

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

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership: Partnership Board held on Tuesday 23 October 2007 at Council Chamber, Dartford Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1DR

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Snelling – Kent County Council  
(Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs A D Allen - Kent County Council  
Councillor J A Kite – Dartford Borough Council  
Ms C Lawler – Learning Steering Group  
(substituting for Mr V Hull)  
Mr I Martin – Environment Group  
Ms J Mookherjee – West Kent Primary Care Trust  
Mr D Sharma – North West Kent Racial Equality  
Council

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr G Harris – Dartford Borough Council  
Mr A Gowan – Dartford Borough Council  
Mr C Woodley – Gravesham Borough Council  
Mr W Farmer – Kent County Council  
Mr J Britt – Gravesham Borough Council  
Ms S Higgins – Kent Teenage Pregnancy  
Partnership

**11. APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed everyone and, in particular, Ms J Mookherjee (West Kent Primary Care Trust), Ms C Lawler (Greater Kent Authority College, substituting for Mr V Hull), Mr J Britt, (Gravesham Borough Council) and Ms S Higgins (Kent Teenage Pregnancy Partnership.)

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor D Turner, (Gravesham Borough Council), Mr V Hull, (Learning Steering Group for whom Ms Lawler was substitute), Chief Superintendent Beautridge (Dartford and Gravesham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership), Mr K Wiles North West Kent Council for Voluntary Service) and Mr A Kher (Government Office of the South East – GOSE would now be attending Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) meetings only at county level). An apology for lateness was received from Councillor J Kite. Apologies were also received from Ms J Thomas (WKPCT) Mr Wintour and Mrs P Jefford (Gravesham Borough Council) and Ms S Bourke (LSP administrator).

The Chairman noted that Mr Wintour was leaving Gravesham Borough Council to take up an appointment at Greenwich Borough Council. He thanked him for his work for the Partnership and wished him well.

**12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 20 JUNE 2007**

AGREED;

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That the minutes of the meeting of 20 June 2007 be confirmed.

**13. MATTERS ARISING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Choosing Health finance* Ms Mookherjee said that it had been possible to give the two boroughs most of the agreed funding allocation. The ethnic minorities post, however, was not yet operational.

*Compact* Mr A Gowan and Mr C Woodley undertook to ascertain the timetable for taking the Compact to the Councils' Cabinets.

*Partnership Board vacancies* An approach would be made to a potential private sector candidate, for the Kent Thameside Economic Board vacancy.

*KCC review of voluntary sector funding* Mr D Sharma would provide the paperwork as requested.

There were no announcements.

**14. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2007-08**

The Chairmanship of the LSP rotated annually, between Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council and the County Council. In 2008/2009, it devolved to Kent County Council and Councillor M Snelling had assumed the chair.

AGREED:

That the appointment of Councillor Snelling as the Chairman of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership for 2007 / 2008 be noted.

**15. PRESENTATION: TEENAGE PREGNANCY**

Mr J Britt, Public Health Manager, Chair of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Implementation Group, and Ms S Higgins, Young Parents Manager, Kent Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, gave a presentation on teenage pregnancy.

Teenage pregnancy was a major issue for the country and for Kent in particular where the rates were very high. With 40 per cent of teenage mothers leaving school without qualifications, the implications for their future employment and economic status were serious. By the age of 30, they continued to be more likely than their peers to be in the poverty trap, with attendant problems such as poor housing and ill health, and a consequent impact on the children. In addition, the infant mortality rate for the teenage group was disproportionately high.

The target was to reduce the under-18 pregnancy rate by half and to increase the proportion of those back in work / training by 60 per cent, by 2010. There had been a 9.7 per cent decrease in teenage pregnancy rates in Kent, but

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with wide variation between districts. Dartford and Gravesham suffered a "London effect" but much had been done in the last 18 months.

In addition to key players targeting groups at risk in a multi-faceted approach, there was a role for LSPs who, by signing up to the implementation of the strategy and developing close relationships with their Local Implementation Group (LIG), could influence local service delivery plans and provide other support. The LIG comprised key players who could achieve positive outcomes in their areas of influence. Current local activities included initiatives in schools, Council summer programmes, sessions for those leaving care, programmes for parents of teenagers, a project with young fathers and work with ethnic groups (where there could be particular sensitivities).

In response to the Chairman, Mr Britt said that it was important for the LSP to be aware of the issue and for Partners to take ownership of it by giving positive thought as to what specific help and support they could provide within their own spheres of work and influence. He agreed with Councillor A Allen that drugs and alcohol were major factors in the issue and also that the proximity of the area to London had an impact through Dartford's night time economy. Asylum seekers and ethnic issues did not, however, figure significantly; any problems tended to involve young men and differences in culture. Ms Higgins noted that cultural perceptions operated also at local levels, where traditions of not using childcare and not continuing education/training were being addressed by the Pinnacle Project.

Ms Mookherjee said that, in some cases, employment opportunities would be a better solution than education. She believed that the LSP could formulate specific proposals on the economic dimensions of the issue and also, through its own priorities, pick up on mental health aspects and the provision of youth facilities.

Councillor J Kite referred to the robust prevention agenda of previous years. If teenagers were better versed in the economic implications and loss of freedoms resulting from pregnancy, they might be less likely to regard a child as a validation or a commodity. A hard-hitting message was desirable. Mr Britt agreed but noted that many schools were reluctant to promote such a message lest this be construed as admitting to a problem. As autonomous bodies, they could not be required to take a particular stance.

The Chairman noted that the topic was one to which the LSP needed to return, and thanked Mr Britt and Ms Higgins for their presentation.

AGREED:

That the presentation be noted;

That the Partnership Board return to the topic at a future date.

**16. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2 AND THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

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Mr Gowan introduced the report. A new Kent Local Area Agreement (LAA) was being developed. Appendix A set out a list of possible outcomes, identified by the Kent Partnership from work across the county, and linked to the recently published 198 national indicators, with the aim of producing the 35 indicators required for the Agreement. There would be further consultation as the process was refined and the LAA indicators identified.

There needed to be transparency in the methodology and processes adopted for the distribution of funds from the LAA funding pool. It was noted that transitional arrangements had been agreed for Safer and Stronger Communities funding, which ensured that funding levels to Districts would not be changed during the first year of operation of the LAA.

Ms Mookherjee noted that, in a number of areas, Dartford and Gravesham had considerable inequalities in relation to the rest of Kent, and asked how these would be accommodated. Mr Gowan said that there was pressure for information to be disaggregated to local levels, so that local needs could be understood and targeted.

**AGREED:**

That the Board note the progress with the development of the new Local Area Agreement;

That, as outlined in paragraph 2.9 of the report, an initial draft structure for the new Sustainable Community Strategy be put to the Partnership.

**17. REGENERATION PLANNING AND HEALTH**

Ms Mookherjee explained that she had been tasked with looking at partnership arrangements. On health/regeneration, her concern was for a consistent process and positive engagement, so that all needs as to consultation and the management of risk were met. There was considerable risk management of existing arrangements, but she was concerned about engagement for the future and was suggesting that a Rapid Health Impact Assessment model might be appropriate.

Mr G Harris noted that part of the problem was that the PCT altered its position, sometimes as a result of national initiatives. This made it difficult to have targets. As planning authorities, both Councils needed clarity as to the direction in which the PCT was moving. Ms Mookherjee said the point was appreciated and that matters would be addressed because risk had to be managed.

Councillor Kite, while welcoming her reassurances, noted that the regeneration agenda was largely complete and expressed concern about the PCT's record on delivery. He suggested that the Trust should be actively participating in the LSP agenda on issues such as obesity and teenage pregnancy and cited as an example the opportunity for PCT initiatives presented by the large numbers of young people attending the football stadium in Dartford each weekend.

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The Chairman referred to SEEDA's interest in the debate on GP surgery size and suggested that this would be a useful topic for the LSP to discuss with the PCT. Ms Mookherjee said that she would raise the possibility with the Trust's Civic Engagement Team and report back. Mr Harris commented that the issue was to work now on health provision for 10 year's time. Ms Mookherjee replied that the joint strategic needs assessment process was ongoing and should provide indications of commitment. In response to Mr Harris' query about GP representation on the LSP, she commented that the Trust managed GPs' contracts. The Trust also commissioned hospitals but the Partnership might wish to consider the position of foundation hospitals in relation to the LSP.

AGREED

That the discussion be noted

**18. CONNECT 2 PROJECT - DARTFORD RIVERSIDE**

Mr Gowan introduced the report, the purpose of which was to engage the LSP's support for the Dartford Riverside proposal, part of Connect 2, a UK wide project aiming to improve local travel by creating new walking and cycling routes. Connect 2 would compete for a single grant of up to £50 million, in the final to be decided by television vote on 8/9 December 2007.

Mr Harris noted that the overall proposal supported the aims of the LSP in respect of active lives, and hoped that the Partnership could support it.

A handout with phone and website details was available after the meeting, and Ms Mookherjee asked that information about the project and vote be emailed out so that this could be cascaded to staff.

AGREED:

That the LSP endorse the Connect 2 project;

That Partners' support in the television vote in December 2007 be encouraged;

That details of the proposal and the vote be emailed to Partners for dissemination.

**19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman noted that Ms Mookherjee would be returning shortly to her former post. He expressed the Board's appreciation of her work for the Partnership.

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Partnership Board would be on Tuesday 19 February 2008, at 3pm, at Gravesham Civic Centre.

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The meeting closed at 4.47 pm

Mr M Snelling  
CHAIRMAN