

WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP MEETING
16 July 2004 10am

Horticultural Research Institute, East Malling (directions attached)

1. Minutes/Matters arising
 - Regional Spatial Strategy - WK response to note – Paper A
 - Regional Housing Strategy – WK response to note – Paper B
 - Profile Raising Initiatives – verbal update – Wendy Wood
2. Project Funding
 - Criteria for appraising bids – Paper C – Wendy Wood
 - Funding bid for Development at CVS – Paper D – Caroline Shaw, CVS
 - Funding bid for Dynamo Regions representation, Brussels - Paper E – Jean Morgan, SDC
3. Additional Voluntary/Community Engagement – Verbal update, Caroline Shaw, CVS
4. Sub Groups Feedback
 - Paper F (Housing) Barbara Thorndick, WKHA
 - Paper G (Transport) Tony Fullwood, TWBC
 - Paper H (Regeneration) Jean Morgan, SDC
 - Paper I (Business) Roger House, FSB
 - Paper J (Learning and Skills) Bill Fearon WKC/Wendy Wilton, KLP
 - Paper K (Health) Lynne Selman, Maidstone & Weald PCT
 - Paper L – Sub Group membership lists
5. Community Plans – verbal update
6. STAR Adult Review – briefing and draft WKP response - Paper M – Wendy Wilton
7. The Bridge Trust – presentation by Niall Willis
8. Any Other Business
9. Dates of Next Meetings – Fridays, 10am
 - 21 January 05,
 - 29 April 05 (conference)
 - 15 July 05
 - 21 October 05

Paper A

The Secretariat
South East Regional Assembly
Berkeley House
Cross Lanes
Guildford GU1 1UN

21th May 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

THE SOUTH EAST PLAN

The West Kent Partnership is the LSP for the West Kent area embracing the districts of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells which falls within the administrative area of Kent County Council. The Partnership, which includes a wide range of representatives from local Councils, the health sector, Police, private sector interests and community and voluntary bodies, is seeking to take a proactive approach towards representing the West Kent area and, when opportunities arise, to lobby on behalf of West Kent to ensure its needs are properly recognised at County, Regional and National levels.

The West Kent Partnership regards early consultation on the South East Plan as an important opportunity to articulate the specific spatial development issues affecting West Kent and therefore, following discussion, the following comments have been agreed by members of the Partnership.

The Partnership believes that, in formulating the consultation draft of the South East Plan:

1. Greater emphasis should be given to inter-regional planning and to examine the distribution of development between the regions. In particular, assumptions should be made that London will accommodate its own growth forecasts rather than export development pressure to surrounding areas beyond, such as West Kent;
2. Any level of growth to be provided for at the regional and district level must be based upon the very best and most robust evidence available and this should not be compromised by the current programme for the production of the South East Plan.
3. On a regional basis, the West Kent Partnership would support the focus of development in the growth regions identified, but would also support the investigation of increasing development provision in the western part of the South East region

recognising the pressures for both economic growth and housing development in that area;

4. In terms of forecasting future demographic and economic change and its implication for housing growth, there is a good case of linking housing provision with expected jobs on a local basis, but the extent to which this is possible must be sensitive to local land supply and other constraints;
5. In terms of employment, it is important that the success of the West Kent economy is sustained and not disadvantaged by investment and other incentives taking place in growth areas within the region or, indeed, by a loss of competitiveness in the South East Region generally. The South East Plan should, therefore, recognise the practical support necessary for local employment sectors and, in particular, the need for investment in transport infrastructure and the provision of affordable (including key and essential worker) housing to support investment decisions and labour supply. These issues are specifically identified as matters of concern in the West Kent Area Investment Framework and the South East Plan needs to be consistent with that Framework with regard to local employment provision;
6. In terms of housing, the overall scale in the region and its intra-regional allocation should:
 - be balanced properly against the realistic land supply which must continue to be focused on previously developed land and, in a predominantly Green Belt area, like West Kent, priority should be afforded to accommodating growth generated from within the West Kent area
 - be realistic in terms of capacity of the house building industry
 - be matched by adequate investment in community infrastructure including health, social care and education facilities as well as transport improvements, and
 - not be based on the Barker Review of providing very substantial increases in land supply to control house prices.
7. Any increase in housing provision must be accommodated by parallel policies to maximise the use of the existing housing stock through increasing renewal programmes and also proactive and also pro-active and defensible policies to secure high standards of urban design;
8. Policies in the South East Plan to promote investment in training, education and other funding streams should recognise that, within areas of apparent prosperity, pockets of deprivation occur and, in these situations, the seriousness of deprivation levels can be great;

9. The strategic role of the Metropolitan Green Belt should be reaffirmed in terms of its purpose of securing openness and restricting development which is more properly focused on growth areas. Within this context, the Plan should promote policies for new recreation opportunities and countryside management arising from changes in agricultural practice and development;
10. Policies to give greater focus to both the use of scarce water resources on the one hand, and the management of flood risk on the other, should be incorporated in the Plan.

We trust the above comments can be taken in to account when the consultation draft plan is formulated in due course.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Worrall', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Mark Worrall
Chairman
West Kent Partnership

Paper B

South East Regional Housing Strategy 2006-2009 Green Paper - the Key Issues

Response from The West Kent Partnership

The West Kent Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for the area covering the districts of Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling. The Partnership includes representatives from the three District Councils, the County Council, the Kent Police, local Housing Associations, Primary Care Trusts and representatives of the Voluntary, Business and Community sectors. The West Kent Partnership agreed to submit comments on the Regional Housing Strategy Green Paper at its meeting held on 23rd April 2004. Following consultation with members of the Partnership, the following comments have been agreed as our formal response.

1. Affordability

The Partnership believes that there is a need to ensure funds for affordable housing are directed to areas where high average house prices create severe barriers to home ownership for those on low and middle incomes. Whilst some of these needs might arise within the growth areas, it is likely that other areas will suffer the same, if not more significant, affordability problems. For example, in the context of Kent, the West Kent area has arguably greater local affordability problems than either the Thames Gateway or Ashford and this must be recognised in future funding provision.

Low cost market accommodation should be excluded from any definition of 'affordable housing' unless there are appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that the low cost subsidy to the initial purchaser/occupier of such accommodation can be retained and passed on to subsequent occupiers/purchasers. There should be greater flexibility for local sub regions to set their own definitions to reflect local circumstances.

The Partnership does not believe that a substantial increase in supply of housing in the region would impact significantly on affordability. Such a strategy is unproven and the amount of new development potentially required to reduce average house prices by creating an excess of supply over demand would have serious and (potentially unacceptable) implications for infrastructure provision, the environment and the economy.

Our studies indicate that the majority of affordable housing needs are best met by social and sub-market renting options. There is a place for encouraging home ownership options for those able to afford this. Resources could perhaps be split as follows: social rented - 50%, sub market rented 30%, home ownership 20%.

2. Key Workers

The West Kent Partnership has embarked on a major study of housing for essential workers and has built up some expertise in this area.

We believe that the current Government definition of 'key worker' is too restricted and locally we have adopted the term 'essential worker' to embrace those included in the Government definition but including any worker employed in the area who, due to low income levels, cannot afford access to home ownership without some form of subsidy. Our studies have indicated that many businesses in West Kent, both public and private, are suffering from recruitment and retention difficulties and skills shortages. As such there are both housing and economic reasons for encouraging greater provision for essential workers.

We believe that such definitions should be established locally by partnerships such as the West Kent Partnership. However, every effort must also be made to encourage Government to withdraw its own, centrally imposed, definition to provide greater freedom and flexibility for local Partnerships to plan for their own needs.

We have found it difficult to engage employers in the issue of essential worker housing. Government should perhaps take a leading role in assessing how more private sector businesses could benefit from direct investment in affordable housing for local workers, potentially via reforms to the tax regime.

3. Sub Regions, Housing Markets and Growth Areas.

The development of a sub regional approach to housing delivery is essential. There is a need for sub regions to be based upon existing defined areas across the South East (such as West Kent) with provision being made for a strategic overview of housing issues to be developed to link the smaller sub regions and the wider Regional Strategy.

4. Housing Supply

The main constraint on the provision of housing generally within the South East is the lack of appropriate support infrastructure and the cost of its provision. Government should do more to ensure that funding of much needed infrastructure is brought forward in time to service new housing development or otherwise impose tougher requirements on the developers of private housing to make contributions to necessary infrastructure provision.

In West Kent, the provision of housing overall accords, and often exceeds, structure plan requirements. In areas like West Kent, the issue is not therefore one of supply but one of tenure and subsidy. Provision of affordable housing continues to fall well below affordable needs as assessed by housing studies.

5. Rural Housing

Rural communities of all sizes may have need for affordable housing provision. The current restriction on settlements of over 3,000 population should be lifted. Larger rural

centres are perhaps more appropriate locations for affordable housing than smaller settlements given the presence of support infrastructure such as public transport and community support facilities.

Rural exception policies have been able to deliver some rural affordable housing where it can be proved via a local survey that there is a need for such housing from people living locally. This approach could perhaps be strengthened further by the creation of a new Use Class for rural affordable housing to enable specific sites for the purpose to be allocated in local development frameworks.

6. Decent Homes

This is not an issue for social housing in the West Kent sub-Region as all 3 local authorities have undertaken stock transfer. All 3 LSVT's are more than 10 years old and have invested substantially in their stock.

7. Private Sector Renewal

In West Kent many of the private homes in poor repair contain substantial equity because of the price of land. There is a need for solid, responsible financial products that could help home-owners release some equity to pay for repairs.

8. Homelessness

Some forms of homelessness can be prevented by providing people with 'floating' support West Kent Partnership are concerned about how the problems with Supporting People Grant will impact adversely on this preventative work. The dislocation of revenue funding from capital funding has also impacted adversely on all new schemes specifically designed to support homeless people.

9. Supported Housing

The same issues that apply to schemes for homeless people also apply to supported housing schemes. Within the Region there is a need for very close liaison between the Counties (who currently administer Supporting People Grant) and the Regional Housing Board (who are now responsible for the Regional Housing Strategy and allocating capital funds). A mechanism needs to be introduced that ensures the identified support needs in local communities are addressed by both the County and the Region – in providing the link between local and County/Region there could well be a role for the sub-region.

10. Neighbourhood Management

West Kent Partnership believe that mixed tenure is good. Indeed part of the problems the sub-region is experiencing is because of very high levels of home ownership (81%) i.e. the problem of mono-tenure is that there is not enough affordable rented accommodation. Even on social housing estates the Right to Buy has ensured that there is substantial mixed tenure. Some of the Housing Associations in West Kent are taking on a wider role as part of the 'iN Business for Neighbourhoods' agenda. West Kent is happy to facilitate and encourage this as the aim of associations involved in this agenda is to substantially improve poorer neighbourhoods for the benefit of all people living in those areas.

11. Crime

All 3 Local Authorities that are part of West Kent Partnership have active Community Safety Partnerships that have impacted on crime reduction in the sub-region.

12. Equality and Diversity

The West Kent sub-region has a small BME population (around 5% in 2001 census). The largest ethnic minority population are travellers (many of whom do not appear in the official statistics). Travellers and settled travellers perceive themselves to be particularly discriminated against. There is a need for innovative schemes in the sub-region to help create more socially cohesive communities in areas where there are travellers and groups of settled travellers.

13. Quality Design and Sustainable Construction

West Kent, through its planning departments, supports high quality design and sustainability. There are, however, issues about high density schemes and car parking. The sub-region does not have a public transport infrastructure to support car free schemes. Indeed the sub-region consists very much of market towns, villages and hamlets and the majority of the population do need to have access to a car to support their quality of life.

Modern methods of construction are being used in some developments in West Kent but there is some concern that social housing does not become the test bed for untried technologies – there is no desire to see a repeat of the system built, poorly constructed high and medium rise estates of the 60s & 70s.

14. Sustainable Construction and the Environment

When developing new homes, there has always got to be a balance between the cost today and the cost in the future. If the government decides that all new housing must reach 'very good' in terms of the eco home agenda then it needs to change the building regulations to ensure this happens.

15. Skills and Training

The Partnership agrees that more needs to be done to encourage the provision of training for trades skills linked to the construction industry. Some progress has been made locally with the provision of new courses at West Kent College although the further expansion of such provision is dependent upon obtaining funding from the Learning Skills Council. Government needs to be encouraged to increase funding to the Learning Skills Councils to enhance such provision.

16. Investment Priorities

We believe that the top priority is to tackle the supply of affordable housing in the South East region to meet the needs of priority groups such as the homeless and those in

medical need such as the elderly and make balanced provision for local workers to support the local economy.

Funding should be made to support the development of a range of sites across the South East particularly where problems of affordability are most acute. They should not be limited to 'strategic sites' as this may limit provision of affordable housing in areas where, due to land supply constraints, only smaller sites are available.

There should be greater freedoms and flexibilities for local choices to be made about affordable housing provision. We believe that the majority of funding should be awarded to enable provision to be made to meet locally defined needs. The growing level of central control over funding and provision should be significantly reduced.

17. Supporting Innovation and Good Practice

Since the Housing Corporation has substantially reduced its Innovation and Good Practice funds, it may be a good idea for the Region to have a small fund.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Worrall', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Mark Worrall
Chairman
West Kent Partnership

Paper C

PROJECT FUNDING – ADVICE NOTE FOR PARTNERS 05/6/04 Wendy Wood

The partnership has a three year budget of £150,000. Taking into account funding of approximately £44,500 for the co-ordinator 2 year post, £10,000 for promotion and £15,000 allocated to the Key Worker Housing project, the following is available for projects:

2004/2005	52,750
2005/2006	27,750

Project – Suitability Criteria

Delivers clear community outcomes benefiting the West Kent area either by

- a) tackling the key issues of crime and safety, health, transport, housing, the local economy and building stronger communities, or
- b) addressing one or more of the WKAIF strategic objectives, ideally targeting the identified *priorities for action* listed under each strategic objective
 - Contributes to the creation of a strong local infrastructure that is responsive to business needs
 - Maximises opportunities for individuals to enhance their skills
 - Strengthens competitive performance of local businesses
 - Reduces disparity between deprived and affluent areas
 - Enhances tourism's contribution to the local economy

Project Application Procedure

Applications will be considered from any member of the West Kent Partnership who will be the 'sponsor partner' with responsibility for the project. The project application must demonstrate achievement of identifiable goals in a specified time scale and cover the following:

- Clear identification of need, supporting consultations and data
- The expected outcome with timeframe and performance indicators
- Outline business plan demonstrating the feasibility of the project
- Breakdown of costs
- Identified match funding or opportunities for match funding within a given timescale
- Lead delivery agency, partners involved and mechanism for monitoring, evaluation and report back, ie, existing sub-group or a new project group or direct to the Partnership.

Project Appraisal Process

Applications for project funding will be considered on a rolling basis. They should be filed with Wendy Wood one month ahead of quarterly partnership meetings to allow time

for appraisal prior to the partnership meeting. The following appraisal criteria will be applied:

- project suitability criteria met
- application requirements met
- objectives match LSP and AIF strategic objectives/priorities for action
- viable business plan and good value for money
- level of reserves held in WKP budget

Paper D

WEST KENT COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE Funding Of Key Voluntary Sector Development Post

“Government wishes to see a strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector fully engaged in shaping and delivering public services, underpinned by high quality, sustainable support services.”¹

OBJECTIVE

This document seeks the agreement of the West Kent Partnership (WKP) to fund an initiative which will strengthen and enhance the role of local voluntary and community organisations (VCO) in West Kent.

Over the past year we have helped 87 groups in a variety of ways. This included assisting groups to raise in excess of £84,500, from one funding source alone. We believe that funding from the West Kent Partnership will enable us to reach an additional 60 new and existing organisations and make a significant contribution to achieving the aims set out in the community strategies for the area. Our goal is to support and increase the capacity of a minimum of 150 frontline VCOs across the whole of the West Kent area.

The 3 published community strategies for the West Kent area all refer to the need to maintain and further develop a stronger and more co-ordinated voluntary and community sector, both for the delivery of key services and to create more sustainable communities. In addition, the West Kent Compact recognises the importance of the sector in delivering key services to the community.

The Government also believes that there should be adequate investment in voluntary and community sector capacity building and infrastructure. This would ensure that VCOs, including those engaged in shaping and delivering public services, have access to the capacity building services, representation and leadership that they need.

The development role of the WKCVS includes supporting and advising West Kent based VCOs. This entails assistance with writing constitutions, fundraising, training and networking. Importantly, the role additionally involves continuing support for these organisations so as to maintain their effectiveness over the longer term.

The initiative will be delivered through the funding of a development officer for 2 years. The post holder will work directly with local communities and groups across West Kent.

MEETING PARTNER OBJECTIVES

We intend to be proactive, rather than reactive, and to focus our assistance on the development of new groups as well as maintaining support to existing groups. In particular, this support will be targeted in areas identified in the Community Plans for the three districts comprising West Kent, as well as in Kent County Council's targets for *“The Next Four Years”* and PSA2. These are areas where it is anticipated that there will be an increased role for VCOs.

¹ Home Office, 'Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure, A Consultation Document', September 2003

Our focused support will add value to local communities by increasing the general capacity and sustainability of local and diverse community projects in the most disadvantaged areas of West Kent. We actively seek to empower local VCOs in the longer term enabling them to access resources, develop projects and influence decision-making structures.

"We recognise the invaluable contribution of voluntary organisations and the need to maintain a strong and diverse voluntary sector to help us achieve this."
(Sevenoaks District Community Plan; 'Making It Happen' Consultation Document for Partner Agencies, Sept 2003, p.9)

Development work is particularly focused on the most disadvantaged communities in West Kent, working with diverse VCOs, and in particular groups working with vulnerable youth, older people, people with disabilities, the homeless, black and minority and ethnic groups (BME) and in areas of deprivation in order to improve the quality of community life.

"Identify and meet service needs of vulnerable groups through the further development of the Supporting People Locality Plan and develop approaches to ensure that Hard to Reach groups are included in future consultations."
(Tonbridge & Malling Community Strategy 2003-2006; 'Serving you better', p40)

We aim to increase the ability of local VCOs to deliver quality services to meet local need. We encourage them to work better together, pool resources and knowledge and to meet shared objectives through partnership working. We also aim to identify and secure inward investment for the most disadvantaged communities by helping VCOs to identify and secure appropriate sources of funding and offering them assistance with writing their fundraising strategies and bids.

"Increase voluntary and community sector involvement in supporting their own communities."
(Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan 2003-2011; 'Enhancing the Quality of Life', p.50)

We add value to the local community by facilitating and supporting partnership working. This results in an improved flow of information, advice and linkages as well as identifying and reducing duplication of effort. Through our efforts VCOs will become more involved in appropriate networks and partnerships locally. The capacity building activities that we provide, such as local training, will enable them to better influence and affect local decision-making.

"The County Council has a role in creating a society with a sense of purpose and belonging, fostering independence and empowering people to be responsible for their own lives, for their families and for their communities"

(KCC; 'Kent – The Next Four Years', p.4)

KEY OUTCOMES AND TARGETS

1. *Strengthen local groups to enable them to deliver PSA and Community Plan actions and targets through capacity building and enhanced partnership working. Voluntary and Community Sector capacity building is described by the Government's Cross Cutting Review as being "... about ensuring that VCOs have the skills, knowledge, structures and resources to*

*realise their full potential.*² It supports front line delivery and typically involves removing barriers to involvement and investing to maximise the contribution that VCOs can make. It is as much about releasing existing capacity as about developing new capacity.

Target: 75 groups working towards the achievement of community objectives as set out in the areas community strategies and PSA

2. *The development of a 'toolkit' to offer support and advice to newly developing Social Enterprises and to VCOs undertaking a range of social enterprise activities.* An increasing number of VCOs are exploring social enterprise as a vehicle for achieving their objectives, whilst securing greater financial independence. The need for specialist advice and assistance in this area is therefore growing. Although there is currently some specialist support available, at national, regional and local levels the Home Office concedes, "coverage is patchy".³
Target: Toolkit developed by September 2005. Toolkit used by a minimum of 10 groups.
3. *Increased support for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups.* BME VCOs bring a distinctive value to local communities, in particular to race equality, social inclusion and the promotion of civil society. They enable BME individuals to contribute to public life, and in particular to their local community. The deep-rooted disadvantage faced by BME communities and organisations demands continued targeted support. However, there is currently little support available for BME groups in West Kent.
Target: 1 support/representation network for BME groups established in West Kent Area.

FUNDING

The Development Officer post will require £16,000 per annum. We are requesting £25,000 from the West Kent Partnership to part-fund the post for a period of two years. Match funding of £7,000 will be raised from other sources, such as training fees and health related projects.

MONITORING

It is proposed that a report is submitted to the main group of the West Kent Partnership on a twice yearly basis showing progress against the objective, outcomes and targets set out in this paper.

RECOMMENDATION

Given the strategic role that infrastructure organisations, such as the WKCVS, play in helping to ensure that the VCS can contribute to the achievement of public sector service delivery objectives, funding support for these organisations might best be described as strategic funding. Such funding ensures that capacity exists, and assists longer term planning and stability within the sector.

It is with this in mind that the West Kent Partnership is invited to support the post of Development Officer at WKCVS for a period of two years.

June 2004

² Ibid p.19

³ Home Office, 'Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure, A Consultation Document', September 2003, p.22

Paper E

WEST KENT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: BID FOR PROJECT FUNDING.

1. **Project:** **Dynamo Regions of the European Community – WKLSP commissioned research into disparities within the region, and participation in Committee of the Regions (CoR) open days, Brussels, 28, 29, 30 September 2004.**

The proposal is to commission an important piece of consultancy work which fits with existing and previous studies into deprivation and affluence in West Kent, as well as with the strategic documents produced by members of the WKLSP. This would be promoted, in the first instance, at a major open day in Brussels. This is the start of a lobbying process to draw the attention of DG Regio and others in Europe and in the UK to the disparities which exist in the sub-region. The work will also be used to inform the Regeneration Sub-Group on common West Kent regeneration needs not currently being met. This will underpin future project development and funding bids across the LSP sub-group as appropriate.

Deleted:

2. **Partners:** Sevenoaks D.C
Tonbridge & Malling B.C
Tunbridge Wells B.C
Kent County Council (International Affairs Group, South East England House – Brussels)

3. **Background**

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is organising a series of 11 open day and seminar events in Brussels over 28, 29 and 30 September, 2004. Kent County Council International Affairs Group (based in South East England House in Brussels, as well as Maidstone), is hosting one of the CoR open days at South East England House.

The theme of the open day at SEE House will be *Dynamo Regions in Europe*. This theme is supported by all the organisations based at SEE House (county councils, SEEDA, SEERA etc), and is attracting interest from other dynamo regions across Europe, particularly in the light of the new, enlarged European Community. Other participating dynamo regions are Veneto (Italy), Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy), South Sweden, Stuttgart Region (Germany) and Haute Normandie (France).

This is envisaged as the first of several events to draw attention to economic, social and environmental issues within regions with the European Community's strongest economies.

The open day at SEE House will feature 3 formal seminars, each lasting 2 hours. Provisionally, these will focus on cooperation between the dynamo regions (led by South Sweden), innovation and competitiveness issues for the dynamo regions (led by SEEDA and Stuttgart region) and the implications of the Lisbon Agenda - policy post enlargement – for the dynamo regions (the flagship event, with current members regions participating). The day will have a high profile, with attendees including experts and politicians from the regions, as well as from DG Regio (the EU department responsible for regional policy).

Final programmes for the CoR open days and for the events at SEE House will be available in mid-July.

4. **Proposal**

It is suggested that WKLSP be represented at the Dynamo Regions open day events in Brussels, and further, that the LSP partners hold a “fringe event” in SEE House on 28 September (date to be confirmed) to draw attention to the particular economic, social and environmental issues affecting the West Kent economy. This is particularly apt as the West Kent Area Investment framework, carried out in 2002,03, highlighted the fact that the West Kent economy is a major player within the Kent economy – the Kent dynamo, effectively. Further, the WKAIIF identified the particular disparities between deprived and affluent areas within the area, and this is one of the themes for the dynamo regions.

A presentation at a “fringe event” would build on work already carried out for the Area Investment Framework, and also being commissioned by individual authorities as part of work on social inclusion, and as background research to the local development frameworks and community plans.

Participation in the Brussels event in September would ensure that this work was widely disseminated. As other similar dynamo regions will be represented there will be opportunities to share expertise and experience, and to generate interest within DG Regio and the Commission in tackling the issues.

However, further work would be required on a West Kent basis to draw together recently published data within the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and the 2001 Census which highlights the disparities between deprived and affluent areas in West Kent and provide a gap analysis of regeneration needs not currently being met. The executive summary of this report would be available at the event.

As well as being used at the Brussels event to draw attention to the disparities within West Kent, and some of the initiatives underway to address them, the report would be used to raise the profile of the West Kent sub-region, and for lobbying by WKLSP partners of other organisations more directly (including, for example SEEDA, GoSE and ODPM). It would also contribute to any review/update of the West Kent Area Investment Framework (under discussion).

This proposal directly meets the WKAIF Strategic objective to **reduce disparity between deprived and affluent areas**. It is also a good example of WKLSP partners working together to further this objective.

It addresses AIF priorities 5.1 and 5.3, ie sharing best practice, developing collaborative actions and funding bids, sharing experience from Swanley People First/Snodland and other partnerships and identifying best practice, identifying resource need and funding sources. As set out above (Project Description) this would be the start of a longer term lobbying process. The executive summary, to be available at SEE House, would draw attention to the need to maintain EU policy focus on deprived areas within long-standing member states. It would also emphasise the need to maintain funding opportunities in these areas.

The report will be a valuable resource for the work of the Regeneration Sub-Group in identifying particular needs that are not currently being addressed. This would enable the Sub-Group to focus future project development and funding bids.

5. **Timescale:**

- Brief for consultant (analysis of disparities between deprived and affluent areas in West Kent using census 2001, Index of Multiple Deprivation - IMD etc. Specific attention to be given to identifying common West Kent regeneration needs not currently being met)

Regeneration Sub-Group (meeting 12 July), European Officers; July 2004

- Analysis by consultant

Consultant; July/August 2004

- Preparation of report, including summary for presentation at CoR open days in Brussels, September 2004.

Consultant; August/Sept 2004

- Preparation of presentation

Consultant: Regeneration Sub- group, European Officers; August/September 2004
--

- Participation in fringe event at seminar on Dynamo Regions within Europe

WKLSP representatives; September 2004

- Follow up with other seminar participants

Regeneration Sub- Group, European Officers; Sept/December 2004

NB

Regeneration Sub-Group = extant WKLSP Sub-Group;
European Officers = Alice Chapman-Hatchet, KCC International Affairs Group;
 Mark Raymond, T&MBC; John Lister, TWBC; Jean Morgan, SDC.

6. Outcomes

- Consultants Report, and executive summary re disparity between deprived and affluent areas within West Kent, including examples of successful initiatives within West Kent;
- Quality e-presentation for use at CoR Open Days, September 2004, and subsequent similar events;
- Identification of common West Kent regeneration needs not currently being met;
- Focus for future project development and funding bids to be taken forward by WKP Regeneration Sub-Group;
- Identification of other opportunities for joint working across West Kent;
- Awareness within other dynamo regions and DG Regio of West Kent as the Kent dynamo

Deleted:

- Follow up by KCC International Affairs Group and WKLSP members;
- Positioning West Kent as a potential sub-region for single pot funding (SEEDA);
- Incorporation in policy documents.

7. Draft funding projection

Consultants report etc.	Up to £7000 to cover compilation of consultants report, preparation of quality e-presentation and related expenses.
-------------------------	---

Likely to attract match funding as follows:

Travel & subsistence * (est. £200 pperson pday)	£1200
Fringe event (refreshments etc) **	not known

* It is expected that the travel and subsistence element (which includes Eurostar travel arranged by KCC at a reduced rate) would be met by participating authorities from existing budgets, with 2 representatives attending from each authority.

** The fringe event would be held at SEE House, hosted by KCC, and this would be met by KCC International Affairs Group budgets.

Funding of up to £7000 is sought from the WKLSP for the consultants report etc. as set out above.

Jean Morgan
2 July 2004

Paper F

WKLSP Housing Sub Group Report back to 16th July 2004 meeting

The Housing Sub Group is continuing to meet on a monthly basis to progress the LSP and Housing Corporation (Innovation & Good Practice grant) funded project on 'Getting Employers involved in essential worker housing'. The report on funding models – which is looking at how to fund affordable housing without grant will be finalised in August. A parallel report on the process of engaging employers in West Kent is also being produced and should also be completed by the end of August.

The group has also been looking at providing information for employers on a website entitled 'Affordable Housing in Kent' and by way of a leaflet. Having carried out the majority of the research work, the group is now wishing to identify pilot schemes to achieve affordable housing for essential workers testing out the research work by engaging employers in the pilots and assessing how such housing may be provided without grant support.

Aside from this project the sub-group produced a response on behalf of the LSP to the draft Regional Housing Strategy.

**Barbara Thorndick
Chair of WKLSP Sub Group**

Paper G

West Kent Partnership transport sub-group REPORT

SCHEME PROGRESS

A21

Lobbying successful as preferred route announced by Government for the improvements to Pembury Bypass to Lamberhurst Bypass link. Construction expected to immediately follow the Tonbridge to Pembury Bypass improvement with completion in 2010.

INITIATIVES

Integrated Rail Franchise

West Kent Partnership response sent.

Local Transport Plan for Kent 2006/11

West Kent Consultation meeting held by KCC and attended principally by transport stakeholders, including members of the Sub-Group.

The key consultation themes are attached to this paper. Many of the points raised at the Consultation meeting were of a detailed nature but, as previously stated, **it is vital that the Partnership now formulates a response.**

Partners are invited to consider the consultation themes and to forward comments to Tony Fullwood (tony.fullwood@tunbridgewells.gov.uk) by 6 August 2004 to assist the sub-group in producing a Partnership response. A draft response will be circulated to all Partnership members for comment prior to submission to KCC by the Partnership Chairman.

Next Transport Sub-Group meeting 15 September 2004 to discuss: draft West Kent Partnership response to LTP; access to health facilities; and sharing of good practice.

Paper H

West Kent Partnership

Regeneration Sub Group

SEEDA have recently announced a Small Rural Town Programme and the Regeneration Sub Group are exploring taking the lead on managing the West Kent response to this initiative. 12 West Kent towns have been identified as eligible. SEEDA are committing £7million over a 7 year period and the AIFS will be an instrumental part of the whole process. The regeneration sub group are holding a rural regeneration workshop covering this initiative along with the Rural AIF and the work of the KCC rural regeneration team on 12 July.

An application has been made to the West Kent Partnership for funding to support research into regeneration needs in West Kent not currently being met. This will underpin future project development and funding bids.

Jean Morgan
Chair, Regeneration Sub Group

Paper I

West Kent Partnership – Business Development Sub Group Report back to 16th July 2004 meeting

A new Business Development Sub Group has been constituted and meets for the first time on 8 July.

In the meantime, a working group has met frequently over the last few months with a brief to shape the focus of the main sub group. As a result of these meetings one particular project is being developed which identifies a significant skills gap not being addressed in West Kent and that is crucial to the success of a growth sector in our economy. The initiative tackles two of the five strategic objectives identified in the WKAIF

The Federation of Small Businesses latest survey shows a significant growth in the numbers of homeworkers. This economic sector, spread across both urban and more remote rural locations, has a great dependency on IT and ICT but there is considerable lack of understanding or expertise in the field of new technology. Homeworkers, including those engaged in horticulture and farming are targeted for the provision of virtual and actual networking opportunities aimed at the unique and specific requirements of a microbusiness. It is anticipated that the project will be implemented via the Kent New Technology Institute facilities which are available at both West Kent College and Hadlow College working closely with their newly appointed skills brokers.

**Roger House
Chair of West Kent Partnership Sub Group**

Paper J

West Kent Learning and Skills Provider Group - Update

This group reconvened on 15th June for the first time since July 2003. The group had been on hold due to the timing of the Kent and Medway Learning and Skills Council's (LSCKM) Strategic Area Review (StAR) process.

LSCKM is undertaking a wide-ranging review of post-16 Education and Training to raise quality and choice for learners and improve the supply of skills for local employers. Key recommendations from the reviews will help set the pattern of post-16 education and training in Kent and Medway from 2005 onwards.

LSCKM has been working closely with schools, colleges, training providers, employers and other partners to plan the best arrangements for each local area.

The reviews form part of a national initiative to identify the best mix of post-16 learning and skills provision to meet learner, employer and community needs in every area and will cover:

- School sixth forms
- Further education colleges
- Higher education institutes offering further education
- Specialist colleges e.g. Agriculture, learning difficulties
- Adult and community learning services
- Work-based learning delivered by private and voluntary sector training providers
- Learndirect

The reviews involve extensive consultation, including public meetings with a wide range of stakeholders.

In West Kent the local stakeholder group met on 28th May to discuss the main issues arising from the initial Learning and Skills Assessment of the needs of West Kent's young people. The results from this meeting will be formulated into possible options for discussion at the next meetings in September and December with final outcomes in February 2005. Alongside the review of 16-19 provision, reviews of adult, land-based studies and learning difficulties provision are also taking place.

Further information can be obtained from www.lsc.gov.uk. Kent and Medway

The West Kent Provider group will then rationalise these findings with the West Kent AIF Strategic Option 1 **Maximise opportunities for individuals to enhance their skills.**

The Star reviews suggest the formation of a West Kent sub-regional Strategic Forum for Education and Skills. It has been suggested that the West Kent Provider Group may be incorporated into/become that group with sub – groups such as the West Kent Learning Federation feeding into it. However this structure is yet to be confirmed by the StAR process.

In the mean-time the group will continue to work to the existing Terms of Reference.

Wendy Wilton
Director Kent Learning Partnership

Paper K

HEALTH POLICY BOARD

A meeting takes place on the afternoon of 16 July when the draft terms of reference will be agreed.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Health Policy Board will:

- ❑ Provide a strategic overview across key public services in the South of West Kent to ensure that the requirements of the NHS Plan and Health and Social Care modernisation agenda are met:
- ❑ Provide a forum and sounding board for resolution of “blockages” in the system that prevent progress with the NHS Plan/modernisation of services and health improvement or appropriate liaison between local authorities and the National Health Service:
- ❑ Focus on the wider determinants of health – social, environmental and economic issues and agree to contribute to delivering the NHS Plan and Local Authority Community Plan health-related targets:
- ❑ Promote the involvement of local residents, community groups and voluntary organisations in joint work and in the day-to-day work of the individual organisations represented on the Health Policy Board in order to improve the health of individuals and communities:
- ❑ Encourage the use of s31 of the Health Act “flexibilities” between health services and local authorities – pooled budgets, joint appointments, lead commissioning: Councillors/cabinet members will be kept briefed about the work of the Health Policy Board.
- ❑ Act as a Health sub-group reporting to the West Kent Local Strategic Partnership.

Frequency/style of meetings:

Quarterly, possibly in two parts – if necessary, the first part focussing on wider “health issues” and the second on the health:social care interface.

Membership:

Chief Executives/Directors of local authorities (District and County); Primary Care Trusts; Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust; PCT Health Promotion Service; WK CVS Director.

Paper L

WKP Sub groups

22-Jun-04

Regeneration

Jean Morgan (Chair)	Sevenoaks District Council
Caroline Shaw	West Kent CVS
Crispin Davies	Kent Rural Community Council
David Coleman	CWCO
Janice Wason	KCC Corporate Services
Keith Wyncoll	KCC Social Services
Linda Foster	KCC Education & Libraries
Linda Mortley	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Mark Raymond	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Rob White	KCC Strategic Planning
Linda Prickett	Maidstone Weald Primary Care Trust
Sally Ratchford	Sevenoaks District Council
Susan Levitt	Malling Volunteer Bureau

Housing

Barbara Thorndick (Chair)	West Kent Housing Association
Lynne Selman	Maidstone & Weald PCT
Claire Martin	KCC Social Services
Frances Kneller	Housing Corporation
Freddie Field	Tonbridge & Malling Housing Association
Gill Harris	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Ian Bailey	Sevenoaks District Council
Janine Allen	Sevenoaks District Council
Mark Raymond	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Business Development

Roger House (Chair)	Federation of Small Businesses
Mark Raymond	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Anne Fido	KCC Libraries
Ian Bailey	Sevenoaks District Council
John Lister	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Emily Haswell	KCC Economic Development Officer
Jackie Mathias	WK Chamber Commerce & Industry
Mandy Bearne	Locate in Kent
Tony Bartlett	Business Link/SEEDA
Vince Nunn	Education Business Partnership
Rosie Serpis	AXA/PPP
Paul Burgess	FSB

Transport

Tony Fullwood (Chair)	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Ian Bailey	Sevenoaks District Council
Chris Briggs	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Brian Gates	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Adrian Neve	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Ray Dines	KCC Strategic Planning
David Eaton	Kent County Council
Kevin Hawkins	Arriva Southern Counties
Sarah Watkins	Freight Transport Association
Jackie Nixon	Strategic Rail Authority

Health (Health Policy Board)

Nigel Howells	Maidstone Weald PCT (Chair)
Lynne Selman	Maidstone Weald PCT (Chair)
Joanne Wainwright	KCC
David Hughes	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Rodney Stone	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Kristen Paterson	Sevenoaks District Council
Merle Bigden	Sevenoaks District Council
Richard Powell	
Debbie Stock	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Phil Beddoes	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Mark Chowdhary	Health Promotion Service
Ian Coupland	KCC SSD W Kent
Linda Prickett	Maidstone Weald PCT
Brendan O'Connor	South West Kent PCT
Trevor Gasson	Maidstone Borough Council
Andrew Ireland	KCC SSD W Kent
Steve Leidecker	KCC SSD Mid Kent

Learning and Skills

Bill Fearon (Acting Chair)	West Kent College
Jane Prideaux	Hugh Christie Technology College
Nicholas Fox	Individual Learning Company
Pauline Smith	KCC Key Training Services
Malcolm Staunton	Kent & Medway Learning & Skills Council
Des Crilley	KCC Adult Education Service
Gabrielle Wilson	KCC Education and Libraries
Rosemary Oliver	St. Gregorys
Linda Wybar	Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School
Colin Allen	University of Greenwich
Vince Nunn	West Kent EBP
Sue Hopkins	Kent & Medway Basic Skills Consortium
Wendy Wilton	Kent Learning Partnership
Kathy Tiller	Adult Careers Guidance Service (Prospects)
Mark Gorringe	Careers Management Kent & Medway (Tonbridge)
Roger House	FSB
David Gough	Hadlow College
Paul Wyatt	Jobcentre Plus (Tonbridge)
Caroline Buss	KCC Social Services
Carol Sharp	KCC Corporate Resources
Mike Thompson	KCC Schools Officer
	Kent & Medway Education Business Alliance
Julie Humphreys	Kent & Medway Learning & Skills Council
Anki Williams	Kent & Medway Learning & Skills Council
Linda Davis	Kent Adult Education Service
Pauline Rowe	Kent Guidance Consortium
Catherine Wilson	Kent Qualified
Angela Collins	Kent Qualified
Bill Orr	LITS
Jane Ring	LITS
Ed Metcalfe	SEEDA
Jackie Matthais	West Kent Chamber of Commerce
Richard Mayhew	YMCA Tonbridge
Von Dawson	YMCA Tonbridge
Cathy Gaunt	YMCA Tonbridge

Paper M

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL FOR KENT AND MEDWAY ADULT STRATEGIC AREA REVIEW

West Kent Partnership - Draft Response

Priority 1 - Meeting business needs and supporting growth and regeneration with high quality learning

Comments

1. The proposal to place FE colleges at the forefront of meeting businesses learning needs is supported. West Kent College and Hadlow College have a strong track record in this area, soon to be underpinned by the Action for Business Colleges initiative and via the Employer Training Pilots (Profit from Learning). Further innovation in the provision of such learning should be encouraged to ensure that, in particular, small and medium enterprises, as well as the micro-business sector, can be effectively engaged in learning. Businesses might be deterred from accessing such support at the FE establishment itself. This might require more informal routes to such training provision, training provided remotely at the workplace or at local centres, or by virtual on-line support programmes.
2. Engagement with the business sector is suggested as a key element in linking learning provision with learning needs. However, the difficulties associated with effective consultation with the business sector should not be under-estimated. Many agencies have a similar need to consult businesses but few businesses, particularly SMEs, have the time or the expertise to become involved in areas that are not core to their business role. There is a great danger of consultation fatigue. This could be overcome by better co-ordinated consultation with business, perhaps organised on a sub regional basis rather than countywide and involving an annual business survey or business consultation event which might cover a wider range of economic issues in addition to learning and skills. Use could also be made of existing consultation fora such as the Kent and Medway Economic Board. For example, the West Kent Partnership is giving consideration to holding a 'West Kent Conference' in early 2005 which could be used to highlight learning and skills issues as part of a wider agenda.

Priority 2 - Provision at level 2 and above in the key industries particularly in the growth and regeneration areas of Kent and Medway

Comments

1. There is a danger that, by concentrating on the growth areas of Kent, areas on the fringe of these nodes will not be given sufficient priority to ensure local learning needs are met. The West Kent area is already providing training for those accessing jobs in the Thames Gateway and Ashford (non-LSC) areas. However, colleges in West Kent receive less funding than those located in the Gateway themselves. Growth areas will impact on the areas that abut them in terms of population growth

and business development. Such needs should be recognised. The West Kent AIF indicates the importance of the West Kent economy to the County as whole and the need to address shortages in skills and manpower. There are 'local' growth points such as Kings Hill that also need to be recognised as areas where training and skills development is a priority. Training in the construction crafts is a key example of training provided within West Kent which supplies labour and skills to the Gateway and Ashford initiatives.

2. There is little within the priorities which highlight the need to concentrate efforts in encouraging both business-based and community learning in the areas of deprivation within Kent. All sub regions have such areas of need. In West Kent, there are pockets of need identified where, based on the recent IMD 2004 data, there are particular areas of need identified in the education, skills and training domain: East Malling (north), Trench ward, Tonbridge (west and south), Edenbridge, Swanley and Sherwood, Tunbridge Wells. Efforts to encourage learning should be focused on these areas recognising, of course, that an adequate range of learning provision should be made across the West Kent area.

Priority 3 - Learning information, advice and guidance (IAG) for adults

Comments

1. The provision of clear, well informed advice to adults about learning choices is a crucial element of linking learning provision with both the learner and business needs. Advisors need to be better informed about local economic priorities, business needs and local skills in demand. We support proposals to achieve this objective and, in particular, believe that such economic information should be based on sub-regional rather than county-wide intelligence as far as possible to ensure local people have the right access to information about their local employment markets. There is a pressing need to develop the role of Connexions in this process and ensure that the service is providing the right information to the right people and is working effectively with schools and colleges in the area.

Priority 4 - Basic and lower level skills for employability

Comments

1. We support proposals to increase provision of support in this area. However, we believe that there should be a mixed economy of provision involving both Adult Education and FE colleges to ensure that provision of basic skills training is sufficient to meet local needs. The West Kent AIF suggests that better co-ordination of services is required to enhance provision and remove duplication of effort. The STAR suggests that the Basic Skills Consortium could take on this role. Whilst this may be one option, an alternative would be for new fora to be established in each sub region to engage local providers better and ensure provision is planned to best meet the needs of each locality.
2. Although employers have said (via consultations on the West Kent AIF) that basic skills is a key issue in terms of skills shortages, the completion of basic skills courses currently appear to have little credibility amongst employers. At the same time, the requirement for 'end tests' is a disincentive for some learners to participate. Courses

should therefore be aligned to the National Standards Framework. More needs to be done to involve the business community in the design of such learning and the provision of 'employability skills' training such as time keeping, team working, customer care skills and numeracy. In this way, those completing such training would have a more credible qualification with which to approach local employers.

3. More emphasis could be placed on the provision of family learning opportunities to encourage parents to access basic skills learning to assist their children in their own development. In order to achieve this, links need to be developed between the colleges and the Adult and Community Service and the Local Education Authority.

Priority 5 - Co-ordinating the planning and funding of learning

Comments

1. There is a need to ensure that any new fora which might be created is complementary to existing sub groups of the West Kent Partnership.
2. We would support the proposal for an annual employer skills conference for West Kent. However, we believe the sequence would be for the LSC to prepare a draft statement of learning and skills priorities for West Kent and to subject this to consultation with local employers via the conference prior to its being used by providers to plan provision for the coming year. The LSC Kent and Medway Annual Plan needs to be aligned with this process.
3. There is a requirement to plan for better progression from FE to HE and for these training programmes to be better aligned and co-ordinated via linked courses and increased joint provision.
4. The West Kent Learning Federation (15 secondary schools and WKC) can facilitate progression from school, through College to HE or work.