

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the East Devon Local Strategic Partnership held in Room 1, East Devon District Council on Wednesday 8th April 2009

Present:	Councillor Sara Randall Johnson (Chairman)	East Devon District Council
	Councillor Jill Elson (Communities Portfolio holder)	East Devon District Council
	Councillor Stuart Hughes	Devon County Council
	Peter Jeffs (Culture)	East Devon District Council
	Matt Dickins (Planning)	East Devon District Council
	Roger Grainger	Devon County Council
	Rev. Peter Brain	United Reformed
	Liz Robertson	East Devon VSA
	Liz Wood	DCC Learning Disabilities
	Simon Wood	East Devon Chamber of Commerce
	Elli Pang	AGILE/Ottery St. Mary & District Later Life Forum
	Sue Parkinson	Secretariat

The meeting started at 9.30 a.m. and ended at 11.05 a.m.

29* **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed Simon Wood, (East Devon Chamber of Commerce), to his first meeting of the LSP.

*30 **Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2009**

Matt Dickins requested an amendment to Minute 23 (LDF) and said that EDDC had received 500 representations and not 60 as minuted.

The Chairman briefly mentioned a meeting she had attended at the Exeter and Heart of Devon Economic Partnership at which a presentation was given by Steve Jackson of the Homes and Communities Agency called 'single conversation'. This attempted to link advice, funding and targets around housing, jobs, health education etc. The Chairman said she was concerned about the potential disruption of planned projects e.g. Cranbrook/Sherford and concentration of urban versus rural area funding. The Chairman said that Steve gave her the impression that the Single Area will not be pan Devon but on County Council boundaries but that he said Plymouth was having discussions with Cornwall as well as South Hams and West Devon so cross-border issues were possible.

The Chairman said that at this end of the County we have joint partnerships like Blackdown Hills that might lose out on funding if South Somerset and West Dorset are not included.

The Chairman then requested Matt to investigate this and in the meantime Sue would circulate the Homes and Communities presentation that the Chairman attended to all members of the LSP.

***32 Matters arising from the Minutes**

Peter Jeffs referred to Minute 23 (LDF – “Core Strategy” and “Issues and Options report” update) and reported that he had written to the Devon Strategic Partnership (DSP) as there was some opportunity to collate together the views of county-wide organisations to feed into the LDF. Peter Jeffs said that he had received a disappointing response.

Peter Jeffs said there was a lack of engagement of major organisations as to what their future plans are. All agreed that there must be a pan Devon view and the DSP needs to explain to the LSP what are the new services that might need to be placed within EDDC.

The Chairman said perhaps there was a need to consider also sharing joint facilities. It was agreed that Peter would prepare a briefing note for the Chairman to present to the Devon Strategic Partnership (DSP) and report back to a meeting of the LSP.

***33 Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Barry Nicholson
John Golding
Helen Harman

Devon County Council
East Devon District Council
East Devon VSA

The Chairman then reported that she had received a letter of resignation from her Vice Chairman, Becky Carmichael. Becky was being asked to concentrate her energies on a Devon PCT county-wide portfolio area for vulnerable groups and extending into the Children and Young People areas. It is believed the PCT recruitment process for a secondment for the Exeter, East and Mid Devon area was under way.

The Chairman agreed:-

- 1) that Sue would send a letter on behalf of the LSP to Becky thanking her for her attendance record, her hard work and dedication over the years and to wish her every success for the future.
- 2) the appointment of a new Vice Chairman would be made at the LSP’s AGM in July.

*34 **Report back on possible LINKS assistance when addressing issues of blind/elderly people receiving mail advertising free insulation etc**

As Helen Harman was unable to attend she had asked her colleague Lynne Robertson to update the LSP on this item. (Lynne thought it worthwhile to mention that Helen was unable to attend as she was taking a group of youngsters from Heathpark on an “away” day. The Chairman was pleased to hear this announcement).

Lynne said that following Councillor Nicholson’s initial question to the LSP (which is not just about people in Honiton but issues from people all across Devon) which was put before Devon LINK, Councillor Nicholson had been linked with the Devon County Association for the Blind’s action group who are also working on similar issues. Councillor Nicholson is seeking more information on what he can do in his area.

The Devon LINK action group are looking at acute hospitals which are not providing appropriate guidance on PODs (Patients own drugs), for people with visual impairment, and are now working on a six month plan to improve those issues. Lynne said letters have been sent to the hospitals asking them what assistance they provide for the visually impaired but unfortunately a poor response has been received. Lynne said that the big hospitals have difficulties providing this type of service and people look to the voluntary sector for support. She also reported that they were concerned about staff training at hospitals and surgeries and the need to provide staff with diversity training. Staff need specific training when dealing with tunnel vision, blindness etc. She said it is hoped that by focussing on the hospitals a clearer position will emerge and then they will need to look at the local surgeries.

Councillor Miss Jill Elson said she believed the RD&E Hospital in Exeter have problems with the visually impaired as patients if they have not been “flagged up” as visually impaired e.g. patients were not eating because they could not see their food left for them. She suggested Lynne contacted Steve Gazzard at Exmouth Town Council who might be of some assistance on disability issues.

Peter Jeffs felt this was a social issue which went a lot further than just having medical implications. He asked what is the most appropriate way of contacting these people, and perhaps there was a need for the LSP to liaise with opticians. Lynne replied that there is a good link through Devon LINK and one of their aims is to put people in touch with people/groups who can assist them.

Lynne also said that there is a team at County Hall on “Sensory Awareness” which is run by the Practice Manager, Kate Skilton, who works alongside specialist people across the County. County receive referrals through e.g. MyDevon who then refer them to Kate’s team. Kate will help people get registered as disabled if appropriate.

Councillor Miss Elson said it was the people that are not registered but could have a visionary disability that concerned her.

Following a useful discussion it was agreed Lynne would talk to Devon LINK and either invite them to a future meeting of the LSP or enquire of Devon LINK if there is any assistance that the LSP can offer on the wider social implications of information to visually impaired people.

The Chairman thanked Lynne for her informative update and requested that she or Helen keep the LSP advised.

*35 **Talk on “Valuing People Now” by Liz Wood (Locality Operations Manager) of DCC Learning Disabilities**

Liz said that in 2001 the Government produced the document “Valuing People”. Last May a consultation document was produced, and the document was published this year. The updated document “Valuing People Now” sets out the Government’s strategy for people with learning disabilities for the next three years.

The document links to aspects of life and health challenges that may affect us all. Liz felt the LSP was the most appropriate partnership to introduce the document and to see where it fits in within the LSP’s framework.

Liz explained that there are 4 sections which come in two documents – a strategic document and a delivery plan and she recommended the easy to read version. These documents are free and can be obtained from the Department of Health or by accessing the link below.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_093378

Liz said the document illustrates how Government departments are working together.

She explained the need to help people become independent and to stay in their own homes/communities. Need also for extra care housing and to ensure best use is made of the equipment that is available to us.

The Chairman commented that it is much easier to deliver services in the urban areas as there are not the distances to travel. In rural areas the needs and challenges are different.

Liz said that in Devon where there are clusters of people with learning disabilities they tend to be within one building. She also described KeyRing. KeyRing support networks provides services to people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable adults, enabling them to live independently in the community in ordinary tenancies. KeyRing work in partnership with Local Authorities and Housing Associations to support a group of (typically) nine individuals who live in the same area, usually within walking distance of each other. These individuals [members] live in ordinary one person properties, and a tenth flat is provided to a volunteer who supports the network of members. The idea is that although living separately they are mutually supportive as a group.

The Chairman wondered why East Devon was not involved in the KeyRing support scheme.

Liz replied that this could be investigated by Janet Regan (DCC), if EDDC were interested.

The Chairman said she felt this should for instance be looked at in respect of Cranbrook.

Peter Jeffs felt that as a housing authority EDDC would be pleased to work better with people with learning disabilities but that EDDC are not specialists on care support for learning abilities but are specialists at improving and providing housing and, finding right people to go into right homes. EDDC would need someone to act as a ‘champion’ to interact with us on this.

Peter also said that the Wider Housing Strategic Partnership was the mechanism that links in with social housing landlords, PCT, adult and social care and would be a good place to discuss Keying.

Contact details were given to Liz of who to contact at the Council's Wider Housing Strategic Partnership (Emma Charlton – 01395 516551).

The people with learning disabilities who find employment have supportive families/friends. There is also the need to find more work for people with learning disabilities. Many learning disabled people could carry out quite complex tasks, but tended to prefer repetitive work. Their sickness record could often be better than for their non-disabled co-workers.

She said their main challenge is to provide assistance differently and said that we do over protect for people – we need to take more risks as we occasionally hold people back. Supporting People have a pot of money for support and the mechanisms are in place to try and share the money in the right place. Need to talk to strategic groups as to how we can meet these challenges e.g. Cranbrook.

The Chairman said this issue needed to be championed and she had direct experience of successful schemes in Whimple. Liz said she would give the District contact name to Janet Regan

The Chairman thanked Liz for her informative talk.

***36 Initial approach to LAA targets**

Peter Jeffs updated all present on the work of the Officer Group in interacting with the 38 LAA targets, 14 of which East Devon LSP will especially interact with.

The Officer Group have started work on 5 LAA priorities to see how the LSP can take these forward. The 5 LAA priorities which had specifically been chosen by the Officer Group to look at are LAA1, LAA2, LAA8, LAA16 and LAA 34. The Officer Group discussed how, given the current financial situation to show progress and commitment. The idea the Officer Group have come up with is to look at building upon projects that are already funded and going forward, e.g. Axe Valley wetlands which is substantially in place with officers working on it could form a platform for other agencies e.g. the PCT might want to look at it as a 'green gym' rather than invest in something new.

Peter concluded by saying that these are the Officer Group's first thoughts and will report back at a future meeting on progress.

The Chairman suggested the Business Forum look at the LAA priorities for East Devon (via Simon Wood) and Simon to report back to a future meeting of the LSP to tell us how the priorities impact business.

***37 Any other business**

Councillor Jill Elson asked about supporting the economy of East Devon during the recession and wondered what the Business Forum was doing as they too must be experiencing difficult times.

Simon Wood agreed and said now is not the time to start a new business and there are a large number of businesses who unfortunately don't know the opportunities available to them. The 'wheels to work' scheme was specifically mentioned.

***38 Date and venue of next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the East Devon Local Strategic Partnership would be held on Wednesday 15th July 2009 – 9.15 a.m. for 9.30 a.m., Committee Room, Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth.

On a final note the Chairman said that there had been a wide ranging area of items discuss this morning which she said showed that there was a lot more work to do.

Signed

Date

Chairman LSP – Councillor Miss Sara Randall Johnson