

**MEETING OF UTTLESFORD FUTURES BOARD held at 2.00 pm at the COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFRON WALDEN on 26 FEBRUARY 2008**

Present:- Councillor H Rolfe – Chairman  
Clare Batty (Warwick Business School), Gaynor Bradley (Leisure and Community Development Manager), Alaine Clarke (Head of Partnership and Performance), Toni Coles (WEPCT), Councillor Catherine Dean (UDC), Graham Fletcher (Federation of Small Businesses), Paul Garland (Sustainable Uttlesford), Dan Gascoigne (Essex Partnership Team), Councillor Ray Gooding (ECC), Councillor Mark Lemon (UDC), Councillor Jan Menell (UDC), Amanda Montague (LSC Essex), Tim Newcombe (Essex Police), Councillor Andrew Proctor (Broadland DC), Jake Roos (Energy Efficiency Surveyor, UDC), Alex Stewart (Strategic Partnership Manager), Sue Sumner (CVSU), David Westcott (CVSU), Yvette Wetton (ECC).

**F38 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Alison Cowie, Councillor David Morson, Councillor Alan Dean, Councillor Rod Chamberlain and Jane Elsom.

**F39 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Management Team held on 12 February 2008 and of the Board Meeting held on 11 December 2007 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**F40 BUSINESS ARISING/ACTION LIST**

- i) F18 - it was noted that a report on Migrant Workers will be brought to the next meeting.
- ii) F31 – Funding process. Alaine Clarke said that a small group would meet and report to the next meeting.
- iii) F35 – Working Groups. The Chairman asked that a list of membership of all Working Groups be circulated.

**F41 LSP PEER CHALLENGE**

The Chairman said that he viewed today's meeting as crucial in determining the framework for the Group, to ensure it would deliver its aims. He was therefore delighted to welcome Clare Batty and Councillor Andrew Proctor who had conducted a peer challenge of the Local Strategic Partnership, and who were attending today to give a presentation on their findings.

Clare Batty thanked the Chairman for his welcome and for the invitation to carry out a peer challenge. She presented the key findings of the challenge, which identified as priorities performance management and communication with the wider community. She said it was clear that the Partnership had

achieved much in taking steps to engage fully with the LAA, and to align partners' strategies and Working Groups, but that there was not always a collective approach. She recommended that the Partnership identify its main priorities, and that it narrow its focus in order to strengthen its position to negotiate local targets to be delivered in the LAA. There was now the need to make the Community Strategy a sustainable strategy. She considered it was important to show Uttlesford's unique qualities in "telling the story", and to support this position with a clear business case.

Clare Batty then invited Councillor Andrew Proctor to continue the presentation. Referring to the review of governance and performance, he said that the Partnership should focus on what needed to be done and how to do it. The LSP was at a tipping point and needed to move from talk to action. His recommendations were to review key relationships; capture and communicate the work of the LSP; use the capacity and resources of all partner organisations; and strengthen working relationships with the community. The Group itself was now responsible for how to implement the findings. For example, certain aspects could be allocated champions, or the Partnership could focus more tightly on smaller priorities for the area. Regarding performance management, this was not just about a system, but could be done with a light touch, simply to keep aware of the direction. In summary, he said that he would encourage the formulation of an improvement plan for 2008/09; bringing all partners together, to plan collectively and celebrate achievements; to network more widely and specifically with the contacts identified in the Peer Challenge; and to tell the story of Uttlesford and ensure the wider community had the opportunity to share in "place shaping".

The Chairman thanked the guests and invited questions, commencing with his own question regarding the recommendation for an improvement plan. In reply, Clare Batty said that in drawing together the plan, the Partnership would need to decide who would lead on the plan, and would need to identify resources, and set out how it would be managed, including what the timescale should be. Councillor Andrew Proctor said that the improvement plan could be based on taking all the Peer Challenge recommendations, or could be put together by a smaller group to consider including other issues.

In reply to a question from Jake Roos, Councillor Andrew Proctor said that the final version of the Sustainable Community Strategy ("SCS") could link back to a few key points, and that this would be easier to do at the time the SCS was formulated. This could mean that the relevance of priorities might need to be re-assessed.

In reply to a question from Tim Newcombe, Clare Batty said that accountabilities of different groups needed to reflect who was doing what, and it was critical to co-ordinate them. It was important to be clear about delivery targets for those groups, and to give them a specific role in drawing certain information together to present to the Board, in a way which would avoid producing huge volumes of performance indicators for the Board to consider. She said it might be useful to talk to some LSP contacts mentioned in the

report, in particular Steve Turner, a colleague from Broxtowe Borough Council.

The Chairman agreed, but said that consistency was also important, as for example, in terms of linking key performance indicators.

David Westcott said that the Board needed to take ownership of the action plans of other groups to avoid a “silo” effect. Councillor Andrew Proctor agreed, and said that the role of the Board was to oversee the work of the groups, for example, to flag issues with “traffic lights”, but the key was to ensure certainty of aims, a holistic approach and a culture of moving forward.

Toni Coles said that an important part of the management team role was to encourage cross-partnership working.

Councillor Menell thanked Clare Batty and Councillor Andrew Proctor. She felt it was important not to overlook detail.

The Chairman suggested that a small Working Group be formed to determine how the recommendations in the report would be taken up. It was

AGREED that a Working Group would be set up, to formulate an improvement plan for the May meeting of the Board, based on the Peer Challenge Report, to comprise Alaine Clarke, Toni Coles, Alex Stewart, Sue Sumner and Yvette Wetton.

## F42 **ESSEX STRATEGY AND LAA**

The Chairman welcomed Dan Gascoigne of the Essex Partnership Team, who gave a presentation on the priorities and targets currently identified for inclusion in the new LAA and new Essex Strategy, due to be signed off on 6 May. He said he hoped that the relationship between the County and the District was one of mutual support. He noted that each had a cycle of programme management to deliver outcomes to improve the quality of life for the area, and emphasised the need for joint solutions. He said that it was fundamental that the next LAA should be articulated at local level, and presented a chart of what was seen by local people as important and what needed to be improved. The aim was to try to reflect the priorities for each locality.

Copies of the draft LAA issued in January were circulated, and a further version would be made available on the website on Thursday 28 February. There was also to be a weekly e-newsletter. Mr Gascoigne referred to key countywide thematic partnerships which had been identified, and in particular mentioned sustainable communities and affordable housing. He said that it was important to be aware that the Target Aggregation element of the LAA should contain reasonable targets at District level, so that Districts could be satisfied that they had had a chance to influence the process. In conclusion, he said he wished to emphasise the fact that the consultation would allow

engagement and challenge. A series of workshops were being arranged in March in order to identify any gaps in the draft.

The Chairman thanked Dan Gascoigne for his presentation, which he said had been excellent. He said that the Board would welcome the opportunity to take part in the workshop mentioned, and it was

AGREED that the Lead Officer and the Essex County Council representative would identify a suitable date in March for the Board to attend a workshop on the draft LAA, to be held at the Saffron Walden Council Offices.

In reply to a question from Tim Newcombe, Dan Gascoigne said that a document explaining how the current draft document had been arrived at was being prepared, as inevitably there were differences of opinion across certain areas. This matter could be included in the workshop.

#### F43 **UTTLESFORD FUTURES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Alaine Clarke said that comments on the proposed Terms of Reference had been sought from partners. The options set out in the report were considered, particularly with regard to the question of duplication between the Management Team and Board. Toni Coles said that she preferred Option 1, as the Board needed to take a strategic and leadership role, as recommended by the Peer Challenge. She was concerned that if Working Groups became too big, this would divert the focus from leadership. Sue Sumner agreed, as she was concerned that the ability to interlink the groups could be lost.

The Chairman was concerned that there would be a high degree of replication with the Board if the Chairs of the Working Groups were also to comprise one group. David Westcott said he preferred a single Board, and expressed concern about the burden on Chairs of Working Groups. Paul Garland said he supported Option 1, so that the Board took a more strategic view.

Councillor C Dean said that there had been a danger of the Board becoming unwieldy, and she considered there were too many councillors. She asked whether the principle of one vote per organisation would continue, and the Chairman confirmed that this would be the case.

Yvette Wetton said that the Management Team would exist in some form in any case, and she therefore supported Option 1.

It was therefore AGREED that the structure of the Partnership would be a Board and a Management Team.

The proposed membership of the Board was then discussed. Following questions from Paul Garland and Jake Roos, it was NOTED that the Sustainable Uttlesford Group should be included. It was NOTED that the

Chairs of Working Groups should be invited to join the Board or to identify a contact who would do so.

Following a comment from Alex Stewart, who referred to the involvement of the Greater Cambridge Partnership in economic development, it was NOTED there should be a large businesses representative on the Board, to avoid an absence of co-ordination with employers such as FLS.

Tim Newcombe said that it would be appropriate for a Partnership Superintendent to be on the Board, rather than the Chief Inspector; and that the representative on the Management Team would be either himself or Joe Wrigley.

Following discussion, it was

AGREED that Alaine Clarke should chair the meetings of the Management Team.

In response to a comment that paragraph 19 of the Terms of Reference should be amended to delete the reference to Chairs of Working Groups, the Chairman invited further comments on points of detail to be forwarded to Alaine Clarke.

It was NOTED that when setting priorities for the Board, it would be necessary to link these to the SCS referred to at paragraph 26.

#### F44 **PLAN FOR FUTURE SUPPORT**

Alaine Clarke presented a report on the need for additional administrative support for the Partnership. Details of the post were discussed, and the elements of funding obtained were considered. Alaine Clarke asked the Board to meet the shortfall of £10K. The Chairman invited the Board to send comments on the job description to Alaine Clarke. Subject to checking the legal and procedural position with the Council's Human Resources Service, it was

AGREED that the Board would provide an additional £10K towards funding the post of an Administrator.

#### F45 **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS UPDATE**

Alex Stewart said that a third draft had been circulated for comment. Toni Coles said that the document should include describing the strategy by "telling a story" and should show how priorities flow out of that need. Yvette Wetton said that the priorities needed to be tied down. Paul Garland said that it was necessary to be clear about the vision, that is, what was meant by "sustainable community", and to find priorities which flowed from trying to achieve that.

Alex Stewart said that earlier drafts had included the “story of place” but that there had been requests to remove this element. However, it could be reinstated. The Chairman said that whilst it did not need to be a lengthy document, there should be some text to help an outsider to understand the logic and priorities, and to enable outcomes to be measured. Elaine Clarke said that actions should be linked with themes. All indicators should be those which the various groups were using. Sue Sumner said that a cross-cutting theme was the need to include much stronger reference to the work of the voluntary sector, and said she would provide some wording. Toni Coles said that the action plans should be separate from the main document.

The Chairman noted that the launch date for the SCS is 26 March, and asked for a workshop to be arranged at short notice.

In reply to a question from Councillor Menell, Councillor Lemon said the Partnership should take over the Transport Forum. Alex Stewart confirmed that Jeremy Pine had seen the draft, but that he had not yet commented. There was discussion of the need to include affordable housing, accessibility and transport as another cross-cutting issue. Councillor Lemon said that before setting up a Working Group on affordable housing, comments should be sought from Councillor Chamberlain on the Council’s Housing Initiative Task Group. It was

AGREED that a Transport and Accessibility Working Group should be set up.

Returning to Paul Garland’s question, the Chairman invited him to circulate a definition of “sustainable community” by e-mail. Tim Newcombe commented that the workshop to be arranged with the County would need to include a review of the SCS. The Chairman agreed that it would be useful to be able to sign off the Strategy at that workshop.

#### F46 **KEY OBJECTIVES/QUICK WINS**

The Chairman said there were areas where Uttlesford performed less well than in other areas, such as teenage pregnancy, road deaths, CO2 emissions and levels of affordable housing. He invited partners to help identify issues where Uttlesford could achieve “quick wins” in four priority areas.

Sue Sumner said that the level of cancer among women in Uttlesford was extraordinary, and suggested bringing MacMillan Nurses into Uttlesford. The Chairman gave his support to this proposal.

Councillor Ray Gooding said that statistics would not show a quick solution for many of the areas mentioned. Councillor C Dean agreed, and said that it was not possible to create the top four priorities until the CSC was in place. She considered a more measured process was necessary.

Jake Roos said that whilst statistics were always about two years behind, we should aim to publicise the aims and beginning of the process. Tim Newcombe agreed that positive publicity for work started was helpful. Councillor Lemon supported this view, although he disagreed with the term “quick wins”.

#### F47 **UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS**

Paul Garland reported that the Uttlesford Carbon Neutral Conference had been very successful, with 85 delegates attending, including businesses, parishes, school and church groups. Jake Roos said that many of the actions from the conference could be linked to the launch of the SCS on 26 March. He suggested that the Board could invite those who attended to be involved in the launch. Councillor C Dean said that some schools in the area were involved in becoming eco-schools under a certification scheme, which should be encouraged.

Regarding economic development in Uttlesford, the Chairman asked Yvette Wetton to contact Councillor A Dean regarding support from Essex County Council. Councillor Lemon said that there was a business group in Hatfield Heath which met once a month.

Alex Stewart reported that the CYPSP had been meeting every eight weeks, and had elected a new Chair. The next CYPSP meeting was in May. He said that a strategic needs assessment for CDRP had just been started. He reported that a Children’s Centre was to be launched in Stansted at the weekend. The Chairman queried how the Board could add value to the work of CYPSP.

Sue Sumner said that the UCVS action plan was now in draft, and a meeting was planned for next week. The first priority was the high incidence of cancer among women in the area.

#### F48 **RENEWABLE ENERGY STUDY**

The Board considered the report commissioned from Derek Taylor which was presented by Jake Roos. Derek Taylor would return to give a further presentation at a later date. Jake Roos said that there were funding sources which could be approached for issues such as retrofitting existing housing to enable use of greener fuel, and to encourage businesses to become carbon neutral. The Chairman said that specific proposals could be taken forward by the Working Group.

AGREED that Jake Roos would liaise with Alaine Clarke and Paul Garland regarding inviting the consultant to return to give a presentation to the Board.

AGREED that Paul Garland would bring his Group’s action plan to the next Board meeting.

F49 **BUDGET**

The Budget had been circulated and was considered. It was noted that spending of £22,000 had been committed for the Partnership's Officer at today's meeting on an ongoing basis.

F50 **UTTLESFORD COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE REPORT**

Sue Sumner said that further funding of £7,800 pa for the next three years was sought in order to maintain the database, a resource which was heavily used by the Partners and was very important for communication purposes. This money would go towards the salary of the Administration Officer responsible for keeping the records up to date, which was an essential task.

Councillor C Dean said that she appreciated the fact that this was a very worthy cause. However, she was reluctant to commit resources without first identifying what would be the focus of the SCS.

Alex Stewart referred to the reliance the Partnership and the Council placed on the UCVS resource, and said that without this it would be far harder to operate. Elaine Clarke referred to the consultation strategy endorsed last year, and said she was concerned that consultation with the voluntary sector would be much more difficult and that Uttlesford would have to bear additional costs.

The Chairman noted Councillor Dean's point, and questioned whether it was necessary to make a commitment for three years. He was sympathetic to years two and three, but proposed that the Board return to this issue at a later date. Graham Fletcher seconded the proposal. In reply, Sue Sumner said it was very difficult keeping staff on, and said that the £45K from ECC was intended to support the LSP. Yvette Wetton suggested supporting two years. Councillor Lemon said that he was in favour of supporting one year, with the proviso that the Board look favourably on years two and three. Alex Stewart suggested a review at the December meeting.

Sue Sumner wished it to be minuted that a number of the people who might have supported the request had left as the item appeared so late on the agenda.

AGREED that the Board would pay £7,800 for one year's support for the UCVS to maintain its database, but that it was sympathetic to a request for years two and three.

F51 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Amanda Montague asked for two future agenda items, on the provision of Personal Community Development Learning, and Vocational Study for all ages. The Chairman agreed.



The meeting ended at 5.00 pm.