



Worcestershire Partnership Management Group Summary Notes: 14th March 2007

Present

Michael Clarke	Chair of the Worcestershire Partnership
Walter Delin	Chief Executive, Wyre Forest District Council
Ian Edwards	Interim Partnerships Director, Advantage West Midlands
Sharon Gray	Director of Area, Learning & Skills Council
Jack Hegarty	Managing Director, Wychavon District Council
Christine Jones	Chief Executive, H & W Chamber of Commerce
Lucy Phillips	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Service
Richard Quallington	Chief Executive, Community First
Rob Sykes	Chief Executive, Worcestershire County Council

In Attendance

Simon Adams	Head of Community Leadership, Worcestershire County Council
Julie Bishop	Worcestershire County Council
Glyn Edwards	Worcestershire Partnership
Jenny Murray	Worcestershire County Council
Elspeth Rolls	Community First/Infrastructure Consortium
Pete Sugg	Worcestershire County Council
Geoff Taylor Smith	Worcestershire County Council
Glyn West	Worcestershire Partnership

Apologies for Absence

Paul Bates	Chief Executive Worcestershire PCT
Supt Jane Horwood	West Mercia Constabulary
Tony Southall	Government Office West Midlands

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on the 9th February 2007

These were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising, which were not already on the Agenda.

Michael Clarke welcomed, Lucy Phillips of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service as a new member of the Management Group. It was hoped in particular that Lucy would bring in additional expertise in relation to the performance management issues.

4.1 LSP/LAA Capacity Building Programme

GW tabled the Worcestershire Partnership LSP/LAA Capacity Building Support Programme submission. Agreement had been reached with the District LSPs with the exception of Bromsgrove, who had access to separate funding under this programme. GW and David Onions of Worcestershire County Council had been put forward to work in 2 Action Learning Set areas. Two other nominees were required. Management Group members agreed to contact GW in the first instance with nominations if they were interested in signing up to the programme.

4.2 Half –day Conference on Poverty

GW reported the half-day conference would take place at Redditch Town Hall on June 29th 2007. Each LSP would have 10 places allocated.

4.3 Olympics 2012 update

GW said funding for the post of co-ordinator had now been agreed with all the districts. The post had been advertised and interviews would take place in early April. GW thanked CJ for agreeing to host the position at the Chamber offices.

4.4 Resumption of meetings of LSP meetings

GW updated the situation. He was experiencing difficulty in setting up a meeting with all LSP chairs in attendance. It was agreed to resume meetings even if some LSP chairs could not attend particular meetings. It was also agreed it would be useful to have LSP co-ordinators attend the meetings on a voluntary basis.

4.5 Location for 2007 Assembly

GW reported that it had not been possible to find a suitable venue in Redditch or Bromsgrove. A provisional booking for the 22nd November had therefore been made with Worcester Rugby Club. It was agreed that this would be an ideal venue as parking and accessibility was good. Concern was expressed over disruption caused by potential construction work was raised but RS understood this phase of the work should have been completed by November.

5. LAA

5.1 LAA Outcome E5: To enrich the experiences and development of young people through activity and positive contribution

Geoff Taylor-Smith presented the Management Group with an implementation report on LAA outcome E5. The CYPSP were developing baselines for outcomes E5a and E5b. Some activity was already in hand in relation to the number of children reached by the Children's Fund, which was a very successful programme. Positive Activities for Young People indicators were also good. Geoff Taylor-Smith stated that Government guidance was awaited, which would probably result in changes to future outcomes.

The Action plan described the timetable and milestones being put in place to collect more data. The Government appeared to be focussing on 13 – 19 year olds, but the Partnership would also address the 8 – 13 years age group. Geoff Taylor-Smith stressed the importance of having one point of contact. It was hoped to refresh the Positive Activities for Young People Grant.

RQ was happy with the proposal but mentioned Local Network Fund, which could be shown in the funding paragraph of the implementation plan. Peter Sugg endorsed this suggestion, and said the Government were keen to link together targeted input after 2008. The Management group welcomed the report, and approved the implementation proposals for outcome E5.

GW pointed out that the Management Group had now considered and approved all four year 2 LAA outcomes, in accordance with the LAA timetable.

5.2 CYPSP Theme Group Meeting

Geoff Taylor-Smith and Peter Sugg represented the CYPSP, and gave a report on the LAA performance to date. David Onions was currently collecting data for a more formal end of year report. Geoff Taylor-Smith said to date progress was satisfactory in many areas, but there were some areas of concern.

Outcome E2 was currently flagged Red, and was a concern. It was very difficult to fully control, as schools were autonomous organisations. Nevertheless an Action plan was now in place and hopefully Key Stage 4 targets would improve. Official figures would be available in November 2007. Ray Westwood, the Worcestershire County Council Principal Inspector for School Improvement was working on supporting schools around Key Stage 4

Outcome E4 was currently flagged Red, but Geoff Taylor-Smith was in discussion with Education Welfare and there had been a definite improvement in Primary School results. Secondary Schools remained an area of concern.

Outcome E5 PAYP was currently flagged Green. Geoff Taylor-Smith explained it was a mixed picture but there is a lot to be proud of, for example schools reaching healthy schools targets. The teenage pregnancy rate had dropped 11.7% from 1998 baseline. The Action plan sought to reduce this by 50% by 2010. CYPSP membership had been reviewed and was now made up of key commissioners. A key issue was to look at the Joint Commissioning Strategy, which would be a key role for Richard Keble the new Head of Service.

Geoff Taylor-Smith referred to a number of key issues and in particular sought guidance from the Management Group to identify priorities for allocation of pooled resources 2008/09. The delivery of Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 was dependent on retaining the funding in pooled budgets. It was planned to update the plan by 14th June, but not the priorities.

MC expressed concern over how we maintain progress and how we build partnerships beyond formal structures. He noted for example that schools were

autonomous. There was a need for greater focus on other partners to encourage involvement in the commissioning process. GW reported that Management Group took a decision on pooled budgets, which gave no guarantee of passporting funds after 2008. £1.8m of Reward Grant was at risk for not delivering outcome E5. CJ asked if the whole grant would be lost. GW explained that there was a floor target, below which no funds were paid, but above this some monies would be paid depending on final performance.

RQ called for regular updates/information on LAA outcome Red flagged areas. It was agreed that CYPSP would share their reports highlighting LAA with Management Group.

MC thanked Geoff Taylor-Smith and Peter Sugg for attending the Management Group.

Discussion then took place over the format of the template. GW had drawn this up at the request of the Management Group. It was agreed that the template was useful and should be used for future Theme Group presentations. RS believed the Management Group needed to keep Theme groups on track by being helpful and supportive, and suggested an 'early warning system' to be in place. It was also agreed that the template should allow the identification of blockages, etc. which were impeding progress as the job of the Management Group was to find ways of removing them.

5.3 LAA Funding

Glyn Edwards presented a report, which outlined progress to date on aligning and pooling funding streams. The initial consultation work had been completed.

Funding had been classified in line with LAA Guidance, and a list of funds had been identified which fell into one of the following groups:

- Funding streams that will be pooled centrally in all LAA's
- Funding streams that can be pooled centrally in all LAA's on a case by case basis
- Funds that can be aligned locally

There were concerns and queries from partners, which are being reflected on a national basis regarding the protocol of alignment and pooling for LAA budgets. These were:

- Fears of a loss of financial control over funding streams,
- The belief that if funds were to be aligned in this round, that this would lead to pooling at a later stage,
- There has also been significant restructuring in certain departments leading to changes in administration of said funds.

In total there are 14 pooled grants, and 32 further grants to be aligned (as a set minimum, either in full where possible or in part under eligibility of that specific funding remit).

GW reported that LAA Reward Grant was based on achieving outcomes, but the process of aligning funds was part of our original commitment when the LAA submission was made.

RQ noted that some of the funds would only exist for one further year. Perhaps we should look to use alignment in the LAA as a lever to gain further sustainability of these funding streams for future years in support of the LAA. SA said we need to think about a future fund analysis of the LAA if possible.

SG added that joint commissioning had a prominent role in the success of the LAA and we need to innovate to make a local difference.

IE said the portfolio of funds did not show the other financial support that is being injected into the County that in some way support the outputs of the LAA. For instance, AWM would be making investments into Worcester city and this support had an impact on job creation. It was agreed that representatives needed to go back and promote the LAA in their own organisations and increase confidence in the alignment issue.

The Management Group approved the LAA funding paper, and asked that the work to align and pool funding should continue, with reference to satisfactorily concluding the alignment of funds as soon as possible.

5.4 Developing future arrangements for LAAs

This item was provided for information only. GW was asked to prepare a paper on the implications of the new LAAs. SA suggested this should be addressed in the summer, once further guidance had been received. This was agreed.

5.5 Evidence of savings, improved outcomes, and good practice attributed to Local Area Agreements

This item was provided for information only.

6. VCS Infrastructure Funding – A Partnership Approach

Jenny Murray and Elspeth Rolls presented the report, which proposed reforming local infrastructure funding support to achieve improved clarity of purpose, and efficiencies in investment and administration.

Elspeth described the background of the VCS in Worcestershire and the growing expectation that the VCS were to provide more front line services. Research undertaken to look at the Economic and Social Impact of the VCS in Worcestershire found there were 2,750 VCS organisations and the estimated annual income of the sector was around £365m. The full report would be published on the Infrastructure Consortium website at the end of March 2007.

Jenny stressed it was important to ensure Infrastructure Funding was sustainable, but at the moment it was seen as an 'add on'. It was also important to consider VCS independence to provide support to front line delivery. She reported that Worcestershire County Council Cabinet had approved the Shopping, Investing and Giving proposal on the 8th March.

The recommendations were endorsed by the Management Group and it was agreed that Jenny take the lead in establishing a Task and Finish group. It was noted that a representative from health needed to part of the task group.

7. Worcestershire Compact Update

RQ presented the report, whose purpose was to discuss possible topics for the next Worcestershire Partnership Compact/VCS /Public Sector conference taking place on the 14th November 2007. After discussion it was agreed that the topics to be covered were health and the Worcestershire Partnership Community Strategy review.

The Compact Questionnaire had been distributed, and comments were still being received. RQ informed the Management Group that an email had been received from CALC stating that they were not part of the VCS. There was a need to find ways of engaging with them. It was agreed that GW, JM, RQ and Nick Riding (WCC) meet with CALC.

The Funding and Procurement Protocol was part of the Compact and funding partners needed to develop their own approach on how they fund the VCS and tailor it for their own organisations. Protocols would be circulated to partner organisations and had submitted for final sign up to the Worcestershire Partnership Board meeting at its meeting on 17th October 2007.

WD suggested a single application form would be useful. This was seen as a useful proposal. It was agreed that JM take this on board and that it be consider by Task and Finish group.

The Management Group then agreed to the recommendations and timescales.

8. Regional Economic Strategy Consultation Submission

It was agreed that the RES submission was balanced and measured, and should be submitted on behalf of the Worcestershire Partnership.

9. Regional Spatial Strategy Consultation Submission

It was agreed that the RES submission was suitable for submission on behalf of the Worcestershire Partnership and sent today (14.3.07).

10. Partnership Communications Strategy

GW reported that no comments received. The Management Group adopted the strategy.

11. Proposed Diploma in Public Service Delivery

GW presented the report. He had been approached by Worcester College of Technology to pilot an innovative management development course. MC had looked into the Diploma work currently operating in Birmingham and said feedback was mixed. It was agreed in first instance for GW to discuss further with Bryn Griffiths (Worcester College of Technology). It was also agreed that it was up to the Partnership to decide what it wanted.

12. Worcestershire Partnership Team Budget 2007/2008

GW presented the budget update report. MC had written to all partners regarding the further funding of the Partnership Co-ordinator's post. Michael O'Riordan had suggested the shortfall be borne by non-local authority partners excluding VCS. David Green had suggested funding a share of the shortfall (£4,600). The Bishop of Worcester had also proposed dividing it up between partners, recognising that the VCS would not be in a position to pay. The Management Group were comfortable with contributing but stressed that they do not want to be in this position again. It was agreed that GW prepare a report for the May meeting highlighting risks over a three-year period. In the interim, RS said he would approve the contract extension of the Partnership Policy & Communications Officer until the 31st March 2008.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Ethnic Monitoring

WD reported that Wyre Forest Matters were undertaking work looking at good practice in Ethnic Monitoring to ensure the classifications used reflect the principal population groups (gypsy/traveller and Polish) in Wyre Forest. It was hoped to have a Countywide agreed definition, with extra categories in. There was a discussion over defining Eastern European categories. It was agreed that WD discuss a proforma with Nick Parker. Management Group members would take this back to their organisations and provide feedback at the 23rd May meeting.

13.2 LAA Forecast 2006/07

GW reported the Pump Priming grant expenditure was on target, which was good news. Government Office was happy and no funding would be taken back.

MC stated this would probably be the last meeting CJ would be attending. Her successor will be introduced to all partner organisations. Christine was given the best wishes of the Management Group and in particular RS thanked her for her drive and valuable contributions.

14. Date of Next Meeting

23rd May 2007, 3pm – 5pm, Conference Suites 2 & 3, Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Services HQ