

## **DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership Executive Board held on 5 April 2005 at the Civic Centre, Gravesend.

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Allen – Kent County Council (Chairman)  
Councillor J Burden – Gravesham Borough Council  
Mr P Conrad – Groundwork Kent Thames-side  
Mr E Falvey – North West Kent Council for Voluntary Service  
Superintendent M Hewitt – Community Safety Partnerships  
Councillor K Leadbeater – Dartford Borough Council  
Ms M Peachey – Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT  
Mr G Sandher – substituting for Mr D Sharma, North West  
Kent Racial Equality Council  
Councillor M Snelling – Kent County Council  
Ms S Stanwick – HIMP Board

Mrs S Free - K T Delivery Board  
Mr G Harris – Dartford Borough Council  
Mr J Wintour – Gravesham Borough Council  
Mr C Woodley – Gravesham Borough Council  
Dr A Jefford – Kent County Council  
Mrs P Jefford – Gravesham Borough Council  
Ms D Carson – Gravesham Borough Council  
Mr J Edwins – KTDB / PCT  
Ms S Kemmenoe – Land Securities

### **35. OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Patrick Conrad who joined the Executive Board as the representative for Groundwork Kent Thames-side.

### **36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms Fisher (GOSE), Mr Hull (Learning Steering Group), Mr Martin (Environment Group), Mr Sharma (North West Kent Racial Equality Council for whom Mr Sandher substituted), Mr Ghani (Dartford Borough Council) and Ms Morgan (Sevenoaks District Council).

### **37. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA**

The Chairman proposed that Item 4 - Local Employment and Training Initiative – presentation, and Item 5 - Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) for Dartford and Gravesham – be taken as the next items of business.

AGREED:

That Items 4 and 5 be the next items of business.

### **38. ITEM 4: LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INITIATIVE**

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5 April 2005

Mr Simon Brooke, retained by KTDB on employment, training and skills initiatives, gave a presentation. The background to the initiative was the creation of sustainable local jobs, at all skill levels, for local people. Possibly some 50.000 jobs were involved, with modelling suggesting considerable variety and a high demand for skills. The aim was a partnership service, emphasising delivery, with employers and key agencies.

Employ Kent Thameside was a brand name, to give existing providers a single delivery point. It would provide guidance, and job and training brokerage. The task to date had been to build the partnership. A Steering Group would be set up, funding secured, staff and premises procured. By the end of the year it was hoped to run pilot courses for customised training, and set up outreach venues.

Ms Stanwick said that the health service spent heavily on training and needed to be involved in discussions; they were looking for changes to support health in the future. Mr Brooke agreed that there was a clear issue about up-skilling those in employment, although funding tended to target those out of employment.

Councillor Leadbeater said that key partners, such as local authorities and health, should not be lost from sight. The key agents made things happen, by opening doors closed to business. Health, as the largest employer in Dartford, was at the forefront for inward investment. Mr Brooke agreed about their importance.

Ms Peachey asked about local patterns of employment, particularly access to high-level jobs, and about engaging employers. Mr Brooke agreed entry level jobs were not the only issue. Higher education aspirations were important.

Councillor Snelling spoke of concerns lest the number of dwellings proposed for the area created a commuter belt if suitable, quality jobs were not available. Mr Brooke said that this possibility would be mitigated if employers and employees wanted to be in the area.

In reply to Councillor Leadbeater, Mr Brooke said that there would not be a management team at the Delivery Board. A lead manager would be identified from the agencies involved, reporting to the Steering Group on its remit and for guidance. Councillor Leadbeater expressed considerable concern that there was no clear structure of governance. He would like to see a clear line of direction, possibly through one of the partner agencies. Ms Stanwick shared Councillor Leadbeater's concerns.

Mrs Free said that the report had been considered by the Kent Thameside Economic Board and was to go to the Delivery Board on 26 April. The Chairman thanked Mr Brooke for his presentation.

AGREED:

- (1) That the report be noted.

- (2) That the Delivery Board be asked for clarification about accountability.
- (3) That KTDB be advised that the Business Plan was not supported.
- (4) That the comments of the LSP be passed to KTDB.
- (5) That a further report on this subject be considered by the LSP following consideration of the Business Plan by the KTDB.

**39. ITEM 5: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS (LDFs) FOR DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM**

Mr Tony Chadwick and Mr Malcolm Doyle of Gravesham Borough Council and Ms Sian Phillips of Dartford Borough Council gave a presentation. Local Development Frameworks would replace the Local Plan. The LDF was a spatial plan, with community involvement at its heart, and concerned all policies, not only those relating to planners. There would be a three year transition period, with continuous consultation. The timetable for this was extremely tight.

The components of the process were set out, as well as the procedural changes, including the requirement for approval at full council level and the inspector's report being binding. Three ongoing consultations were referred to, particularly the Stakeholder Workshop on 15 April 2005 to which partners were invited.

The LSP needed to consider how they wished to be involved and the implications for partners' plans and strategies. They were also in a position to advise as to who should be consulted.

Ms Peachey was glad to see that Health was seen as partner in the process. The Health Impact Assessment of the South East Plan would be reported in two weeks' time, with a fuller response later, and this might make a contribution, both as to the method of consultation and results.

Mr Sandher thought that the forthcoming Vaisakhi weekend on 16/17 April, with 200 representatives from ethnic minorities attending, and the radio station being run by the Sikh Temple during April, offered opportunities for consultation. He was happy to provide further information for the presenters

The Chairman thanked Mr Chadwick, Mr Doyle and Ms Phillips for their presentation.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the presentation be noted.
- (2) That the three consultations referred to in the report, and the invitations to participate, be noted.

**40. ITEM 2: MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 6 January 2005 were confirmed.

**41. ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 24 – Financial support for the LSP

The Chairman asked that there should be a statement of the budget position at each meeting of the LSP.

Minute 24---Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework

Mrs Free advised that copies of the Summary document were on the table. The full document was available on request and would go to the KTDB on 26 April for formal adoption.

Minute 26 – Update on Subgroups

Mrs Free said that the KTEB had taken on the jobs and business theme but had advised that regeneration and transport was an appropriate theme for the Delivery Board. The appointment of a representative to the LSP had been delegated to the Board's chairman and was under consideration.

Minute 29 – Smoke-free Kent Thameside

The Chairman asked how the smoke-free issue was being taken forward. Ms Peachey said that the Stop Smoking programmes of the NHS were being geared to train people, and partners would shortly be written to. However, greater public involvement was needed. A letter would go to all public sector organisations asking them to review their positions and providing them with the Kent and Medway policy. In reply to Mr Harris, she said that "signing-up" would be preferable as this would involve greater commitment. Mrs Free said that one LSP had a charter on non-smoking and she would obtain details of it.

Minute 30 – LIFT programme

Ms Stanwick said that the note circulated with the agenda was background briefing. She would pursue the role for councils separately.

Mr Wintour said that if councils were involved at Level 1, arrangements would be required so that the councils had no financial liability in the event of the programme's bankruptcy.

Ms Stanwick acknowledged that necessity. There was, however, benefit in involving local authorities. Mr Harris said that he was happy for any meeting to be a joint one with the two authorities.

Minute 31 Consultation documents

Mrs Free said that she would provide copies of the letter on Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, on request. So far, only an acknowledgement had been received.

Minute 33 Any Other Business

Mrs Free said that the final draft of the Evaluation of Community Development Work Study would be published in the middle of the following week. It would provide evidence to enable a range of projects to be taken forward and for the expansion of community development work in accordance with best practices.

AGREED:

- (1) That a statement of the budget position be considered at each meeting of the LSP.
- (2) That the position on the appointment of a representative from the Kent Thameside Economic Board be noted.
- (3) That the taking forward of the smoke-free issue be noted.
- (4) That Mrs Free obtain details of an LSP charter on non-smoking.
- (5) That the background note on LIFT be noted.
- (6) That Ms Peachey meet the Managing Directors of both Councils to discuss the councils' involvement in the LIFT programme.
- (7) That Mrs Free supply the full version of the Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework, on request.
- (8) That Mrs Free provide copies of the letter on Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, on request.
- (9) That the position on the Community Development Work Study be noted.

**42. ITEM 6: DRAFT REVISION TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

The Chairman thought that a more user friendly document was needed for public consumption. Mr Woodley agreed. The current document was intended to provide a reasonable working framework. It included considerable material from the LAA because this was a new initiative but he expected that the final document would have less detail.

Ms Peachey said that inclusion of LAA material was right but that was not an LSP initiative and the document should be LSP-driven. She noted that Appendix A should include a reference to the White Paper "Choosing Health".

Mr Harris asked if the LAA targets, which were Kent-wide, encompassed all the targets of the key agencies. There might be local priorities which should be included but it was not clear how these were to be presented. Mr Woodley replied that he hoped that the thematic groups would identify key aspects for the next three to five years from the LAA; this might also be the opportunity to identify additional targets and activities.

The Chairman said that the document should pick up on the timescales to which she understood the LAAs were subject. She added that partners were concerned about how they would obtain their LAA funding. Mr Woodley said that where relevant this was being passported directly to existing responsible agencies

Dr Jefford spoke of the relationship between county outcomes and those for Kent Thameside. Mrs Jefford and Ms Stanwick said that they understood that local partners could select from LAA targets. Mr Harris thought that it was not so much a matter of choice as of negotiation.

Mr Woodley sought guidance as to how the LSP should proceed. A subgroup might be a possibility. Ms Stanwick suggested that the thematic groups should

come up with options and report back. Mr Harris was concerned lest concentration on thematic groups missed out on other bodies and additions.

Councillor Burden agreed that thematic groups might be approached but said that they were not fully representative. Some groups had excluded their local authority representatives from their considerations. If they were not to be involved, the local authorities would have to work outside those groups. Councillor Leadbeater agreed that the democratically-elected Members felt that they were not being permitted to play a full part in the groups.

Mr Woodley said that consulting the thematic groups was manageable in the timetable proposed in the report. He also suggested that the Chairman should write to the chairs of the groups asking them to confirm how they were involving elected members in their processes.

Mr Woodley explained that an editorial panel would avoid the revision being determined solely by him and Mrs Free. Mr Harris proposed instead that the Leaders of both councils see the draft as part of the revision process. He also thought that thereafter the document should go formally to the principal bodies, including health, to endorse what was to be issued

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the document be produced in a more user-friendly format for the public.
- (3) That the sub groups be asked to advise on themes and that the Chairmen of the sub-groups ensure that three key outcomes for each theme, with associated targets and indicators, be available for inclusion in the document.
- (4) That the document be finalised in consultation with the Leaders of both Councils.
- (5) That, thereafter, the principal bodies, including health, be asked formally to endorse the content.
- (6) That the revised consultation timetable be adopted.
- (7) That the Chairman write to the chairs of each thematic group asking them to confirm how they were involving elected Members in the process.

**43. ITEM 7: KENT LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT UPDATE**

Mr Woodley explained that purpose of the report was to update members on progress in developing the Local Area Agreement.

**AGREED:**

That the report be noted.

**44. ITEM 8: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP – RACE EQUALITY SCHEME 2005-08**

Ms Stanwick said that the report set out the state of play on race relations matters in the health service, in its capacity as employer and service provider

and sought agreement that there were issues which should be explored between partners.

Mr Sandher said that the Racial Equality Council would be undertaking consultations in Dartford and Gravesham in the coming sixteen weeks in which it might be possible for public agencies to become involved. He asked that the consultations be borne in mind when events were being planned.

The Chairman and Councillor Leadbeater congratulated Gravesham Borough Council on achieving Beacon Status in the race relations field. Mr Harris suggested that race relations good practice could be applied to other disadvantaged groups. Mr Woodley said that the aim was to disseminate good practice. Ms Carson was working on this, with the aim of involving health and other interested parties and capitalising on planned events.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That members share their Race Equality Schemes as part of the consultation process and identify areas of common ground.
- (2) That members identify job objectives e.g. sharing of community profiling information and explore Health Action teams taking responsibility for joint activity.
- (3) That members invite Minority Ethnic staff groups to recommend joint objectives.
- (4) That Members take note of the best practice example of Gravesham.

**45. ITEM 9: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY FORUM**

Mr Falvey introduced the report. The proposed post of Community Forum Co-ordinator was key to providing the Forum with the capacity to operate effectively. The LSP's endorsement of the extra financial commitment for set-up and on-costs, as outlined in the report, was required.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the report be welcomed.
- (2) That the action by the Chairman, that the additional financial commitment of £5,960 be funded from the money provided to the LSP by Dartford and Gravesham Councils, be endorsed.

**46. ITEM 10: LSP REGIONAL CONFERENCE, 15 FEBRUARY 2005**

The Chairman said that the conference had been very informative. It had been clear, however, that the Dartford and Gravesham LSP lagged behind other LSPs in the scale of the projects in which it was involved.

Mr Woodley said that the best performing partnerships had resources to co-ordinate activities across the partnerships. The revision to the community strategy hoped to address such co-ordination. Partners needed to consider how to provide the required resources. Recent Government policy documents might result in the issue of fresh guidance after the election, which would be timely for the June deadline for the revision.

Mrs Free said that this was a key time for the LSP and agreed that the revised community strategy provided the opportunity to look at resources, an appropriate action plan, and monitoring and supporting partners. The Community Forum co-ordinator post, the first dedicated coordinator would be a helpful start but further support for the revised community strategy needed to be discussed.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

**47. ITEM 11: URBAN THAMES GATEWAY KENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The report updated members on the funding programme and projects.

Councillor Leadbeater expressed disappointment that there was no representative from Urban Thames Gateway Kent at the meeting to support the detailed report. He was concerned that the governance arrangements for the approval of projects and the disbursement of monies were not clear. He would like the Delivery Board to set out the position.

Councillor Burden shared Councillor Leadbeater's concerns on these points.

AGREED:

- (1) That a letter be sent to the Kent Thameside Delivery Board seeking clarification as to the arrangements for governance of the programme.
- (2) That Urban should be represented at LSP meetings when its reports were on the agenda.

**48. ITEM 12: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other items of business.

**49. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

AGREED:

That the dates for future meetings be noted as:

28 June 2005

27 September 2005

5 January 2006

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.

Councillor A Allen  
Chairman