

**West Kent Partnership
Notes of the meeting 14 July 2006
Kings Hill Conference Centre**

Present:

David Aikman; Nick Chard; Michael Cooke; Bill Fearon; Robin Hales; Roger House; David Hughes; Melvyn Hughes; Alan McKendrick; Tom Phillips; Tim Read; Mark Raymond; Rosie Serpis; Caroline Shaw; Barbara Thorndick; Sheila Wheeler; Simon Wilshaw; Wendy Wilton; Mark Worrall; Wendy Wood

Apologies:

Keith Austin; Merle Bigden; Penny Chatfield; David Coleman; Peter Fleming; Kate Greenaway; Brendan O'Connor; Maureen Pullen; Mark Salisbury; Mandy Wynne

Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed guest presenters and other attendees:

- Mike Gilks, Rural Officer for Kent of GOSE, attending in place of Maureen Pullen
- Liz Jarvis to present Tunbridge Wells CDRP report
- Carol Infanti, Acting Head of Business and Performance Management Unit, Adult Services Directorate at KCC
- Colin Maclean, Interim Head of Community Planning, Kent Partnership representing Steve Leidecker
- Carolyn Michel, LAA Team, KCC
- Angela Painter of South West Kent PCT, representing Brendan O'Connor
- Richard Spoerry, Kent Agreement Manager, presenting item 5
- Paul Wilczek, representing Mark Salisbury

The Chairman suggested that future Agendas be organised so that items for action and decision are listed at the top and reports at the end.

Declan O'Neill has formally withdrawn from the LSP. Under interim arrangements until the appointment of a new Director of Public Health for the new West Kent PCT in October, he is operating in the role of Director of Public Health for Kent and Medway strategic review of health services. Brendan O'Connor will represent both current PCTs at the WKP.

1. Minutes/Matters Arising

AIF

The focused consultation concluded at the end of June and a number of minor amendments have been made. The document has been approved and will be printed and distributed during the summer. A targeted launch is planned for September – to those we wish to influence – GOSE, SEEDA, KMEB, etc – lunch plus tour of WK. The AIF progression group will continue to meet and monitor progress.

Bid Appraisal – Ssky Project

£10,000 was agreed at the last meeting subject to further evaluation and a commitment to funding from other organisations to be facilitated with the Chairman's approval. Funding has now been approved and Ssky understand that the £10K is a one off funding stream to meet the costs of Time2Talk counselling to clear a backlog in demand.

Consultation Response – Kent Prospects

The 3 districts sent in responses. Drawing out the common themes from these the WKP also put in a response.

2. Presentation – 'Towards 2010'

Nick Chard introduced 'Towards 2010' which is allied to Vision for Kent and other County strategies. This consultation document is aspirational but following on from consultation it will be developed into a strategy which can be achieved with measurable targets and milestones. Targets will be SMART and agreed with partners. Resources will be diverted as necessary to meet the targets in the final strategy.

There was some discussion around connectivity with 2011 Skills Olympics. Bill Fearon to cover in his response to consultation.

Bill Fearon

There was some concern that the high level aspirational statements and methodology must translate into realistic and achievable targets and that delivery partners must be properly involved.

It was pointed out that 'Towards 2010' alongside Vision for Kent provides a link between the Kent Agreement covering the years 2005-8 and LAA 2, the development of which will begin later on this year. 'Towards 2010' could form the basis of the next Kent Agreement.

Action

- Partners to engage in consultation
- Partners to copy in their own organisations' response to Wendy so that a West Kent response drawing on common themes, can be crafted if appropriate.

All partners

All partners

1. Co-ordinator's report

Financial Report – noted.

Conference

The concept has now been refined to include the opportunity for delegates to meet key buyers from the public sector. There will be a dedicated exhibition area and meet the buyer sessions immediately before and after the conference which links to a conference session planned on winning public sector contracts.

Key to the success of the conference is the ability of WKP partners to draw in businesses they have connections with and partners were asked to hand or send out invitations with a personal message. Wendy will check on progress

before the conference. Delegates are requested to register on the WKP website which will provide the opportunity to give more information on the partnership. Wendy Wood

Post meeting – email invitation attached to these notes and card invitations being sent out to partners. Wendy Wood

Action: All partners to personally invite businesses with whom they have links All Partners

Bid appraisal – VAWK Development Officer Post

The appraisal group, whilst fully recognising the important role this post fulfils within the West Kent community could not recommend the bid for approval as its scope fell outside of the appraisal criteria. The group felt that it was essentially continuation funding for a core post at VAWK. Core activity at VAWK already receives financial contributions from WKP funding partners – the local authorities. The post has already been part-funded by the WKP for 2 years and it was felt that alternative funding streams could have been found.

Caroline Shaw made a case for the partnership to approve funding arguing that that VAWK receives inadequate core funding from KCC and the local authorities. North West Kent CVS which covers only 2 boroughs receives £115,000 whereas VAWK receive only £34,000. VAWK is addressing this issue with KCC but in the meantime it is very difficult to attract funding to support infrastructure. Caroline pointed out that the bid was only for part-funding and that the match funding would be generated from management fees on other projects. She pointed out that this was a critical support and development post for the sector that must be continued. Furthermore, the post has levered in substantial funding to West Kent organisations and whilst it is core funding for VAWK the post supports project funding in the sector.

The bid received substantial support from partners although it was recognised that given the guidelines within which the bid had to be appraised the appraisal group had no alternative but to reject the bid. It was suggested that some further refinement of the bid could be undertaken to give a greater emphasis to specific projects and clearer outcomes and targets. However, to expedite matters, it was agreed that funding would be provided for a further year over which period, more detailed monitoring information about the role, purpose and achievements of the post would be undertaken. The Appraisal Group were invited to consider the need for any refinements to the appraisal criteria with regard to project/core funding.

Action

- Funding to continue for period of one year
- a more complete picture of the work undertaken by the VAWK development officer during the first two years' funding to be provided as a basis for consideration of funding for the second year
- Appraisal group to revisit appraisal criteria and implications of including core funding bids as eligible. Melvyn Howell volunteered to work with group on this.

Caroline Shaw

Appraisal group

4. Annual Community Plan and CDRP Updates

Tunbridge Wells CDRP

The focus of the report is on actions, projects and their associated outcomes.

Tunbridge Wells is fortunate in having low levels of crime, but this does cause problems when trying to make a direct link between crime levels and partnership activity.

The reassurance agenda has been addressed through a number of projects and initiatives in Cranbrook, focusing on support for older and more vulnerable members of the community.

A cause for concern is that 03/04 was a particularly low crime year in Tunbridge Wells. In 05/06, BCS crime rose by 16% compared to 03/04 but when compared with 04/05 the rise was 0.8%, the lowest in the county. There is an ever-increasing willingness from partners to work effectively to improve the quality of life for residents and the partnership goes from strength to strength.

Tonbridge & Malling CDRP

A similar picture to Tunbridge Wells with low levels of crime. Partnership working is proving most effective. A range of examples were given including:

- 41% of all criminal damage in Tonbridge & Malling involved vehicles but now over 3,000 vehicles have signed up to vehicle watch
- 80% of the anti-social behaviour cases reported to the borough council were resolved without the need for any more formal action and without recourse to the criminal justice process.
- There are a range of diversionary activities available for young people, particularly in the summer holidays

Sevenoaks CDRP

A further endorsement of the success of partnership working across West Kent, even against a backdrop of restructuring within partner organisations. Sevenoaks Community Safety Partnership has been strengthened by the recent police area re-structuring bringing the whole of the district under one command unit.

Kent Police have been re-organised from 9 areas to 6 with a Chief Inspector for each command unit. The police see a key plank for the future as partnership solutions, moving beyond police and local authority responsibility and working with all agencies to play a part in crime reduction. The local authorities have already begun to see the benefits from the restructuring with the introduction of monthly tasking meetings involving all agencies in how to deploy resources and prioritise issues.

There was a discussion around how graffiti vandals are dealt with. An opinion was expressed that the police need to give a strong message that it will be punished but countering this was the view that it can often be dealt with

appropriately within a given community. The police have to follow their procedural guidelines but this does not preclude victims from pursuing a compensation claim through the civil courts. Each of the West Kent authorities have graffiti cleaning kits available for loan and their use within communities has a positive impact.

5. Presentation – Kent Agreement

The powerpoint presentation is attached. The monitoring report is available from Richard. Richard Spoerry commented that the kind of successful partnership working demonstrated by the West Kent CDRPs is a key element in the Kent Agreement. The outcomes in the Kent Agreement were agreed with partners and can genuinely only be delivered through partnership working. All partners are working together to deliver an improvement in the quality of life and to help people to become independent.

The reward grant is substantial - £36M on 100% success. The Kent Partnership looked closely at all community strategies in Kent when putting together the terms of the Agreement and the reward money will go either via the local councils or through KCC to deliver those targets directly at community level.

The monitoring system was explained, particularly that because this is a 3 year programme with the targets set for the position at the end of year 3, an amber light at the end of year one was a positive outcome and that even a red light didn't mean a target was a matter for concern because there are still 2 years left for it to reach target and the reporting system doesn't necessarily accurately reflect ongoing progress. Additionally some indicators are about perception and these can take a significant period to influence successfully. Communication is key to this.

Looking ahead to LAA2 consultation will soon be underway with partners to identify the shared targets and address new issues.

Currently, monitoring progress against the outcomes involved mainly county level data. It was felt that more refined analysis was required, perhaps down to the district level so that comparative performance between different areas in Kent could be obtained.

Action: Richard to provide to Wendy for next meeting a specific list of where West Kent are underperforming against the targets. Although individual agencies are well aware of progress against relevant targets it will be useful for the WKP to have an overview.

Richard
Spoerry

6. Sub Group Updates

The update Papers can be found with the Agenda papers. Additional discussion is minuted here.

Business Development

The business group met recently, including some new faces. A concerted effort is needed to draw in more business people. The lack of meeting places for business people came up as an important issue in West Kent. There is potential to link this to the E-Kent broadband initiative which is

mapping wifi hotspots. The provision of premises for small businesses is also a priority and the implementation of the home based businesses project.

Bill Fearon commented on the closure of West Kent College's high street IT training venues due to the withdrawal of LSC funding. It is hoped that it will be possible to develop Union House in Tunbridge Wells as a business services centre.

Action: Bill Fearon and Roger House to liaise on Union House potential and report to next meeting

Bill Fearon/
Roger House

Learning and Skills

The 14-19 Group are not due to meet until next week. We had the action plan to consider at the last meeting. Malcolm Staunton of LSC has been confirmed as partnership director for West Kent in the LSC restructuring. West Kent (and Maidstone) one of 4 LSC Kent areas will have 8 LSC officers working under Malcolm. It is important that West Kent continues to push for adequate resourcing from LSC.

Action: Wendy Wilton to invite Malcolm Staunton to sit on the WKP.

Wendy
Wilton

Bill Fearon updated the meeting on the West Kent Learning Federation who are putting in a bid to become a pilot region to deliver 14 new diplomas. The pilot would require common timetabling across schools and colleges.

West Kent College has been approved as a train to gain provider delivering training for adults who have not attained level 2. An ESF bid has been submitted involving 11 partners including Hadlow College.

West Kent College remains in the top 3 colleges in the South East with student success rates in numbers finishing courses successfully.

A potential major new project for the college next year will be to substantially rebuild most of it to provide a contemporary campus which will be the best in the country of its type.

Housing

The WKP supported work by the housing sub group to engage with local employers to understand the need for and support provision of affordable housing to recruit and retain staff. The West Kent Housing Association has developed the first pilot scheme on Tonbridge High Street. The marketing of this has had a overwhelming response. Properties are available on an equity share basis and 12 of the 18 purchasers currently live and work locally for employers such as Boots, South East Trains, a local dentist, a local school and for Kent Messenger. Four properties are being sold to key workers working a little further afield, for example, the Police and Pembury Hospital. There will be an event in the autumn to celebrate and publicise the completion of the building and this is an excellent opportunity to get good publicity for the WKP.

The Chairman congratulated West Kent Housing Association on the successful delivery of this project.

There was some discussion around the withdrawal of supporting people funding and how West Kent residents effected by this can be helped to maintain their tenancies. Whilst WKP partners recognise that there is no alternative to the redistribution of funds to the centre and east of the county it is important that the change in resourcing is properly managed.

Action: Barbara Thorndick to draft letter to KCC for the Chairman.

Barbara
Thorndick

Transport

It has just been announced that the SE Regional Assembly have decided that there will no funding for the Colts Hill link before 2016. Partners felt that this is a seriously dangerous stretch of road and the decision has to be challenged.

Action:

- Tim Read to draft letter for the Chairman to send to the Minister for Transport inviting him to meet with local MPs and other interested parties at Colts Hill.
- The new franchisee, South East Rail, will attend the next sub group meeting.
- The sub group will explore how rail travel can be used to alleviate the load on the road system in West Kent. Network rail should be engaged with on this issue, particularly provision of adequate car parking and branch line development. There is a new team working to support the franchisee and Tim will report on progress to the next meeting.

Tim Read

Tim Read

Health

The financial resources available for the changing health agenda is unknown at this stage but there is comprehensive planning on how it might be delivered. The partnerships are further strengthened through creative ways to deliver public health work – for example joint appointments by Health and Local authorities. Although the health re-organisation will result in a much larger PCT, the focus will not be lost on local work.

7. Any Other Business

Roger House updated the meeting on a private sector initiative – Enterprise into Schools, which is already being piloted through Kent Works. Funding has been secured from KCC and SEEDA and a small amount of match funding would be required to deliver the initiative in West Kent.

8. Dates of Next Meetings

- 27 September – 9.30 start, The River Centre, Tonbridge – conference
- Friday 20 October – 10am Kings Hill Conference Centre
- Thursday 18 January 2007, 10am
- Thursday 26 April 2007, 10am
- Thursday 19 July, 2007, 10am
- Thursday 25 October 2007 10am (note this replaces 18 October)