

Notes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Strategic Senior Officers' Group (SSOG) held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday 9 May 2007.

PRESENT

- John Sinnott - Chief Executive, Leicestershire County Council – in the Chair
- Rosemary Beard - Chief Executive, Connexions Leicestershire
- Mick Connell - Director of Adult Social Care and Health, Leicestershire County Council
- Jim Connelly - Director, JobCentre Plus
- Nigel Farrow - Representing the Director of Children and Young People's Service, Leicestershire County Council
- Christine Fisher - Chief Executive, North West Leicestershire District Council
- Mike Goodwin - Assistant Chief Constable, Leicestershire Constabulary
- Brian Hayes - Chief Executive, Charnwood Borough Council
- Neil Lambert - Director, Voluntary Action Charnwood
- Heather Munro - Chief Probation Officer, Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Service
- Howard Robinson - Representing the Chief Fire Officer, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- Mary Rogers - Area Director, Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council
- Kishor Tailor - Chief Executive, Leicestershire Economic Partnership

Officers in Support:

- Jan Sensier - GOEM, Area Director for Leicestershire
- Andy Robinson - LAA Lead Officer, Leicestershire County Council
- Paul Smith - Leicestershire Constabulary
- Dr. Andrew Wakeman - Director of Public Health, Leicestershire PCT/Leicestershire County Council
- Sheila Rochester - Leicestershire County Council, Assistant Director of Adult Social Care (Item 75)
- Robert Radburn - Leicestershire County Council, Senior Research Officer (Item 75)
- Martin Gage - Chief Executive, North West Leicestershire CVS (Item 76)
- Nicole Rickard - Leicestershire County Council, Policy Team Leader (Item 77)
- John Wright - Leicestershire County Council, Senior Policy and Performance Officer (LAA) (Item 78)
- Tom Purnell - Leicestershire County Council Policy Group Manager (Item 80)
- Harry Mistry - Leicestershire County Council, Research and Information Team Leader (Item 81)
- Jeremy Prescott - Director, Rural Community Council (Leicestershire and Rutland) (Item 82))
- Geoff Cave - Leicestershire County Council, Committee Officer

72. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of: Catherine Griffiths, Dr Peter Reading, Richard Tobin, Dave Webb and Gareth Williams.

73. Notes of the Meeting held on 14 February 2007

The notes of the meeting of SSOG held on 14 February 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

74. Report Back on SSOG Development Event held on 13 March 2007

Andy Robinson introduced a report prepared by Links Consulting containing notes of the meetings it had facilitated with LAA Leads, SSOG and the Leicestershire Together Board in March 2007. A copy of the report marked '4' is filed with these notes.

The consultant's report drew out a number of common themes from these development events and suggested ways of taking forward the issues raised. The Group briefly discussed some of the main themes, in particular those arising from the SSOG development day on 13 March. It was noted that a number of the issues identified had been taken into account in the preparation of the agenda for this meeting of the Group.

John Sinnott commented that one of the issues raised had been that of accountability which he considered also needed to be kept high on the Group's agenda.

It was AGREED to note the consultant's report on the main issues arising from the development events and to note how these were being taken forward, for example, in the preparation of agendas for future meetings of the Group and the Leicestershire Together Board.

75. Older People – Trends and Priorities

Further to the presentation given at the previous meeting of SSOG by Sheila Rochester and Robert Radburn on the main findings of a statistical review that had been undertaken of data of the population of older people in Leicestershire and how this would change over the next 10-15 years, the Group discussed the trends and priorities in more detail from the points of view of the different public agencies involved. Copies of the presentation slides from the previous meeting were circulated to assist in the discussion and these are filed with these notes.

An open discussion took place at the meeting to identify any cross-cutting issues. Issues raised in the discussion were as follows:

- The County Council was looking at the further potential of working with the District Councils on "extra care" housing, where older people could live independently but with a high level of personal care, and this was being considered alongside the County Council's

proposals for reduction of in-house provision upon which consultation was currently being undertaken until 8 June. The County Council recognised the need to develop an approach of treating older people as active citizens, i.e. the link between 'ageing well and being well' which was also linked to social capital.

- The last four fire deaths in Leicestershire had affected older people in rural communities and the Group recognised the need for agencies to have close liaison with the Fire Service on where vulnerable people live.
- The Police had discussed the issues raised in the Review and were interested in the findings in respect of community safety matters. In particular, it was recognised that in Leicestershire and Rutland fear of crime was disproportionately higher than in other areas of the country. Paul Smith and Robert Radburn undertook to progress the refinement of survey work in this regard as there was a need to seek to understand and address this issue jointly with other agencies.
- The Older People's Network's views had been sought on the Review and it would be discussing the issues further at its next meeting on 20 June.
- A number of the main messages from the review would form key strands in the PCT's delivery plan.
- The issues of accessibility to services and community transport must also be addressed possibly as a separate issue.
- The Group recognised the need to address this theme in LAA(2), for it also to be taken into account under the new Growth Point proposals and for it to fit with housing strategies.
- The particular needs of vulnerable people aged over 85 should be addressed and survey work was needed in this regard.

In conclusion, the Group was informed that priorities would be developed further after the Older People's Network meeting in June. Other LAA blocks had the opportunity to engage with the Network on priorities in order to deal with matters in cross-cutting ways as part of Sustainable Community Strategy and the LAA (2) processes.

It was AGREED that the issues would be progressed as set out above and an update report be made to the next meeting on 2 July.

76. Social Capital Survey

A presentation was given at the meeting by Martin Gage (Chief Executive, North West Leicestershire CVS) on the key findings of a survey on "Social Capital and Stronger Communities in Leicestershire" that had been commissioned by the Stronger Communities Board of Leicestershire Together. Copies of the survey report were circulated at the meeting and a copy is filed with these notes.

The Group was informed that the background to the survey report was that the Voluntary and Community Sector, which leads on the Stronger Communities block of the LAA, had developed a project aimed at measuring and enhancing social capital in 20 communities across the county. It was now possible to measure social capital (or community spirit) in various ways. The findings of the survey were continuing to be analysed and it was intended to produce updated editions of the survey report on the website.

The Group then discussed the report's main findings and conclusions and the following main points were made:-

- Social capital was not evenly distributed across the county and the issue was raised as to whether it was feasible to redistribute it.
- Focus groups would be run with young people in certain areas to seek their opinions on the issues.
- The issues raised needed to be considered in the context of putting services back into the identified areas.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) That Martin Gage be thanked for the presentation and the team involved be thanked for their work in preparing the survey report;
- (ii) That the survey findings be taken on board in the work LAA (2);
- (iii) That consideration would be given to publicising positive findings from the Survey.

77. Revised Sustainable Community Strategy and the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA)

Nicole Rickard gave a presentation on the background to, proposed timescales for, and contents and products of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Leicestershire. Copies of the presentation slides are filed with these notes together with a copy of the Leicestershire Together Strategic Governance Framework which was also circulated at the meeting.

The Group was reminded that a draft Strategy document was needed by late autumn to enable it to be in place to inform the preparation of the new LAA for April 2008. Consultations would now be carried out with key partners, including the district LSPs, in order to produce the first draft of the evidence base by late summer. The evidence would then be used to develop all of the priorities in the Strategy. The ambition was that the new Community Forums would also be engaged in the process and it was hoped that these could be set up by the end of the consultation period.

Two particular issues were raised in the subsequent discussion:-

- The need to align work on the Sustainable Community Strategy with that on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (also see minute 79 below) was recognised.
- The Police, Probation Service and the LSEP had their own databases of research information that could be made available via the new research group (see minute 81 below) to contribute to the evidence base for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It was AGREED to note the information provided in the presentation on the timetable for and contents of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

78. Leicestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA) – End of Year Performance

John Wright introduced a report providing a high level summary of the risk assessment of the likelihood of achieving the targets set for the LAA indicators and a brief explanation of the annual review process and of developments in future performance reporting. A copy of the report marked '8' is filed with these notes.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) That the current risk summary in respect of the LAA be noted (including the requirement for contributions to be made by the District LSPs by the end of August 2007 within the strategic/place structure of the Sustainable Community Strategy);
- (ii) That drafts of the self-assessment be sent via e-mail to Group members for comments and approval;
- (ii) That SSOG would receive future reports informed by the theme lead partnerships on improvement activity to address outcomes and indicators at risk.

79. Commissioning Framework for Health and Well-Being

Mick Connell introduced a report drawing attention to the Commissioning Framework for Health and Well-Being published by the Department of Health and recommending actions for making progress. A copy of the report marked '9' is filed with these notes together with the Executive Summary of the Framework report which was circulated at the meeting.

The Group was informed that a stakeholder event would be held on 18 May to assist in the preparation of a response to the consultation on the Framework by health and social care communities. The key challenge of ensuring that GPs were involved in the commissioning arrangements was recognised by the Group.

The Group also considered it important that there was an agreed definition of the term "commissioning" in the areas involved.

The Group also recognised that JobCentre Plus would need to be engaged regarding practice-based work.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) That the Commissioning Framework for Health and Well-Being be noted;
 - (ii) That it be noted that a stakeholder event would be held on 18 May and that Group members were invited to attend in order to contribute to the partnership response;
 - (iii) That preliminary work be commenced to align commissioning between the PCT and the County Council;
 - (iv) That a brief be prepared for the production of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in consultation with the Statistics and Research Co-ordinating Group.
80. Review of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure in Leicester Shire – Views of Stakeholders on the Report of the VCS Infrastructure Working Group

Further to the presentation by Neil Lambert given at the previous meeting of SSOG on progress in reviewing VCS Infrastructure in Leicester Shire, a further report was circulated at the meeting which included consultation responses to the findings of the report of the VCS Infrastructure Working Group. A copy of this report is filed with these notes.

Tom Purnell outlined the contents of the report. The Group was informed that, subsequent to expressing its preference for model A, the Leicester Shire VCS Infrastructure Consortium had worked up a proposal for a "hub and spoke" approach to infrastructure provision similar to model B and that this proposal was attached as Appendix B to the report. Neil Lambert elaborated on this proposal and requested SSOG to agree that further discussions should now take place on finalising it as an agreed option. It was noted that option B carried additional costs which might not be affordable. John Sinnott stated that from the County Council's point of view, whilst the need for more time to discuss this proposal was recognised, there was also a time factor involved to enable the preferred model to be taken into account as part of budget discussions in late summer/early autumn. Neil Lambert responded that he considered an acceptable balance could be achieved through these further discussions but he appreciated these needed to be concluded within a relatively short space of time.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) That it be noted that the Voluntary and Community Sector was seeking to devise a proposal for a "hub and spoke" model maximising the best possible support for Voluntary and Community Organisations at local level but that this had additional costs that were unlikely to be met by local funding partners;

- (ii) That arrangements would be made for the voluntary and community sector to present a reasonably firm proposal to funding partners by the end of June. (It was noted that this might not be one that had unanimous agreement by the sector.)

81. Terms of Reference for a New Leicestershire and Rutland Statistics and Research Co-ordinating Group

Harry Mistry introduced a report seeking approval to the establishment of a "Leicestershire and Rutland Statistics and Research Co-ordinating Group" which provided a better management of research and other related activities to support partnerships and public sector agencies in the sub-region. A copy of the report marked '11' is filed with these notes.

Subsequent to the preliminary discussions of this proposal by the Group at its meeting on 3rd January, SSOG was informed that the suggested name for the new Group had been discussed by the Task and Finish Group with NHS officers who were content with the word "research" being used as they understood that the new Group would not be involved in specialist or academic research.

Kishor Tailor urged the City Council to agree that the Group should encompass both Councils' areas: John Sinnott responded that this matter would be discussed by the Leaders of the two Councils. In this connection he also referred to paragraph 3(d) in the proposed Terms of Reference and said it would be beneficial for the new Group to be chaired by a representative of an organisation which covered both the City and County areas. He understood that Leicestershire Constabulary had offered to nominate a senior Police officer to fulfil this role if this was acceptable to SSOG. Mike Goodwin elaborated upon how the Police could take on this role and the Group accepted with gratitude the offer of chairmanship.

A number of questions were raised on the details of the proposed Terms of Reference and it was agreed that these should be accepted in outline form only to enable any points of concern to be clarified at the Group's first meeting.

Andy Robinson also commented that it would be necessary to ensure that the Terms of Reference of the new Group and those of IMAG were properly aligned. It was noted that a forthcoming Police seminar on 'analytical research' would help inform this process.

It was AGREED:

- (i) that the outline Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed, subject to the use of the term 'research' being qualified to include 'analysis' and to the specific inclusion therein of customer/co-ordination information';
- (ii) that Leicestershire Constabulary be thanked for its offer to nominate an officer to chair the new Group (referred to in

paragraph 3(d) of the outline Terms of Reference) and that this offer be accepted;

- (iii) that officers would ensure that the Terms of Reference of the new Group and those of IMAG were properly aligned.

82. Community Forums Update

Jeremy Prescott (in his capacity as Chair of the Community Involvement Task Group) introduced a report providing an update on progress with the establishment of Community Forums and seeking views on outstanding issues. A copy of the report marked '12' is filed with these notes.

Jeremy Prescott informed the Group that:

- The County Council had appointed Derk Van Der Wardt as the Community Engagement Team Leader and that two other members of the team would be appointed during the summer;
- He clarified that, in respect of paragraph 2 of the report, some progress had been made in Harborough and Oadby and Wigston Districts;
- There was still disagreement in two districts regarding the intention that a consistent name of "Community Forum" should be used county-wide. (The Group recognised that there might be some change in this position as a consequence of the recent Local Election results.)
- It was considered that the goal that all Forums would meet at least once by the end of the year was achievable.
- Brian Hayes (on behalf of Christine Fisher who had had to leave the meeting before this item was discussed) also referred to concerns regarding a consistent name for the Forums (which was not unanimously accepted by all Districts) and queried the reference, in recommendation 7(b), to the end of June 2007 for arrangements being in place in each district for the establishment of the Forums. On this latter point, Andy Robinson explained that this had already been discussed with the district councils in the context of the preparation of the Sustainable Community Strategy. John Sinnott reiterated that the County Council's position was clear that a consistent name should be used but that this issue would now need to be finally determined at a political level.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) that each Community Forum should meet at least once during 2007 and that the Forums should consider the priorities and outcomes for their areas to be included in the Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA(2);

- (ii) that, in order to ensure that (i) above is achieved, arrangements for the establishment of the Forums should be in place in each district area by the end of June 2007;
- (iii) that SSOG's previous decision that the term "Community Forum" should be used consistently across the County be noted and that it would be necessary for further discussion of this matter to be given at political level.

83. Leicestershire Employment and Skills Board

Kishor Tailor introduced a report advising of Team Leicestershire's plans to establish an Employment Skills Board for Leicestershire. A copy of the report marked '13' is filed with these notes. He invited the Group to submit any comments to him on the proposals by e-mail. It was intended that the Board would hold its first meeting in September.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) that the proposed establishment of the Leicestershire Employment and Skills Board be noted;
- (ii) that Group members would send any comments on the proposal to Kishor Tailor by e-mail.

84. Update on the Public Sector Compact in Leicester Shire

Howard Robinson introduced a report providing an update on the Public Sector Compact in Leicester Shire. A copy of the report marked '14' is filed with these notes.

He reported that interest in the Compact was growing steadily and that there were currently two network groups carrying out development work in respect of learning and development and recruitment and retention activities.

It was AGREED:-

- (i) that the update report be noted;
- (ii) that SSOG be kept informed of further progress.

85. Forward with Leicestershire Aggregates Grants (FLAG)

Andy Robinson introduced a report on the transfer of Aggregates Levy Sustainability Funded Grants through the Local Area Agreement. A copy of the report marked '15' is filed with these notes.

It was AGREED that the arrangements made to deliver the Aggregates Grants Scheme through FLAG be noted.

86. New Growth Point Updates and Development of a County Infrastructure Plan

Andy Robinson introduced a report providing an update on the new Growth Point and development of a County Infrastructure Plan. A copy of the report marked '16' is filed with these notes.

It was AGREED that the contents of the report be noted.

87. Leicestershire Housing Task Group

The Group received a report on behalf of the District Councils regarding the current position on the consideration of housing issues by the Leicestershire Housing Task Group. A copy of the report marked '17' is filed with these notes.

It was AGREED that the contents of the report be noted.

88. Dates of Future Meetings

It was NOTED that the next meetings of the Group would be held on the following dates in 2007:-

- Monday 2 July at 1.00pm (to be followed at 2.00pm by the formal first year LAA Review meeting with representatives of GOEM)
- Wednesday 1 August at 2.00pm
- Wednesday 31 October at 2.00pm

2.00pm – 4.20pm
9/5/07