

Coventry Partnership Leaders & Advisors Meeting– 22 August 2007

10.00 am – 12.00 pm, Corporate Training Centre, Elm Bank

Present:

Les Ratcliffe, Chair, Coventry Partnership
Rosalind Roberts, Coventry Partnership Secretariat
June Morley, Coventry Partnership Secretariat
Jonathon Skinner, Coventry Partnership Secretariat
Helen Shankster, Coventry Partnership Secretariat
Nigel Wain, Coventry Partnership Secretariat
Janita Wesson, Physical and Sensory Impairment Partnership
Jenni Venn, Advisor, Equalities and Communities
David Smithson, Community Safety Partnership
Jane Malbassa, Jobs and Learning Group
Rebecca Young, Jobs and Learning Group
Adrian West, Advisor, Environment Theme Group
Sara Roach Advisor, Community Safety Partnership
Alice Davey, Cultural Partnership
Sue Bent, Chair, Equalities and Communities
Janice Nichols, Head of Neighbourhood Management
Marc Harder, Children and Young People's Partnership

In attendance:

Su Edwards, Coventry Partnership
Sharon Mace, NRF team
Priti Bharadwa, NRF Team

Apologies:

Cllr John McNicholas, Chair, Transport Theme Group
Mark Taylor, Chair, Community Safety Partnership
Bob Keith, Chair, Environment Theme Group
Jane Beaver, Chair, Job Strategy Group
Nigel Hart, Coventry Partnership Secretariat

1. Welcome and Apologies

Les Ratcliffe welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Ros Roberts, who joins the Coventry Partnership Secretariat on 3 September as Partnership Development Manager.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. Neighbourhood Renewal Funding Succession Strategy

Priti Bharadwa, NRF Team, gave an oral presentation to the Group and reported the following points:

- a) All of the Theme Groups have now been visited and the Operations Group and LSP approached for approval of the succession process
- b) The timetable for succession includes a meeting of the NRF Sub Group on 24 September 2007 , a follow up meeting on 11 December 2007 and a wrap up meeting in February 2008
- c) The role of the Theme Groups and, specifically, that of the Leaders and Advisors, to provide evidence of project outcomes and the potential for mainstreaming. Theme Groups are requested to provide feedback on succession planning during September 2007
- d) There needs to be documentation in place to show the achievements made through NRF with the £10.6million.
- e) Succession planning may inform the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Local Area Agreement through the identification of good practice

Sara Roach, Community Safety will compile a report to identify which funding streams currently come through the NRF, including information on how these contribute to strategic objectives and support specific staff roles.

4. Theme Group Support – Coventry Partnership Secretariat

June Morley, Coventry Partnership Secretariat, presented a paper outlining the funding situation for the Partnership Support Officers within the Secretariat, highlighting their roles and the support provided through these posts. The group were advised of the following issues:

- a) The 3 Partnership Support Officer posts and the Communications Officer post are currently funded until March 2008 through the NRF and this funding is due to cease
- b) The Partnership Support Officers currently work to deliver the outcomes of the Community Plan and support each of the Theme Groups

- c) The group were asked to provide feedback to help shape the future roles of the Secretariat, particularly in supporting the Theme Groups effectively
- d) The Partnership Development Manager will consider the future structure of the Secretariat over the coming months and present a proposal

Responses from the group included the following points:

- a) The Partnership Support Officers have all had a positive impact on Theme Groups and provide an important link to the Partnership and other Theme Groups. The Partnership Support Officers and the Communications Officer role are an invaluable resource and provide added value
- b) If the roles are not continued there may not enough capacity among certain Theme Groups to incorporate the work currently undertaken by the Partnership Support Officers and Communications Officer. Partnership issues may then become de-prioritised. Some activities could also become disparate and difficult to manage
- c) It is likely that the voluntary and community sectors would suffer most heavily from the lack of support should the roles not exist
- d) The Communications Officer role is just starting to bear fruit, with the production of materials and the development of a vibrant and up to date website. These activities help to give the Partnership a clear identity. Support for marketing and awareness raising is key for the voluntary, community and cultural sectors
- e) The roles add value to the cross cutting themes but this could be improved
- f) New links with the private sector need to be managed and improved with Secretariat support
- g) Discontinuation of these roles may send a negative signal that the Coventry Partnership is ending or is less important
- h) The Partnership Support Officers can contribute to the development of the LAA and the posts will be a valuable source of communicating the plans and changes to the Theme Groups with the development of the Public Service Board
- i) It is important to consider what is needed in the future rather than what has happened in the past. Helen Shankster, Coventry Partnership Secretariat, highlighted that there is an existing report which had been commissioned to consider the role of the Partnership and that this could be revisited.

It was agreed that a questionnaire be sent to all Theme Group leaders and advisors requesting their views and that these views would then be used to help shape the future structure of the Secretariat.

5. Draft Cultural Strategy

Alice Davey, Cultural Partnership, presented the Cultural Strategy to the group with an explanation of the processes involved in creating the strategy. The group were advised that the Cultural Strategy will be used as an action plan to work towards a

range of targets over a 3 year period. This draft is not the final version but will provide a means of delivering the first steps to achieving cohesion for the city. It was highlighted that there may be some difficulties in mainstreaming some activities which appear to be successful due to the lack of output evidence. The Children and Young Peoples Group felt that they could provide some Coventry specific data to support the strategy and also identify further links. The role of business was discussed and it was agreed that links with the private sector could be improved.

The Children and Young People Group agreed to send some supporting information to be included in the Cultural Strategy.

6. Private Sector Engagement in the Coventry Partnership/Theme Groups

Jonathan Skinner, Coventry Partnership Secretariat, presented a paper to the Group detailing the progress being made with the private sector engagement in the Coventry area. It was reported that consultant, Jo Sandford, has been commissioned to help identify existing business networks in the city. The results of this work will be available at the end of the year. The group were advised that Nigel Hart, Coventry Partnership Secretariat, is also involved in ensuring the effective communication of this work.

The group discussed potential links into Theme Groups, such as Health, Environment, Transport and Learning, Skills and Employment. A number of suggestions were received as to how the private sector could be engaged in Partnership and Theme Group activities, including:

- a) Work experience opportunities and jobs
- b) Skills shortages, employment schemes and the promotion of current job vacancies
- c) The environment and waste reduction schemes
- d) Travel plans and volunteer drivers
- e) Healthy employment schemes
- f) Buddy links and volunteering (corporate social responsibility)
- g) Healthy employment schemes
- h) Cultural links
- i) The planned growth of the City

It was also highlighted that there are Relationship Managers now in place within LEGI. It was suggested that the Relationship Managers could build strategic links with businesses in Coventry and that placements and employment opportunities could then be offered to LEGI clients.

It was agreed that Jonathan Skinner take forward the following actions:

- i. Follow up the above suggestions for potential business engagement***

- ii. Discuss with Howard the potential to liaise with the Relationship Managers*
- iii. Develop case studies highlighting the evidence of benefits to business and develop business champions*
- iv. Present a draft report at the next meeting of the Operations Group and to the Partnership Board in November*

7. Update on the Development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Local Area Agreement

Jenni Venn, Coventry City Council, and Sara Roach, Community Safety, updated the group on current progress in the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. The group were presented with a flow chart to illustrate the process for development and it was highlighted that much of the supporting evidence is currently being collated to identify key priorities by October 2007.

It was reiterated that the Sustainable Communities Strategy needs to include aspirational statements which look towards 2026. The SCS will be delivered through the LDF Core Strategy, the LAA and other specific strategies. The LAA will give focus to the way in which government measures progress but is also how the local area will measure its progress. It was reported that the PIE Group is currently working to identify key outcomes over the next 20 years and to understand how these may be embodied in the 3 year LAA plan. It will be important to link the short term LAA priorities with the longer term SCS priorities.

The group were asked to note specific points in the development timeline, including:

- a) Consideration of the process by the Partnership Board on 12 September 2007
- b) Transitional LAA Guidance to be issued in October 2007
- c) Draft priorities to be agreed with the Partnership Board in November 2007 (subject to the availability to the National Indicator Set)
- d) LAA to be finalised in March 2008 and agreed with the Partnership Board and Council
- e) LAA to be signed off by ministers in June 2008

The group were advised that it will be important to involve Government Office representatives in negotiations and activities to develop the 'Coventry Story'. Theme Group Leaders were encouraged to see this as an opportunity to communicate positively with Government Office.

Recent meetings with organisations with a Statutory Duty to Cooperate were also discussed. It was reported that some of these organisations are local but some, such as English Heritage, Sport England, the Passenger Transport Authority and the Environment Agency, are regional. Theme Group leaders were advised that

representatives from the regional organisations may also be present at some Theme Group meetings.

8. Theme Group Update Reports

Each of the Theme Groups reported the following points:

a) Pie Group

- i. Work is being undertaken around the Quality of Life paper
- ii. Information from a number of Theme Groups is being pulled together for the SCS and LAA and a bespoke set of information will be produced for each group. This information will also include the cross cutting issues
- iii. Leaders and Advisors were asked to consider the diagram supplied and inform Helen Shankster, Coventry Partnership, if there were any additional strategies/plans that had not been included

b) Community Safety

- i. The latest performance figures indicate that some targets are short and the PSA 1 is a pressure point, with work around drugs marked for a 20% reduction
- ii. Mark Taylor has offered relevant Theme Groups training on 'Hazardous Materials'. A number of groups were named as potential candidates for the course
- iii. Data for drugs and alcohol misuse may be available from the Children and Young People's Partnership

c) Environment

- i. The Draft Climate Change Strategy is now available. The Strategy has been through the Operations Group and will go to the Partnership Board on 12 September. The final version will be available in March 2008

d) Equalities and Community Cohesion

- i. No formal meeting of this recently established Theme Group has yet taken place. The membership of the group is made up of representatives from various Theme Groups and Partnerships to help embed equality and community cohesion across all Theme Groups
- ii. The LAA has no specific indicators of equality and community cohesion as these are expected to be embedded in the priorities of all Theme Groups

e) Learning Skills and Employment

- i. There has been one meeting since the two groups merged

- ii. There are some concerns regarding the LAA targets as unemployment is high at the moment and JSA rates are up in the City, though some priority areas have fallen. Work is being undertaken to establish the key reasons for this
- iii. Comments on the Draft Employment Strategy have been incorporated into the document
- iv. Current work is underway to consider in-work support, as there is evidence that a number of new employees are not staying in the posts for long periods
- v. Worklessness is seen as a cross cutting theme and it is proposed to run some roadshows to other Theme Groups to discuss the Employment Strategy and any key links

f) Children and Young People – Children’s Partnership

- i. The Children’s and Young People’s Plan is now submitted and will form part of the annual performance framework. There will be an evaluation in November 2007
- ii. There is Children’s Fund extension money and a commissioning framework will be established to take account of the Children and Young People’s Plan, the SCS and LAA arrangements. This funding is not for the re-commissioning of existing projects.
- iii. Recent A level results across the City were good with A – C grades above the national average
- iv. A key priority for the group is the NEETS and the retention of young people in Year 12

g) Learning Disabilities Partnership Board

- i. There is a focus on Enablement. There are many cross cutting issues – working with employers in the City, transport links, employment, health and housing.
- ii. There has been some links established with NRF funding and the Routeforward project
- iii. The Learning Disabilities Strategy is now updated and can be found at www.ldpb.info.

h) Transport Theme Group

- i. There have been two recent consultations, one for the LDF and the other for the Right of Way.
- ii. The Transport Cabinet Member is now part of the Transport Theme Group.
- iii. The hospital car park charges are to increase but at the same time the bus routes to the site are increasing in capacity by 22%

i) Health Theme Group

- i. In considering recent performance data, the group were concerned about immunisation and vaccination levels

- ii. That a 'Being Healthy' working group has been established to build on links between the Health Partnership and the Children and Young People Partnership

j) Cultural Partnership

- i. There are concerns that the 2012 Olympics may be diverting funds away from regional level activities

k) Housing Theme Group

- i. To contribute to the Decent Homes Standard, a helicopter is being sent over the city to identify particular areas where many homes are losing heat
- ii. The group are considering those with specialist needs and larger families
- iii. There is a pilot eco-housing scheme in Whitley through Midland Heart

l) Any Other Business

- i. The group were reminded that the six monthly review meeting with the Government Office is due to take place on 21 November 2007. Further details are to be confirmed shortly but performance data is required, particularly for targets and actions which were defined to be red or amber at the last review
- ii. The group were asked to note that the Coventry Partnership were supporting a range of cultural events as part of 'Celebrating Coventry' during the coming weekend.