

MEETING OF UTTLESFORD FUTURES BOARD held at 1.30 pm at the COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFRON WALDEN on 11 NOVEMBER 2010

Present:- Councillor Howard Rolfe – Chairman (UDC).
Councillors Christina Cant, Janet Menell, Alan Dean (Economic Development Group), Keith Eden (Transport Group) Eric Hicks (UCVS), John Mitchell (Chief Executive UDC), Gaynor Bradley (Community Partnerships Manager UDC), Kerry Vinton (Partnerships Officer UDC), Graham Fletcher (Federation of Small Businesses), Mike Jeffs (Environment Working Group), Ray Gooding (ECC), Steve Robinson (Essex Police) and Yvette Wetton (ECC).

F12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Sumner and Alison Cowie.

F13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 21 July 2010 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F14 BUSINESS ARISING

The following items were still outstanding from the action list.

i) Minute F2 – UCVS data base

The report on the UCVS data base was being considered by the Healthier Communities Working Group. It would then be circulated to the members of the Board.

ii) Minute F7 – Environment Group

Mike Jeffs had now met with Mark Wilson, the new Corporate Strategy and Programmes Officer. The post was being shared with Braintree District Council. Initial discussions had been positive and it was hoped that some positive outcomes could be achieved. Mark Wilson would assist with the preparation of the carbon reduction plans, which he hoped would be considered at the next meeting.

AGREED that the outstanding carbon reduction plans be obtained from the partner organisations and an item be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

iii) Minute F7 (iv) – HICOP

In response to a question raised at the last meeting, the Board was advised that the issue of affordable housing would come up through the Sustainable

Community Strategy and be fed into the LDF process. John Mitchell said that there was more affordable housing under construction in this district than in the other Essex authorities. Even so it was clear that local provision of affordable housing was a key issue for the LSP and it would be useful for it to be considered by this group.

AGREED an item on affordable housing be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

iv) F7 (v) -CSP

Alan Dean said that the issue of CCTV had been considered at a recent meeting of the Scrutiny Committee. He would have liked to have seen statistical information to show the benefits of the system but this type of data was not available.

v) F8 – Community Engagement Task and Finish Group

Information concerning the number of hits on the LSP page of the website would be circulated for the next meeting.

vi) F9 – Community Forum

The programme for the forum meetings in March would be informed by the outcome of the forthcoming conference.

F15

PRESENTATION – CENTRE FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES (CLES)

Mathew Jackson, Head of Research at CLES gave a presentation on 'exploring the power of procurement'. He outlined details of research that aimed to gather evidence of where public sector resources were spent and develop a replicable method of measuring the economic impact of the public sector spend on the local economy. For an organisation this would enable better economic decisions around service delivery. He then set out the findings of a study that had been carried out with Manchester Metropolitan Council. For Uttlesford he suggested that it might be useful to use the research to analyse the current supply chain and identify any gaps in provision and use this information as a basis for a procurement strategy.

Members asked a number of questions about the research. It was generally felt the research was more applicable to an area larger than Uttlesford and might be appropriate for the West Essex Partnership or the County Council. It was noted that the council had recently left the Braintree procurement hub and now employed a dedicated procurement officer who might be able to make use of this tool.

AGREED the procurement officer be advised about the availability of the toolkit for measuring the economic impact of public sector spend on the local economy.

F16 **PRESENTATION – ST CLARE’ S HOSPICE**

Richard Cowie, Chief Executive of St Clare’s Hospice spoke to the Board regarding the work of the hospice and about the planned expansion of services and seeking feedback on what the community felt about the service provided and where there were any gaps. He was aware that there was often a lack of information about what a hospice could offer and he would welcome suggestions of ways to raise profile and publicity. Of particular concern was the number of deaths in acute wards in the west Essex area, and to address this he was trying to promote the concept of ‘hospice in the home’.

The Board members asked a number of questions about access to care and were advised that hospices worked cross boundary in the interests of the patients. There should be greater publicity of the service and Members made a number of suggestions on how this could be achieved; by providing information in parish council magazines, at the day centres in Uttlesford and at the offices of the UCVS. Richard Cowie thanked the Board members for their feedback and asked them to forward him any further comments.

F17 **BUDGET AND FUNDING UPDATE**

The Board received an updated balance sheet for 2010/11 and was advised of the likely budget balance at the end of the financial year. In the light of the withdrawal of funding from Essex County Council, the Board was given the following funding information:

1. To the end of 2010/11 funding would have been £533.671, comprising the following:-

2007/8	capacity building	45,000
2008/9	capacity building	45,000
2009/10	capacity building	45,000
2010/11	capacity building	45,000
2011/12	capacity building	45,000
2012/13	capacity building	45,000
2009/10 & 2010/11	PRG project funding	263,671
TOTAL		533,671

2. Uttlesford Futures had actually received the following payments:

2007/8	capacity building	45,000
2008/9	capacity building	45,000
2009/10	capacity building	45,000
2009/10 & 2010/11	PRG project funding	263,671
TOTAL INCOME		398,671

The Chief Executive of the District Council had proposed that the payment to CVSU be covered by a Council budget which removed the need for the LSP to pay that sum next year and reduced the annual commitment to **£40,506**.

It was noted that all Essex Authorities would be repaying funds to Essex County Council, but the Chairman said that it should be a fair and appropriate amount. As some authorities had received the 2009/10 Building Capacity Grant, he thought it would be equitable to withhold the £45,000 for 2010/11 from the amount to be repaid to the County Council.

AGREED that Essex County Council be advised that Uttlesford Futures will repay £60,152.

There was concern about the long term future of the partnership, and if it did have a finite life the group would need to determine its priorities. However, the future of LSP's was still uncertain and until further information was available members felt that they should carry on the positive work that was already underway. The localism and the big society agenda could be significant for local partnerships and it was felt that existing capacity should be retained as far as possible to enable it to adapt to any future arrangements. Uttlesford Futures was also dependent on funding from other partnership members but these authorities were not in a position to give guarantees of future funding at this time.

The Board noted that its major expenditure was on staffing costs but it was acknowledged that these posts were essential to support the partnership and in particular the working groups.

AGREED that the present arrangements for the funding of the two staffing posts continue for the year 2011/12.

F18 **PRG PROJECTS**

The Board noted the performance grant project updates since the last meeting.

F19 **ESSEX PARTNERSHIP FORUM**

The Board noted that the report from Essex County Council on the future of the Partnership Board had not yet been completed. However, Yvette Wetton said it was important that Uttlesford came to its own decision on how best to serve its community and how it saw the partnership developing in the future. During the course of the discussion the Chairman referred to 'place based budgeting' and Yvette Wetton AGREED to circulate information to Board members.

F20 **WEST ESSEX PARTNERSHIP**

Gaynor Bradley reported on a recent meeting of the West Essex Partnership. Whilst still working on their own projects, the member districts were also looking at areas where they could work collaboratively. It was still too soon to say whether in future the LSP's would be based on a wider geographical area.

AGREED to circulate the agenda and minutes of the West Essex Partnership when available.

F21 **FUTURE OF LSP**

John Mitchell gave an overview of recent Government thinking with regard to partnership working. It was advocating a smaller state, pushing responsibility downwards to communities and neighbourhoods and not just to local councils and looking at how to re-profile public services.

With the cuts to public spending, councils were looking to pool resources and in this context the Leaders of all Essex authorities had been meeting to discuss a way forward. The authorities in West Essex had recently agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding, which might be significant for the future operation of the LSP. As for the future of the LSPs, he said that although the LSP was not a statutory body it did provide a democratic legitimacy to decisions and served to bring all the partners together. Also, the Sustainable Community Strategy was a statutory document. He concluded that community involvement was only likely to increase under the localism bill and there would still be a need for some type of local partnership arrangement.

F22 **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY**

Kerry Vinton circulated a revised programme for the assembly on 1 December. It now included a presentation by the Chief Executive on the Big Society, picking up on the issues in the Localism Bill. The event hoped to reach a broader audience than previously and invitations would shortly be sent out to the thematic groups and parish councils. Members also suggested business groups and the voluntary sector. The Board said that thought should be given to how to encourage parish councils as their attendance was very important.

F23 **THEME GROUPS UPDATE**

The Board had received detailed reports from the working groups. The following additional points were raised:-

i) Uttlesford Children's Locality Partnership

The group had discussed how to work with the West Essex Children's Trust Board. There had been some difficulties with the size and effectiveness of the Board.

AGREED that the Board be advised of any developments in relation the West Essex Children's Trust Board.

Councillor Menell confirmed that the children's centre for Saffron Walden had received funding and would now go ahead.

ii) CSP

The group had discussed the issue of CCTV and Alan Dean again raised the fact that there was no available evidence to show whether CCTV made a difference in the locations in Uttlesford. Steve Robinson said that specific static information was not available but the Police tended to approach the issue of CCTV in a holistic way and realised that it was about a lot more than just catching criminals.

Steve Robinson said that there was some doubt over the future of the CSP and whether groups based on small local areas would exist in the future. He also reported that, unusually, there had been a number of dwelling burglaries in the District and there had been increased publicity around heightened awareness during the day.

iii) Economic Development

Alan Dean reported that the group had 2 new members, both from business groups. The recent business breakfast had been very successful and a similar event was planned for next year. Unfortunately the original consultant was not able to progress the Wood Fuel project but it was hoped that a suitable person could be sourced from ECC.

Ray Gooding mentioned the apprentice scheme that was funded by ECC and said that there were currently only 6 apprentices working for companies in Uttlesford. This was hampered by the fact that there was no local training providers and difficult transport links, but as there was funding available, more effort should be taken to publicise the opportunities in Uttlesford.

iv) Environment Working Group

Mike Jeffs reported that the group had co-opted a representative from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group. Work was continuing around the special verges project and on raising awareness about biodiversity. He said that the group would probably need some officer assistance to help run the projects.

v) Healthy Communities & Older People Working Group

The access to services review was continuing despite the withdrawal of funding and would be progressed with the CAB. The group would benefit from a representative from the health service attending the meeting.

AGREED

- 1 Officers to contact NHS West Essex about a permanent representative for the group.
- 2 An item on the access to services review be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

vi) Transport Working Group

Keith Eden outlined progress with the group's 4 main themes – community travel, Quality Taxi Partnership, improvements to local bus services and increasing cycle travel.

F24 NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Board was Thursday 27 January 2010.

The meeting ended at 4.35pm