneath the LSP involved political representatives of the Councils and not just officers.

Patricia Jefford commented on the fact that community representation should be strengthened on the LSP.

It was noted that there would be 2 representatives from the Dartford and Gravesham Community Forum and 3 members from the local authorities if these proposals were taken forward. It was also noted however that it would be necessary to clarify the number of representatives from Kent County Council, as the County had made two nominations to the LSP.

Ian Lindsay indicated that the purpose of the report was to recognise that the main work of the LSP would be carried out through sub-groups and that a representatives from each of the sub-groups would form a decision making body in order to drive through change.

The consensus was that the LSP should concentrate on delivering practical action within the community. It was noted that the number of representatives on the LSP needed to be kept to a manageable size.

Members of the LSP felt that there was a need to more consideration of the report and further dialogue. It was agreed that there would be an additional and separate meeting of interested LSP members to take forward the discussions on this matter:

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- (1) That a further meeting be held in March to enable members to consider the report and discuss a way forward.
- (2) That representatives submit written proposals on their preferred structure for the LSP by 12 March 2004.

6. Dartford and Gravesham Community Forum

Susan Free presented this report and it was noted that at present there was no mechanism for taking forward Community Enterprise Hubs. It was suggested that Community Forums would be a good way of achieving this.

Dev Sharma was concerned that the Voluntary Sector had not been consulted prior to the preparation of this report. Susan Free explained that the CVS and Groundwork who had prepared the report for the previous meeting had been involved in discussions, but apologised for the fact that the REC had not been directly involved.

The report was a starting point for addressing concerns about the lack of commitment to community engagement.

The question of administrative support for the Community Forums was raised and it was noted that the Forum could work in tandem with the CVS.

Christopher Woodley reported that Councillor John Burden, Leader of Gravesham Borough Council, had indicated that he was very keen to develop community engagement.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That agreement be given to the setting up of a Dartford and Gravesham Community Forum on the basis set out in the report submitted to the meeting.
- (2) That the Terms of Reference for the Community Forum be agreed in consultation with the Chairman.

7. Community Safety Presentation

Superintendent Martin Hewitt gave a presentation on this item which reflected on his 11 months in the role of Area Commander. He considered that without doubt North Kent was the most complex policing area within Kent.

There were issues around:

- The area having the largest minority community in the County

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- The border with the Metropolitan area causing problems with managing crime and the recruitment and retention of staff.
- The Dartford Tunnel/Bridge
- Bluewater, and
- Brands Hatch

He asked for clarity on what the LSP was trying to achieve. He felt that there was possibly too many separate groups with their own meetings and that it would be helpful if these could be reduced in number.

He hoped that with the appointment of the new Chief Constable, Michael Fuller, who was taking a particular interest in North West Kent and Medway, it would be possible to tighten up on action plans, which would then be driven through by the Police.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Allen, thanked Superintendent Hewitt for his presentation.

8. Additional Resources

Ian Lindsay reported in connection with this item and circulated information on additional funding which was to be submitted to the Delivery Board the following day. He requested any comments by midday on 18 February 2004.

Ian Lindsay indicated that the timescale this year had prevented LSP involvement, but it was hoped that SEEDA would be able to confirm their 3 year programme in May 2004 after which they would discuss with the LSP the way forward.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the funding proposals being developed for SEEDA investment in North Kent in 2004/05 be noted.
- (2) That comments on the proposals be submitted to the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership in relation to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2004.

9. Priority Communities

Kenneth Lawrie introduced this report and indicated that Dartford Members have some concerns about the areas currently identified as priority communities in the Community Strategy. He would be seeking to review this by using the information and comments from partners, to

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ensure that areas of deprivation at a sub-ward level were also taken into consideration.

Meradin Peachey thought that this was a good idea in principle and requested that Health statistics be included.

Christopher Woodley advised that Gravesham would probably be re-visiting this subject at Cabinet level in due course.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That partners co-operate and assist Dartford Borough Council in its review of area statistics and priority communities.

10. Community Strategy Action Plan

Christopher Woodley introduced the report, which had been tabled at the meeting. The report contained an outline draft of the action plan, which was set out for comment.

Patricia Jefford offered to re-write the section dealing with Health and would comment by 12 March, so that information could be supplied to the additional meeting proposed for March.

Kenneth Lawrie encouraged partners to comment on this document, so that their views could be taken on board.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That partners respond to the outline draft action plan by Friday 12 March 2004.

- (2) That the proposals set out in paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 5.15pm

Councillor Mrs A Allen

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Chairman