

<b>'West Cheshire Together' Thematic Leads meeting</b>
--

**Date:** Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009  
**Time:** 1.30pm  
**Venue:** Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chester

**Attending:****Representing:**

Steve Robinson ( <i>Chair</i> )	Children & Young People
Tim Jackson	Safer & Stronger Communities
Steve Kent	Rural West Area Partnership Board
Sara Mogel	Business, Enterprise & Culture
Cllr Lynn Riley	Safer & Stronger Communities
Chris Rowbottom	Northwich & Rural North Area Partnership Board
John Salt	Environmental Sustainability / Winsford & Rural East Area Partnership Board
Jane Staley	Environmental Sustainability
John Stephens	Children & Young People
Julie Webster ( <i>for Helen Bellairs</i> )	Health & Wellbeing

**Apologies:** Helen Bellairs (Health & Wellbeing), Jon Betts (Ellesmere Port Area Partnership Board), John Denny (Chester Area Partnership Board), Alison Roylance-White (Rural West Area Partnership Board), Ian Whitehead (Health & Wellbeing) and Mark Wilson (Business, Enterprise & Culture)

**Visitors:** Laurence Ainsworth, Mike Armstrong and Beverley Wilson (Cheshire West and Chester Council)

**Support:** Alison Armstrong (Cheshire West and Chester Council)

Item No.1	<b>Welcome, introductions and apologies</b>  Steve welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were noted.
Action - Decision	None required
Item No.2	<b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising: 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>  The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.  Alison circulated a draft Vision Statement for the new Sustainable Community Strategy and draft joint summary questionnaire to be used as part of the wider consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan. It was noted that the short questionnaire had been developed to gather as wide a cross-

	<p>section of views from individuals and organisations as possible. A series of separate, more detailed questionnaires focusing more specifically on each of the three key documents was also under development. It was hoped these would gather more in-depth responses from key consultees.</p> <p>Laurence introduced a report, requested at the previous meeting, setting out the proposals for a partnership led “Community Survey” to supplement the bi-annual national Place Survey as a means of providing timely perception based information. Bev reminded partners that the Place Survey was used to benchmark performance across a small number of National Indicators, some of which featured in the Local Area Agreement. It was noted that any local survey should follow the same methodology as the Place Survey in order to provide comparable data. Appendix A to the report highlighted the results from the first Place Survey published in June 2009. Appendix B identified a series of draft questions for the proposed interim survey. It was suggested that a small working group comprising representatives from each of the five thematic partnerships be established as soon as possible to determine the content of the final questionnaire.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic partnerships to identify their nominated representative to Bev by the end of October.</li> </ul>
Item No.3	<p><b>Mid Year LAA Performance Report</b></p> <p>Mike introduced a report detailing the implementation status of the Local Area Agreement delivery plans at mid year. It was noted that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 33 of the 34 delivery plans had now been signed off by the relevant thematic partnership. The delivery plan for NI 4 would be presented for sign off to the next meeting of the Safer &amp; Stronger Communities thematic partnership. A number of the plans had been revised to make them more robust. It was important to ensure that performance managers were represented on all thematic partnerships to embed the Performance Management Framework (PMF) across the piece.</li> <li>2. At mid year, no indicators had been identified as “red” though only 20 were categorised as “on target”. Ongoing work was therefore needed to identify problems and ensure corrective action.</li> <li>3. Only seven delivery plans had been completed against the 19 non-designated indicators / targets. If these were to remain within the LAA, then the same process should be followed to ensure effective performance monitoring and management.</li> </ol>

	<p>4. The Safer &amp; Stronger Communities thematic partnership had recommended the removal of a non-designated indicator (NI 37). Whilst there was no formal statutory process with Government to remove non-designated indicators, it was felt important that any changes to the LAA should be formally agreed locally through the relevant thematic partnership and, ultimately, through the Local Strategic Partnership and Executive of the Council to ensure good governance.</p> <p>5. Initial calculations had identified a potential maximum financial reward, should all targets be achieved, of approximately £2m. Based on the latest position, this figure had been reduced to £1.5m.</p> <p>In addition to those indicators highlighted in section 3 of the report, partners noted that a number of those indicators currently showing as “amber” could become “red” over the remaining lifespan of the LAA, e.g. NI 153, NI 163, NI 164.</p> <p>Julie also highlighted a potential additional request from the Health &amp; Well-being thematic partnership for the removal of a non-designated indicator.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners agreed the recommendations contained within the report.</li> <li>• It was also agreed that, over the next few months, each thematic partnership closely monitor the status of the indicators for which they are responsible and review the on-going relevance of the non-designated indicators.</li> </ul>
Item No.4	<p><b>Second Homes Taxation Funding</b></p> <p>Steve introduced this report highlighting potential resources available to the wider partnership framework through the additional income generated from Second Homes Council Tax, and requested views on how these resources should be deployed.</p> <p>Partners explored a number of ideas which could help demonstrate the credibility of the Area Partnership Boards, deliver against key outcomes and contribute to key LSP priorities.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For 2009/10, it was agreed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) £10k be allocated to support the Bonfire Initiative outlined in Appendix A to the report;</li> <li>ii) £10k be allocated to each Area Partnership Board to support local projects and initiatives; and</li> <li>iii) each thematic partnership consider potential ideas for</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>further use of the available funding to support the delivery of LAA outcomes prior to the next meeting of the Thematic Leads.</p>
<p>Item No.5</p>	<p><b>Economic Recession Action Plan</b></p> <p>Sara introduced this report examining the background to the recession and its current impact on the borough. Specific reference was made to the key areas currently affected. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Commercial risk;</li> <li>○ Claimant unemployment;</li> <li>○ Job gains and losses;</li> <li>○ Young people who are NEET (i.e. not in education, employment or training);</li> <li>○ Residential property market; and</li> <li>○ Benefit caseloads.</li> </ul> <p>A series of economic forecasts were also presented together with an Action Plan outlining tasks and performance measures to underpin ongoing work.</p> <p>It was noted that recent news concerning the establishment of a large Marks &amp; Spencer outlet at Cheshire Oaks and confirmation of Vauxhall's position to 2013 was positive both for Ellesmere Port and the wider borough though it was important to think about the longer term.</p>
<p>Action - decision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● That the report be presented to the LSP on 29<sup>th</sup> October for endorsement.</li> </ul>
<p>Item No.6</p>	<p><b>Area Action Plans</b></p> <p>Partners considered the final draft Area Action Plans produced by each of the five Area Partnership Boards and discussed future working relationships between the APBs and the five strategic thematic partnerships. The following specific points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) To date the five Area Partnership Boards have not been 'tasked' to lead on specific priorities at a local level by the thematic partnerships despite being willing to be 'commissioned' in this way.</li> <li>ii) The APBs should provide an opportunity for middle managers across all partner agencies to listen to the views of both the community and front-line officers and consider the effectiveness of decisions taken at a strategic level (be they in relation to policy or resource allocation) against the context of local needs and priorities.</li> <li>iii) Thematic partnerships want to see delivery at a local level through the APBs but currently are unaware of what is important and what is not. It is therefore important that the</li> </ul>

	<p>APB Chairs meet with each of the thematic partnerships to share information and intelligence and identify opportunities for partnership 'commissioning'. Tim highlighted that the Safer &amp; Stronger Communities thematic partnership had identified localised priorities by each APB area within the Strategic Assessment. The next meeting of the APB Chairs to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October could provide a useful opportunity to explore this thematic area in more detail.</p> <p>iv) Further clarity was needed on the relationship between the APBs and Community Forums. It was crucial that local intelligence was fed into the APBs via the elected Member representatives.</p> <p>v) The lack of coterminosity with PCT boundaries was still perceived as a problem for the Northwich and Rural North and Winsford and Rural East APBs, particularly when Central &amp; Eastern Cheshire PCT is not represented elsewhere in the partnerships framework.</p> <p>vi) The APBs need to demonstrate 'added value' in delivery.</p> <p>vii) The APBs need to ensure they reflect the issues and priorities of all communities within the area and not just the larger towns, e.g. Northwich.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the APB Chairs meet with representatives of each of the five thematic partnerships to explore common priorities and opportunities for local action.</li> </ul>
Item No.7	<p><b>Community Cohesion Strategy</b></p> <p>Alison introduced a brief paper outlining a partnership approach to the development and agreement of a Community Cohesion Strategy for the borough. It was suggested that a draft Strategy and Action be produced in partnership for consideration by the Thematic Leads on 14<sup>th</sup> December and subsequent consideration and endorsement by the LSP on 28<sup>th</sup> January.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners agreed and endorsed the proposed approach and timetable.</li> </ul>
Item No.8	<p><b>LSP meeting agenda and LSP Network conference programme</b></p> <p>Partners considered the draft agenda for the next meeting of the LSP to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners agreed that this meeting would 'spotlight' on the Environmental Sustainability Thematic Partnership.</li> </ul>
Item No.9	<p><b>Audit Commission's latest CAA area assessment report</b></p> <p>Laurence circulated a pre-publication summary version of the Area</p>

	Assessment for Cheshire West received from the Audit Commission.
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners to submit any further comments on the document to Laurence Ainsworth by 28<sup>th</sup> October.</li> </ul>
Item No.10	<p><b>Thematic Partnerships – Progress, Work Programme and Emerging Issues</b></p> <p><i>Environmental Sustainability</i> – Jane referred to a £0.5m Low Carbon Community Challenge bid to be submitted imminently. LSP endorsement of the bid would be beneficial.</p> <p><i>Business, Enterprise &amp; Culture</i> – Sara reported that the partnership was no longer operating ‘virtually’. Current areas of focus were public transport / accessibility; the skills gap; and the need to make it easier to ‘do business’ in West Cheshire. The partnership also felt very ‘Chester-centric’. It had been agreed that the partnership would operate as a streamlined Board with no sub-committees.</p> <p><i>Safer &amp; Stronger Communities</i> – Tim noted that the status of NI 20 had recently moved from ‘red’ to ‘amber’ following the focused interventions of a new Task and Finish group led by Jon Betts. The partnership had recently held a ‘horizon scanning’ workshop to inform the future of the next Strategic Assessment. This would also be the final thematic partnership leads meeting to be attended by Tim as Craig Gilford would be picking up this role from 1 November. Steve thanked Tim for his hard work and commitment to partnership working in West Cheshire.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jane to send details of the Low Carbon Community Challenge bid to Alison for consideration and endorsement by the LSP.</li> </ul>
Item No.11	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>There were no further items of business.</p>
Action - Decision	None required.

**Details of next meeting:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1.30pm – 3.00pm,  
Committee Room 2B, County Hall Chester.

Signed (Chair): ..... Date: .....