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**Sent:** 11 November 2002 12:42  
**Attach:** Minutes dated 23 September 2002.doc; 6 Resources Available.doc; 7A - Update on Identified Priorities.doc; 7B Communications Update.doc; 7C Report on Partnership Mapping.doc; 7D Community Plan Pilots.doc; 8 - Determining Priorities.doc; Agenda 18-11-02.doc; 5 LSP DIALOGUE DAY.doc  
**Subject:** Mendip Strategic Partnership - Board Meeting Agenda

Please find attached the agenda and relevant reports for the Mendip Strategic Partnership Board Meeting which is due to take place on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 4pm at Marston House, Frome. If you need location directions please contact Collette Haynes on 01749 341474 or e-mail [haynesc@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:haynesc@mendip.gov.uk).

Many thanks

**Collette Haynes**

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# **The Mendip Strategic Partnership**

**Board Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002.  
4.pm Marston House, Frome**

## **Agenda**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Public Participation**
- 3. Minutes of the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> September**
- 4. Matters arising – action update**
- 5. Somerset wide LSP's dialogue / a proposal – Jane Tromans /Sharon Adams**
- 6. Current resources available to Support Community Planning - Stuart Palmer**
- 7. Task Groups - reports**
  - **(A) Baseline Information Task Group - what are the issues for the Mendip area ? – Jane Rolands**
  - **(B) Communications Task Group – how should we communicate, between ourselves, our partners and our communities ? – Sara Skirton**
  - **(C) Partnership Task Group – what are our partnerships and how do they, or should they link up ? - Jenny Davies**
  - **(D) Sub – Strategic Task Group – what is the best area basis to start to plan locally in Mendip, and why ? – Chris Arscott**
- 8. A District Wide Community Plan –determining our priorities through 'whole system events' - Stuart Palmer**
- 9. Any Other Business**
- 10. Date / Venue of next meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003 ? .**

## The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Minutes of the meeting of The Mendip Strategic Partnership held on Monday 23 September 2002 at 2.00 pm in Henton Village Hall, Henton

PRESENT: Sharon Adams - Somerset County Council  
 Ron Ballantine - Mendip Primary Care Trust (Chair)  
 Penny Church - Citizen Advice Bureau  
 Nick Cottle - Glastonbury Town Council  
 Richard Dixon - Mendip Environment Forum  
 Jilly Edwards - Voluntary Action Mendip  
 Doug Furlong - Mendip Housing Limited  
 Andy Gardiner - Environment Agency  
 Stephen Harrison - Mendip District Council  
 Graham Livings - Victim Support  
 Janet Palmer - Mendip Social Forum  
 Zena Pollard - Mendip Economy Forum  
 Jim Shearer - Avon & Somerset Police  
 Ian Wallace - Young Somerset

OFFICERS

PRESENT: Stuart Palmer - Mendip District Council  
 Sara Skirton - Mendip District Council  
 Jill Temple - Mendip District Council

Agenda Item Number	Agenda Item
1	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Cathy Bakewell – Somerset County Council            Ian Bennett – Strode College</p>
2	<p><b>Appointment of Board Vice Chair</b></p> <p>It had been proposed and seconded at the previous meeting that Penny Church be appointed as Vice Chair. She had not been present at that meeting but now agreed to her appointment as Vice Chair.</p>
3	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting dated 15 July 2002</b></p> <p>Agreed as a correct record.</p>
4	<p><b>Matters arising – Actions Update</b></p> <p>Stuart Palmer advised that current funding for Community Planning was as follows: Mendip District Council £10,000</p>

	<p>and Somerset County Council at least £5,000. Mendip Housing Limited had agreed to a donation and £2,000 would be forthcoming from the Environment Agency.</p> <p>It was felt that any finance for the MSP would need to be held separately from the individual partners' finances. It was queried whether any restrictions would be put onto the use of funds and Stuart Palmer advised that at the initial stage it would be funding used to progress the process.</p> <p>Discussion took place as to whether the funds should be placed in a separate bank account or possibly kept in a fund by Mendip District Council under a budget code. It was also suggested that it would be worthwhile checking with other LSPs' to see how they handled their finances.</p> <p>Graham Livings proposed and it was seconded that a view should be taken by the Financial 151 Officer, Mendip District Council.</p> <p>Stephen Harrison requested that it be known at the next meeting how the MSP would be handling the budget. Funds could be held within Mendip District Council as long as the procedure was transparent and the MSP had control.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the November meeting and it was agreed that the meeting would be held in public and publicised accordingly.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Community Planning Action Plan</b></p> <p>Stuart Palmer circulated and ran through the detailed action plan which had been set up. He pointed out that there was not a clear target date for the development of the Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Sharon Adams explained her role as County Council Link Officer with Mendip District Council and Sedgemoor District Council which combined community planning and sustainability. She advised that the support group discussed the need for good communication and working arrangements between the MSP and the Somerset Strategic Partnership.</p> <p>It had been suggested that a training day be set up to look at the relationship between the two tiers and how they communicate and work together. The two suggested dates</p>

	<p>were 26 and 29 November 2002. She asked for nominations to help set up and attend the training day. The Somerset Strategic Partnership would be donating most of the funds for that event.</p> <p>Graham Livings queried the network that was involved and Sharon Adams explained that it consisted of all County and District Councils. The regional network met infrequently.</p> <p>Stuart Palmer suggested that it would be useful if a representative from the original working group could volunteer as one of the representatives for setting up/attending the training day.</p> <p>The Chair queried whether there were designated issues to be dealt with by the County and by the District. It was noted that this would occur but that there were other issues that would cross boundaries.</p> <p>Jim Shearer advised that care was needed when working in two tier authorities as some of the legislation was aimed at unitary authorities. In the terms of the LSP it was important that all partnerships, County and District, had a vested interest. Some Somerset Strategy would be needed that all LSPs were connected to.</p> <p>Richard Dixon felt that there was a caution in being too prescriptive at this stage. A lot of the partnership's work and issues had a County perspective, others were more Mendip based. Options should be kept open.</p> <p>The Chair asked for nominations to represent the MSP at the November training day and the preparatory planning day. Nick Cottle, Stephen Harrison and Jilly Edwards volunteered.</p> <p>Any other volunteers were invited to contact Stuart Palmer.</p> <p>Stuart referred to Appendix A Part 2 and advised that there would be two planning pilots which would be commissioned in the new year.</p> <p>It was noted that Stuart would be leaving the District Council by the end of the year and concern was expressed as to his replacement as Lead Officer on the MSP. A lot of hard work had been undertaken by Stuart in connection with the role and the Group were concerned in case this did not continue and</p>
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	<p>had a negative impact on the Partnership. Various suggestions were put forward including jointly commissioning a post by all agencies but it was eventually agreed that an officer from the Council should undertake the role. Any comments should be made to Stephen Harrison.</p> <p>The action plan was noted.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Updates from Task Groups</b></p> <p><u>Partnership Task Group</u></p> <p>Jilly Edwards explained the questionnaires that the Group had sent out. A database had been created and there were inevitably some overlaps. The group had discussed a press release going out for feedback from the general public. Jenny Davies had agreed to collate the information.</p> <p>Nick Cottle suggested that the Chairs and Clerks of Town and Parish Councils would be able to identify groups that were not known to the MSP.</p> <p>Jilly Edwards advised that they were looking at Partnerships currently in operation and asking them on the forms to rank their objectiveness.</p> <p>Janet Palmer explained that the Communications Group had talked about the importance to focus on specific issues so that the Task Groups could identify the Partnerships involved.</p> <p><u>Baseline Information Group</u></p> <p>Stephen Harrison advised that the group had had two meetings and good progress had been made on the terms of reference. Sources of data had been identified and was included in the report. Data from the South West Regional Observatory was not completely clear yet but it was hoped to be investigated in time for the November meeting of the MSP.</p> <p>Geographical Maps were available for the whole district.</p> <p>The strategies and plans were also listed in the report.</p> <p>Ian Wallace pointed out that there was no reference to the democratic process.</p> <p>Discussion took place relating to the assessment of priorities</p>

	<p>and it was generally felt that the socially deprived areas in Mendip should be identified. Land use and farming should also be identified.</p> <p><u>Sub Strategic Task Group</u></p> <p>Graham Livings explained that there was a Minute being produced which he endorsed.</p> <p>Stuart Palmer advised that the Task Group is working through the issues of how to prioritise areas for a pilot in time for the November meeting.</p> <p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>Zena Pollard explained that internal communication had been listed amongst the group. External communication had commenced which would be added to. It was intended that a website be set up which could be linked into individual agencies or wider. She circulated a Minute around the table.</p> <p>Support had been received from Grenville Jones, Press Officer and she asked for any ideas for a press release to be passed to herself or Janet Palmer.</p> <p>The Chair queried whether the website could be free and Stuart Palmer advised that funding had been made available to the Council for the E Government and Somerset On Line initiatives. It was possible that funding might be available for the website.</p> <p>Some members were concerned about the use of private e mail addresses and it was agreed that e mail addresses would be set up specifically for the Partnership and would not identify individual members' addresses.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Mendip Community Plan</b></p> <p>Stuart Palmer advised that there would need to be a limited number of themes for the strategy to be effective. The findings of the Baseline Information Group would be reported to the November meeting and would guide our thinking and drafting of these themes. At the December Conference there would be a facilitated session for a draft set of issues.</p>

	<p>Richard Dixon pointed out that the group already had a good idea of who would be invited to the group event in January. He wondered whether it would be sensible to write to them soon advising of the January event requesting them to submit draft sets of issues so that the agenda of the large group event is shared with the invitees to the December Conference.</p> <p>It was suggested that this be covered in the introduction to Mendip Strategic Partnership leaflet</p> <p>The Chair asked whether the group were in favour of the November, December and January events. Members agreed.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Travel and Expenses Claim Forms</b></p> <p>The Board agreed the process and criteria for making claims together with the draft claim form.</p> <p>It was noted that claim forms could be submitted whenever required but no longer than 3 monthly.</p> <p>Stuart Palmer pointed out that the process was available to those members who were not funded by their own particular agency.</p> <p>Richard Dixon asked that the availability of public transport facilities be considered when looking at all future meeting venues and that members car share where possible.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Graham Livings proposed that the Board express sincere thanks to Stuart for the steer that he had given the Partnership and Members showed their appreciation.</p> <p>It was noted that no venue had been booked for the next meeting and the Chair suggested looking at venues in the east of the County.</p>

The meeting finished at 4 pm

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

**Agenda Item: 5**

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**FROM:** Sharon Adams/Jane Tromans      Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT: Somerset Wide Local Strategic Partnership Dialogue**

## **SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

A number of meetings have been held across the County to develop a better understanding of the relationship between Local Strategic Partnerships and Community Planning Work.

The attached note is a draft proposal to hold an event to which all LSP members are invited in February.

Further information will be available at the Board Meeting.

**DRAFT**

## LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS - DIALOGUE DAY

FEBRUARY 2003

? Monkton Heathfield Village Hall, (this is a central venue and I understand a high quality venue)

### **Aims for the day**

**To bring together members of Somerset's 6 Local Strategic Partnerships to:**

- a) Build trust and stronger relationships between members of the LSPs in Somerset
- b) Build shared knowledge and understanding to the respective Community Planning processes and structures
- c) Build a shared commitment to on-going dialogue to ensure the best level of co-ordination and agreement between the different partnerships
- d) To agree on future key areas for discussion and action/solutions to perceived issues
- e) To agree how the next stage of the dialogue process should be taken forward

## PROGRAMME

- 10.00 Arrival and refreshments
- 10.15 Welcome, introductions and aims for the day (Chair for the event?)
- 10.30 Presentation from each LSP Group
- Each LSP is invited to make a 10-minute presentation on the make-up, style and key priorities of your Partnership. You are asked to be as innovative, colourful and lively as possible within the time constraints. Key points to include are:
- Your LSP, including Chair, membership, Terms of reference etc, budget/pooled funds etc
  - Work-programme priorities (both now and for the future)
  - Emerging key themes from community strategies
- 12.00 Presentation from Hamp partnership – good practice on the ground. What are the ingredients, what makes it work and most importantly, what's the added value for local people?
- 12.30 Lunch and networking opportunity
- 13.30 Group work sessions based in mixed LSP groups looking at key issues for LSPs. Each group is asked to:
- Nominate a chair and scribe
  - select one question for discussion
  - develop a list of answers/further issues.
- Questions for discussion:
1. How can we develop greater co-ordination between the different LSPs. Who decides where an issue should be discussed and when? – give examples where possible.
  2. How can we encourage better communication and information/best practice exchange, given that we all have limited time/resources?
  3. Should our LSPs hold their own budgets and other resources. If so where should these come from and how do we maintain accountability?
  4. Is there a need for greater consistency in the membership of the LSPs. How do we support business, voluntary sector and community representatives to participate. How can we encourage hard to reach groups to participate in LSPs.
- 14.00 Feedback from each group with plenary discussion opportunity after each topic
- 15.00 General discussion on future action  
Close

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item:

6

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**FROM:** Stuart Palmer Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT: Resources Available to Support Community Planning**

## **SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

Members of the board asked for an update of resources and for advice on the District Council setting up a separate budget of partners funds, and acting as a 'banker' to the partnership. The report outlines current known resources, financial and personnel available for the process.

## **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Currently members of the partnership have committed funds to Community Planning work this financial year as follows:-

Mendip District Council £10,000  
Somerset County Council up to £5,000  
Mendip Housing Ltd – resources to be clarified  
The Environment Agency £2,000  
£17,000

## **SPEND TO DATE**

So far we have spent £1870 on venues and consultancy/facilitation for the away day and board meetings from the Mendip District Council and Somerset County budgets – both contributing 50% of costs. This leaves £15,130 available.

I will report at the meeting on the issues around Mendip District Council acting as a budget holder or 'banker' for MSP when I have consulted our section 151 officer.

## **CURRENT STAFF RESOURCES**

The following organisations have provided officer time (excludes board members contributions):-

### **Mendip District Council**

Stuart Palmer – 30% of time leading the process  
Sara Skirton – Task Group Lead and Support Group  
Chris Arscott – Task Group Lead  
Jennie Davies – Task Group Lead and Support Group  
Jane Rolands – Task Group Lead and Support Group  
Jill Temple – Board Minutes

Collette Haynes/Louise Crosthwaite – Community Planning Admin and agenda distribution, board venue admin etc.

Rachel Willis – Task Group

Grenville Jones – Task Group

### **Somerset County Council**

Sharon Adams – Support Group

### **Mendip PCT**

Caroline Gamlin – Task Group

We have had some recent offers of help from Mendip Housing also.

## **FUTURE RESOURCES**

Mendip Council has agreed to recruit and fund a Community Planning officer to provide the resource in co-ordinating the process and supporting the MSP. This replaces the input provided to date by myself.

We have also recently recruited a ‘Sustainability Officer’, Lesley Rowan, who joins us hopefully on 16<sup>th</sup> December. At least 50% of her time will be spent in developing sustainability through community plans, so she will be heavily involved and has experience of a pathfinder community planning process in Stirling, Scotland over the last two years.

Graham Jeffs, chief executive from Mendip has agreed to act as a lead from the Council’s General Management Team.

A concern I have is the limited engagement from senior managers and officers of partner agencies who are responsible for delivering many of the services which directly impact or will contribute to the improvements we wish the process and partnership to deliver.

A proposal at item 7 is meant to begin to address this gap.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That members note existing and future known resources.

Contact Officer:

Ext No:

### **Background Papers**

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

**Agenda Item: 7A**

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**FROM:** Baseline Information Sub Group      Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT: Community Planning – Local Plan Pilots**

## **UPDATE ON IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

The subgroup acknowledged the additional draft priorities identified by the Partnership Board at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, namely:

- The decline in farming
- Economic regeneration

The Subgroup also recognised there was a 'gap' in relation to the education sector and was pleased to welcome Beatrice Beer from the Learning and Skills Council to participate in the subgroup. The draft priorities identified in relation to education and skills were:

- Post-16 education provision/Education for life
- Opportunities for the employed to retrain/upskill
- Literacy and numeracy

## **DATABASE PROGRESS**

The database that was proposed at the last Board meeting in September has been progressed, but at this stage, the Subgroup agreed it should take a 'back seat'. There is the possibility of similar work being done at a County level, so this needs to be clarified to avoid duplication of effort.

## **TABLE OF DRAFT PRIORITIES**

Instead of the database, what has been prepared is a table, presenting the draft priorities along with:

- A brief description of the draft priority with examples of supporting data, where available
- Actions or targets in existing strategies or plans that relate to each priority, where available
- Matching Audit Commission Quality of Life Indicators

The table should show 'at a glance' where resources are currently being targeted in relation to the identified draft priorities. The information presented also highlights any 'gaps' to the Partnership. These 'gaps' could form the basis of any future development – either of the priorities, or of potential pilot projects.

**Contact Officer:**

Jane Roland

Housing Needs and Social Support Officer

Email: [rolandj@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:rolandj@mendip.gov.uk)

Phone: 01749 341487

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

**Agenda Item: 7B**

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**FROM:** Communications Sub Group      Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT:    Communications Update and Draft Communications Strategy**

## **SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

This report highlights the work of the Communications Sub Group since the September MSP board meeting:

## **COMMUNITY WEBSITE**

The Chair of the Sub Group is working with with Peter Underwood, of the Citizens Advice Bureau, to design an MSP Website, which will be hosted by UKOnline.

## **MSP UPDATE 'NEWSLETTER'**

The Communications Sub Group is editing an update for interested parties, which will be published shortly.

## **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (ATTACHED)**

A draft Communications Strategy has been produced with the emphasis on ensuring co-ordinated, accurate and consistent messages both within the Strategic Partnership and externally. The draft also contains a first stage action plan.

## **SUB GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

Mary Cullen, Community Development Manager for Mendip Housing Ltd, has joined the Communications Sub Group.

Chair: Zena Pollard  
Vice Chair: Janet Palmer  
Lead Officer: Sara Skirton

# Mendip Strategic Partnership Draft Communications Strategy

## Why does the MSP need a communication strategy?

### *Internally*

- To ensure free flow of information amongst Board Members and Sub Groups so that Board members have the information they need to:

- understand what is happening
- make contact
- make decisions
- take action

- To ensure that information is clear, consistent, complete and timely

### *Externally*

-To encourage understanding of the aims and objectives of the MSP and the Community Strategy

-To raise awareness and interest

-To ensure appropriate methods and media are used to maximise interest and involvement

-To ensure that information is clear, consistent, complete and timely

## Defining 'communication'

For the purposes of this strategy, communication ranges from *telling* someone something to actively engaging them to *do* something:

i.e.

Informing	=	telling
Consulting	=	listening
Involving	=	engaging

## How will we communicate?

The methods for communicating will be determined by:

- What we want to say
- When we want to say it
- Who we want to say it to
- What we want to happen as a result

The MSP has a wide variety of groups of people, or stakeholders, to communicate with and engage with. Although many people will fall into more than one stakeholder group, we need to carefully consider how best to match our messages to our intended audiences.

## **MSP Stakeholders**

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Key issues to consider</b>
All	Branding, key messages, involvement
MSP Board and Sub Group members	Quick 'internal' communication links, message boards etc
Residents	What is happening, how it will benefit people, encourage involvement. NB careful consideration of timing is essential
Staff and associates (of all partner organisations)	What is happening, encourage involvement
Media	Ensuring positive and timely coverage
Other Partners not on MSP Board	What is happening, encourage involvement
Business Community	'Selling' what we are doing and retaining interest. Addressing the 'what's in it for me' question

## **Some Key Principles for Communicating**

### **Branding – partnership logo or strapline**

The advantages of branding the MSP include ensuring that achievements are accredited to the partnership and not any one organisation and clarifying accountability.

It is therefore recommended that the MSP devises a logo and / or strapline so that any publications etc are instantly recognisable as coming from the MSP.

### **e-Communications**

We will make use of electronic communications wherever possible through:

- Development of MSP website to aid communication and provide links to other useful and related sites
- Electronic dissemination of newsletters, agendas, reports to those that have access to e-mail

### **Publications**

Any newsletters or other publications from the MSP must have clear objectives, for example:

- What are the key messages we want to get across
- What do we want the publication to achieve?
- What impression do we want it to make

It is vital that we tailor publications according to the intended audiences otherwise not only will effort be wasted but there is a real danger of turning people off the whole project.

## **Community Consultation and Engagement**

The range of community consultation and engagement techniques is too broad to be captured in this document but they will be explored and evaluated by the Communication Sub Group. Some key principles for engaging include:

- **Information** – ensuring people know what they are being asked about or participating in so they can make informed decisions
- **Encouragement** – making clear what the benefits of involvement are. ‘Social proof’ such as clear evidence of what other people have achieved can be a powerful motivator
- **Feedback** – letting people know what happened or will happen as a result of their participation. This is vital if we want to maintain credibility and encourage people to stay engaged / involved
- **Methodology** – ensuring the right mix of methods are used to achieve objectives
- **Inclusion** – the minimum requirement being to ensure that the chosen methods do not create barriers for any individual or group to participate

## **Plain English**

Despite the fact many of us are immersed in jargon in their work lives, people are not generally impressed with complex language. If people can’t understand our messages they will quickly lose interest and the MSP will be seen as bureaucratic.

## **Role of Communications Sub Group**

### **Co-ordination of Communication**

To ensure messages are accurate, consistent, and timely, MSP members are to inform the Communications Sub Group about any planned communications with the public or press.

### **Quality of Communication**

The Sub Group is responsible for ensuring that all MSP communications are of a professional standard, therefore:

***All documents, press releases, Web pages etc relating to the MSP must first be vetted by the Communications Sub Group Chair and Vice Chair.***

DRAFT

**Draft first stage Communications Action Plan - November 2002**

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Key issues to consider</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>
All	Branding, key messages, involvement	Logo / strapline Newsletter	As soon as possible November 2002	Board to agree Communications Sub Group (CSG)
MSP Board and Sub Group members	Quick 'internal' communication links, message boards etc  Ensuring all partner publications carry same message re MSP  Exploring links with regular and planned consultation undertaken by partnership agencies	Website – investigate format, sponsorship  Audit of publications: what, when, to whom etc  Audit of consultation programmes / activities	November	CSG
Residents	What is happening, how it will benefit people  Engaging / encouraging involvement.	Initially via press releases, community newspaper (Mendip News?)  Initial evaluation of consultation and engagement methods	Careful consideration of timing of messages is essential and needs to link with overall Community Strategy project plan  By January 2003	CSG with guidance from the Board  CSG esp. Sara Skirton
Staff (of all partner organisations)	What is happening, encourage involvement	Newsletter Briefings / discussions	November	CSG
Media	Ensuring positive and timely coverage	Press releases	As appropriate in line with project plan	CSG to advise press officer
Partners	What is happening, encourage involvement	Newsletter, discussions, direct contact		Co-ordinated through CSG
Businesses	'Selling' what we are doing and retaining interest. Addressing the 'what's in it for me' question	Newsletter, discussion (e.g. via Economy Forum)	As soon as possible	CSG – esp. Zena Pollard

# Mendip Strategic Partnership

**Agenda Item: 7C**

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**FROM:** Partnership Group      Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT:    Report on Partnership Mapping**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Partnership Group was set up to:-

- Map existing partnerships/their role and key contacts
- Tease out duplications and effectiveness of partnerships
- Consider the resourcing of partnerships
- Begin dialogue to discuss roles and links to the Mendip Strategic Partnership
- Develop and propose alternatives to existing structures if necessary
- Report to board to agree this will proposals for communicating with and between partnerships

In order to achieve the above a questionnaire was sent to all members of the Partnership together with other organisations and groups known to members of the group. The questionnaire attempted to gain information about various partnerships operating across the district, their purpose, their effectiveness and the funding. The information received has been recorded under separate categories, i.e. strategic partnerships, local geographical partnerships and topic/issue based partnerships – copies of which will be available at the meeting.

## **THE NEXT STAGE**

The response to the questionnaire was limited and most of the information obtained was provided by statutory organisations, there are probably many partnerships still not identified and this should be borne in mind as the work of the LSP develops.

The first three points have been achieved and it is now necessary to make contact with the various partnerships to discuss roles and links to the Mendip Strategic Partnership. This will involve members attending meetings or making contact with key people within the partnerships and is not a task, which can be completed by the end of November, it will be an ongoing process over a period of time.

It is important that the key partnerships are identified, approached and informed of the purpose of the work of the LSP and invited to engage in the process. The Partnership need to consider how this can be achieved.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that further work needs to be carried out to identify other partnerships and this should be an ongoing process as partnerships develop.

The strategic partnerships identified in appendix A need to be integrated and engaged in Mendip Strategic Partnerships purpose and principles. Each need to be contacted personally (chair etc.) and a dialogue should be started in respect of how they see their role contributing to Community Planning development work. Some thought needs to be given to the three Fora (Social, Economy and Environment), in respect of their alignment. At present they are MDC fora, but it would arguably be more appropriate to develop them as part of the MSP.

The local geographically based partnerships (appendix B) need to be engaged also. We recommend that these groups are contacted as part of the capacity building process at the start of the local planning pilots, but that we also engage with local partnerships to brief them on where MSP has got to, and where it is going generally with Community Planning. This allows all local groups an opportunity to impact, or be involved as appropriate.

Further work is needed in developing links with the topic/issue-based groups. They could, for example link with one of the three Fora – (Social, Economic and Environment).

Critical to this is the communication strategy to provide a way of quickly keeping all partners up to date with what Mendip Partnership is doing, and perhaps what their own group is doing. Broadcast through community web pages in the future for example.

There is still work to be done on ensuring that partnerships identified under the various headings link together, where appropriate, and have reporting structures in place to ensure there is no duplication of work or funding. We have set out a short outline plan with a timetable for this:-

Dec – Feb

Dialogue with strategic partnerships on:-

- How they wish to link to MSP
- Formal adoption/constitutional issues
- Working practices
- Continue to map all partnership contacts
- Review/revise partnerships structure

Feb – April

- Enter dialogue with local partnerships in pilot areas – engage them in the process of planning
- Information/contacts with other partnerships to bring all up to speed (link with communications strategy)

April – May

- MSP Boards formal adoption of revised partnerships and structure

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 7D

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**FROM:** Sub Strategic Planning Group      Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT:** **Community Planning – Local Plan Pilots**

## **SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

The Sub-Strategic planning group met on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October and confirmed its belief that pilot areas should be assessed on the basis of need and capacity, the latter relating to both community capacity and staff resource to co-ordinate, drive and administer. The group agreed that if a weighting had to be given then capacity was of greater priority. Staff/volunteered time and financial commitment were imperative.

The group deliberated over the existing partnerships within the Mendip area and concluded that the data was confined to those partnerships which were known to Mendip staff. It was probable that more groups existed within Mendip but irrespective of this limitation it was agreed that in order to proceed a view should be taken.

The group was aware of the initial economic, environmental and social priorities established by the baseline information sub group but were also aware that no priority had been set for these categories or the issues within them. Furthermore in consideration of the assembly of data for each of the issues there was some concern about the compatibility and suitability of the information to enable all but subjective area based priority setting. The group did not believe it was helpful to the MSP to wait for more definitive information to establish area based priorities and rather than prevaricate over this matter the group believed it was important to 'press on' and come to a considered view on which areas to recommend as pilots.

The group believed it was essential that this was genuinely a pilot exercise and that community planning within the pilot areas should be reviewed on a quarterly basis and the MSP should receive a structured report on progress and development. This would enable learning, redirection and betterment.

In consideration of the pilot areas the group believed that Frome was too large a settlement to resource and the process could be complicated by its affiliation to West Wiltshire. It was acknowledged however that there was a strong community capacity to invigorate community planning. Although the 'New Wells Initiative' had a high publicity profile it was believed not to be engaging the 'hard to reach' groups or the 'ordinary' residents of the city. To enable this considerable time and resources would be required and there was

concern over the communities ability to drive the process forward. Capacity within Glastonbury was accounted for by the 'Bringing Glastonbury Together' project and the imposition of a further community based project could be disruptive to the substantive project.

The groups preference was to pilot community planning in Shepton Mallet to reflect its status as a key priority for regeneration for M.D.C. and to acknowledge the history of community engagement in matters within the town. There was an established forum to build upon and develop and a willingness of the community to participate. It was considered beneficial to pilot the rural area of East Mendips again building on the established forum whilst acknowledging the need for its development and resourcing. This area would require close monitoring so that a genuine community could be identified rather than simply amalgamate a number of parishes within one area. If the Board were to accept these preferences it would achieve both a rural and an urban pilot area.

Considering Street, the community (via the Self Help Centre) has been developing a self generated approach to community planning assembling information and data to establish priority matters for consideration. The group believed that the Board should acknowledge the work undertaken in Street and support its continued development. Again if the Board were happy to accept this view the pilot would be exposed to a beneficial political dimension by having a trial project within each of the Mendip Area Boards.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Sub-Strategic Planning Group Recommends:

- 1) The MSP proceeds to pilot Community Planning in Shepton Mallet and East Mendip and acknowledge the obligation to address resource issues by way of a commitment to pilot areas.
- 2) Endorse the work on community planning within Street and request a dialogue be established to enable continuity with the two pilot areas within Mendip.

# Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 8

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FROM:

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002

**SUBJECT: The District Wide Community Strategy – Determining Priorities through Whole System Events**

## SUMMARY

This report sets out a strategy to develop a district wide community strategy. The principles, events and action plan have previously been agreed by the partnership. This report sets out the detailed method of the process.

## BACKGROUND

Within our Community Planning action plan we have a number of key events set out to help us pull together the strands of a District Wide Community Strategy with a limited number of themes and priorities. This work will take the evidence drawn together by the Baseline Information Task Group to inform the process.

This 'raw data' will consist of known information from existing surveys, strategies and consultation processes which we already have within our agencies.

By using a 'whole systems' process we will make the connections between complex issues to target our efforts more efficiently and creatively to where it is most needed.

This Strategic Mendip Wide Process is separate from the individual Community Planning Pilots which will be focused on local communities working with the partnership to get a better understanding of:-

- What are the needs of each community
- What are we doing to meet these needs locally
- What are the gaps that need to be filled
- What actions can we take at a local level to meet the needs of these communities

The District Wide strategy is meant to provide the framework for partner organisations to work more closely together to tackle a limited number of major needs strategically over the medium to long term, and will need the agreement and commitment of all agencies to tackling these priorities both separately and together within the main stream of their business.

## PROCESS

While system events are intensive and carefully planned to deliver in a few events what could normally take many months to achieve in 'normal' meetings. 70% of the work takes place before the event to ensure that those who participate are clear on:-

- Why they are there
- What their role is
- What is expected of them to 'agree'

All information is made accessible and available well in advance so that all participants have 'equal access' to the information.

It is essential to bring the right people together who for example:-

- have specialist knowledge
- are decision makers
- deliver the services
- have power and influence
- are users of these services

The aim is to look at issues as part of a 'whole process' and how issues interact and relate to each other rather than as separate services.

Part of the process is building trust and relationships to work together in the future to deliver the agreed actions.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR THE PARTNERSHIP**

There are a number of issues which the partnership needs to address before it embarks on this process, because we need the time and commitment of a wide range of people to deliver tangible benefits to the community.

1. Limited Multi Agency Engagement
2. Building Capacity/Training Facilities

### 1. Multi Agency Engagement

The whole ethos of Community Planning in Mendip has, so far, been built upon joint/multi agency working, from the development of the partnership itself to the working up of a two year action plan.

Since the partnership was formally constituted, the work of the task group has been largely led, carried out and developed by Mendip Council Staff. There are exceptions, but in the main there has been limited engagement from other agency officers with the exception of some board members.

My key concern is that if the people who deliver and manage critical services are not engaged with the process then the Community Planning process in Mendip will fail. Key managers and those that have responsibility to deliver services need to be:-

- aware of what is happening
- playing a part in developing Community Planning
- committed to sharing this with their teams, and involving their teams

## **FIRST PROPOSAL**

That Service Managers from key agencies hold a half day meeting in January to:-

- Fully understand the Community Planning process and Whole System approach
- Agree an overall process to identify the key strategic issues
- Agree to lead the implementation of these actions in their own organisations

- Agree the overall costs and resources – e.g. staff time
- Begin exploring the emerging issues identified by the Baseline Task Group

## **SECOND PROPOSAL - BUILDING CAPACITY/TRAINING**

To roll out a 'full whole system' set of events to cover all key issues will be costly in facilitation and consultancy.

It is therefore essential that a group of officers across agencies work together to plan the events and gain experience/training, as part of the process. This means that we can reduce the overall costs of external facilitation to the managers/leader meeting mentioned above in 1, and the first main whole system event.

The remaining single issue events can then be staffed, facilitated and resourced within the partnership agencies resources.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

I would recommend that board members discuss and agree how they wish to proceed on developing the process, and specifically on:-

1. Committing their staffs time to the process and a planning group
2. Using consultancy to facilitate the initial events and provide training to resource the following events