

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Meeting of the East Devon Local Strategic Partnership held in the Committee Room, East Devon District Council on Wednesday, 26th November 2008

Present:	Becky Carmichael (Vice Chairman in the Chair)	Devon PCT
	Councillor Barry Nicholson	Devon County Council
	Councillor Mrs Margaret Rogers	Devon County Council
	Peter Jeffs	Corporate Director
	John Golding	Head of Housing & Social Inclusion
	Mr. Bob Buxton	Devon Towns Forum
	Rev. Peter Brain	Faith
	Elli Pang	AGILE/Ottery St. Mary & District Later Life Forum
	Roger Grainger	Devon County Council
	Mike White	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
	Meryl Spencer (Presenter)	Environmental Health Manager

The meeting started at 9.30 a.m. and ended at 10.55 a.m.

***12 Tribute**

The Vice Chairman welcomed all present and then referred to the sudden sad death of Councillor Chris Tratt who was a member of the LSP. The Vice Chairman asked Mr. Bob Buxton to lead the tribute to Councillor Tratt.

***13 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the East Devon Local Strategic partnership held on the 16th July 2008 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

***14 Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Miss Sara Randall Johnson	East Devon District Council
Councillor Miss Jill Elson	East Devon District Council
Councillor Stuart Hughes	Devon County Council
Helen Harman	East Devon VSA

The Vice Chairman reported that she had received 2 resignations from the LSP:

Mr. Malcolm Sherry	East Devon Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Vernon Whitlock	Devon Towns Forum

and welcomed Mr. Bob Buxton who would now represent the Devon Towns Forum on the LSP.

It was noted that a successor to represent the East Devon Chambers of Commerce had not yet been notified to the Secretariat.

*15 **Feedback items**

a) Honiton “satisfaction with area report”

Bob Buxton reported that Vernon had relayed this report to the Honiton Town Council who in turn had no comments to make. However Bob spoke with the Honiton Development Trust and most of the issues contained within the Council’s report closely matched (to within 5%) the results of the survey carried out by the Development Trust and it was felt that the Council’s report was not only useful but it backed up their survey’s results.

He said that both surveys showed that people in Honiton feel that there is a lack of facilities for teenagers which they felt led to anti-social behaviour.

John Golding said that some of the statistics were based on the earlier Council Housing tenants survey, the results of the new one say much the same and are being reported to the next meeting of the Housing Review Board. He also said that a report on some opportunities to upgrade and improve the environment in the St. Pauls area of Honiton, would be presented to the Housing Review Board.

Bob said that he chairs the Honiton Community Safety Partnership and that anti social behaviour in the Heathpark area had improved since one family had moved on. John Golding said that the Council had generally changed the non secure tenancies at St Pauls and moved them to long term tenancies.

Councillor Mrs. Margaret Rogers commented that on a recent visit to Heathpark she felt there were not enough play areas and suggested a “Fun in the Sun” exercise for Honiton as she felt this changed people’s views of youngsters when the exercise was held in Seaton.

Councillor Barry Nicholson said he visits the area regularly and the residents there know they can see him if they have a problem. He said that he too felt the situation was improving.

The Vice Chairman thanked Councillor Nicholson for his endeavours.

b) Alleged racial abuse incident involving school children

Peter Jeffs said that Malcolm Sherry had raised an issue over alleged racial bullying in Sidmouth amongst international students attending language school. This was reported as ‘hate crime’. He said that since then Police had looked at the problems and that contact with language schools had been maintained along with higher police visibility. This problem related to a very small number of local residents and had now been addressed.

c) Multi agency check for vulnerable people

Peter said this item related to the possibility of linking up agencies when visiting vulnerable people and referred to the attached leaflet from Care Direct “Getting the most out of life”. He said that the LSPOG had looked at this and felt the most effective way may be to use an existing scheme which was being launched by Care Direct. The LSP then requested the Officer Group to explore the potential for multi-agency ‘sign up’ to the proposed scheme across East Devon. If agreed by the LSP this could become a pilot for the rest of Devon. This ‘sign up’ would include a commitment to promotion of the scheme and opportunities across all home visiting services and agencies who promote the needs of vulnerable people.

Following the presentation to the Officer Group, Care Direct were welcomed to the idea of linking up agencies but were concerned that they may become inundated and preferred the more gently progressive approach by promoting the scheme area by area.

Elli commented that she felt the work of Care Direct was very good, for signposting but was also concerned, that as they would be the first point of contact, Care Direct might not have the staff resources to cope. She was concerned as to whether the services to whom people were being signposted were working well.

Councillor Mrs. Margaret Rogers said she too was also impressed with Care Direct but she felt there was a lack of contribution from other agencies to solve the capacity and resource problem.

The Vice Chairman concluded by saying that with a diversity of service you needed to know where the demand is and that Care Direct was reluctant to carry out a blanket approach because of staff demands, hence a targeted approach may be necessary. She said that she would report this to the Devon PCT.

It was agreed Peter would contact Care Direct and get a current report on the capacity of the Scheme for LSPOG.

*16 **LAA 33 (Improve energy performance of housing stock and reduce fuel poverty)**

a) Presentation on Devon Warm Zones seminar held in Exmouth

Meryl Spencer, Environmental Health Manager gave a presentation on Devon Warm Zones. She explained the scheme was a joined up, and co-ordinated project with the aim to deliver a simple and effective service to help people access energy efficiency grants, discounts and advice. The project involves all 10 local authorities in Devon and has been building up over 3 years with the aim to encourage and assist householders to access advice, benefit entitlement check, and grants, discounts for insulation, and heating measures. Advice is tailored to each home but the over 70's and those in income related benefits are entitled to free loft and cavity wall insulation (in privately owned or rented properties). Also working in conjunction with the Devon & Somerset Fire Service by offering home safety visits. The project is funded by EON (world's largest investor-owned power and gas company).

Meryl said that the help of local partners will be the key to the success of the scheme and that they want to work with local health, care and welfare professionals, voluntary and community groups to target everyone in the chosen communities. The local community groups are best placed, and are in contact with the most vulnerable people who we are trying to reach.

Meryl said that organisations needed to provide us with ideas and advice as to how to best reach the local community/your clients and to spread the word through home visits, displaying leaflets and posters, newsletters and other communication channels.

Meryl said that in promoting this project:

- a float had been entered in the Exmouth Carnival which publicised the launch of our Warm Zone, and a light bulb give away was held in September to launch the Warm Zone,
- a trade stand was displayed at the 'Christmas Cracker' in Exmouth to primarily seek out partners in Exmouth amongst the charitable organisations and agencies trading there,
- a trade stand will be present at the Devon County Show in May 2009, and

- other local events will take place to help roll the Warm Zone out across East Devon.

The website link for Devon Warmzones is www.devonwarmzones.org.uk

Peter Jeffs and Rev. Peter Brain commented by saying this was a good opportunity to use the Churches as a link.

Following a useful discussion Councillor Mrs. Rogers asked if there was any scope for Warmzone to investigate differing levels of energy charges for differing means of payment. Meryl replied that they are unable to take on a direct debit payments campaign but her Devon wide Housing group were looking into tackling the issue of pre payment meters being so expensive. Meryl said she would report back to Councillor Mrs. Rogers on this.

The Vice Chairman asked Meryl if they were working with the CAB. Meryl replied that only Plymouth CAB had come on board and Meryl agreed to speak to Peter Jeffs to try and get the local CAB involved.

The Vice Chairman thanked Meryl for her presentation.

(b) Feedback on elderly/partially blind Ward residents receiving mail advertising free insulation. Residents unable to read mail

Councillor Barry Nicholson said that at the last meeting of the LSP he mentioned that he was quite concerned about the number of people living on his estate that are partially blind and unaware to things that they should know about, and was asked by the Chairman to investigate and report back to this meeting.

Councillor Nicholson said that following his investigations he has learnt that one particular issue was the supply of aid to people over 70 years of age for insulation who had received literature via the post, or reps leaving literature, but were unable to read it. They would then leave it to stockpile until a relative visits them. This can be anything up to 2/3 months and they have no assistance from authorities who could have helped.

Councillor Nicholson said that the estate where he lives consists of 47 freehold sheltered properties that have recently seen a change of managership. The previous manager was formerly a nurse and would help the residents with personal finances etc but the new manager felt this could be misconstrued.

Meryl Spencer said there are organisations who can help with a “reading/speaking book” but that ideally we need to exercise some influence over installers and other agency heating insulation companies. These firms have access to details of people over 70 years of age.

Following a useful discussion the Vice Chairman said that she felt this matter needed researching to see how wide-spread this problem of disabled people was. She therefore agreed that:-

- 1) Meryl would raise the matter at a meeting of her Devon Housing Group and report back
- 2) The item to be placed on the agenda of the next LSP Officer Group for researching, and
- 3) A report be presented to the next/future meeting of the LSP

The Vice Chairman thanked Councillor Nicholson for his work.

*17 **“Local Development Framework – “Core Strategy” and “Issues and Options report” update**

Unfortunately Matt Dickins, Senior Planning Officer, was unable to attend this meeting. The Vice Chairman asked that this item be placed on the next agenda of the LSP.

***18 Review of LSP and Sustainable Community Plan**

Peter referred to his paper on the future role of the LSP and said that the national guidance has suggested that this will be a significant change, and that the emphasis of East Devon's LSP may need to shift. He said his paper (pages 8-13 of the agenda) reviews our approach and he then briefly ran through his paper.

Peter said that there will be quite a shift in the role of the LSP and the possible changes mean we have 2 areas of work as set out in the paper. The first relating to monitoring working and the second area relates to our place shaping role and ensuring streamlining. This suggests our agenda needs to dwell on these two areas of operation. The LSP will become a monitoring and checking group rather than a discussion group.

Peter then invited comments:

1. Rev. Peter Brain commented that the Faith communities would be pleased to see that environment and social resources had been included but felt "effective and co-ordinated" should replace "streamlined" in the "Conclusion" on page 11 of Peter's paper.
2. The Vice Chairman added that she felt there was a need for a health and improvement well-being group.
3. Roger Grainger felt there was a need to be careful about capacity if trying to do too much.

Peter concluded by saying that it seemed sensible and reasonable to adjust our agenda to take account of the new approach. If all Members are in agreement he proposed that this item be placed on the next agenda of the LSP Officer Group to work out some more detailed options and approaches. In the meantime if any Member has any other comments could they please feed them back to Sue.

***19 Any other business**

- 1) Councillor Mrs Margaret Rogers asked "who does the LSP report back to?" It was agreed to make this more clear.
- 2) Councillor Mrs. Margaret Rogers asked if the LSP could have a progress report about gypsies and travellers in East Devon.
- 3) Elli Pang raised the issue of water poverty.
- 4) Following a discussion concerning the date of the next meeting it was agreed that arrangements would be made for it to be held in early/mid February 2009 and that Sue would let everyone know the proposed date.

Signed Date

Vice Chairman LSP – Becky Carmichael