

MINUTES OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

19th October 2009

2.00 pm, Room 18a, Brockington, Hereford

List of Attendees:

Cllr. Roger Phillips – Leader, Herefordshire Council (Chair)
Chris Bull – Herefordshire Council & NHS Herefordshire
Cllr June French – Elected Member
Joanna Newton – NHS Herefordshire
Will Lindesay – Voluntary Sector
Richard Gething – HALC
Sharon Menghini – Children's Trust
Rob Garner – Environment Partnership
Geoff Hughes – Stronger Communities Partnership
Dr Akeem Ali – Health and Wellbeing Partnership
Angela Smith – Economic Development Partnership
Philip Weaver – Job Centre Plus

Apologies:

Mike Ashton
Mark Turner (Kevin Purcell representing)
Ian Edwards (Jon Payne representing)
Helen Braithwaite – Government Office West Midlands
Cllr Brig Peter Jones – (Lucy Phillips representing)
Philip Talbot (Will Lindesay representing)

In attendance:

Chris Bucknell – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team
Jane L Jones – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team
Gaby Wright (Strategic Partnership Manager, West Mercia Police)
Cllr J Jarvis – For item 4
Peter Yates – For item 4
Oliver Goode – For Item 6
David Galliers – For Item 6
Steve Martin – For items 7.2 and 7.4

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Cllr Phillips welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested that attendees should briefly introduce themselves. It was noted that Philip Talbot would in future replace Richard Betterton as the Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium representative on the Board

2. Minutes of the last meeting

These were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising not on the agenda

◆ Update from Jobcentre Plus

Phil Weaver gave an overview of the local position for the period since March, which had stabilised. Whilst male unemployment had fallen by 4% there had been a corresponding rise in female unemployment of 3%. Jobcentre Plus continued to see well motivated clients. The vacancy factor was down by 10% on the same time last year. Redundancy rates were slowing, although it should be noted that this relates to notified redundancies and there is awareness that smaller sized employers may not necessarily report redundancies.

The recent Jobs Fair with 18 local employers had attracted 700 visitors. A number of local initiatives were being undertaken, in particular to support young people into employment.

West Mercia Police commented that the anticipated uplift in crime as a result of the economic downturn had not really manifested itself. Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service echoed this comment.

◆ Update on Economic Downturn Action Plan

Angela Smith reported on the Area Based Grant allocation, supporting small businesses. Angela particularly wished to note her thanks to Lyndsey McCron and Alan Ronald from the Economic Development Team for their hard work.

The Chair commented that the action plan was largely achieved, and particularly noteworthy was the fact that HC payment times were now down to under 14 days. However, the economic climate is still delicate.

Action – the Economic Downturn Action Plan to be refreshed.

◆ Appointment of Vice Chairs

It was noted that the issues of appointing two Vice Chairs, one from the Voluntary Sector and one from the Business sector, should be resolved.

Action – the Chair requested the two sectors firm up their recommendations in readiness for the next Board meeting.

4. Links between the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework (LDF)

Cllr Jarvis and Peter Yates presented an overview of the LDF, its role in strategic planning policy development and its links with the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. It was noted that the relationship between the LDF group and Herefordshire Partnership require appropriate management and proper representation as there was currently no Board member on the LDF group. The Chair emphasised the importance of the LDF as a strategic document.

Jo Newton welcomed dialogue with the health sector, particularly regarding health provision and design. Lucy Phillips commented that the Fire and Rescue Service was currently considering its contribution and Kevin Purcell added that West Mercia Police are working with Herefordshire Housing to be part of the design process. This might be something Fire and Rescue could contribute to.

It was noted that, should there be a change of Government, there may be a different approach to the Regional Spatial Strategy although the Chair added that there would still be a need to retain flexibility in housing allocation.

The Board was asked to consider how best to take this forward and was recommended to note:

The “nine steps to improved practice” summarised in the CLG paper “Planning Together”, and establish a joint action plan to develop best practice and to ensure alignment of the outcomes of both the SCS and the LDF if necessary through formalised arrangements for an Implementation Plan.

Action – It was agreed that a member of each Policy and Delivery Group nominate an Infrastructure representative for the LDF. This to be done by e-mail with a proposal tabled outside of the main HP Board meeting.

6. Learning to Deliver Improvement offer

David Galliers from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership gave a presentation on the support he and his organisation were able to offer Local Authorities and their Partners across the West Midlands.

The support programmes relate to expertise, money & learning activities to help develop / improve the LAA planning and delivery systems.

Key areas are: People and Leadership, Adult Social Care, Performance Improvement, Children's Services, Transformation and Process Improvement, Partnership Working and LAA Support (L2D) and Procurement and Efficiency.

The features, need and benefits of the support offer were explained, as were measures of success. It was suggested that one or two issues should be focussed on, with cross-cutting interest.

The links with Total Place were noted as was the requirement for strong leadership to ensure delivery against emerging issues. Concern was raised over possible duplication of effort, although there was a general welcome to the offer of support for improvement.

Action – A development proposal to be signed off by the Management Group at its next meeting (27th November) with an update to the Board at its December meeting.

7. Items for Information

7.1 Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy

The Board heard a statement of progress, including the outcome of the September consultation process which had been undertaken in conjunction with all the partnership groups. It was explained that a number of responses had been received and it had not been entirely clear whether these had been on behalf of Policy and Delivery groups or individuals. Additional work was being done with each of the facilitators to clarify this. Board members were also asked to approve, or suggest amendments if required, to the structure and delivery structure section of the document.

Jon Payne complimented Herefordshire Partnership Support Team on the document to date.

Action - The Board approved the delivery and structure section (page 8) of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy. The Board approved the additional time requested for the Policy and Delivery Facilitators to be consulted further on their Group's response. The Board also reiterated this task as a priority.

7.2 Total Place

Steve Martin explained the development of the *Total Place* agenda nationally and drew attention to the foundations being laid in Herefordshire, inviting the Board to consider the

next steps so as to ensure that the county maximises the potential benefits. Links to the Reaching the Hearts of Herefordshire programme (**Item 7.3**) were noted.

7.4 Comprehensive Area Assessment

It was reported that Herefordshire had received no red or green flags. The headlines were mostly positive, and Mary-Ann Bruce (CAA Lead) had expressed her confidence in Herefordshire's ability to undertake effective and accurate self-evaluation.

The process had been moderated, so although comments could be submitted, these should generally be relating to inaccurate or misleading information or data. Comments should be sent to Steve Martin smartin@herefordshire.gov.uk 01432 261877 by 31st October 2009.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution to the CAA process. Angela Smith particularly wished to record her appreciation of the excellent support and guidance from Chris Bucknell and the Support Team during the process.

7.5 ABG and Allocation process

Chairs of the Policy and Delivery Groups will be examining the process for allocating the ABG from 2010 on November 3rd.

7.6 Community Engagement Strategy

Herefordshire Partnership been asked to formulate a strategy for the partnership as a whole, particularly referencing the Third Sector. The current draft document is out for consultation until 30th November, after which an action plan will be developed.

8. Any other Business

Herefordshire Equalities Partnership - a paper was tabled regarding future arrangements, including a proposal that the partnership was subsumed in the Stronger Communities group.

Herefordshire Partnership Autumn event – November 25th Kindle Centre @ ASDA, 1.30 arrival for a 2.00pm start. An advance notice had been circulated and invitations with additional information be sent out w/c 26th October. The event will focus on the local impact of successfully delivering the LAA, involvement of interested groups and organisations, and will hear presentations from 3 of the Policy and Delivery Groups.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

9.30 – 12.00 9th December 2009 venue Hereford Room Plough Lane.

Dates for 2010

Monday 8th February	2.00 – 4.30	Hereford Room, Plough Lane
Monday 24th May	2.00 – 4.30	Hereford Room, Plough Lane
Monday 18th October	2.00 – 4.30	Hereford Room, Plough Lane
Monday 6th December	2.00 – 4.30	Hereford Room, Plough Lane