

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

MINUTES of the meeting of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership - Partnership Board, held on Thursday 29 June 2006 in the Council Chamber, Dartford Civic Centre.

PRESENT:

Councillor J Burden (Chairman)	–	Gravesham Borough Council
Councillor Mrs A Allen	–	Kent County Council
Mr P Conrad	–	Groundwork Kent Thames-side
Mr E Falvey	–	North West Kent Council for Voluntary Service
Chief Superintendent G Beautridge	–	Community Safety Partnerships
Councillor J Kite	–	Dartford Borough Council
Ms C Cotter (in place of Ms M Peachey)	–	Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT
Mr D Sharma	–	North West Kent Racial Equality Council
Councillor M Snelling	–	Kent County Council

ALSO

PRESENT:

Mr G Harris	–	Dartford Borough Council
Mr J Wintour	–	Gravesham Borough Council
Mr C Woodley	–	Gravesham Borough Council
Mr A Gowan	–	Dartford Borough Council
Ms J Gill	–	Dartford Borough Council
Mr R Spoerry	–	Kent County Council
Mr D McKenzie	–	Sevenoaks District Council

1. ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Meradin Peachey (DGSPCT) for whom Ms Clair Cotter was substitute, Mr A Kher (GOSE), Mr M Ward (KTDB), Ms K Phillips (KCC) and Ms N Luscombe(KCC).

2. MR DEV SHARMA

The Chairman congratulated Mr Dev Sharma, on behalf of the Partnership Board, on his appointment as MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

3. ITEM 2 - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JANUARY 2006

The minutes of the meeting of 5 January 2006 were confirmed.

4. ITEM 3 - MATTERS ARISING

7. Urban Thames Gateway Programme

Councillor Snelling said that the KCC Cabinet was studying what official support be might offered to Local Strategic Partnerships. The position should be clear by the next meeting of the Partnership Board.

8. The Equalities Bill and its implications

Mr Sharma thanked the Partnership Board for its support on the matter. Assurances of funding until 2009 had been obtained from the Government.

12. Culture in the Thames Gateway

Mr Wintour noted that Dartford and Gravesham were not accessing their share of monies available for the arts. The Partnership Board agreed that Dartford and Gravesham should make a joint bid, under the aegis of the LSP, for an officer post, to assist the voluntary and other sectors with bids for available grants.

AGREED:

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) That Dartford and Gravesham make a joint bid, under the aegis of the LSP, for an officer post, to assist the voluntary and other sectors with bids for available grants.

5. ITEM 4 - MINUTES OF PSB MEETINGS, 24.01.06 AND 31.05.06

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Public Service Board of the Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership, held on 24 January 2006 and 31 May 2006, be noted.

6. ITEM 5 - THE KENT AGREEMENT: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Mr Richard Spoerry, Kent Agreement Manager, Kent Partnership, gave a presentation on the first monitoring report on the Kent Agreement. The Agreement was based on the Kent Community Strategy, and local community strategies and safety plans among others, with a view to joint working to improve the quality of life for Kent residents on a variety of fronts. It was a measure of the high level of success achieved that the year's work had attracted £21.5 million (a 100% achievement under PSA1 would have brought £26 million). The Agreement aimed for the highest possible outcomes, taking into account the aims and aspirations of KCC and its partners, with each outcome having a dedicated Lead Officer and an outcome plan. Partnership teams were being developed to provide more support for the necessarily fragmented voluntary and community sector. The outcomes fed into the four blocks on which the Kent Agreement was based – children and young people, safer and stronger communities, healthier communities and older people, and economic development.

Mr Spoerry noted that the freedoms and flexibilities - now referred to as "enabling measures" - which were a major component of the Government's proposals for LAAs, were proving to be problematical as they could require primary legislation in some matters. The Government was working on ways to free up the delivery of outcomes.

LAAs were flagships of partnership ambitions, attracting rewards under PSA indicators. Rewards would be allocated to the various blocks of the Kent Agreement. A 100 per cent performance achievement could result, for example, in each LSP receiving around £500,000, with £100,000 going to local CDRPs. The emphasis would be on allocating money locally, to be spent locally.

In relation to the CPA framework and Kent Agreement achievements, he noted that the aim was to keep performance management and bureaucracy to the minimum. The full text and data from reports made to the KCC Performance Manager were contained in the monitoring report which was publicly available.

Mr Spoerry reviewed the eighteen outcomes graded red / amber / green, indicating their current status. That the majority were amber was to be expected. The targets showing red (indicating concern) had been chosen deliberately, as needing priority attention, but were now beginning to turn the corner. In twelve months' time, he expected more outcomes to be marked as green, indicating being on target.

Mr Spoerry acknowledged tensions between county-wide indicators and local delivery ambitions. It would be necessary to get the right mix between front-line delivery and the need to keep the bigger picture in sight. Communication and publicity county-wide, to publicise success and developments, would be important. He concluded his presentation by emphasising the importance of partnership. He suggested that LSPs should be considering their role vis a vis the Kent Partnership and, in particular, what information they should be collecting and what performances they should be monitoring. He noted that LSPs were entitled to have a KCC representative.

The Chairman commented that the LSP looked forward to having Kent Officers on its executive, the Public Service Board. He noted that the LSP had no access to the Public Service Board at Kent level.

Mr Harris said that, given that the LSP was meant to direct and influence resources, there was no question of its not being engaged in the Kent Agreement. With such high level targets, however, it was difficult to gauge success locally. As to what information was needed, the LSP should have relevant local information as a matter of course, as Kent-wide targets did not inform the position at local level. Mr Spoerry suggested contacting Trevor Minter at KCC to discuss the means of getting the necessary information to the LSP.

The Chairman thanked Mr Spoerry for his presentation. Mr Spoerry said that he could be contacted for further information.

AGREED:

That the presentation be noted.

7. CHANGE IN ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Chairman proposed that Item 9 – Review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Responding to the Report - be taken as the next item of business as Chief Superintendent Beautridge had to leave the meeting early.

AGREED:

That Item 9 – Review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Responding to the Report - be taken as the next item of business.

8. ITEM 9 - REVIEW OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998: RESPONDING TO THE REPORT

Mr Gowan introduced the report. The review of partnership provisions arose from the Police Reform White Paper of 2004. The findings had been reported in January 2006, taken forward by the Police and Justice Bill, and consultation was now proceeding by invitation-only briefings. However, it was understood that representations were also permitted.

Because of concerns about disconnection between various agencies, the Government proposed to move the strategic function of CDRPs to county level, with funding coming more from GOSE and being allocated, via LAAs, at county level. Operational matters would sit at local level. The Government was also encouraging mergers of CDRPs. Government discussion papers, however, had acknowledged that that district CDRPs did have a strategic role but its solution – of two bodies with strategic functions - had the potential for confusion and disagreement. In Kent, there was already an effective working relationship to deal with disparate county-wide and local priorities and the Government's proposals involved fundamental change to these operations. If funding were to come via LAAs, long-term programmes and the concomitant staffing levels, based on current funding arrangements, could be affected.

The Chairman believed that there was a strategic function for CDRPs at local level, because of specialised local knowledge, which should not be ceded to the county.

Chief Superintendent Beautridge referred to a recent inspection by the Police Standards Unit, de-briefing from which had produced recommendations consistent in the main with those of the Government review, including the proposal that the two district CDRPs should become one, with support being provided by two Public Safety Units at Dartford and Gravesham. His personal view was that the CDRP should be a strategic body, with PSUs deciding on what was delivered locally.

Mr Wintour noted that there was resistance among his colleagues on the Community Safety Sub-Group to more targets being imposed on districts through the county being given a strategic role.

Councillor Kite expressed considerable concern about any possibility of two strategic tiers in CDRPs, as this could lead to conflicts. He noted that a single CDRP was favoured at borough level. What both Dartford and Gravesham

wanted, however, was a service which delivered, bringing together all the elements which were currently operating successfully. He believed that the review offered a good opportunity for the LSP to take the initiative and make proposals to permit delivery at district level, free of others' targets.

Councillor Snelling said that the allocation of strategic and operational functions, and the possibility of their being two bodies with strategic functions, was the key issue. While he sympathised with concerns about the proposal that responsibility for strategy rest with the county, the county's interest could not, however, be ignored. He was anxious to have the county's response to the proposals and to the report being considered.

The Chairman said that, while both boroughs would make their individual positions on the proposals known to Government, the LSP also needed to respond as it clearly had a role in the arrangements which the Home Office needed to take into account. He proposed that a response from the LSP to the Home Office should be compiled and circulated to partners.

AGREED:

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That the LSP send a response to the Home Office based upon the issues set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.9 of the report.

9. ITEM 6 - LAA PUMP-PRIMING PROJECTS

Mr Gowan introduced the report which described the LSP's bid for Pump Priming Grant for funding Deep Cleans across Dartford and Gravesham – five in each borough. The outcome of the bid would be known by 27 July. In reply to Councillor Snelling's query as to the basis on which areas would be chosen for Deep Cleans, it was noted that selection would be for each borough to decide. Councillor Kite commented that, in Dartford, choice was not based purely on need but also on the potential for wider benefit to the area, through active involvement of the community – particularly young people – in the work and by tapping into the public's growing environmental awareness.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

10. ITEM 7 - PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: FEEDBACK FROM PSB AWAYDAYS

The report set out the work undertaken at the two "Awaydays" held by the Public Service Board as part of the Partnership Development Programme.

AGREED:

That the outcomes from the first phase of the development programme be noted.

11. ITEM 8 - DRAFT INTERIM PROJECTS

The report set out a number of proposals for projects to form the Community Strategy Action Plan for 2006-08.

AGREED:

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That the draft interim projects be agreed.

12. ITEM 10 - APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2006-07

The report proposed that, in accordance with previous practice whereby the chairmanship of the LSP alternated between the local authorities, the chair should pass to Dartford Borough Council for 2006-07.

AGREED:

That Councillor J Kite, Dartford Borough Council, be Chairman of the Local Strategic Partnership for 2006-07.

13. ITEM 11 - COMMUNITY FORUM STEERING GROUP

Mr Falvey said that the second Community Assembly was being planned for November, by which time there should be an elected membership from the community and voluntary sector.

Mr Woodley said that it would be helpful if the Board could be given a written timetable to clarify when the COMPACT would come to the Board, as there could be problems in relation to the Local Development Framework if COMPACTS were not formulated for both boroughs. Mr Falvey said that a timetable and regular reports would be provided for the LSP.

AGREED:

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That officers continue the development of the Community Forum structure with a view to having it endorsed at the next Community Assembly;
- (3) That a working group, to include representation from the borough councils, other public sector bodies and the community forum be established to lead the development of the COMPACT;
- (4) That the LSP be provided with a written timetable for the development of the COMPACT.

14. ITEM 12 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Burden

Councillor Kite thanked Councillor Burden for his work as Chairman of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Health Improvement Board

Ms Cotter said that the theme for the next meeting of the HIMP Board, on 12 July, would be young people and would focus on sexual health and teenage pregnancies. The latter aspect was an issue for Dartford. At present, there

was only one Member representative from Dartford and it was hoped that more could come forward.

Councillor Kite said that the matter of Dartford representation would be considered.

15. ITEM 13 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Partnership Board would be on Tuesday 12 December 2006.

The meeting closed at 4.12 pm

Councillor J A Kite
Chairman