

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 20 June 2007 at Council Chamber, Gravesham Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Councillor J Kite (Chairman)	– Dartford Borough Council
Councillor Mrs A Allen	– Kent County Council
Chief Inspector D Cooper	– Community Safety Partnerships (substituting for Chief Supt G Beautridge)
Mr E Falvey	– North West Kent Council for Voluntary Service
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
Councillor D Turner	– Gravesham Borough Council

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr J Wintour	- Gravesham Borough Council
Mr G Harris	- Dartford Borough Council
Mr C Woodley	- Gravesham Borough Council
Mr A Gowan	- Dartford Borough Council
Mrs P Jefford	- Gravesham Borough Council
Ms S Bourke	- Gravesham Borough Council
Ms J Gill	- Dartford Borough Council
Mr J Pexton	- Kent Thameside Delivery Board
Mr J Britt	- Gravesham Borough Council
Ms J Webb	- Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr V Hull, Learning Steering Group, Ms K Phillips, KCC, and Ms K Paterson and Ms M Bigden, both of Sevenoaks District Council. An apology for lateness had been received from Mr R Hardy, KCC.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Ms J Webb (Head of Dietetics and Nutrition, Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust), Mr J Britt (Public Health Manager, Gravesham Borough Council), Mr J Pexton (Urban Programme Manager, Kent Thameside Delivery Board) and Chief Inspector D Cooper (North Kent Police) representing Chief Superintendent Beautridge.

The Chairman said that Mr E Falvey was shortly to take up a post at Age Concern at Bexley and thanked him for his work at the NW Kent Council for Voluntary Service. Mr Falvey said that he believed that the Council was now providing appropriate representation for the community and voluntary sectors.

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2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 21 FEBRUARY 2007

AGREED;

That the minutes of the meeting of 21 February 2007 be confirmed.

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

Updated Community Strategy Mr J Wintour said that the update on the twenty six items from the existing Strategy was in hand and, he hoped, would be available for the next meeting. Mr C Woodley said that the Community Strategy Update 2007/2008 was near completion and should be published, in a user friendly form, by the time of the next meeting. Targets to underpin it had been identified and would be placed on the Dartford Borough Council performance management system, enabling reporting on progress.

Dartford and Gravesham CDRP The Chairman said that a cut of 40 per cent in CDRP funding had been announced. While he was pleased that the police were covering that year's shortfall, it was extremely disappointing that, having encouraged CDRPs as the way forward against crime, the Government was effectively disinvesting the initiative with, he feared, the inevitable consequences. A meeting of the Kent and Medway Leaders' and Chief Executives' Forum the previous evening had agreed on a robust response, direct to the Government, to what they considered to be a retrograde step.

Policy Co-ordinator's report Mr Woodley introduced the report and agreed that the list of items for a Forward Plan for the LSP should include the possible impact of new LAAs on performance management frameworks.

AGREED:

That the report be noted;

That a representative of IDeA attend a meeting of the PSB as an observer;

That the list of matters to pursue in the coming year include the possible impact of new LAAs on performance management frameworks.

4. OBESITY PROJECTS IN DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM

Mr J Britt, Public Health Manager, Gravesham Borough Council, and Ms J Webb, Head of Dietetics and Nutrition, Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust, gave a presentation on addressing obesity across Dartford and Gravesham.

National statistics showed an upward trend in obesity from an early age - in 2005/2006, 12 to 13 per cent of 4 year olds were overweight, and 9-10 per cent were obese. With 10 -11 year olds, the figures were 14% and 19% respectively. Figures, in early 2007, from the "Don't Sit - Get Fit" programme, of 1200 children from local schools in both deprived and non deprived areas, showed obesity as above the national rate for 9-10 year olds. (All statistics showed obesity to be a greater problem among boys.) The reasons for the trend were multiple, such as changing patterns in play and parental working, and different diet and catering arrangements emanating from dysfunctional work/ life balance. A 2006 update to the Kent Lifestyle survey had put the local adult population in the bottom quartile for activity.

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Obesity work with children had been based on initiatives, already shown to work, and have sustainable outcomes, with young people and using a whole family approach – for example, innovative food and exercise initiatives in schools with links to the national curriculum, such as healthy lunch box work with pupils, teachers and parents, taster sessions, a cooking calendar exercise, forthcoming health days in junior schools in Gravesham. Children influenced family practice and workshops with teachers also brought about positive outcomes. For adults, the aim was to increase the opportunities and choices for activity generally, to provide initiatives for the non-economically active, who were most at risk, and to involve adults generally in activities for children. Initiatives included community cooking programmes and marketing exercises.

The Primary Care Trust and the Acute Care Trust, and health teams in the locality, were actively developing obesity strategies and moving forward in action planning, with targets and review dates. Addressing local issues was key.

The Chairman asked how the LSP, as a practical partnership, could assist. Mrs P Jefford thought that leading by example, such as with the banning of smoking in partnership buildings, was very important. Another opportunity would come with the guidelines being drawn up for corporate hospitality, and local authorities could also do much to encourage greater and better use of assets such as parks and sports facilities.

Mr Woodley asked whether Choosing Health finance could be used to accelerate work on obesity. Ms V Miller said that £1.9 million was likely to be available for West Kent and, after top-slicing to fund key areas such as sexual health, there would be resources to be applied at local discretion for identified key work. Last year, “Don’t Sit - Get Fit” had been a priority and deserved to continue as such. It was hoped to take this major project forward. Partners asked about the possibility of developing “Don’t Sit – Get Fit”, with its user-driven ethos of fitness and health, further by branding related activities as part of the scheme.

The Chairman thanked Mr Britt and Ms Webb for their presentation. He was pleased to see the matter progressing and hoped that funding would be found for core schemes

AGREED:

That the presentation be noted.

5. URBAN PROJECTS SUSTAINABILITY

Mr J Pexton, Urban Programme Manager, introduced the report which the LSP had requested because of concerns about the extent to which projects would be sustainable beyond the end of the programme in 2008. The report listed the current projects and commented on their sustainability.

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Mr Pexton said that, by the end of its eight year existence, the scheme would have provided £8 million from the European Regeneration Development Fund and attracted match funding of about £12 million. All projects approved for funding had to demonstrate sustainability. However, sustainability was not merely a question of whether a project could remain operational, but also a matter of the nature of its legacy to those who had been affected by it.

The Chairman wondered whether the £1.3 million of funding remaining to be disbursed would not be better spent on existing projects, rather than applied to new ones. Mr Pexton said that there was limited flexibility in the programme. The last opportunity for virement had passed. The projects earmarked for funding were worthwhile. The entire Urban programme would be evaluated externally on its completion and it was hoped that the information from that would act as leverage to unlock other funding, as well as providing examples of good practice.

The Chairman concluded that it was necessary to concentrate on the positives of the scheme. However, the disadvantages of providing short-term support for projects, which was not replaced, could not be ignored.

Mr Pexton was thanked for his report.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

6. LOCAL COMPACT / COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY

Mr E Falvey, NW Kent Council for Voluntary Service, introduced the report which asked the Board to endorse the local COMPACT, and also reported on the Community Assembly in March. The Assembly had endorsed fully the document, which had been circulated previously to some 350 organisations. Sixteen representatives had been duly elected and, while the two chosen to represent the voluntary and community sector on the LSP, Patrick Conrad and himself, would no longer be there to do so, their respective organisations would continue to provide the representation.

The Chairman said that, if the Partnership Board agreed the COMPACT in principle, it should be referred without delay to the Cabinets of both Borough Councils as it was important to get it in place. Subject to the Councils' detailed considerations, the document would be returned to the Partnership Board for endorsement in full, to be followed by its official launch. He thanked Mr Falvey for his work on the document.

AGREED:

That the COMPACT be endorsed in principle, for onward referral to the Cabinets of Dartford Borough Council and Gravesham Borough Council.

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7. "GO RIDE" PROJECT - TOUR DE FRANCE

Mr Woodley introduced the report describing a project to deliver cycling activities, to coincide with the Tour de France's passage through North West Kent, which had arisen from the LSP's work to develop initiatives around the health agenda. Schools in both boroughs would be involved. He commended the project to the Board.

AGREED:

That the report be noted and that the project be endorsed.

8. LGC CONFERENCE - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS

Ms S Bourke, LSP administrator, introduced the report. Given the LSP's determination to formulate a performance management framework, it had been appropriate to attend the conference to obtain practical information as to how other partnerships were faring. She noted that even those LSPs with a robust management performance framework would have to adapt their approach to respond to the new LAAs and their indicators.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the membership vacancies listed on the cover of the agenda, namely the HIMP Board and the Kent Thameside Economic Board (KTEB). He suggested that the Primary Care Trust membership covered health representation. He wondered whether the KTEB vacancy would perhaps be allocated more appropriately to a representative of the private sector. Councillor Snelling commented that any such representative would wish assurance that a meaningful role existed for the sector within the Partnership.

AGREED:

That the Primary Care Trust should represent health on the Partnership Board;

That proposals for the other vacancy be drawn up and circulated to partners for comment.

Mr D Sharma referred to a KCC review of funding for the voluntary sector on which limited consultation was taking place, and wondered whether the LSP should draw up a response on behalf of Dartford and Gravesham. Other partners were unaware of this review. The Chairman said that he would wish to retain a Borough Council response to such matters but that this would not preclude a Partnership response. Mr Sharma was asked to forward the paperwork to both Mr Harris and Mr Wintour for consideration.

In response to Councillor Turner, Chief Inspector Cooper said that the police role on the LSP was to assist and inform on strategic issues, as well as involvement in specific initiatives. He hoped that issues might be referred for discussion from the CDRP. Mr Martin explained that Groundwork's

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involvement as a representative of the Community Assembly came from its having community development workers in the field.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Partnership Board would be on Tuesday 23 October 2007, at Dartford Civic Centre. The next meeting of the Public Service Board would be on Thursday 19 July, also at Dartford.

The meeting closed at 4.45 pm

Councillor J A Kite
CHAIRMAN