

**Minutes of Joint LSP Board/LSMG Meeting
held on Friday 17th September 2010 at Wigan Investment Centre**

Present

Peter Smith
David Molyneux
Colin Greenhalgh
Carol Watson
Peter Burt
Angie Buckley
Susan Loudon
Gareth Cheesman
David Smith
Peter Jenkinson (JCP)
Miranda Barker
Kate Fallon
Julie Hotchkiss

Joyce Redfearn
Gillian Harris
Joe Taylor
Pamela Ball
Trevor Barton
Jim Maloney
David Dunning
Cath Hurst
Ashley Crumbley
Bernard Walker
Shaun Donnellan
Julie Southworth

Apologies

Marion Andrews
Nick Hudson
Rodney Hill
Marie Gillot
Pam Gilligan
Kate Ardern
Chris Ready
Liz Edmondson
Andrew Foster
Khaled Amini
Les Higgins

In attendance:

Susan Gambles
Stephen Normington
Lynn Kay
Simon Dale
James Winterbottom

1. Welcome and introductions and purpose of joint meeting

The Chair welcomed everyone and introduced the purpose of the meeting. He outlined some of the issues facing the partnership as a result of shifts in government policies, administration and cuts in public sector spending.

Reflecting also on discussions with GM colleagues, the Chair informed partners that forthcoming changes would have huge impact on the borough. He said that prosperity was vital and that the partnership needs to be forward looking to ensure support for the young and most vulnerable within our communities.

Mindful of the new Government's policy for a Big Society he reminded the meeting that it was not possible for organisations to tackle issues alone and that the LSP had an important role to support a strong shared working for the benefit of the borough

2. Minutes of previous LSP Board meeting 12 July 2010, and LSMG meeting 9th July 2010 (previously circulated)

The minutes of the above meetings were agreed. No updates or comments were noted.

3. Review from all core services and stakeholders

Wigan Council

Joyce Redfearn outlined some of the challenges, current and future actions facing the Council and its core service partners WALH and WLCT

- Need to remove £55m expenditure from budget over the next 3 years
- Loss of major programmes such Building Schools for the Future
- Removal of the Audit Commission and associated performance management regimes – as well as the RDA and regional government office
- Major housing supply issues – at a time of increased demand
- External recruitment freeze
- Review of capital programme and overtime
- ER / VR and Voluntary reduction schemes
- Employee support

Joyce noted that these huge issues would mean significant changes – and in particular the removal of bureaucracy in many areas and a requirement to innovate and take more risks.

Initiatives

- Shared services e.g. Shared Payroll / HR service with Stockport and Trafford
- Implementation of new benefits: Assess and Decide
- Commissioning and Procurement – reviewing external contracts.
- Standardising service provision and focus on self service – savings in customer services

Joyce outlined some emerging opportunities such as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and the potential for new approaches to partnership to help connect with opportunities and investments as well as enterprise and skills.

Trevor Barton noted concerns from the voluntary sector about the potential for removal of grants and other funding. He also noted views of the private sector that do not see public sector funding cuts as a business opportunity.

Trevor emphasised the need for clarity around future supply of funding and the importance of continuing grant aid for the voluntary sector.

The meeting noted that it was unrealistic for any public body to give commitments in relation to future funding. It was possible that changes in public service provision might lead to increased funding into the 3rd sector.

FE Post 16 provision

Cath Hurst reported that qualification based funding had reduced by 25% - even though there the College now has more student places than before.

She also noted that public perception driven by media messages seems to be deterring interest in college and further education places. .

Cath noted the importance of support for colleagues facing redundancy including financial support for re-training.

NHS

Julie Southworth reported on local NHS saving targets of £100m over 3 years with an aim to achieve a balanced budget within the current year. Immediate changes will include reconfiguration of some treatments e.g. plastic surgery with treatments over £1000 to be approved by senior management. The Tariff payment level will also be frozen. She noted that re-configuration of services to protect front line services is likely to have effect on other community and social care provision.

Julie reported on emerging work to develop local GP commissioning consortiums – and the potential risk of losing co-terminosity with Local Authority and other public service boundaries.

Alan Stephenson cautioned that Estates owned by PCT i.e. Lift Buildings may go to National Commissioning Board which will impact on some shared services – although this is not clear yet, there is a need to have a debate on the ‘assets’

Greater Manchester Police

Shaun Donnellan reported on current cutbacks already affecting 1,500 support staff. Although front line staff are being ‘protected’ it is recognised that cuts are likely to have negative effect on other issues and local communities. Notwithstanding these challenges Shaun said the Police remained committed to working with and supporting partners.

Greater Manchester Probation Service

Angie Buckley noted that the Probation service was also planning for cutbacks of about 25%. She said that new priorities for service delivery were being identified and that all services would be reviewed. As reported in the national press, the focus was likely to shift away from prison and towards rehabilitation – e.g., mentoring for offenders in relation to employability.

GM Fire

Joyce Redfearn reported on work to achieve 10% savings. She noted that this would have an impact on staffing as well as volunteers and retained fire-fighters. Concerns remained in relation to the need to preserve service responsiveness levels in order to support resilience needs.

Voluntary Sector

Pamela Ball described the impact of cuts being seen at a national level such as the removal of funding for the V-Involved youth volunteering programme.

She then noted a series of local developments:

- Updated mapping of 3rd sector had identified over 1500 active organisations
- 3rd Sector Assembly establishment underway
- Volunteer strategy in development
- Support for Social enterprise development

Jim Maloney cautioned of the likely increase in demand for services due to changes in benefits, increased unemployment etc., He reflected that volunteers alone are not able to deliver all public services – and that there needs to be a professional support mechanism.

Trevor Barton suggested that the Partnership Convention in February might focus on the role and opportunity for the voluntary sectors.

Community Sector

Carol Watson spoke of how the community sector can make things happen without money. She described a number of local examples of community action and the ongoing need to make partnerships work at a local level.

Bernard Walker gave a brief update from the recent meeting of the 3rd Sector Committee. Serious concerns had been expressed about the likely impact of forthcoming public sector funding cuts. Bernard shared a draft concordat which the committee wished to recommend to the LSP. The committee felt it was important for a re-statement of the COMPACT principles. The Board endorsed the principles of this new concordat and agreed it should be formally launched and shared following wider consultation.

Schools

The Chair commented on the pressures facing CYPF due to the withdrawal of BSF and how this will have a massive impact on future re-shaping and re-structuring of schools in the borough. Susan Loudon outlined some of the work being done by CYPF to address this.

Summary:

The Chair expressed the need for WBP to look collectively at the opportunities that could be taken out of some of the challenges especially around Big Society and stressed the importance of keeping up the conversations and communications with local people and stakeholders to enable ALL partners to work together on positive actions.

4. Session 2

Moving Forward

Joyce Redfearn introduced the 2nd session outlining some of the big Economic issues facing the borough. Followed by Steve Normington, Miranda Barker and Susan Gambles the joint presentation outlined key challenges and opportunities for future economic growth and development.

Steve highlighted spatial development issues focusing on potential primary development and employment sites set out within the Local Development Framework (LDF) including Greenheart and North Leigh. The plan has series of long term objectives up to 2026. These include a focus on connecting local people to employment and the support for balanced housing markets.

Some of the options outlined by Steve included connections to emerging regional opportunities including the new Media City in Salford.

Susan and Miranda outlined work to date by the Economic Partnership to develop a new Economic Framework for the borough based on the principles of “connecting people to opportunities”. The framework will be driven by 3 main themes: People, Prosperity and Place.

In discussion a number of key points were noted:

Important for the LDF to acknowledge Homes & Community Agency projections for housing growth in relation to housing developments to ensure full potential.

Important to support ongoing infrastructure development in order to support economic growth and support better job opportunities

Need to be ensure that housing development reflects the needs of the people and not just developers

Essential that Borough plays a key role in regional development but should seek to ensure that job opportunities are linked back to people within the Borough.

Important for all of these key messages and the local implementation to be reported in detail to Township Forums and local people.

Public services will need to adjust their future service planning to the possible new housing developments and infrastructure changes.

Need to acknowledge potential for local resistance especially if increased economic activity leads to further traffic or impact on local communities.

5. Key Actions

Agreed that focus for LSP should be 3 economic priorities:

People
Prosperity
Place

The LSP Board will focus its next meeting around supporting the EECH Partnership to develop the Strategy which will include identifying and supporting other partners' contributions.

6. Date and time of next meeting

LSP Board Monday 8th November 3pm
LSMG Friday 19th November 9am

