

**Notes of Meetings
of
Leicestershire Together**

9th, 12th and 13th March 2007.

Links Consulting
March 2007

Notes of Meetings

Common Themes

Now that we have completed the three development activities in early March it may be helpful to consider common themes which ran through the events, in order to develop thinking as to how they may be addressed.

Establish Headline priorities for the Partnership

This appeared in discussion at each meeting; it may be that this provides a useful focus for work over the next few months, dependant on the information base being available on which to identify these headline issues.

Ensure accountability of the partnership to its partners and within the partnership family

This is likely to become a running sore unless it is lanced early and directly. Communication strategy will also need to address this issue.

Focus the energy of SSOG

SSOG is recognised by each group we worked with as a powerful force and driver for change; the seminar raised some useful pointers for action. Members of SSOG are also prepared to take a much stronger role in driving the change agenda.

Increase the quality of communication

Despite not getting to the communication question at the Board, it is obvious that members recognised that they have a central role in growing awareness of Leicestershire Together activities.

Change culture to focus on people and neighbourhoods

This was a very strong issue through all sessions. It neatly meets the concerns of all partners and allows serious thinking about redesigning service delivery to meet the needs people and communities.

Take time to think and plan differently

This is an issue which chimes with all partners; most of whom seemed willing to accept the challenge of working differently together.

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Note of the meeting of joint LAA and cross-cutting Partnership/group leads 9 March 2007

1. Purpose

The half day session was aimed at:

- Establishing networking arrangements
- Setting the core agenda for five future joint meetings
- Establishing at least two groups to address challenging or cross cutting issues

As this was the first meeting of a new group, the programme was designed to be flexible, to ensure all present contributed to discussion of issues raised.

The session divided into

- An initial discussion of the new LAA arrangements, current performance and potential challenges [Para. 2].
- How to improve existing arrangements? [Para. 3 and 4]
- Selecting an agenda for future work of the group. [Para. 5]

2. Our partnerships

This session aimed to get participants talking about 'their partnership landscape, their achievements. The intention was to relate these achievements to the LAA and SCS.

Achievements in the last 12 months

There was recognition of some of the benefits of the partnership agenda developed with the existing LAA arrangements.

- Stronger communities and cleaner & greener working together
- LAA has helped to join up budgets e.g. incapacity into work
- Achieving recycling targets and LAA refresh targets
- LAA process:
 - constructive process to help achieve things collectively – opportunity to work with other agencies across themes and look at common issues, problems and solutions
 - strengthened and invigorated some groups
 - raised the profile of key groups and activities (that were not known about previously)
- Pump priming funding has been positive

Issues/challenges

At the same time much had been expected of the process. It has been regarded as a 'project' and demands have been great.

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- LAA has been 'on top of the day job' – it needs to be mainstreamed
- Managing complexity of the LAA – the number of key issues/cross-cutting issues etc. It can appear impenetrable.
- Danger of partnership/block 'silos'
- LAA is outside the elected members' decision-making processes
- Promises on freedoms and flexibilities have not been delivered
- Tensions between national and local priorities
- How to free-up funding to focus on key priorities
- Neighbourhood management – how to join up locally and make an impact
- Inclusive SCS development
- We haven't communicated the radical change and potential of LAA to all staff/members
- Cultural change:
 - focus on needs of people/customer rather than services
 - identify and agree cross-cutting issues
 - shift our thinking about working together to the 'not so obvious'
 - shift resources
 - target-driven culture takes all our time and does not allow time for new thinking

3. How do we achieve cultural change?

This section asked participants how to 'change the partnership landscape for the better'. Participants were asked to think about those changes that they could bring about in the wider partnership that will help to deal with the challenges identified previously.

- Leadership from SSOG
- We must be clear about our partnership priorities, cross-cutting issues and linkages between themes – who can help us?
- The focus should be on people rather than services
- We have done many of the obvious things, we need to shift thinking to the 'not so obvious' – who can help us?

4. Focus on neighbourhoods – an event

Discussing these points made it clear that the 'neighbourhood' provided the locus that brought all the elements together. Following the break, the group thought more on this issue.

'What do we do differently in service areas to address needs of a locality?'

- Develop and strengthen the 'neighbourhood model'
- Identify theme partnership contributions to localities
- Agree programme of activity
- Agree how to continue the process of working together in localities
- Identify what others can do to help e.g. SSOG

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Ideas for a future event/session

Some thought that this could be the rationale for a conference/series of events which would provide the backbone [golden thread] of both district and county SCS.

- Understand what is happening in neighbourhoods and the issues/concerns: Use neighbourhood profiles and 'soft' qualitative information from neighbourhood managers, residents, local groups and local service providers (neighbourhood action team)
- Identify what is already happening and the gaps
- Identify different ways of working
- Identify what leads could do in localities
- Make links with (existing) and (new) outcomes/targets in SCS and LAA
- Hear about good practice from elsewhere

5. Ideas for future meetings of LAA and cross-cutting leads group

Meetings should be clear about what they want to achieve and focus on outcomes and actions:

- 'Leads' meetings should include discussion on cross-cutting opportunities within the LAA and contribution of different theme partnerships.
- Identify and agree cross-cutting issues and how we can work across the partnerships/blocks
- Focus on the neighbourhood agenda and how we can make it work
- Look at how individual organisations can link into and contribute to the blocks/themes
- Development of new SCS
- Improve communication strategies and channels
- Deal with capacity issues

6. Today's meeting was useful

Some of the comments that members made about the meeting:

- *'Because of the opportunity to meet new people';*
- *'To have time to think';*
- *'To focus on prevention and quality of life rather than processes and targets';*
- *'To think about cross-cutting issues and those we need to contact';*
- *'To realise the need to consult LAA leads more on neighbourhood profiles'.*

Oliver Goode and Maggie Rust
Links Consulting
March 2007.

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Discussion at Leicestershire Together Board Meeting 12 March 2007

Introduction

This was the first meeting of a reconstituted Board brought together following recommendations of the Peer Review. An hour of activity was inserted into the agenda of the Meeting to provide discussion before the lunch break. The purpose of this exercise was to allow members of the Board to think in the meeting about the type of group they wanted to be part of and their contribution to it.

The Discussion

Members of the Board were asked to think about the answer to a question: 'What do you want the LSP to achieve?'

Members were then asked to share their answers with individuals they did not know in the group. A discussion followed which was a useful indicator of members understanding of the purpose of Leicestershire Together; how it should do its business and the kind of meeting the members felt would be useful to get the work done.

Broadly the discussion opened up debate on four themes:

- Leadership and Vision within the partnership
- To whom is the LSP accountable
- The priorities of the LSP and how it operates
- How the Boards works

Theme One Leadership and Vision

Members recognised the importance of a broad based 'partnership of partnerships' providing a clear direction for all the organisations in the county by selecting a small number of issues within broader priorities based on local opinion and facts about need.

'Deal with big issues'; 'Collective vision for Leicestershire'; Shared Vision were very evident in the responses.

There were many comments about providing Leadership for the rest of the county.

In discussion, it was recognised that whilst the Board itself needed to give expression to this function; all members had responsibility to demonstrate the leadership of the Board within their own organisations and partnerships.

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Theme Two Representation and Accountability

Because of this responsibility, the Partnership must represent the needs and interests of particular places and particular groups who are not usually well represented in 'high level' discussion and policy making.

'Developing stronger communities'; 'Build on what happens at level of place'; 'Recognise issues of Disability and Equality'; 'Broader Ethnic representation'; 'Ensure BME issues are reflected in decision making'.

One or two Board members commented on the importance of connecting the Board into existing Local Government governance structures.

Discussion of this point resulted in agreement that the Partnership existed to develop Leicestershire's priorities from 'downstream' bodies such as County and District organisations, towns, neighbourhoods and communities. These priorities should be expressed as Leicestershire's unique voice 'upstream' to sub-regional, regional and national bodies.

The key word that came through in this discussion was *'Transparent'*. The Board needs to be clear about what it is doing and why; this should be communicated across all parts of the county by members.

Theme Three What do we do and how do we do it?

Deciding priorities together, the board needs to *'focus on issues that affect the whole county'* and *'work towards communities that work'*; by *'developing world class public services'*; the Partnership should ensure that *'services are delivered differently'* [less rigidly?] and realign and *'pool resources to use them better'*. In this context the connection with Leicester City Partnership was regarded as an important link which needed exploration.

The discussion also covered how the partnership offered the opportunity to gain added value by thinking holistically. *'Manage the complex issues'* that can't be dealt with by one agency; perhaps this means *'commissioning services together'*. None of this is possible without *'Ensuring that key information is available and used effectively'*.

Theme Four How the Board works

Members were in favour of having opportunities to meet in informal settings to:

- Discuss issues in order to understand how they might be managed better;
- Learn about how important issues could be tackled better [best practice];
- Sort out headline priorities



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They also felt that it would be useful to have an opportunity to finish all meetings with time to reflect on how the meeting had worked, so that they could ensure they too focused on improvement.

Oliver Goode March 2007.

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Notes of the meeting of Strategic Senior Officer Group 13 March 2007

1. Purpose

The half day session was aimed at:

- Understanding the implications of the White Paper for all public agencies in Leicestershire
- Clarifying what SSOG can expect from the Sustainable Community Strategy and can contribute to it.
- Developing ideas about how SSOG might work with other members
- Exploring the function of SSOG in the revised structure.

As this was the first meeting of a new group, the programme was designed to be flexible, to ensure all present contributed to discussion of issues raised.

The session divided into

- How might SSOG work better?
- A presentation and discussion of the new LAA arrangements, and how it might impact upon a key theme in this case 'Health'
- Selecting an agenda for future work of the group.

2. The Discussion

How might SSOG work better?

The meeting was split into tables and each table discussed this issue and brought forward their conclusions which led to a debate on the role of SSOG in the broader partnership.

Driving the Partnership As the change agent and driver for the partnership; SSOG should help to create and define the ambition and direction of partnership activity. This should include defining 8 top priorities. The agenda should be shaped in a process that increases partner involvement.

[This is reflected in the Board's discussion about defining 'headline priorities' and perhaps implies that SSOG should enable or drive this process across the partnership]

Ensuring political 'buy-in' SSOG is in a good position to ensure that political players are involved and happy about issues being discussed and process being used for delivery.

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[The Board too is concerned about this issue. 'Transparency' and 'accountability' were strong concerns in their discussion. SSOG will need to consider how these may be addressed]

All partners better engaged SSOG needs to enable the involvement of partners. This will ensure partners can bring those elements of live issues that are amenable to action by the Partnership are brought to the table by partners for discussion and, if necessary, action by SSOG members.

Developing as a Team SSOG should allow time and space for a 'team dynamic' to develop within the group to ensure closer relationships across partnerships and partner organisations, and a challenging and supportive 'ethic'.

Ensuring that the structures are 'fit for purpose' SSOG should enable effective delivery of the partnership agenda by making clear choices about how the agenda is delivered and resourced. The Partnership presents an opportunity to address both the mechanisms 'upstream' at regional and sub-regional level and the processes 'downstream' within partner agencies and neighbourhoods. (? same as Board)

Focus on Adding Partnership Value SSOG should work on developing simple success criteria; work to define the added value of partnership activities and identify the most effective interventions.

Develop Communication SSOG must take responsibility for communicating the activity of the partnership outwards within Leicestershire and regionally.

LAA its effect on the Health Theme

Jan Sensier provided a brief input into how the latest version of the LAA will work and impact on Leicestershire. A copy of her presentation is attached to these notes.

[Andy can you arrange this as I don't have her disc]

The Health Theme

After a short break, SSOG looked at how they could add value to one of the Health theme's priorities.

Reducing Obesity

A. Obvious Connections:

- Transport Safe routes walking to school
- Healthy School Programme Diet and exercise

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| • Leisure etc | Access to open space, team sports |
| • Environmental health | Quality of Food |
| • Trading standards | Licensing |
| • Exclusions Policy | Working with excluded groups |
| • Road Safety | Cycling proficiency |

B. Less Obvious Connections:

Groups of people with high risk behaviour and high needs known to:

- Probation and Prison Service and Social Care [Social housing agencies?]
Their clients have most risky behaviours [Smoking; drinking; mental health issues; drug misuse; violent behaviour; poor diet; poverty; low self esteem; poor education outcomes]
- The Drug Intervention Project also works with similar groups
- Police have quality mapping tools which could be used to chart the whereabouts of these groups. [Needs protocols and Strategic context]

C. How might this approach be mainstreamed?

Use Notts City and Neighbourhood Management Network examples

Develop Framework to locate and analyse existing info

Organise delivery [decide which agency is the most likely to be effective etc]

Share assets as part of planning

Set up Multi-disciplinary teams

Identify families for intervention

Link with developing Neighbourhood Management approach.

Future Agenda for SSOG

- Clarify governance arrangements for the family of partnership structures that make up Leicestershire Together
- Scan what is over the horizon and key themes [*what is and is not a priority*] identifying opportunities and threats.
- Help the Board to set strategic priorities and ensure they link to preparation of the SCS and new LAA
- Develop time to think and set up
 - Task and finish groups
 - Action Learning opportunities
- Communications!!

Simplify-Reduce-Concentrate