

Links are printed in red

From: "Skirton, Sara" <skirtons@mendip.gov.uk>
To: "Mendip LSP" <MendipLSP@mendip.gov.uk>
Cc: "Community Strategy Project Group" <CommunityStrategyProjectGroup@mendip.gov.uk>; "Brown, Stuart" <browns@mendip.gov.uk>; "Jeffer, Graham" <jeffsg@mendip.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 March 2003 16:48
Attach: [MSPmemo.doc](#)
Subject: Mendip Strategic Partnership - Memo from the Chair

Please find attached a memo from the Chair of the Board, which clearly sets out the remit of the three Task Groups, set up as a result of the Board meeting on 4th March.

The minutes of the meeting will be circulated shortly.

Regards

Sara

Sara Skirton
Community Planning and Consultation Officer
01749 341340

This e-mail has been scanned for viruses by the WorldCom Internet Managed Scanning Service - powered by MessageLabs. For further information visit <http://www.worldcom.com>

MENDIP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

MEMO

From: Ron Ballantine

To: Members of the MSP Board

Copy: Sara Skirton & Officers

Date: 10 March 2003

Dear Colleague

Alongside the minutes of our last Board Meeting on 4 March, I felt it might be useful if I tried to describe what I believe we agreed as the forward programme of work for the MSP. I do so with some care, because I have no authority to define or lay down what work we should do, but believe it will help if we can be clearer on the Board's immediate intentions and programme.

The starting point for this is at appendix 1 attached, where the seven current key issues identified by MSP Board Members at the special meeting in December are listed. These seven issues were discussed by senior stakeholder agencies at a meeting in January and it was agreed to group the first six into three, as shown at appendix 2. Issue number seven, on quarries, was felt unsuitable for attention at this time and, after considerable discussion on 4 March, the Board agreed that the MSP would not address this issue - at least for now.

At the Board Meeting, we then confirmed the disbanding of the Baseline Data, Partnerships and Sub-Strategic Working Groups (having completed their tasks) and set up three new task groups to tackle the three priority issues taken forward.

We accepted volunteers to head up these Task Groups and discussed membership as follows (please note that the titles for each group are only my interim shorthand!):

"Securing Employment"

Headed by Stephen Harrison, supported by Penny Church, Penny Baker, Zena Pollard, etc

"Education & Young People"

Headed by Ian Bennett, supported by Beatrice Beer, Cathy Bakewell, Ian Wallace, etc

"Transport"

Headed by Graham Livings, supported by Nick Cottle, Richard Dixon, Ian Wallace etc

It is very important that other Board Members of the MSP involve themselves in one or more of these Task Groups, and I would ask you please to contact the Task Group Heads to indicate your interest.

At the 4 March meeting we also agreed to adopt Peter Chapman's proposal for Mendip Housing to administer and support a sub-area Strategic Partnership for the town of Shepton Mallet. It is important to note that Peter Chapman and Zena Pollard will together take the next careful steps in this, by contacting and developing a working model with the existing Hillmead partnership group and Shepton 21. What is hoped will then come out of these discussions is a fourth key issue for us to work on as part of the MSP's agenda.

As for the three new Issues Task Groups, what I believe should happen now is:

1. Membership of the Task Groups to be extended by involving other MSP Members interested
2. Sara Skirton to discuss and agree (with Graham Jeffs?) what appropriate officer support can be provided to the different Task Groups
3. Task Group Heads to call initial meetings of Group to discuss
 - understanding and better definition of the issue being addressed
 - background work and data needed (we already have all the data gathered by the Background Information and Partnerships Working Groups)
 - the planned forward work programme (the chart shown at appendix 3, as tabled at the Board meeting by Lesley Rowan, MDC Sustainability Officer, can be helpful here and she can be contacted for input)
4. The Task Groups to be prepared to report to the next MSP Board Meeting (20th May 2003) on the task definition, background work and proposed forward programme (and anything else accomplished).

I hope you will accept that, by writing this memo, I am seeking to ensure that the MSP continues to make progress and covers a solid basis of work that we can take to the next full partnership workshop/dialogue day, which I believe we must schedule for sometime before mid year.

Regards

Ron Ballantine
Chair

On 13th 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*

At a meeting in January 2003, links were made between some of these issues and recommendations put forward for the MSP to address:

Issues 1 & 3 - "SECURING EMPLOYMENT"

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 place 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 - "EDUCATION & YOUNG PEOPLE"

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 - "TRANSPORT"

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:

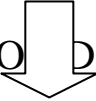
- ***ensure that the needs of Mendip are linked into the work of the Post 16 Strategic Transport Group.***
- ***Look at levels of peak time public transport in parishes in Mendip (37% parishes in Somerset have none) – what do the routes look like for Mendip?***
- ***Look at links with Mendip Community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

Checking Priorities
District-wide participation events

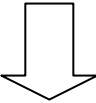
COMMUNITY PLANNING

Appendix 3

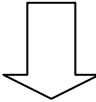
SUGGESTED PROCESS FOR DISTRICT WIDE ISSUES



All Partners Negotiate Draft
Action Plan



Consult on
Action Plan



Approve Final
Action Plan