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**From:** "Skirton, Sara" <skirtons@mendip.gov.uk>  
**To:** "Mendip LSP" <MendipLSP@mendip.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** "Community Strategy Project Group" <CommunityStrategyProjectGroup@mendip.gov.uk>; "Jeffs, Graham" <jeffsg@mendip.gov.uk>; "Brown, Stuart" <browns@mendip.gov.uk>; "Bush, Keith" <bushk@mendip.gov.uk>; "Wilkins, Ros" <wilkinsr@mendip.gov.uk>; "Harrison, Sue" <harrisons@mendip.gov.uk>; "Haynes, Collette" <haynesc@mendip.gov.uk>; "Peter Grainger" <PGrainger@somerset.gov.uk>; "Emma Hockey" <EHockey@somerset.gov.uk>; <sshc2000@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** 26 February 2003 17:12  
**Attach:** [LSP Travel Claim Form.doc](#); [10 Sub Area LSP for Shepton Mallet - Proposal.DOC](#); [12 Communications Update 4.3.03.doc](#); [3 Minutes MSP 18th November 2002.doc](#); [5 Feedback from Key Senior Stakeholders Event.doc](#); [5a Seniorstakeholder event notes 24.1.03.doc](#); [5b Notes re meeting to define further the MSP priorities.doc](#); [6 Support Arrangements.doc](#); [7 Financial Support for the Partnership.doc](#); [8 Community Consultation.doc](#); [9 The Way Forward.doc](#); [1 Agenda 4-3-03.doc](#); [4 Feedback from Somerset LSP Diaolgue Day.doc](#)  
**Subject:** Mendip Strategic Partnership Board Meeting 4th March 2003

Dear MSP Board Members

Please find attached the agenda and reports for the next Board meeting on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March, at the Indictment Room, Wells Town Hall, commencing at 3pm.

Wells is fairly well served by public transport and if you are travelling by car we would suggest parking in Chamberlain Street or Union Street Car Parks. Also attached is a travel expenses claim form should you need to claim mileage etc. Please can these be returned to me in hard copy.

I am out of the office until Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March so if you have any queries in my absence, including directions to the venue, please contact Stuart Merritt on 01749 341312 or e-mail [merritts@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:merritts@mendip.gov.uk)

Regards,

Sara

Sara Skirton  
Community Planning and Consultation Officer  
01749 341340

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## The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Board Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003  
3pm Wells Town Hall  
Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Public Participation
3. Minutes of the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002
4. **Feedback from Somerset LSPs dialogue day 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003**  
*Including a report on the outcomes, which is to follow and will be presented by Roger Kershaw, Somerset County Council*
5. **Feedback from the Key Senior Stakeholder event 24<sup>th</sup> January 2003**
  - 5a. **notes from the Event 24.1.03**  
*for information and to provide context*
  - 5b. **notes from a meeting to define the priorities further 17.2.03**  
*includes recommendations for the Board*
6. **Support Arrangements** *includes recommendations for the Board*
7. **Financial Support for the Partnership** *includes recommendations for the Board*
8. **Community Consultation** *includes recommendations for the Board*
9. **The Way Forward** *Consideration of how the Board wishes to proceed with the Community Planning process in Mendip, in the light of discussion of agenda items 4-8*
10. **Sub Area LSP for Shepton Mallet - Proposal from Mendip Housing Limited** *includes recommendations for the Board*
11. **Street Community Appraisal Project (SCAP)**  
*verbal report / presentation from Anne Dixon, Chair of SCAP, for information*
12. **Communications Sub Group Update** *includes recommendations for the Board*
13. Any Other Business
14. Date / Venue of next meeting

## The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Minutes of the meeting of The Mendip Strategic Partnership held on Monday 18th November 2002 at 4.00 pm in Marston House, Frome.

PRESENT: Penny Baker - Mendip Association of Chambers of Commerce  
 Cathy Bakewell - Somerset County Council  
 Ron Ballantine - Mendip Primary Care Trust (Chair)  
 Peter Chapman - Mendip Housing Association  
 Penny Church - Citizen Advice Bureau (Vice-Chair)  
 Nick Cottle - Somerset Association of Local Councils  
 Richard Dixon - Mendip Environment Forum  
 Jilly Edwards - Voluntary Action Mendip  
 Andy Gardiner - Environment Agency  
 Stephen Harrison - Mendip District Council  
 Pam Iles - St Dunstons, Glastonbury  
 Graham Livings - Victim Support  
 Janet Palmer - Mendip Social Forum  
 Zena Pollard - Mendip Economy Forum  
 Jim Shearer - Avon & Somerset Police  
 Angela Yeoman - Foster Yeoman (as host and for item 3 only)

### OFFICERS

PRESENT: Sue Harrison - Mendip District Council  
 Graham Jeffs - Mendip District Council  
 Stuart Merritt - Mendip District Council  
 Stuart Palmer - Mendip District Council  
 Jane Roland - Mendip District Council  
 Sara Skirton - Mendip District Council  
 Jill Temple - Mendip District Council  
 Sharon Adams - Somerset County Council

Agenda Item Number	Agenda Item
1	<b>Apologies</b> Ian Bennett - Strode College Ian Wallace – Young Somerset Rosemary Pike – Government Office South West Chris Arscott – Mendip District Council Jenny Davies – Mendip District Council
2	<b>Public Participation</b> No members of the public were in attendance. It was noted that a more accessible location for public transport would be needed for future meetings.

3	<p><b>Somerset Community Foundation</b>          Angela Yeoman visited the meeting and gave a brief outline of the new charity 'Somerset Community Foundation' that will exist as a body to facilitate the payment of government and local money raised for charitable organisations. Although in it's infancy Angela Yeoman is the Chair and contact can be made through her for all enquiries. Angela Yeoman left the meeting.</p>
4	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting dated 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2002</b>          Agreed as a correct record.</p>
5	<p><b>Matters arising – action update</b>          Stuart Palmer did not bring the travel and expense claim forms to the meeting however any member of the Partnership who needs to make a claim can request a form through Stuart Palmer's office in Mendip District Council.</p>
6	<p><b>Somerset wide LSP's dialogue / a proposal</b>          Sharon Adams talked through the draft programme for the proposed 'Dialogue Day' on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003. It was discussed in detail and although it was understood that this was an agreed programme two basic changes are to be requested to the draft framework;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify another two tier authority that is up and running and request that they give an presentation on the day.</li> <li>b) Clarity is needed in the roles of the Countywide LSP and District LSP's – discussion to be added.</li> </ul> <p>It was understood that possibly 100 people will be attending and a venue with workshop rooms and facilitators has been arranged.</p>
7	<p><b>Current resources available to Support Community Planning</b>          Stuart Palmer reported that the 151 officer in Mendip District has confirmed that the Council is able to act as banker for the Partnership. A new post of Community Planning Officer will be advertised nationally to start as soon as possible – this post will be 100% dedicated to the partnership and the community planning process.          The new Sustainability Officer starting in December will also support the MSP work from a 'sustainability' angle.          Peter Chapman from Mendip Housing reported that £10k has been budgeted for this Partnership and can be requested for individual tasks as needed, but that he was able to put £2,500 into the MSP general pot.          Graham Livings wanted to stress the fact that the MSP must be seen to be working separately from Mendip District Council in order to establish its multi-agency initiatives.</p>
8	<p><b>Task Groups – reports</b>  <u>Communications Task Group</u> – how should we communicate, between ourselves, our partners and our communities?</p>

Zena Pollard explained the report that was produced for the meeting. Janet Palmer stated that a 'newsletter' was discussed for updating stake holders on progress of the partnership work to date but another format other than a 'newsletter title' would be more appropriate. It was discussed and agreed that a web-site was needed now to take the Partnership forward and provide transparent working with agendas reports and minutes of the meetings accessible to all. It was stressed by several members that the public need to know what is happening and senior managers of key organizations want to know 'what is in it for them'.

It was agreed that a name for the MSP was to be agreed by the Communications Task Group and action on the web-site to be initiated as soon as possible.

'Mendip Area Partnership' and 'Action in Mendip' were suggested. It is also noted that several members wanted the word 'strategic' to stay in the title, and an equal number thought that this makes it 'less friendly'.

Partnership Task Group – what are our partnerships and how do they, or should they link up?

Jilly Edwards reported on the work that has been done to identify strategic, geographic and issue based lists of possible partners. It was explained that these were not complete lists yet, but all those listed already serve a group or have a partnership with others and therefore could be of more use to the MSP.

The Chair noted that this was an excellent start.

Andy Gardiner suggested that the web-site could be used for outside bodies to register an interest in the MSP and was a good point of first contact.

Penny Church clarified the point that the dialogue with different sizes and types of organizations would need to be tailored depending on their roles and structure i.e. Community Legal Service and Age Concern.

Sub- Strategic Task Group – what is the best area basis to start to plan locally in Mendip, and why?

Chris Arscott was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting so Stuart Palmer explained the reasoning behind his report.

The recommendations of the report;

1. Concentrate on Shepton Mallet town centre regeneration.
2. Leave Frome because it is complex and difficult for a pilot.
3. Recognise and support the work taking place in Street.

Nick Cottle wanted to record that fact that he has not had the opportunity to give any input to this report. Generally the recommendations were endorsed.

Baseline Information Task Group – what are the issues for the Mendip area?

Jane Rolands and others had produced detailed lists of 'Priorities for

	<p>Mendip' based on economic, social and environmental factors using the Audit Commission 'Quality of Life' indicators as a basis. The Chair wished to thank everyone who had helped produced this document. It was decided that a 3 or 4 hour meeting would be needed to discuss all the information that has been produced and decide on the way forward.</p> <p><b><i>Leaving the meeting</i></b>  <i>At this point Graham Jeffs, Penny Baker and Steve Harrison left the meeting.</i></p>
9	<p><b>A District Wide Community Plan determining our priorities through 'whole system events'.</b></p> <p>Stuart Palmer discussed this and explained that priorities need to be decided and action carried out. He suggested that a smaller meeting of Corporate Directors, Chief Executives and Service Managers of those delivering a service need to meet for a half day meeting in January to engage with the issues and commit their organizations to the process, and its outcomes.</p> <p>The membership of a small project group to plan this meeting and further events was proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robin Smith – PCT</li> <li>• Jilly Edwards – representing voluntary groups</li> <li>• A County Council Director</li> <li>• Ian Bennett – Strode College</li> <li>• Graham Livings</li> <li>• A member of the communications group</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that this should go ahead prior to 13<sup>th</sup> January 2003 and report back to the board at the next meeting.</p>
10	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Graham Livings and Nick Cottle are going to arrange a visit to another two tier LSP and invited two other members of the board to accompany them. Anyone interested should contact them directly.</p> <p>Janet Palmer produced a letter from Age Concern that was sent as a result of the social forum and explained that 92% of the money provided by Carers UK was being used for respite care transport. This should be filed and noted for transport discussions.</p> <p>Nick Cottle asked if any communications for the Parish Clerks SALC meetings be given to him as he attends these meetings.</p>
11	<p><b>Date / Venue of next meetings;</b></p> <p>Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2003 at 3pm – venue to be arranged</p> <p>Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003 at 3pm – venue to be arranged</p>

The meeting finished at 6.05 pm

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 4

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**FROM:** Sara Skirton Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**SUBJECT: Feedback from Somerset LSPs Dialogue Day 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003**

## 1. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

1.1 Members from Somerset's six LSPs were invited to attend a Dialogue Day / Workshop at Lyngford House, Taunton on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003.

The aims of the day were to:

- Build shared knowledge and understanding of the Community Planning process and the role / priorities of each LSP
- Build links and relationships between the LSPs in Somerset
- Build a shared commitment to on-going dialogue to ensure the best level of co-ordination and agreement between the different partnerships
- Agree on future key areas for discussion and action / solutions to perceived issues
- Agree how the next stage of the dialogue process should be taken forward

1.2 In addition to receiving a presentation from each Somerset LSP, attendees also received a presentation from Shropshire Strategic Partnership, which outlined the approach taken in another 'two tier' County to community planning and the learning outcomes from the process.

1.3 A report detailing the outcomes of the event is to follow and will be presented by Roger Kershaw, Somerset County Council.

Contact: Sara Skirton  
Telephone No: 01749 341340

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 5

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FROM: Sara Skirton Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

SUBJECT: **Feedback from Key Senior Stakeholder Event – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2003**

## 1. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its last meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002, the Board received a report stressing the need for active multi agency engagement in the Community Planning process if it is to succeed in Mendip.
- 1.2 A meeting of senior managers from key public agencies was proposed for January 2003. The aims of this meeting included to
  - come to a shared understanding of:
    - the purpose of the Community Planning process, as set out in central government guidance
    - the particular 'flavour' and approach that is being adopted within the Mendip area on Community Planning
    - the underlying assumptions of a 'whole systems' approach to Community Planning
  - discuss current proposals on how to move from agreed issues, to developing implementable action plans
  - discuss and agree leading the implementation of eventual actions in both their organisations as well as on a multi-agency basis
  - gain commitment on how the Community Planning process will be resourced over the next year in terms of consultancy/facilitation costs, staff time and administration costs
  - explore joint training and development opportunities as part of implementing the next stages of Community Planning
  - come to a shared understanding of emerging issues identified by the Baseline Data Task Group and share any additionally held knowledge on issues.
- 1.3 The meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2003. The notes from this event (5a) and the subsequent meeting held to further refine the identified priorities (5b) are appended to this report.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Board Members are asked to consider the key messages at the end of 5a and the recommendations to the MSP highlighted in Appendix 5b.

Contact: Sara Skirton Telephone No: 01749 341340

**Notes from Senior Public Agency Stakeholder Event  
24<sup>th</sup> January 2003**

**Introduction and Welcome**

Cllr. Stephen Harrison welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed his gratitude that all partners were willing to meet on a Friday evening, saying that this in itself shows commitment for working together on Community Planning. He went on to express that he saw this meeting as 'crunch time' for key stakeholders in the Public Sector to decide together, how they want to move forward and how this needs to be resourced.

**Aims of the meeting**

- Discuss emerging strategic issues as a result of the work done by the Data Baseline Task Group
- Discuss and agree approach for taking forward the Community Planning process
- Agree the resources needed for the management and implementation of the agreed way forward

**Context**

Cllr Stephen Harrison related the following key stages that had taken place in setting up the Mendip Strategic Partnership (MSP):

- Mendip District Council initiated the process by holding a meeting on 12 December 2001 of key stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Two working groups were set up as a result of this meeting – one to develop a structure for the MSP and the other to develop a project plan for the first two years of the MSP's work
- These two groups worked between January and March 2002 and their work was pulled together in April 2002 when a document was produced entitled 'Mendip Local Strategic Partnership and Community Planning Process
- This was used to recruit members for the MSP Board and these people came together for the first time in June 2002 for an Away Day where they met each other and discussed in more detail both the structure and project plan

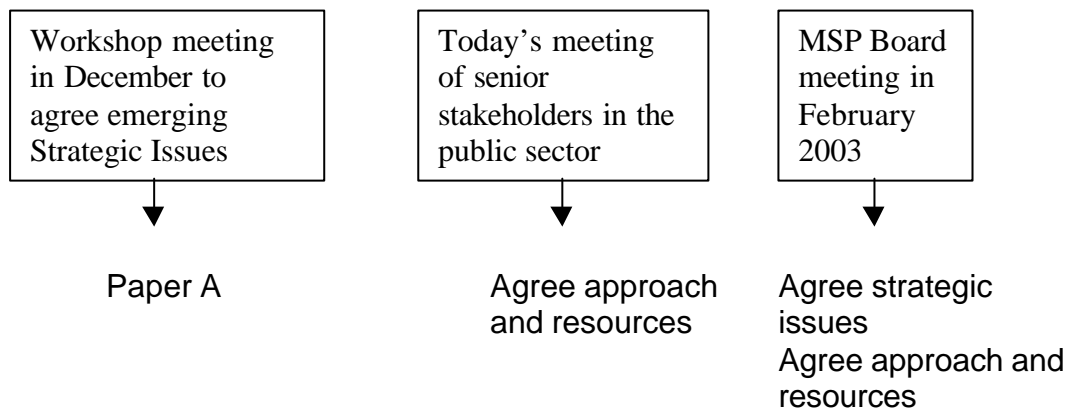
Ron Ballantine, the Chairperson of the Mendip Strategic Partnership explained the main activities that the MSP had been involved since July 2002. This included:

- Setting up 4 Task Groups looking at Communications, Data Baseline, Partnerships and Sub district pilot

- The Communications Group has drafted a Communications Strategy for both internal and external communications
- The Partnerships Group has mapped out existing partnerships both within the District and County wide
- The Sub district pilot Group has recommended Shepton Mallet as the area for exploring a sub district community planning process
- The Data Baseline Group has researched existing information from across agencies and the distilled version of this research is Paper A

He reinforced the need for partners to now discuss the emerging issues and more importantly agree how to take this forward so that a difference is achieved.

Lynn Wetenhall completed the Context session by explaining where this meeting fit into the wider picture by referring to the following diagram:



### **What is my one hope for this process?**

Each person was asked to introduce himself or herself and share what their one hope was for the Community Planning process.

Ian Bennett (Strode College) – to provide the impetus for attracting more money into Mendip

Nigel Farrow (Somerset County Council)– to not become a bureaucratic exercise and that it adds to the sustainable development of the area

Cllr Cathy Bakewell (Somerset County Councillor) – that the Community of Mendip has ownership of what we are doing and that the Mendip Strategic Partnership links in with the Somerset Strategic Partnership

Sara Skirton (Mendip District Council)– existing commitment is revived and from this tangible results are manifested

Graham Jeffs (Mendip District Council)– try and resolve the dilemma that District Councils are in, i.e. show leadership but also be part of a team

Malcolm Lythgo (Environment Agency)– better involvement with local people, especially in terms of the Environment Agency’s work

Andy Gardiner (Environment Agency)– better information on what the community wants

Peter Chapman (Mendip Housing Limited)– make a difference in terms of improving existing activity as well as new projects.

Jim Shearer (Somerset Constabulary)– developing and making changes especially in terms of making Mendip a safe place to live and work

Beatrice Beer (Learning and Skills Council)– we are in a climate of expanding agendas with many targets to meet – this process can help us do this by better understanding each other’s agendas and how we can work together to achieve the targets that we cannot meet other than by working together.

Robin Smith (Mendip Primary Care Trust)– we need to be careful to not aspire too high then achieve far less than we hoped. We need to align our individual agendas so that they work for Mendip and we need to create new corporate knowledge within the partnership, which will impact our individual organisational objectives so that we can begin to really plan together

Ron (Mendip Primary Care Trust and Chair person of MSP) – to pull together what is already happening and not chase some new strategy

Stephen (Mendip District Councillor)– to gain clarity on what we take to the MSP and to make a real difference that people can see, e.g. Shepton Mallet

## **Emerging Strategic Issues**

*Paper A- priorities identified at the “Sharpening the Issues for the Mendip Strategic Partnership” workshop held on 13.12.02,*

Paper A, containing the priorities or issues that had emerged through evaluation of social, economic and environmental baseline data was considered in order to gain understanding on whether partners felt these issues were the right ones for the Community Strategy and if so how they should be taken forward

Issues 1-6 were considered to be in line with most organisations’ priorities, although they were seen to be less immediately relevant for the Environment Agency. It was acknowledged that new priorities would emerge over time and that some agencies would be more involved than others at various stages.

With regard to issue 7 – Quarrying - the ability to have an impact was less clear cut and it was acknowledged that conflicting views about the quarrying industry in Mendip existed amongst the community. Therefore it was recommended that:

*The MSP has a strategic watching brief on quarrying, i.e. keep an eye open for any threats /changes*

It was also recommended that:

*The Shepton Mallet pilot area be added to the list of priority areas for action*

## **Whole Systems Approach**

*Paper B – Briefing Note on the Guiding Principles of a “Whole Systems” approach*

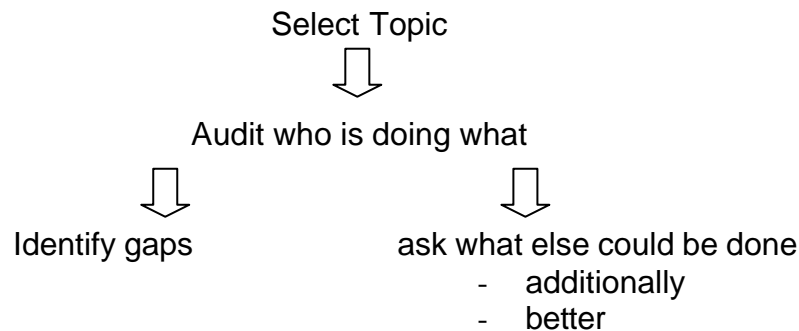
A Whole System Approach was explained using the example of joint training and development amongst partners; (this was used as a ‘live’ example, because the desire for more joined up training had been expressed at the first Community Planning stakeholder meeting in December 2001 but no action has been taken)

## **Options for taking the Community Planning process forward**

*Paper C – Different process approaches to developing an implementable Community Strategy and Action Plan*

A number of possible processes for taking the Community Planning process forward, including whole systems events, were considered. In addition to the approaches identified in Paper C, the following approaches were also suggested:

1.



2. Look at what is working well and build on it. ‘Re-badge’ / align with MSP if appropriate.

3. **Product champions:** an approach whereby agencies put conscious effort into enabling local ‘activists’ who are keen to do things towards the LSP’s priorities, to get on and do things from the ‘bottom up’.

As a result of discussions, it was concluded that a different approach would be appropriate, depending on the strategic issue being taken forward. For

example it was suggested (but not agreed), that developing a Community Plan for Shepton Mallet could use a Whole Systems approach, whilst matching local skills to local jobs could be progressed through a working groups approach.

Lynn & Maria suggested to the group that once agreement has been reached on the issues which are to be worked on, it will be important for a dedicated small group (this could be the Support Group or a special task-focused group) to come together in order to pay real attention to process – to how things will be done, who will do them, by when and so on. They referred to this as 'designing' process.

### **Commitment**

The need to have multi agency commitment to taking the Community Planning process forward and making it work was acknowledged. It was generally agreed that the MSP Support Group membership should be multi agency rather than just Mendip District Council Officers.

### **Agreed action:**

*Graham Jeffs, Robin Smith, Beatrice Beer and Ian Bennett to meet before the next MSP meeting in March in order to:*

*Rewrite and regroup Paper A issues 1-6, making them more defined - in doing this, consider how to best pick up on the cross-cutting nature of the issue i.e. avoid falling back into 'silo thinking'*

- *give consideration to how these issues can be taken forward (i.e. process)*
- *draw out resource and commitment implications, or at least begin the process*
- *consider how to engage wider community*

*This should be circulated to the MSP Board for discussion at the 4 March 2003.*

### **Key messages from this meeting to the MSP**

- Look at the agreed priorities and focus down further e.g. what are we trying to achieve in the next 12.-18 months?
- New issues will arise, to which MSP must remain open to
- MSP needs to look for issues, which:
  - Dovetail with SSP
  - Will attract extra funding
  - Have a joint Mendip angle (i.e. SSP and MSP)
- The Support group role is essential and should continue – but with multi agency membership and with more emphasis on process i.e. *how* things will be done.

**Meeting to define further the MSP priorities for the next 12-18 months  
17<sup>th</sup> February 2003**

Present	Beatrice Beer	Learning and Skills Council
	Ian Bennett	Strode College
	Graham Jeffs	Mendip District Council
	Sara Skirton	Mendip District Council
Apologies	Robin Smith	Mendip PCT

**Background**

- The Baseline Information Task Group gathered together social, economic and environmental data for the Mendip district
- On 13<sup>th</sup> December 2002 members of the MSP considered the data and agreed the following as priorities that the MSP can work on over the next 12-18 months:
  1. *Matching local skills to local jobs. This includes several areas of work:*
    - *Re-skilling and retraining of local workers to match the local industry base*
    - *Attracting inward investment that matches local skills base*
    - *Focusing on small and medium enterprises, farm diversification and tourism as sustainable options for economic regeneration*
- 2. *Improving public and community transport links. This includes out-of-district links, and creative provision for specific target groups, for example, young people and people with disabilities*
- 3. *Addressing long term unemployment (LTU). To develop an improved understanding of the causes of LTU, and awareness of the barriers to re-entry into the job market*
- 4. *Encouraging and enhancing access to post-16 education provision and take up in Mendip, particularly Higher Education*
- 5. *Improving road safety, particularly casualties involving young men*
- 6. *Developing a better understanding of the links between employment, education/skills and housing, particularly in relation to why/when young people leave the district, and what would attract them to return, for example, after studying away from home*
- 7. *Strategic planning focused on the after-use of quarries. This would involve developing an improved knowledge and understanding of the relationship between issues, especially the balance between the economic and environmental needs of the area*

- On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2003 a group of senior stakeholders further considered the priority issues and agreed that:

*Graham Jeffs, Robin Smith, Beatrice Beer and Ian Bennett to meet before the next MSP meeting in March in order to:*

*Rewrite and regroup Paper A issues 1-6, making them more defined - in doing this, consider how to best pick up on the cross-cutting nature of the issue i.e. avoid falling back into 'silo thinking'*

- *give consideration to how these issues can be taken forward (i.e. process)*
- *draw out resource and commitment implications, or at least begin the process*
- *consider how to engage wider community*

### **Outcomes of the Meeting**

Through discussion, links were made between the issues and recommendations were put forward for the MSP to address.

### **Issues 1 & 3**

1. *Matching local skills to local jobs. including:*

- *Re-skilling and retraining of local workers to match the local industry base*
- *Attracting inward investment that matches local skills base*
- *Focusing on small and medium enterprises, farm diversification and tourism as sustainable options for economic regeneration*

3. *Addressing long term unemployment (LTU). To develop an improved understanding of the causes of LTU, and awareness of the barriers to re-entry into the job market*

Ian explained that a greater choice of higher education qualification needed to be made available locally – not just honours degrees but advanced technical qualifications (such as HNC/D and Foundation Degrees) and that this would in turn attract different employers into the area. The introduction of additional fees in higher education in 2006 was likely to increase demand for local courses.

A significant number of students left Strode to go into public service, police etc having gained HNC/D qualifications. Increasing the number of people with technical skills should lead to more self employment in the district.

It was felt that 'matching local skills to local jobs' was only one aspect. There was also a need to 'match local jobs to local skills' as there was a view that skills and training were advancing ahead of the local economy – employers

needed to change, lots of small firms lack managerial skills and suffered from 'short termism' seeking skills for now, not looking to the future.

With regard to long term unemployment the following factors were highlighted:

- where people have traditionally worked for one employer that no longer exists, they tended to have a narrow skills base
- literacy and numeracy problems impacted on ability to fill in forms and affected self esteem etc

It was pointed out that whilst much emphasis was placed on local businesses, public sector organisations are major local employers and they too have problems attracting and retaining staff

***Recommend that MSP:***

- ***develops closer relationships with employers, helping to change their perspective***
- ***look at raising basic skill levels,***
- ***look at raising skills levels relating to specific sectors, especially the low skill/low pay areas such as in customer care affecting for example, the tourism sector and care sector***
- ***research the extent of the gap between the skills and qualifications of the local workforce and the new jobs that would be in place by 2010***

**Issues 4 & 6**

4. *Encouraging and enhancing access to post-16 education provision and take up in Mendip, particularly Higher Education*

6. *Developing a better understanding of the links between employment, education/skills and housing, particularly in relation to why/when young people leave the district, and what would attract them to return, for example, after studying away from home*

It was agreed that 4& 6 were strongly linked

***Recommend that MSP carry out more research and focus more on the needs of young people***

**Issue 2 & 5**

2. *Improving public and community transport links. This includes out-of-district links, and creative provision for specific target groups, for example, young people and people with disabilities*

5. *Improving road safety, particularly casualties involving young men*

Clear links between 2&5 were apparent. It was acknowledged that young people need a car to access college, work, social life etc.

***Recommend that MSP:***

- ***ensure that the needs of Mendip are linked into the work of the Post 16 Strategic Transport Group.***
- ***Look at levels of peak time public transport in parishes in Mendip (37% parishes in Somerset have none) – what do the routes look like for Mendip?***
- ***Look at links with Mendip Community Transport***
- ***Look at contributing to the provision of strategic support for independent travel for young people with disabilities.***

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 6

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**FROM:** Sara Skirton Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**SUBJECT: Support Arrangements for Community Planning and the MSP**

## 1. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Board members will be aware that Stuart Palmer, who previously dedicated 30% of his time to supporting Community Planning and the MSP, left Mendip District Council in December 2002.

## 2. SUPPORT FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

- 2.1 In the interim between Stuart leaving and the appointment of a dedicated Community Planning Officer, it was agreed that a number of officers at MDC would provide a 'caretaking' support role.
- 2.2 The level of response to the job advertisement was lower than anticipated and this provided an opportunity to reconsider the options for supporting Community Planning. It was felt that the required skills and commitment existed in-house but that the input to the process needed to be led and co-ordinated by a nominated officer.
- In February 2003 Sara Skirton, formerly the Community Consultation and Research Officer, took on the lead role of supporting the process and co-ordinating the input from other officers.
  - Lesley Rowan began work in December 2003 as Sustainability Officer. She will be dedicating at least 50% of her time to developing sustainability through the community planning process. Prior to joining MDC, Lesley was involved in a pathfinder community planning process in Stirling, Scotland.
  - Graham Jeffs, Chief Executive of MDC is the lead from the Council's General Management Team.

## 3. SUPPORT FROM OTHER PARTNERS

- 3.1 Current identified support from other MSP Board organisations is:

**Somerset County Council**

Pete Grainger – Support Group

**Mendip PCT**

Dr Caroline Gamlin – Task Group

## 4. TASK GROUPS / SUPPORT GROUP

- 4.1 The Board established four task groups to support the process. Each group comprised at least one Member of the MSP Board, plus support from MDC officers
- **Baseline Information Group** - collated a wide range of social, economic and environmental data relating to the district. This data was presented to Members at the last Board meeting and subsequently was used to help identify key priority issues.
  - **Partnerships Group** - carried out an audit of partnerships in the district, the results of which were disseminated at the last Board meeting
  - **Sub Strategic Planning Group** - identified Shepton Mallet and the East Mendip area as pilot areas for local Community Planning
  - **Communications Group** - drafted a communications strategy, which included an action plan. An update from this group is included as a separate report.
- 4.2 Three of the Task Groups were designed to be time limited, with only the Communications Group having an ongoing role.
- 4.3 In addition to these task groups, a Support Group was set up, which included the lead officer from each of the task groups.
- 4.4 With the exception of Jane Roland, who has now left Mendip District Council, it is envisaged that those involved in the task groups, plus others, will continue to play a key role in supporting the work of the MSP.
- 4.5 Whilst the Communications Group will continue to work to achieve the actions set out in the action plan, it is likely that the objectives and composition of the remaining groups will change according to the priorities of the MSP.
- 4.6 The Support Group is to continue in its role of co-ordinating the work of the MSP and arranging meetings etc. It is acknowledged that membership has mostly been made up of MDC officers

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 For the MSP to be fully effective as a Partnership and achieve the objectives of Community Planning it is essential that further support in the form of dedicated staff time and / resource is given from the other agencies on the Partnership. This was acknowledged and recognised by attendees at the Senior Stakeholder Event on 24th January.

5.2 Members are therefore asked to consider what resources they or their organisations can commit to the Community Planning process. The exact skills mix will vary according to the issues the Board is addressing but key skills / knowledge requirements are likely to include:

- Community engagement
- Communication
- Knowledge of process
- Project management
- Organisational skills

Contact: Sara Skirton  
Telephone No: 01749 341340

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item:

7

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**FROM:** Stuart Merritt Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**SUBJECT:** Financial Support for the Partnership

1. The last Partnership meeting received a report on expenditure to date. Since then, an additional £2,200 has been spent mainly on the facilitation of, and venue for, the Senior Stakeholder event. This was funded by Mendip District Council. This report looks towards financing the Partnership next year.
2. The main costs incurred in setting up the Partnership and reaching our current position have been in the employment of consultants Lynn Wettenhall Associates with Maria Scordialos. Next year, funding is likely to be needed primarily for consultation and participation events with the community.
3. The bid to Mendip District Council for additional resources specifically to cover the costs of community planning has been unsuccessful in the face of other budgetary pressures for the Council. It may be possible to make available limited funding from the Council's existing budgets (for example from salary savings achieved from the decision not to replace a General Manager), and I am still attempting to quantify what this might be. It is unlikely, however, to be possible to set aside more than £10,000. In view of this, there are unlikely to be resources next year to fund the use of consultants to the extent that they have been used in setting up the Partnership, unless significant contributions are available from other members of the Partnership.
4. Somerset County Council are able to commit £5,000 to the Partnership next year. There are outstanding commitments of £2,000 and up to £10,000 respectively from the Environment Agency and MHL which have not yet been taken up.
5. Mendip District Council is prepared to commit significant staffing resources to the community planning process. We do have, in house, extensive experience of community consultation particularly in Sara Skirton, who will now be leading on community planning for the Council, and also through specific projects such as the successful preparation of the Mendip District Local Plan. We also employ a number of people who will be able to contribute to the work of the Partnership and to community planning, an example being Lesley Rowan, our Sustainability Officer, who is charged with integrating the principles of sustainable development into the community planning process.
6. As reported verbally last time, Mendip District Council is happy to act as 'banker' to the Partnership. Under this arrangement, funds will be allocated to separate internal budget heading. Any underspending at the end of a financial year are retained in the budget for the following year. This arrangement is already employed by the Community Safety Partnership and appears to work well. It will enable much better

control to be kept of the budget and enable information on the total spending on projects to be more readily assembled.

## **Recommendation**

7. The Partnership is asked to consider what financial resources member organisations are able to commit to its work over the next year, in parallel with similar consideration of available staffing / time resources.

Contact Officer: Stuart Merritt, Service Manager, Corporate Policy, Mendip District Council

Phone No: 01749 341312

# Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 8

**FROM:** Stuart Brown (General  
Manager – Corporate Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003  
Policy & Support, MDC)

**SUBJECT: Community Consultation**

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to propose an approach to community consultation that will be of benefit to both the Mendip Strategic Partnership and Mendip District Council.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In following Mendip District Council's approved programme of Best Value Reviews, it is necessary for the Council to consult a wide range of service users, non-users, stakeholders and the wider community on a wide range of subjects.
- 1.2 The success of the Council in achieving this level of consultation is all the more critical now that it has opted, on Government advice, to move towards more strategic reviews that thereby enable greater innovation in service delivery and improve performance.
- 1.3 Having commenced two Strategic Reviews it has become very apparent that reviews of this magnitude (i.e. "Caring for the Environment" and "Achieving More Vibrant and Sustainable Local Economies") cannot, and should not, be conducted in isolation of the Community Planning process. With this in mind, the Council has had lengthy discussions with both the Audit Commission and its External Auditors with a view to agreeing a preferred way forward.
- 1.4 It is very apparent that the preferred approach is for the Best Value process to work alongside the Community Planning process, with one informing the other. However, at present the processes are not truly aligned, in terms of the timescales that each is working to. It has therefore been agreed with the Audit Commission that a period of "re-phasing" is acceptable in order that the two processes can be better aligned.

## 2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 Whilst acknowledging that there is a short period necessary to allow the two processes to become more aligned, the Council is nevertheless anxious that progress should continue to be made. This is particularly so in the area of community consultation which, if it is to be carried out effectively, needs to be well planned and delivered over a pre-determined period of time.
- 2.2 For this reason, the Council proposes to continue to work on a programme of community consultation, but to develop and deliver it in close consultation with the Mendip Strategic Partnership. In this way, both parties can agree the methodology, thereby ensuring that the subsequent results are of benefit to both the MSP and MDC,

whilst at the same time minimising any potential for variance in the interpretation of the results.

- 2.3 This approach should ensure a greater consistency in terms of how the Council shapes and delivers its services in the future, in line with the views of the Mendip Strategic Partnership and the local community as a whole.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Board is asked to approve the proposed method of joint consultation with Mendip District Council
2. Subject to approval, the details and methodologies for this consultation will be developed and brought back to a future Board meeting.

Contact Officer: Stuart Brown, General Manager – Corporate Policy and Support  
Mendip District Council

Tel No: 01749 341364

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

## Agenda Item: 9

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**FROM:** Sara Skirton

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**SUBJECT: The Way Forward**

### 1. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for Board Members to consider, in the light of previous agenda items 4-8, what its next actions should be to progress the district wide Community Planning process.

Issues for consideration might include:

- Links with Somerset Strategic Partnership
- Links with other initiatives
- Involving the Community – e.g. community engagement programme, techniques and skills
- Timescales
- Capacity Building / Training requirements
- Resourcing

Contact: Sara Skirton  
Telephone No: 01749 341340

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

Agenda Item: 10

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**FROM:** Peter Chapman                      Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003  
Mendip Housing Limited

**SUBJECT:    Sub Area LSP for Shepton Mallet - Proposal**

## **1.    OBJECTIVE**

- 1.1.    The purpose of this report is to inform Mendip Strategic Partnership of an offer to administer and support a sub-area LSP for the town of Shepton Mallet.

## **2.    BACKGROUND**

- 2.1    Shepton Mallet is generally recognised as the town within Mendip most in need of regeneration. It has suffered significant job losses recently due to the closure of the Griggs shoe factory and the Huntsman Polyurethane plant. Even before those events the main shopping street had a number of empty shop units and the trading position of many traders is thought to be precarious.
- 2.2    At the meeting of senior stakeholders of MSP on 24<sup>th</sup> January, Shepton Mallet was identified as one of the potential key priorities for the MSP. It was the only priority which based on a sub-area of Mendip.
- 2.3    The MSP is looking for a positive contribution to its work from members of the MSP as well as for members to shape their main stream programmes to match the local priorities as set by the MSP itself.

## **3.    PROPOSAL**

- 3.1    Mendip Housing has made an offer to administer and support a sub-area LSP for Shepton Mallet based on expending the community development work they have been doing on the Hillmead estate, Shepton's most deprived area, to encompass the whole town.
- 3.2    Mendip Housing has the necessary skills and experience in community consultation and planning. They are willing to resource the administration and support of the project although they also hope to draw on external funding

sources such as the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) run by the South West RDA.

- 3.3 The key to an LSP is the partnership board which is created. An option exists to enlarge the present partnership board which work on Hillmead as it has on it most of the agencies and bodies which a town wide LSP would require. However another organisation Shepton 21 exists which already deals with Shepton as a whole and whose support would be vital. It is therefore suggested that an approach be made to Shepton 21 to act as the basis of the partnership for the Shepton LSP. If that is agreed Shepton 21 will need to be enlarged to include a number of other agencies, such as the Police, in order to have on it representatives of all the key agencies.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the MSP Board agree to the creation of a sub-area LSP for Shepton Mallet town and that the offer from Mendip Housing to administer and support that LSP be accepted.

Contact: Peter Chapman, Mendip Housing Limited  
Telephone No: 01749 334302

# The Mendip Strategic Partnership

## Agenda Item:12

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**FROM:** Communications Sub Group      Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**SUBJECT:    Communications Update**

### **1.    SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1    This report updates the Board on progress since the November 2002 MSP board meeting, and highlights the requirements for additional staff and financial resource.

### **2.    CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUB GROUP**

- 2.1    Since the last Board meeting the Sub Group has lost two of its members:
- Janet Palmer, Vice Chair is moving from the district
  - Mary Cullen is no longer working for Mendip Housing Limited.
- 2.2    It has become apparent that limited progress can be made on the Communications Action Plan without sufficient resource. We are therefore seeking new group members from amongst the Partnership. We would particularly welcome people with any of the following skills / knowledge:
- communication,
  - consultation / community engagement
  - graphic design
  - website design / management

### **3.    MSP LOGO**

- 3.1    Shoon has kindly designed the logo for the MSP at no cost. This logo is to be used on all documentation relating to the MSP. Any further design development will incur costs, unless we can provide the skills and capacity from within the Partnership.

### **4.    MSP WEBSITE**

- 4.1    One of the key tasks for this group is to develop a website for the Partnership.

- 4.2 Peter Underwood of CAB, offered to develop and host a website for the MSP. A 'first draft' website was created but the Sub Group felt the design did not meet our needs and further development work was put on hold, pending the production of the MSP logo and design.
- 4.3 Peter's offer to set up and maintain the website includes meeting the costs of:
- A further 4 hours of time to finish setting up the website
  - Hosting the website for a year.
- 4.4 The MSP would need to meet the ongoing costs for updating / adding to the website at approximately £25 per hour
- 4.5 Matrix Web Design of Shepton Mallet have provided a quote to design and build a website at a cost of £175. This would include:
- home page and up to 4 further pages
  - login facility for members use
  - hosting and domain name registration (if required)
  - submission of site to major free search directories

The hourly cost for converting existing documents to individual web pages would be £35 per hour.

- 4.6 The Sub Group is impressed by what it has seen of the design capability of Matrix Web Design. An example of their work is the Shepton Mallet website, which can be viewed at [www.shepton-mallet.org.uk](http://www.shepton-mallet.org.uk) .

## **5. MSP UPDATE 'NEWSLETTER'**

- 5.1 A newsletter has been produced in draft form and will be circulated at this meeting. The intention is to finalise the draft following the meeting, with the date of the next meeting (to help publicise the Board) and any key decisions Board Members may wish to include, space permitting.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 The Board is asked to consider how the resource requirements might be met for
- i) Website development and maintenance
  - ii) Progression of the Communications action plan

Chair: Zena Pollard  
Vice Chair: Janet Palmer  
Lead Officer: Sara Skirton  
Telephone No. 01749 341340

# THE MENDIP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

## BOARD MEMBERS TRAVELLING AND EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

NAME (block Capitals Please): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (block Capitals Please): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notes Legitimate travel/transport costs for Board or other meetings of The Mendip Partnership are payable on completion of this form and authorisation by the responsible officer claims should be submitted monthly, and returned to Policy and Partners, Mendip District Council Offices, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5BT

Claims can be made for:-

- Fuel used in members own vehicle – mileage allowance @ 35p per mile for partnership business use
- Car Park charges
- Taxi or public transport (lowest fare) costs
- Child care payments – to allow a board member to attend a partnership meeting where child care is needed

**(Receipts should be attached as proof of expenditure is needed before payment will be made for expenses other than mileage)**

Vehicle Make: _____
& Model: _____
_____
Reg. No: _____

I declare that the journeys and expenses set out on the claim form below were approved duties performed by me as a Board Member of The Mendip Partnership and that to the best of my knowledge the claim is in accordance with the existing partnership agreement.	
Members Signature _____	Date _____
Authorised Officer Signature _____	Date _____

Total mileage claimed:

Total expenses claimed:

Date	Details of Journey (starting and finishing points to be shown)	✓ Car Share number of passengers	Miles Travelled	Description of Approved Duties	Other expenses detail – please attach receipts	Expenses £      p		
Total Mileage Claimed			Total Amounts Claimed					