

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 24 OF THE ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans on Thursday 23 March 2006 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Derrick Ashley – Councillor, Hertfordshire County Council;
Niel Clements – Wheathampstead Parish Councillor, St Albans Association of Local Councils;
Laura Cronshaw – St Albans Council for Voluntary Service (CVS);
Mark Dawe – Oaklands College;
Rocco Di Lieto – St Albans Racial Equality Council (SAREC);
Robert Donald – Environment Forum;
Gill Freeman – St Albans and District Access Group;
Philip Gillmor – St Albans District Chamber of Commerce (Vice-Chairman);
Mark Hunter - Hertfordshire Constabulary (in place of Alison Roome - Gifford);
Stephen James – Rothamsted Research;
Brian Lee – Councillor, Hertfordshire County Council;
Brian Peyton – (Chairman), Councillor, St Albans City and District Council;
Russell Thomas – Councillor, Hertfordshire County Council
Kevin Tighe – St Albans and District Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership;
Chris White – Councillor, Hertfordshire County Council.

Officers in Attendance:

Claire Andrews – Corporate Policy Officer, St Albans City and District Council;
Trevor Brennan – Environmental Resources Officer, St Albans City and District Council;
Angela Parry – Corporate Policy Manager, St Albans City and District Council;
Rob Smith – Assistant Director (Environment), Hertfordshire County Council;
Steve Welch – Strategic Director Community Services, St Albans City and District Council;
Paul Warne – Corporate Administrator, St Albans City and District Council.

Observer:

Allan Witherick, – Councillor member of Hertfordshire Police Authority.

Apologies for Absence:

These were received from the following:

Board Members:

John Bennett - St Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust;
Philip Waters – University of Hertfordshire.

Observer:

David Dixon – St Albans and District Access Group.

Officers:

Dr Joel Bonnet – Director of Public Health, St Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust;
Gill Clutterbuck – Community Strategy Officer, Hertfordshire County Council.

1. **INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked each attendee to introduce themselves. He took the opportunity to thank Rothamsted Research, represented by Stephen James, for hosting the previous meeting of the Board.

With regret, the Chairman referred to the written resignation from the Board of Lesley Culley, who was also leaving her post as Director of Housing with Hightown and Praetorian Housing Association. The Chairman and Vice Chairman both noted that Lesley had been an enthusiastic member of the LSP Board since its establishment and commented that she had made a great contribution to its work. There would be an opportunity for members to bid Lesley farewell at a social event on 30 March 2006.

DECISION

That the Chairman write to Lesley Culley, on behalf of all members, to record their appreciation for her great service to the Board since its inception and to extend their best wishes to her for the future.

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous two meetings of the Board, held on 26 January and 28 February 2006, were submitted.

DECISION

- (i) That, subject to it being recorded that Allan Witherick was attending the meeting as a member of Hertfordshire Police Authority, the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2006 be approved.
- (ii) That, subject to "A member" being inserted in place of "Gill Freeman" in line 5 of the first paragraph of Minute no. 4, the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2006 be approved.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Further to Minute no. 4 of the meeting held on 26 January 2006, in response to a question from Niel Clements, the Board was advised that the Fairtrade Association were currently considering the application which had been made by the District Council on 8 February for St Albans City to be granted Fairtrade status. Subject to that application being successful, the District Council would then consult Parish Councils about extending Fairtrade status to the rest of the District.

With reference to Minute no. 10, the Vice-Chairman thanked Claire Andrews for having drafted a response from the Board to a Government White Paper on the

future of LSPs. The Vice Chairman had amended the draft response on behalf of the Board and it had then been finalised and sent to the ODPM within the deadline for comments.

4. **A LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT FOR HERTFORDSHIRE**

The final draft of a LAA for Hertfordshire was submitted.

The Chairman reminded the Board that if at least 60% of each of the stretch targets in the document were achieved, each District-level LSP in the county stood to receive a grant, although this would not be available for some three years. In recognition of this, the Vice-Chairman wondered whether the LSP would need to appoint its own Treasurer. The Chairman replied that unless the LSP became an independent company with its own officer structure then Council officers would continue to support it.

In relation to the proposed annual sustainability appraisal of the LAA by Hertfordshire County Council's Sustainability Team, the Chairman wondered whether the LSP should obtain a copy of the Team's sustainability criteria for assessing all plans and strategies.

Laura Cronshaw expressed concern that the LAA appeared to contain no stretch targets for the voluntary sector and wondered how the performance of that sector would be monitored and evaluated. She was also concerned about a lack of baseline data generally when measuring stretch targets. In reply, the Chairman referred to section 3 of the LAA which concerned performance management and noted that the strategic monitoring tool for the Hertfordshire LAA would be the SAP Strategic Enterprise Management system.

Kevin Tighe drew attention to the link between the Children and Young People Block within the LAA and the Children and Young People's Plan to be discussed later at this meeting (Minute no. 6 below refers).

It was reported that the LAA had been signed-off by the ODPM earlier on 23 March 2006.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

5. **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE DISTRICT**

Trevor Brennan gave a presentation on the growing problem of climate change, its causes and effects and how it was a "live" issue for governments, both nationally and internationally. The Government had produced a package entitled "Climate Change Challenge" which sought to make climate change more readily understood.

In brief, the burning of fossil fuels and the release of additional carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, plus the release of methane resulting from decomposition processes within landfill sites were giving rise to these gases settling in the stratosphere. As heat from the sun was radiated back from the surface of the Earth it was being trapped by those greenhouse gases, with the result that the planet was becoming warmer than it would otherwise. The release of carbon dioxide into the

atmosphere had really begun with the industrial revolution and the volume of such releases was continuing to increase. There had been a gradual increase in average global temperature from 1860 - 2000; since then the data was still being analysed. Most scientists world-wide accepted that climate change was happening and that it was resulting mostly from the activities of mankind.

Trevor Brennan asked whether the LSP wished to become the key driver to lead the Climate Change Challenge across the District and whether individual partner organisations within the LSP were prepared to become involved in the campaign.

Stephen James agreed that climate change was a current reality. Climate modelling predicted a period of warming for the United Kingdom but also showed that within the next twenty years there would be a significant cooling in winter.

The Vice-Chairman agreed that the LSP should lead in raising public awareness of the issue and was confident that local business would do all it could to help.

The Board discussed the benefits of requiring all new housing to be built with solar panels, although it was recognised that builders would not enjoy any financial savings. Trevor Brennan confirmed that the District Council was currently consulting on possible new conditions to be imposed with new planning permissions, which would require 10% of the energy needs of new residential or commercial premises to be met from renewable sources. Such conditions were already being imposed by other District Councils, such as Woking, and they had not yet been legally challenged by developers.

Allan Witherick and Niel Clements referred to the massive programme of house building in the Eastern Region being required by Government, which they considered would worsen the problem of water shortage. It was also understood that the resulting increase in the developed land area would exacerbate water run-off during downpours and lead to an increased incidence of flooding.

Robert Donald urged the Board to concentrate on delivering focussed environmental projects, such as the Green Travel Plan, before taking on other initiatives. Otherwise he feared that the Board would not be able to achieve all of its objectives.

DECISION

- (i) That Trevor Brennan be thanked for having raised the profile of climate change among members of the Board.
- (ii) That the theme group dealing with Safeguarding the Environment and Heritage be asked to add the problem of climate change and its effects on the District to their remit and that Stephen James be welcomed to join that group.

6. YOUNG PEOPLE - EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Members of the Board were advised of the establishment of a Children's Trust Board by Hertfordshire County Council as part of a partnership within the county, and how this inter-related to work undertaken at district level.

Details were also given of key subjects from a draft county-wide Children and Young People's Plan (2006/09), together with subject areas for a plan of action. In addition, the Board was appraised of the details of a locality study to be undertaken in Sopwell.

Mark Dawe advised that Oaklands College was already being inspected to ensure that it met certain criteria relating to the well-being of young people and that much of this linked in with the draft county-wide Children and Young People's Plan (2006/09). Kevin Tighe then invited Oaklands College to join the Children's Trust Partnership Board for the county. Gill Freeman welcomed the references in the draft Plan to disabled children and their inclusion in mainstream activities.

DECISION

- (i) That the draft county-wide Children and Young People's Plan (2006/09) be endorsed.
- (ii) That Kevin Tighe be requested to produce a local plan of action and report back to a future meeting of the Board.

(Note: The meeting was adjourned at 8.31 pm and resumed at 8.47 pm.)

7. DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

A list of potential priorities for possible inclusion in a new Community Strategy for St Albans City and District was reported. Claire Andrews advised that the next stage of the process was to consult the public, in tandem with a similar exercise in relation to the Local Development Framework. A draft timetable for consultation on the Community Strategy was also reported, together with a list of various process issues which needed to be determined by members of the Board.

Derrick Ashley perceived that Government and local authorities seemed united in wanting LSPs and LAAs to oversee the totality of public spending in the local area. He considered that the list of 13 potential priorities for possible inclusion in a new Community Strategy could probably be made to fit the four blocks determined nationally.

Several members advocated that the number of potential priorities for possible inclusion in a new Community Strategy be reduced. Laura Cronshaw expressed concern that, with the possible exception of Children and Young People, the LSP had not followed a robust process in identifying potential priorities, nor had the Theme Groups had an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Angela Parry reminded the Board of Government advice that public consultation on both initial ideas for priorities in a Community Strategy and the Local Development Frameworks should be closely linked. The Chairman recognised that there could be an exchange of ideas between the two documents and that, following public consultation, the Theme Groups could consider the matter and report subsequently to the Board.

The Vice-Chairman commented that, following public consultation, it might be that some major priorities for local people were different to those in other areas and that, if necessary, the Board would have to group those concerns in a fifth block to be

considered by a fifth Theme Group. Laura Cronshaw confirmed that she would be prepared to progress such a Group.

DECISION

- (i) That the potential priorities for possible inclusion in a new Community Strategy that were identified at the meeting on 28 February 2006 be included in the initial public consultation document.
- (ii) That, subject to the inclusion of Theme Group meetings to consider the outcome of the initial public consultation, the timetable for drawing up the new Sustainable Community Strategy, as now reported, be agreed.
- (iii) That public consultation on potential priorities for possible inclusion in a new Community Strategy be conducted jointly with the Issues and Options Consultation Paper of the Local Development Framework.
- (iv) That the outcome of the consultation be considered by each of the Theme Groups who will then report back to the Board.
- (v) That the process issues identified in the report be considered and determined by the Board in the light of (iv) above.

8. COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES

(a) Green Travel Plans

Copies of a draft covering letter to local companies and a draft Travel Plan were tabled, having been forwarded by Philip Waters. That letter explained that the LSP aimed to better co-ordinate the travel patterns of business employees within St Albans City Centre which it could only do if companies completed and returned the questionnaire. Once those completed questionnaires had been analysed it was intended that the LSP and City Centre business could work together on new initiatives designed to reduce traffic congestion.

DECISION

That Philip Waters be advised of the following:-

- (a) that LSP member organisations and public sector organisations also be contacted, such as the District Council, University of Hertfordshire, schools and others;
- (b) that the questionnaire be kept as brief as possible in order to encourage its completion by more recipients;
- (c) that the option of completing the questionnaire either electronically or on paper be offered to all recipients.

(b) Healthy Living in the District

Copies of a written update on Healthy Lifestyle Initiatives, which had been produced by the St Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust, were circulated. The update

concerned the issues of smoking, the monthly St Albans "Talk Health" market stall to promote good health, physical activity and healthy eating.

DECISION

That the update be noted.

(c) Sopwell Community Partnership

Laura Cronshaw reported that 60 people had attended a public meeting in Sopwell in January 2006 and that since then about 20 were playing an active role. A range of community awareness events were being planned, starting with the first in late May 2006. This would be both a celebration of the good aspects of living in the local area and an opportunity to ask residents what improvements they would like to happen.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

8. **CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

Steve Welch advised on various successes in the field of community safety. The taxi marshalling scheme in St Albans had been fully funded by Hertfordshire County Council for 2006/07 and it was now being replicated in other Districts. The Automatic Numberplate Recognition System was fully functioning. There had been another major drugs raid recently in the District. The District Council had appointed a Business Crime Reduction Officer with funding for the first year from Hertfordshire Police Authority. Thereafter it was expected that the post would become self-financing.

Laura Cronshaw advised that the CVS had employed a funding support officer for the last two years, during which time he had accessed an additional sum of £0.5 million from other funding sources for use by local voluntary and community groups.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Butterfly World

The Vice-Chairman reported that Butterfly World had been informed that their funding application satisfied all the criteria and the consortium was confident that it would be placed on the shortlist for further consideration. He proposed that the Board write a letter in support for the project, which would aid the funding application.

DECISION

That the Chairman be authorised to write a letter on behalf of the Board to express support for the Butterfly World project in Chiswell Green.

(b) Involvement of local Members of Parliament in the LSP

DECISION

That, with immediate effect, the two local MPs for St Albans City and District be sent electronic copies of the Minutes of all meetings of the LSP Board for their information.

(c) Voluntary Members of the LSP - Remuneration

The Vice-Chairman expressed concern that, now that the workload of the LSP was increasing, those members of the Board representing voluntary bodies were participating without receiving any form of remuneration.

DECISION

That during their next review of a Scheme of Members' Allowances for the District Council (beginning in Autumn 2006), the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to consider the possible introduction of allowances for volunteer members of the LSP Board.

(d) Mental Health Services and St Albans City Hospital

It was reported that the St Albans and Harpenden PCT had written to various bodies, seeking their views by 3 May 2006 on proposed reductions to mental health services. Allan Witherick warned that the proposals might include the closure of certain services at the City Hospital, while Robert Donald noted the continuing uncertainty about the future of the City Hospital and its site.

10. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period April - July 2006, as amended, is appended to these Minutes at Appendix 1.

The meeting ended at 10.13 pm.

(Signed)

CHAIRMAN

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR LSP BOARD AGENDAS

APRIL 2006 - JULY 2006

DATE	ISSUE	Description	LEAD CONTACT
30 May 2006	Update on Ward Based projects Update on Healthy Living Projects Update on Green Travel Plans Annual Update on Community Strategy Consultation with LSP Theme Groups on new Sustainable Community Strategy	Update on progress Update on progress Update on progress Update on action plans Feedback on progress	Laura Cronshaw, CVS John Bennett, PCT Philip Waters, University of Hertfordshire Gill Clutterbuck, HCC To be decided
18 July 2006	Consultation on potential themes for new Sustainable Community Strategy Update on Ward Based projects Update on Healthy Living Projects Update on Green Travel Plans	Feedback and discussion on results of consultation Update on progress Update on progress Update on progress	To be decided Laura Cronshaw, CVS John Bennett, PCT Philip Waters, University of Hertfordshire
Sept 2006	Draft Sustainable Community Strategy Update on Ward Based projects Update on Healthy Living Projects Update on Green Travel Plans	Presentation of draft strategy to Board Update on progress Update on progress Update on progress	Claire Andrews/Angela Parry, SADC Laura Cronshaw, CVS John Bennett, PCT Philip Waters, University of Hertfordshire
Nov 2006	Update on Ward Based projects Update on Healthy Living Projects Update on Green Travel Plans	Update on progress Update on progress Update on progress	Laura Cronshaw, CVS John Bennett, PCT Philip Waters, University of Hertfordshire

This is not an exhaustive list of all key issues/decisions that the LSP will undertake but gives an indication of those issues which it is known that the LSP have chosen to consider in the coming period.

Please contact the Corporate Policy Officer at St Albans City and District Council on 01727 819571 or the relevant officers/members for further information. Contact details are listed below.

Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership

St Albans City and District Council
Council Offices, Civic Centre,
St Peter's Street, St Albans AL1 3JE

LSP BOARD MEMBER CONTACT DETAILS

Cllr Niel Clements	Association of Local Councils	01582 833239	Ndclements@hotmail.com
Philip Gillmor	Chamber of Commerce	01727 860281	Penna-press@btconnect.com
Joanna Field	Churches Together	01727 763205	
Rocco di Lieto	St Albans Racial Equality Council (SAREC)	01727 865174	Roccodilieto@aol.com
Laura Cronshaw	Council for Voluntary Service	01727 852657	Laura@cvsstalbans.org.uk
Gill Freeman	St Albans and District Access Group	01727 846481	Tomandgillfreeman@btinternet.com
Robert Donald	Environment Forum Chair	01727 841647	cldr.r.donald@stalbans.gov.uk
Alison Roome-Gifford	Hertfordshire Constabulary	01727 796661	alison.roome-gifford@herts.pnn.police.uk
Cllr Chris White	Hertfordshire County Council	01727 845300	chris.white@hertscc.gov.uk
Cllr Brian Lee	Hertfordshire County Council	01727 826397	brian.lee@hertscc.gov.uk
Cllr Derrick Ashley	Hertfordshire County Council	01462 450892	Derrick.ashley@hertscc.gov.uk
Mark Dawe	Oaklands College	01727 737789	mark.dawe@oaklands.ac.uk
John Bennett	Primary Care Trust Chair	01727 831219	john.bennett@stalbansharp-pct.nhs.uk
Cllr Brian Peyton	St Albans City and District Council	01582 621266	cldr.b.peyton@stalbans.gov.uk
Cllr John Newman	St Albans City and District Council	01582 715645	cldr.j.newman@stalbans.gov.uk
Cllr Roma Mills	St Albans City and District Council	01727 866084	cldr.r.mills@stalbans.gov.uk
Philip Waters	University of Hertfordshire	01707 284033	p.e.waters@herts.ac.uk
Stephen James	Rothamsted Research	01582 763133 (x2440)	stephen.james@bbsrc.ac.uk
Kevin Tighe	Chair, St Albans and District Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership	01727 866100	k.tighe@stalbans.gov.uk

