

**Herefordshire Partnership
Executive Group meeting, Friday 22nd July
2011**

Present:

Dean Taylor - Herefordshire Council / NHS Herefordshire (chairing in the absence of Chair and Vice Chair)
Paul Deneen - West Mercia Police Authority (representing Charles Hill)
Mark Yates – Hereford and Worcester Fire Service (representing Lucy Phillips)
Lynda Wilcox – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
David Throup – DEFRA group
Richard Quallington – Third Sector Board
Gary Woodman – Herefordshire Business Board
Liz Smith – West Mercia Probation Service

In attendance:

Nina Bridges – Herefordshire Council
Philippa Lydford – Herefordshire Partnership Support
Jane Jones – Herefordshire Partnership Support
Jenny Lewis – Asst Director, People, Policy & Partnerships
Clem Attwood – Research Team (Item 7)
Geoff Hughes - Herefordshire Council / NHS Herefordshire (Item 6)

Apologies:

Andy Watts – Clinical Commissioning group
Chris Bull – Herefordshire Council / NHS Herefordshire
Charles Hill – West Mercia Police
Lucy Phillips - Hereford and Worcester Fire Service

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested they introduce themselves for the benefit of anyone who hadn't previously attended. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Jane Jones advised the group that, in accordance with the discussion arising from the previous meeting, an Appendix to the current Sustainable Community Strategy had been drafted. This explains the rationale behind the decision to utilise the current document until the end of the calendar year. Members were asked to approve the Appendix, which they did.

Gary Woodman informed the group that in respect of the Enterprise Zone, Herefordshire is one of 29 bids submitted of which 10 can be approved. It is understood that a decision may be forthcoming mid-summer.

3. Community Safety Partnership

(1) Changes to legislation for Community Safety Partnerships

Nina Bridges explained the changes to legislation for Community Safety Partnerships, including proposals to reduce bureaucracy and other administrative burdens and the move to a 1 year (rather than 3 year) Strategy.

Richard Quallington asked how the Third Sector can best be engaged, and this was echoed by Lynda Wilcox in respect of HALC.

It was clarified that the Responsible Authorities listed in the report, were those which were mandatory partners for Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). However, with Herefordshire's CSP function being covered by HPEG, both HALC and the Third Sector Board have input into Community Safety issues and this is reflected in the Terms of Reference. A number of partners are also involved in the sub-groups which support the priorities of the CSP.

Action

It was agreed to maintain the CSP function within the role of full HPEG terms of reference as currently stated. List of membership of CSP sub-groups to be circulated with Minutes.

(2) CCTV

The current contract for CCTV with Remploy will end January 2012, but with the provision for a two year renegotiated extension. Due to funding reductions, a viable service can still be provided, with 24 hour recording, but with reduced operator hours.

A number of partners confirmed the effectiveness of CCTV. Probation, West Mercia Police and Fire and Rescue all commented on how powerful it was as evidence. Paul Deneen, also commented, that in his role as a magistrate, he could also support its effectiveness with defendants changing their plea when faced with firm evidence. Mark Yates also commented that it is used in assisting fire investigations. David Throup reported that from an environmental perspective it can be very useful e.g. flooding problems. Lynda Wilcox commented on the value that Town Councils place on CCTV because they perceive its value in community reassurance. The meeting endorsed the renegotiation of the Remploy contract for a 2 year period and noted that from the 9th January 2012 the monitoring hours are to be reduced, with further consultation to be led by the CCTV Steering Group.

In terms of securing future sustainability, it was felt that more needed to be done to promote the benefits of CCTV.

Action

It was also agreed that the value and success of CCTV should be communicated more widely.

(4) Performance

It was agreed that a more comprehensive report would be submitted at the September meeting.

(5) Priority Updates

A discussion took place around the priorities. It was noted that the Health and Well Being Board has identified alcohol misuse as a key area where partnership working has the potential to make a real impact.

Liz Smith explained the current programme of targeting "top" offenders, to help reduce re-offending. However in the light of overall budget cuts, there was real pressure on some areas of the service.

Mark Yates commented that work is continuing around targeting young people, particularly the 15-17 age group, in respect of increasing road safety and safer driving techniques.

Nina Bridges explained that Empowered Localities is being taken forward by Herefordshire Community Development Partnership.

Budget reductions to the Community Safety Fund were noted – 20% for 2011/12 and 60% for 2012/13 compared to 2010/11 figures. Nina Bridges also explained that with the election of the Police and Crime Commissioners, the latest advice was that CSPs would only receive 6 months funding in 2012/13.

(6) Domestic Homicide Reviews

Liz Smith explained the process for the Review of Domestic Homicides, with three key points to note: the process is statutory; there is a good deal of expectation from the process; and its cost can be significant.

Funding a Review, may cost up to £30,000. In Herefordshire in the last three years there has probably been a requirement for one such Review.

Recommendations in respect of Domestic Homicide Review as per page 3 of the report were accepted.

(7) Substance Misuse

The Joint Commissioning Group had met on 20th July and discussed the anomaly in respect of Substance Misuse funding, which had now been resolved for direct service provision. All agreements would be subject to renegotiation for 2012/2013.

(8) Other funding – Supporting People

In respect of other funding issues Liz Smith reiterated the current squeeze on budgets this year, which will only increase next year. The prison population hasn't reduced as much as previously predicted and this will add further pressure on services.

4. Work Plan for the Executive Group

Philippa Lydford explained that this item led on from the previous discussion around the Community Strategy. There is a need for the group to share information around the table and identify areas where tangible outcomes can be realised. Before a new Community Strategy can be developed there is a requirement to pinpoint any additional notable challenges facing the County. Better integration of information will have a positive impact on commissioning.

The Group was asked to consider the content of the work plan.

The following points were raised:

Members felt that HPEG was well placed to provide a strategic lead and support on localities and the Localism Bill.

There was a need for tangible outcomes and clarity that the Locality Strategy does deliver better outcomes.

The need to consider the implication of some work which is "cross-locality", e.g. environment.

The need to think more collectively and creatively about best use of Partner resources e.g. buildings – there are good opportunities to share currently under-utilised facilities.

With a reduction in budgets, pooling resources is increasingly going to become a necessity.

The localities approach allows us to differentiate between varying needs, and arrive at a richer understanding of Herefordshire.

Can we demonstrate added value? The facility for town and parish councils to set a local precept offers the opportunity to address local issues.

Action

The template to be populated with suggestions from the meeting, circulated, discussed with members for contributions (Report Appendix A) and brought back to the September meeting.

5. Autumn Partnership event

Jane Jones reminded members that the Terms of Reference identified the objective to hold a partnership event twice yearly. A date had been set (October 17th) and previously circulated. In line with our practice of holding events in community facilities wherever possible, the Parish Hall at Bodenham had been booked.

The Group was asked to consider best use of the event. A number of key challenges had already been highlighted in the meeting, and a number of options had been suggested in the Report. The Support Team now requested that Group members decide the focus for the event, submit suggestions for the invitation list and commit their organisation to participation – e.g. facilitating workshops.

It was generally agreed that, as had been discussed earlier in the meeting, the impact of locality working and Localism would be good topics to pursue as there is a need to clarify our local intentions and consider their impact. It might also be pertinent to include a briefing around the Health and Well Being Board and how its remit and Strategy might dovetail with that of the HPEG and the Community Strategy.

Members agreed to consider how their networks might best be used to promote the event and target the most appropriate audience.

6. Locality working

Geoff Hughes explained that there were a number of complexities which were feeding into locality working, including emerging legislation, the best use of local assets and staff across various partners and the need to manage the process in a political environment.

Whilst some services can clearly be subject to locality delivery, others e.g. environment, may not be so, and it is about what works best. HPS has identified senior managers for each locality and it will be the responsibility of these managers to work with key partners to develop the approach for working in the locality. They will work closely with elected members, who in turn will need to work closely with Parish Councils to best identify and address local need. It was noted that the richness of intelligence through this approach would feed into and benefit the commissioning cycle.

Richard Quallington commented that there was a need to raise the profile of locality working within the Third Sector, and Gary Woodman echoed this comment for the private sector, saying that messages needed to be tailored to the different sectors. It was also felt that there was still a lack of understanding of the rationale of the locality approach and therefore some clarity was required. It was agreed that, as per the previous Agenda item, this would be a suitable topic for the Autumn event. Geoff also agreed to speak at any event if that would assist communication. It was proposed that the County's M.Ps should be updated on the initiative.

Liz Smith commented on the need to ensure that local differences are acknowledged, even with one locality (Hereford) there may be substantial variations and that shouldn't be lost. However, the proposal offered significant opportunities.

Mark Yates welcomed the opportunity to share resources, including the fire stations, particularly in rural areas, space at which could be used by other services and local the community. Richard Quallington requested that a whole area approach be taken to maximising the use of assets, to include the community and voluntary sector, to ensure the viability of village halls etc.

There was agreement that whilst partnership working would be a key part of locality working, the phrase "locality partnerships" had connotations which were not helpful and it was noted that the paper described locality networks, but this might need further consideration.

Action

Further update to be brought back to October HPEG, with Locality working covered at the Autumn Event.

7. Locality Profiles

Clem Attwood from the Research Team tabled some examples of locality profiles and explained how they had been developed. Through examination of these it can be seen how and where areas differ, from one locality to another as well as variations within a locality itself. For example, whilst the Golden Valley is mainly a very rural area with similarities to other parts of Herefordshire, there are areas of deprivation embedded within, e.g. Kingstone.

Hereford locality shows some significant variances, e.g. some of the highest and lowest achieving schools. Clem asked for comments on the profiles, which were being updated in the Autumn. It was suggested that the names used to describe the super output areas be reviewed, especially if the documents were publicly available, as local knowledge around the table, suggested that they might lead to misunderstandings and confusion. Clem explained that the names had been devised for these Lower Super Output (LSO) areas and were used for consistency. Changes were possible, or additional clarity could be provided. All agreed that it was a very useful document which could be a valuable tool in respect of targeting resources towards deprivation.

It was noted that an “environment” strand was not included and this could be rectified. Clem requested suggestions for additions to the locality profiles by the end of August for bringing back to the October meeting and the Autumn event. The Group complimented the Research Team on some excellent work.

Action

Comments on the locality profiles to Clem Attwood cattwood@herefordshire.gov.uk by the end of August.

Item 8. Information Sharing

Dave Throup advised the meeting about the Natural Environment White Paper, published on 7th June, with the proposal for Local Nature Partnerships and their purpose of bringing a diverse range of individuals, businesses and organisations together at a local level to create a vision and plan of action of how the natural environment can be taken into account in decision making.

Whilst there will be a recognition of the value of sustainable economic development, there will be a requirement for environmental reinvestment elsewhere to counter-balance.

The new Local Nature Partnerships will contribute to the work of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Development Framework. The Environment Partnership is submitting a bid to assess if it fits the required criteria. There is a possibility that this could be done with Shropshire.

Lynda Wilcox raised Cross Border working and whether previously agreed arrangements are still in place. Some work is being established with Town and Parish Councils, mainly towards Wales. It was agreed this should be a future Agenda item.

Richard Quallington advised the Group that the appointment of Chair of the Third Sector Board would be announced soon. (Jake Bharier has since been confirmed as the new Chair)

Gary Woodman informed the Group that the Chamber of Commerce is keen to see economic strategies based on the Market Towns.

The Fire and Rescue service forewarned the Group about impending publicity concerning how the service responds to some fire alarm activity. Analysis has shown that only a very small percentage of call-outs are genuinely required and supplying such a service has a huge resource impact, and is therefore under review.

9. Any Other Business

Pride of Herefordshire Awards 2011 – the Group was reminded that there is still time to submit nominations for this year’s scheme. The deadline is 5th August.

Hereford Photography Festival – the Group was informed that the Festival (the longest running in the UK) takes place 28/10/11 – 26/11/11 and promotes Herefordshire as the region’s cultural capital in photography and lens-based media. Venues will be used across the County to exhibit photos with the aim of promoting the County culturally and as a centre of creativity and innovation to new businesses.

Paul Deneen commented on how useful and stimulating the meeting had been and thanked officers for the supporting paperwork.

10. Date and time of next meeting:

Friday 9th September 2011, 10am, Kington Room, Plough Lane, Hereford