

**DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

MINUTES of the meeting of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership: Partnership Board held on Wednesday 21 February 2007 at Room B12, Dartford Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1DR

PRESENT:	Councillor J A Kite (Chairman)	- Dartford Borough Council
	Councillor Mrs A D Allen	- Kent County Council
	Mr E Falvey	- North West Kent Council for Voluntary Service
	Det. Supt C Hogben	- Community Safety Partnerships (substituting for Chief Supt Beautridge)
	Mr I Martin	- Environment Group
	Ms V Miller	- West Kent PCT
	Mr D Sharma	- North West Kent Racial Equality Council
	Mr M Snelling	- Kent County Council

ALSO

PRESENT:	Mr J Wintour	- Gravesham Borough Council
	Mr C Woodley	- Gravesham Borough Council
	Mr A Gowan	- Dartford Borough Council
	Ms S Bourke	- Gravesham Borough Council
	Ms J Gill	- Dartford Borough Council
	Mr R Hardy	- Kent County Council
	Ms K Phillips	- Kent County Council
	Mr M Ward	- Kent Thameside
	Mr A Dennington	- Charlton Athletic Football Club
	Ms S Kemmenoe	- Land Securities

24. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Chief Superintendent G Beautridge (Community Safety Group) for whom Detective Superintendent Chris Hogben was substitute, Councillor J Burden (Gravesham Borough Council), Mr P Conrad (Groundwork Kent Thames-side) , Mr V Hull (Learning Steering Group), Mr G Harris (Dartford Borough Council) and Mrs P Jefford (Gravesham Borough Council).

The Chairman welcomed Mr Michael Ward (Kent Thameside), Mr Alan Dennington (CAFC) and Detective Superintendent Chris Hogben to the meeting.

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2006

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 12 December 2006 be confirmed.

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

26. CHANGE IN ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Chairman proposed that the two presentations, at Items 10 and 11, be taken as the next items of business.

AGREED;

That Items 10 and 11 be taken as the next items of business.

27. AN OVERVIEW OF THE KENT THAMESIDE FE AND HE FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT

Mr Michael Ward, Kent Thameside Delivery Board gave a presentation on the study into the need and potential for the development of new higher and further educational provision within Kent Thameside, prompted by the provisions of the Regeneration Framework and Government aspirations and commitments for the Thames Gateway.

On a number of indices of educational attainment, the area lagged regionally and/or nationally. The demands of an increasingly service-based economy – both now and under regeneration – were for higher levels of skills.

The study had concluded that there would be insufficient demand for a higher education facility starting from first principles, and no evidence that funding necessary for such would be forthcoming. The approach should be to attract other institutions to move, or expand, into the area or for the area to “grow” its own, that is, to build on what already existed. The consultants commended the latter as the starting point, citing the success of the North West Kent College and proposing the taking-on of suitable premises. The report also suggested where approaches might be made to institutions outside the area. Mr Ward also referred to the importance of developing links between research facilities and industries in the area, something already recognised by Dartford Borough Council and SEEDA in connection with the Innovation Centre at The Bridge.

The Delivery Board was talking to existing and potential employers about their requirements, to the public sector about its training needs and was exploring what speciality demands might be met. If, at its meeting in July, the Board considered that the commitment of the various partners, stakeholders, institutions and agencies made it appropriate to proceed, a project manager would be appointed.

The Chairman agreed that it would be right to exploit any such opportunity but wondered if the establishment of nearby higher education satellites would have restricted ambitions to grow further. Mr Ward acknowledged the scale of commitments already made in Medway but thought that if the relevant institutions were able to fund a small number of places with shared premises rental risks, this could lead to growth. There could be no question of introducing a traditional institution but there could be a chance with specially selected courses. On community access to any HE facility, this should be built in from the start. He agreed with Mr Christopher Woodley that the

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

proposals were to some extent supported by the Multiversity concept – what was at issue here was the nucleus of a Multiversity. As to Mr Robert Hardy's point about international links, these were yet to be explored but that he would take on board the suggestion about the University of Lille.

The Chairman thanked Mr Ward for his presentation.

28. POSITIVE FUTURES PROGRAMME - HOW DARTFORD'S AND GRAVESHAM'S CONTRIBUTIONS ARE UTILISED AND HOW THE SCHEME OPERATES COUNTY-WIDE

Mr Alan Dennington, Charlton Athletic Football Club, gave a presentation on the Positive Futures programme.

This was a national sports-based social integration programme, begun in 2003, for 10 – 19 year olds, aiming to make opportunities a right rather than a privilege and helping to build safer stronger communities. Driven by the DoH and DCMS and other agencies, it acted in partnership in the area with Health and Drug Action Teams, Police, Borough Councils, the Racial Equality Council and the Youth Offending Service among others. Dartford and Gravesham Councils had contributed directly to its expansion and the scheme had received recognition at the highest levels.

The scheme worked on estates and in schools in the two boroughs, and with asylum seekers, ethnic minorities and the homeless, emphasising not just health and fitness, but also social responsibility. Participants were selected for specific reasons such as poor school attendance, social isolation etc. The Chief Constable of Kent had commended the community working – anti-social behaviour had been cut significantly and there were benefits in self confidence and health. Some two and a half thousand young people, out of a target of three thousand, had been involved in the scheme.

Partners agreed that it was a valuable project. In response to Ms Val Miller, Mr Dennington said that the programme was undergoing evaluation, in addition to the Home Office's tracking of the engagement in, and progress of, those taking part. The Chairman asked about access to the scheme for young people without problems. Mr Dennington acknowledged the difficulty of appearing to reward the badly behaved; the scheme, however, did make some provision for schools as a whole. Mr Woodley referred to a Gravesend and Northfleet Football Club initiative (Playing for Success).. Mr Dennington acknowledged the importance of working with clubs for the benefit of the wider community but this would always turn on coaches having the appropriate proficiencies and experience. The Chairman referred to the numbers of young people attending matches at Dartford Football Club's new home and the potential of football to be an agent of change. He wondered whether including sports other than football and cultural activities would diminish the effectiveness of the scheme. Mr Dennington said that it was matter of activities which attracted the majority of people. The scheme was designed to be needs driven but it would not be diluted.

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

The Chairman thanked Mr Dennington for his presentation.

29. MATTERS ARISING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: POLICY CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Mr Woodley introduced the Policy Co-ordinator's report which updated the Partnership Board on actions arising from the last Public Service Board meeting. In particular, having recently attended a meeting of the Obesity Strategy Working Group, he was waiting to hear further from it but had some concerns about progress.

The Chairman asked what action plans had been developed. Ms Miller said that the group had not yet reached the stage of a detailed action plan. A number of key organisations were already delivering initiatives which contributed to the reduction of child obesity, such as Don't Sit Get Fit (at risk because of lack of funding) and the Healthy Schools project. However, the group needed to draw them all into a central plan, with well developed strategies and well delivered, joined-up, programmes, rather "quick fix" solutions. That said, the local press had recently given considerable coverage to dieticians' work on obesity and she hoped for further publicity at next month's obesity conference. The group would also be recruiting to the Stepometer Challenge, a nationally funded campaign likely to attract widespread notice.

The Chairman acknowledged the importance of well developed plans but regretted that although health professionals were working on what was a major issue, no action plans had yet been devised to meet the LSP's particular targets. The starting point needed to be the children themselves and he believed that short term publicity exercises were by no means unproductive.

AGREED;
That the report be noted.

30. UPDATED COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2007-2008

Adrian Gowan introduced the report, which set out a draft update to the existing Community Strategy, by drawing out its aims and targets, particularly SMART targets, but without recasting the Strategy's narrative. He hoped that it could be used as a basis for the management training being proposed for the Public Service Board at Agenda Item 5, as well as for the Sustainable Communities Strategy which would underpin the new Local Area Agreement (LAA) in 2008. The aim would be to publish the document within the next two to three months.

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

Mr Woodley suggested that an update on the twenty six items from the existing Strategy should be provided at the next meeting of the Partnership Board.

AGREED:

That the Community Strategy Update 2007-2008 at Appendix A be approved for publication;

That the publication costs be met from budgets already agreed by members;

That delegated authority be given to the Managing Directors to approve any minor amendments which might be required, prior to publication;

That it form the basis of the performance management arrangements dealt with at item 5 on the agenda;

That a position report on the twenty six items from the existing Strategy be presented to the next meeting of the Partnership Board.

31. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Mr Gowan introduced the report which sought agreement to a specification for inviting offers from suitably qualified organisations to provide a presentation on strategic performance management to members of the Public Service Board. This was to meet the need, identified by the PSB, for a framework to define governance for the LSP and to understand partners' roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, to enable the delivery of the LSP's vision for the area. Such a framework would ensure that partners, and residents, understood the LSP's priorities and their outcomes. The aim would be to seek bids now, with training on a date after May to be agreed with partners.

Mr Hardy commended the approach but pointed to the need for having agreed data from the start so that there was a common point of view on issues and details. Mr Gowan agreed that this was important. Work was already in hand with KCC on data to which everyone could sign up.

AGREED:

That the specification attached at Appendix A be used to invite offers, from suitably qualified organisations, to provide a presentation on strategic performance management for members of the Public Service Board;

That Dartford Borough Council be the lead partner managing the contractual arrangements; and

That funding for the commission be met from budgets already approved by members.

32. DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM YOUTH STRATEGY

Ms Josie Gill, Policy Officer, Dartford Borough Council, introduced the report which mapped the work being done for youth across the area by both statutory and voluntary agencies. It also identified gaps in such provision.

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

Mr Hardy commended the summary but suggested that there were two significant omissions, namely mental health which was a major issue despite data being difficult to access, and the world of work into which a significant number of young people went directly from school, either as employees or setting up on their own.

Mr Woodley welcomed the document, particularly its role in preparation for the next LAA. He suggested that the Action Plan be tightened up, to identify three or four issues for maximum impact.

The Chairman asked if the document were robust enough for any changes in structure which might result from the Kent Commitment (Item 9 on the agenda), as districts rather than County might be deemed to be a more effective vehicle to deliver on youth. The document should focus on the customer and output, not on the organisation delivering it.

Ms Gill noted that the strategy was a working document to which information would be added as it was obtained. The next stage was for the document to be submitted to both Cabinets, before implementing the Action Plan.

AGREED;

That the comments made on the draft by the Partnership Board be noted.

33. PROGRESS REPORT ON DEVELOPING A LOCAL COMPACT

Mr Eddie Falvey explained that the report contained the draft of the Compact which had been amended to take account of comments made by the Public Service Board. The draft had now gone to the community and voluntary sector for consideration and he hoped that it would be adopted at the Community Assembly in March.

The Chairman said that the revised document had advanced matters. He thought that it was at a stage when Cabinets might be asked to agree to it although, as it was based on a national document, it might need adjustments to reflect the situation locally. Mr Falvey said that he would be happy to take any such amendments on board.

Mr Dev Sharma thought that the document was weighted in favour of the statutory sector. It needed to be strengthened as to the voluntary sector, and the commitments and priorities sharpened generally. Mr Falvey noted that it was a living document, providing a starting point and recognition for the community and voluntary sectors.

Mr Woodley said that the next stage was for Mr Falvey to discuss the draft with the two Borough Councils, with a view to their Cabinets signing up to the document. Any necessary refinements could take place at this stage.

AGREED:

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

That the second draft of the Local Compact, attached at Appendix A, and its progress be noted;

That comments on the draft by the Partnership Board be noted;

That the Partnership Board note that the document will be presented to Voluntary and Community Sector at the Community Assembly on Thursday 29 March 2007.

34. BRIEF UPDATE ON THE DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM CDRP

Mr Jim Wintour introduced the report and explained that the Dartford and Gravesham CDRP was the first such merger in the South East. The Public Service Unit at Gravesham would be officially opened on 22 March. The crime reduction figures across North Kent were extremely encouraging.

Detective Superintendent Chris Hogben confirmed an improvement of just over 10 per cent in crime reduction as a whole, which had put policing in North Kent at the head of the county for the current year. In particular, he thought that in another six months Dartford would not be seen to be experiencing the problems it was currently perceived to have.

The Chairman agreed with Detective Superintendent Hogben about the very positive nature of the partnership. Dialogue and communication were having a real effect. He was delighted by the crime reduction figures and expressed his thanks to the CDRP.

AGREED:

That the current information regarding the CDRP be noted.

35. THE KENT COMMITMENT

The Chairman introduced the report which outlined how Kent County Council and the twelve district councils could work together to give the people of Kent the best local government in the UK. The document had been compiled by the Leaders of Kent Councils, following the publication of the White Paper on local government re-organisation. Kent Leaders had not been attracted to possible pathfinder or unitary status. They believed instead that any structural ambitions should be subordinate to improvement in the services desired by Kent residents. The Kent Commitment therefore concentrated on the sharing of the obligation to deliver services and on the delivery of these at whatever level was most effective.

AGREED:

That the report be noted

36. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007

37. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Dates of future meetings would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting closed at 4.55 pm

Councillor J A Kite
CHAIRMAN