

# **LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

**SHADOW BOARD - 31st MAY 2002**

## **LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP REMIT, MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMANSHIP**

### **REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To set out proposals for the remit and membership of the Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership (LLSP) for the consideration of the Shadow Board.

#### **Background**

2. The Leader of the County Council, Mr Barber, outlined the County Council's position on local strategic partnerships and community strategies in September last year. He proposed:

- To begin to draft the Community Strategy.
- To establish a Partnership based upon either a small umbrella group that works with a range of existing partnerships (a 'partnership of partnerships') or a body with all major partners represented.
- That the Partnership should oversee practical initiatives to improve service co-ordination in the County e.g. consultation, information sharing and access to services and information (including electronic access)
- That the County Council would nominate an Executive Member to attend each District Local Strategic Partnership (DLSPs).

3. Mr Barber also stressed that discussion with partners about the Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership and Community Strategy is required before final decisions are made.

4. At a meeting also in September 2001, County and District Council Leaders agreed to hold a partnership seminar to discuss LSPs and that an officer group should be established to consider the next steps after the seminar. The seminar was facilitated by the District Auditor and held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2001. The report of the District Auditor was received in February. Following its receipt, informal officer level discussions have taken place with district council officers and representatives of other agencies and partnerships in the County.

5. The timetable suggested was for the first meeting of a Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership (LLSP) to take place in April or May 2002 and for the draft Community Strategy to be published for consultation in the Summer of 2002. County and District Council Leaders met on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2002 and

Leicester Shire Economic Partnership  
Business Link Leicestershire  
Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership  
Leicestershire Learning & Skills Council  
Leicestershire & Northamptonshire Strategic Health Authority  
Connexions Leicester Shire  
Primary Care Trust(s)  
FABLE  
Leicestershire (seven) District Councils/ District LSPs  
Leicestershire Cultural Strategy Forum  
Leicestershire Rural Partnership  
GOEM (As observers)  
Leicester Racial Equality Council  
Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils  
Leicestershire Constabulary  
Leicestershire Partnership for Safer Communities  
Leicestershire Police Authority  
Leicestershire CVS Community Partnership

Discussion is currently taking place with faith groups to secure appropriate representation from this sector. The Leicester Racial Equality Council has responsibility for liaison with the County Council.

12. It is not suggested that a wider forum or reference group should be established to achieve wider involvement in the LLSP. Instead, this should be

obtained through linkages between partnerships and agencies represented on the Board and other partnerships and agencies within the same subject area. Existing Forums and consultation methods should also be used as appropriate (see paragraph 13 of Appendix1).

#### *Administrative Support*

13. The County Council is willing to provide support for the Partnership in terms of the administration of Partnership meetings and the development of the Community Strategy. The Partnership will need to consider resources in relation to the wider work programme – see separate report on the agenda.

#### *Voluntary Sector*

14. The Leicestershire CVS Community Partnership has raised concerns about its ability to engage with the LSP process. These are set out in Appendix 3. The Community Partnership requests that consideration be given, with support from the County Council, to obtaining funding to support its role in this respect.

#### **Recommendation**

15. It is recommended that the Shadow Board consider the membership, chairmanship and remit of the Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership Board and the request of the CVS Community Partnership for funding.

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## APPENDIX 1 – BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP.

This appendix covers:

- The background and framework for the LLSP including the outputs from the seminar held in October 2001 to open discussion on the issue;
- Government Guidance and experience in other parts of the country;
- An assessment of the key issues to be considered, including the need for a county level LSP, how it should be organised and what its remit should be;
- Background information concerning membership of the Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership.

### Outcome of The Seminar 'Achieving Excellence for Leicestershire'

1. The District Auditor's report of the event held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2001 was received in February. The main points from the workshop discussion and from the District Auditor's diagnostic are as follows:

#### *Summary of Workshop discussion*

- Get the best from existing partnerships.
- Disadvantage of a 'partnership of partnerships' is achieving adequate representation from all sectors.
- Involvement of those without resources required.
- Needs to deliver.
- Avoid duplication.
- Discussion of three alternative models – a 'partnership of partnerships', building on existing partnerships and a new partnership of organisations – led to the identification of a range of advantages and disadvantages for each. The balance was in favour of a 'partnership of partnerships' type approach.
- There was concern from some about whether a Leicestershire LSP is required at all.
- The difficulty for some groups to engage in the process and the general difficulty of engaging in the many partnerships that now exist was raised.
- It was suggested that district councils should undertake detailed consultation and that arrangements for consultation generally should be streamlined.

#### *Summary of Issues Raised in the Diagnostic*

- A project Plan is required for the preparation of a community strategy.
- An analysis of need for and deployment of public sector resources should be taken forward in conjunction with district councils.

- Appropriate resource allocation required both within the County Council and to ensure effective voluntary and community sector involvement.
- LCC to review its internal arrangements to link the Community Strategy in with all departments.
- LCC to consider its elected member involvement in LSPs.
- LCC should now firm up its LSP structure and membership plans, including discussion of the need for a County LSP.
- The rationalisation of community planning processes and partnerships should be considered.
- Various issues about the operation of the LLSP should be considered including;
  - the degree of authority that representatives would have,
  - what the partnership structure should be and whether working groups are required,
  - how the LLSP will influence and inform decisions,
  - whether partners will have equal voices,
  - chairmanship and support,
  - how community involvement will be achieved,
  - performance review.

#### National and Regional Framework

##### *Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) – Government Guidance*

2. These are the key points from Government Guidance:

- LSPs should:
  - Be a single body that brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors.
  - Operate at a level that enables strategic decisions to be taken and is close enough to individual neighbourhoods to allow actions to be determined at community level.
- They will need to:
  - Develop a variety of means to work with and consult local people
  - Build common purpose and shared commitment
  - Develop and publicise common aims and priorities
  - Value contributions of all partners - avoid domination by one
  - Develop a common performance management system
  - Provide a forum for debate, discussion and common decision making
- Existing Strategic Partnerships involving the main local players provide a good place to start. Early links should be established between LSPs and existing partnerships. Opportunities for rationalisation should be identified- LSPs should reduce not add to the time commitment of partners. *This part of the Government Guidance is worthy of particular note.*



- Membership should include:
  - Public sector organisations which provide most of the local public services in the area (including LA elected members)
  - Community Organisations and local people
  - Voluntary Organisations
  - Businesses
- The guidance doesn't address the relationship between District and County LSPs.

#### *Regional Context*

3. The East Midlands Regional Assembly has developed an 'Integrated Regional Strategy' to provide a framework within which more detailed themed strategies can be prepared. These strategies will cover the economy, social issues, the environment and spatial guidance. For the economic and spatial strands other agencies (emda and EMRLGA) take the leading role. The Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership could take account of this approach in two respects. First, it may wish to regard the Community Strategy as providing a framework for more detailed themed strategies. Second, it could rely on other agencies or partnerships to take the leading role in preparing detailed strategies. Also it may wish to consider whether the East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy itself provides a framework for the Leicestershire Community Strategy.

#### *National Research*

4. The Warwick University Local Authority Research Consortium has undertaken a wide-ranging review of issues concerning LSPs and Community Strategies. The main findings are:

- In nearly all cases the local authority is taking a lead in setting up the LSP – in some cases with extensive discussion with key partners or within an existing partnership.
- Local authority boundaries were considered to be the most appropriate although in two tier areas there is ongoing discussion between county and districts. In some areas a sub county-based model is being adopted and in others a two tier approach.
- Many authorities are rationalising existing partnerships as they establish their LSPs. There is a trend towards grouping partnerships under five themes – economic, health, education, community safety and environment/housing. A key objective of this rationalisation is a separation of functions eg between strategic planning/priority setting as the role of the LSP and the delivery function of themed bodies.

- There are then issues about whether other partnerships relate to the LSP or the relevant over-arching themed partnership.
- Membership of LSPs varies considerably and includes lead officers/members from specific agencies and chairs of relevant partnerships.
- Actual membership is influenced by Government guidance and also by the need for a workable number, balance and the need for members to have resources and influence.
- Twenty-five seems to be considered the absolute membership limit.
- Obtaining sufficient involvement from business, community groups, ethnic minorities, young people and women is a general problem. There is an issue around whether membership should be mainly made up of bodies that bring power, resources and influence.
- The CVS usually represents the voluntary sector, although there is sometimes concern about how representative they are.
- Public service providers are strongly represented and this is often leading to more constructive relationships being developed between them.
- There seems to be some common elements emerging involving the organisation of LSPs; a 'community convention', an executive group, supporting thematic partnerships with a delivery focus, a support team.
- Within this arrangement there are various differences including whether the themed partnerships take a leading role with the LSP acting as an umbrella or whether an LSP executive takes up a powerful leading role for example.
- The need to keep the process simple while achieving meaningful input is seen as a key issue for partners.
- The remits of LSPs commonly include;
  - Developing/owning the vision
  - Agreeing common priorities and co-ordinating service provision.
  - Developing strategies on certain issues.
  - Promoting community involvement and engagement
  - Considering PSAs

- Carrying out an ambassadorial role for the locality.
- Rationalising activities such as consultation.

### Key Issues for Consideration

#### *Is a Leicestershire LSP (LLSP) needed?*

5. The County Council has committed itself in its Medium Term Corporate Strategy to lead the preparation of a Community Strategy for the County and to assist in the development of an LLSP.

6. County and District Leaders have jointly accepted that there will be an LSP for each District and the County in Leicestershire.

7. An LLSP can add value to existing activity by:

- Assisting co-ordination between district level LSPs,
- Acting as a communication channel between district level LSPs and County-wide/sub regional organisations,
- Co-ordination of activity and sharing of priority setting between major themed partnerships (e.g. the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership, FABLE, the Learning Partnership, Leicestershire Community Safety Partnership, Leicestershire Rural Partnership, etc.),
- Co-ordination of service delivery and shared priority setting between the main service delivery agencies in the County,
- Co-ordination of improved access to services and information,
- Co-ordination of the collection and use of consultation and community information.
- Co-ordination of engagement with people of Leicestershire.
- Co-ordination of relationships with external bodies at regional and national levels.

8. A LLSP is also required for other reasons. Increasingly the Government requires the endorsement of an LSP for strategies or bids for funding that are submitted to it. There are examples in the education and social care fields. Also, Leicestershire County Council is currently preparing to negotiate a Public Service Agreement with the Government. This will need to be endorsed by an LSP. It would not seem practical for it to be endorsed by seven district based LSPs. Other partnerships and strategies, for example, valuing people and the childrens strategy planning group, also require endorsement from the LSP.

9. Discussions with partners have included debate about two alternative proposals. These are that instead of a County LSP there should be either the seven District based LSPs only or four LSP's matching the boundaries of the emerging Primary Care Trusts. Informal discussions with partners have indicated that a two-tier county and district approach is generally supported rather than these alternative arrangements. Partners recognise that both



levels are appropriate for various types of business. For example some health and social care issues are appropriately dealt with at the County-wide level, while others are more local in nature. However, it is recognised that it will be important for good co-ordination between the levels to ensure that duplication is avoided and that the issues dealt with at each level are communicated.

#### *How should a LLSP be organised?*

10. Given the above, the LLSP should be able to link County and District LSPs together, help to co-ordinate the activities of the main public agencies and partnerships at County level, have links into the wider community but be small enough to focus on priorities and be able to deliver.

11. A Board could be established to play the leading role. This might be made up of both public agencies and overarching partnerships in order to maximise the advantages and minimise the disadvantages of the options discussed at the seminar.

12. One key issue is the involvement of District Councils and District LSPs (DLSPs). If part of the purpose is to provide for communication between DLSPs and between the district and county levels generally (two way) then it will be important that all DLSPs are represented. However the involvement of all District Councils and all DLSPs on an LLSP Board would take up 14 places, severely restricting the places available to other bodies and partnerships. One solution would be for District Councils to represent both themselves and their DLSP on the LLSP Board. Discussion with District Members and officers favour leaving the choice to District Councils in consultation with their DLSP's where they are established.

13. Wider involvement could be obtained through a number of means without establishing any new forums or conferences. For example through:

- The membership arrangements directly involving a number of overarching themed partnerships.
- Linkages between those partnerships and other related partnerships.
- Linkages between the DLSPs and other district based partnerships.
- Direct and indirect involvement with various existing Forums such as the annual Rural Conference and the Community Youth Conference.
- The use of consultation results at strategic and local levels (including the use of Citizens Juries, a Citizens Panel, consultation by DLSPs and village appraisals).
- Use of an interactive web site.

#### What should the remit be?

14. This might include:

- To oversee the development of a Community Strategy for the County of Leicestershire and to secure partnership commitment and action to achieve its implementation.
- To act generally to help achieve excellence in public services for the people of Leicestershire.
- To consider, comment upon and endorse as appropriate other strategies, bids or proposals that advance the implementation of the Community Strategy or provide for improvements to service delivery.
- To provide a forum to link strategic policy and service delivery between the regional, county and district levels.
- Engage with and represent Leicestershire interests to regional and national bodies.
- To bring about the strategic integration of planning partnerships.
- To provide a framework for joint identification of service priorities between service delivery agencies and partnerships.
- To identify a program of activities to improve the co-ordination of service delivery between major agencies and partnerships to add value to what partnerships can achieve on their own.
- To consider and encourage the simplification of partnership working arrangements where it makes sense to do so.
- Undertake consultation.
- Deliver sustainable development.
- To work with and support local authorities in developing Public Service Agreements.

One of the first tasks of the LLSP would be to develop prioritised work programme. The Partnership would not have any Executive powers.

*Possible Membership of a Leicestershire LSP.*

15. The membership arrangements outlined below, are based upon a model that provides for an overarching partnership and/or an organisation to represent a particular service area. This model is predicated on the assumptions that:

- working relationships exist or would need to be developed between partnerships and agencies in the same service area;
- overarching partnerships and representative agencies do or can link with those related partnerships and organisations and represent their interests at the LLSP and pass information and proposals to and from it.

16. It will be important to select from the list of potential members listed below to keep membership to no more than 25 partnerships and organisations and preferably less than 20. It may not be possible to include representative partnerships or organisations for all of the topic areas listed below. It may be desirable to seek to develop an overarching partnership where no partnership or lead agency currently exists – for example, transport. The final membership should provide for a mix of public, private, community and

voluntary sectors. In addition, observers could be invited including GOEM.

Topic Area	Key Partnership	Key Organisation
Economic	Leicester Shire Economic Partnership	Leicestershire Small Business Service(Business Link) / Leicester Shire Development Agency
Learning	Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership. Connexions.	Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council
Health	HIMPs	Leicestershire and Northants Strategic Health Authority . One or more PCT.
Community Safety	Leicestershire Community Safety Partnership	Leicestershire Constabulary; Leicestershire Police Authority.
Transport	No over-arching partnership	
Environment	Forum for a Better Leicestershire	Environment Agency
Culture	Leicestershire Cultural Strategy Forum	East Midlands Arts
Local Government	Seven DLSPs.	Leicestershire Local Authorities
Voluntary sector	CVS Community Partnership	
Community	No Faith Forums currently available.	Leicester CRE
Social and Housing	Supporting people commissioning group	East Midlands Housing Corporation
Spatial Planning	Joint Structure Plan Member Steering Group	
Sport and Recreation	Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Sports Forum	
Access to Information and services	New ICT Strategy Group	
Cross- cutting	Leicestershire Rural Partnership	Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils.

17. It would be appropriate for the Leader of the County Council to be the Chairman of the Partnership.

18. Dedicated Officer support can be provided by the Corporate Support Unit of the County Council. Consideration will need to be given to the need for a partnership officer group or network. Existing groups could provide this, for example, County and District Council Chief Executives and Assistant Chief Executives Groups.

19. There is currently no advantage in seeking the accreditation of the partnership as a formal LSP, although this may need to be reviewed if Government extends funding beyond those areas with Neighbourhood Renewal funding.

## **Appendix 2 - Creating a Successful Local Strategic Partnership for Leicestershire**

### **A View From the Districts**

Leicestershire's seven district councils are committed to playing their part in making partnership working at the county level a success.

All districts therefore wish to take on a constructive role working with Leicestershire County Council and other partners in the development of the proposed Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). We wish to see the Leicestershire LSP become an effective mechanism, which adds value to the working relationships and strategic planning processes already in existence.

In this spirit, we wish to highlight the following points for consideration by all partners as the Leicestershire LSP is being established:

1. With the good progress that is already being made in developing similar partnership working at district level through district LSPs or their equivalents, it is very important that LSPs at county and district level work closely together. Effective channels of communication between county and district levels must be created.

*In practice, we believe that each district LSP must be represented on the Leicestershire LSP.*

2. Distinct from district LSP involvement is the representation of district councils, which we believe is also necessary. District Councils are key players in their own right and have a distinct input to make, separate to that of the district LSPs.

Whilst there is a proposal that district council representatives should also act on behalf of district LSPs on the Leicestershire LSP in order to keep it to a workable size, we would highlight that district councils alone are not in a position to agree to this proposal. This proposal will need to be discussed by district LSPs as well as district councils.

If joint representation of district LSPs and councils proves to be acceptable to everyone, then this dual representational role will need to be clearly understood and accepted by all concerned.

3. There needs to be clear terms of reference for the Leicestershire LSP. These should be developed by the partners on the LSP and agreed by consensus, and should not be imposed by any of the partner organisations. The districts are keen to co-operate and contribute to this process.



4. Our experience of partnership working at the district level leads us to recommend that the Leicestershire LSP should operate wherever possible by consensus. Its value will ultimately depend on its ability to reach agreement between the range of partners involved, by listening carefully to all views and developing proposals which respond to them. Where the work of the Partnership leads to proposals for action by the partner organisations, this should be ratified separately by each partner through its existing decision-making processes.

In addition, we believe that all partners should have the opportunity to help set the agenda for the LSP

5. The acid test for each LSP will be: does it 'add value' to the work that is already happening. As the remit of the Leicestershire LSP is considered, this question needs to guide the discussions
6. In conclusion, we look forward to a constructive role in the development of partnership working between the district and county level. We hope to see a successful Leicestershire LSP formed, based on terms of reference, which reflect the issues raised above.

## Appendix 3 - CVS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

### DEVELOPING VOLUNTARY SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND THE LEICESTER SHIRE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

#### 1. Purpose of Discussion Paper

To open discussions with Leicestershire County Council and other partners regarding the need to support the effective involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Leicestershire County and Leicester City in the Leicestershire County Council LSP and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership.

#### 2. Background

To be effective and to achieve their strategic aims SSPs and especially LSPs **must actively involve all** the key players, including the Voluntary and Community Sector.

'Involvement' is emphasised in the Government guidance and refers to the fact that "meaningful engagement takes time and that attention should be paid to working with hard to reach groups." Membership of the LSP should also reflect the diversity of the area, with special reference given to Black and minority ethnic communities.

Government guidance has emphasised the need for the Voluntary and Community groups to be involved from the outset, this raises crucial capacity and support issues for the Sector as follows:

**Information** – a range of methods will need to be used on a continued basis to inform, increase & build knowledge and awareness across the sector, such as newsletters, websites, forums/networks, etc.

**Support** – a process will need to be developed and co-ordinated which ensures that Sector 'representatives' on the SSPs and LSPs are supported and are able to give, as far as possible, a 'collective view.' Members should be formally elected/selected through an accountable mechanism, and answerable to that constituency, providing reports and taking views forward. SSPs and LSPs should not be allowed to 'cherry-pick' voluntary sector members.

**Consultation** – to ensure genuine participation consultation events will need to be organised, facilitated and resourced. Guidance acknowledges the voluntary sector as best placed to act as conduits to reach and involve hard to reach communities.

**Linking in** – effective participation and genuine involvement means sharing information and linking across the SSPs and the LSPs. This is a particular concern for countywide voluntary organisations, some of whom are quite small with limited resources.

3. **Infrastructure development and support for the voluntary & community sector**

LSPs are encouraged to build on existing community networks but there are currently no specific funding streams to support Voluntary and Community Sector involvement in Leicestershire County. The Community Empowerment Fund may be used to assist community engagement in Leicester City which is one of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund areas.

CVS Community Partnership (CCP) is in a prime position to facilitate Voluntary and Community Sector involvement but has no current capacity or resources to do any additional work of this magnitude.

CCP can develop an inclusive approach so that the voluntary sector is fully involved in decision-making. CCP already has a proven record in working with voluntary groups in the area of health & social care, learning & skills but recognise that relationships need to be built with community development, advice, regeneration, environmental and arts groups.

CCP has been acknowledged as a partner in the Leicestershire County Council Medium Term Strategy.

Leicestershire County Council has agreed to develop a Compact with the Voluntary Sector which will support the achievement of the Council's Medium Term Corporate Strategy objectives of working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector and delivering services that provide value for money. *Note: evidence of continuing and effective Compact development will be explicitly linked to LSPs that require accreditation such as Leicester, but is also in the interests of all LSPs.*

CCP is a member of the Leicestershire Cares Operations Team. Martin Gage, Director of NWL CVS and Kevan Liles, Director of VAL are members of the Leadership Team.

4. **Proposals**

The Voluntary & Community Sector in Leicestershire has a long history of working in partnership with Leicestershire County Council; the value the sector brings in terms of its experience and expertise to strategic planning is now recognised. It is within this context that we seek the support of Leicestershire County Council:

- in securing funding for CCP to enable the Voluntary and Community Sector to engage effectively in the Leicestershire LSP and Leicester Shire Economic Partnership, and to enable countywide groups to engage in district/borough LSPs.
- in identifying and exploring funding opportunities with other partners.

Gill Wollerton  
April 2002