



**LSP Board Meeting, 18 December 2012
Daventry District Council
10am – 11.55am**

Partners Present (* denotes voting member)

Lynn	Aston	Daventry & District Housing
Simon	Bovey	Daventry District Council
Ellen	Butler	Northampton College (Daventry)
Carella	Davies* (Chair)	Daventry Volunteer Centre
Darren	Dovey	Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Kay	Driver*	Daventry District Council
Cllr Elizabeth	Griffin*	Daventry District Council
Cllr Alan	Hills	Daventry District Council
Mary	Higginson	Bromford Housing
Lorraine	Mosolf	Daventry JobCentre Plus
Cllr Gina	Ogden	Northamptonshire County Council
Elaine	O'Leary	NACRE
Victoria	Pietersen	Groundwork Northamptonshire
Dave	Spencer	Northants Police

Also in attendance

Alison	Harris	Daventry District Council
Roz	Tidman	Daventry District Council (LSP Support)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Declarations

Carella Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from: Carolyn Palmer-Fagan, Dr Matthew Davies, Fiona Galbraith, Sally Halson and Phil Martin.

There were no declarations of interests.

Carella advised that, unfortunately, Phil Martin had stepped down as Vice-Chair of the LSP Board because of ill-health. Simon Bovey added that enquiries would be made amongst partners for a new appointment.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 18 September 2012

a) Amendments were made as follows:-

Page 6 – DDH update report by Lynn Aston, Dawn Aker amended to Dawn Eckersley, and Michelle amended to Michelle Rafferty. Following these amendments the minutes were then agreed as an accurate record.

b) Matters Arising

Prevention & Demand Management - Cllr Hills reported on the most recent meeting, where attendees had reviewed progress. There was very limited additional information available in general and, in particular, on Government funding. The majority of decisions on the way forward for prevention and demand management were dependent on funding.

In respect of the implementation timetable, a consultation exercise would take place in June 2013, with expected implementation in April 2014. Lynn Aston advised that the County Council's website contained information on the implementation timetable and added that existing contracts would be re-negotiated until 2014. Cllr Driver expressed concern that current service providers could lose their funding from 1 April 2013. These concerns were echoed by Carella Davies who added that it was understood even though funding would roll-over reductions in existing budgets would be between 10% and 25%.

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/social-care/plans/prevent/Pages/Prevention-strategy.aspx>

Those present expressed serious concern about the impact of funding cuts.

Cllr Hills commented that despite the removal of Locality Leaders from the proposals, there would be some areas where leadership was needed.

Cllr Ogden advised that NCC had started consultation on the County Council's budgets. There had been a very poor turnout to one of the first events, with only one member of the public present. SB suggested that the LSP respond to the County Council's budget consultation, to express partners concerns about the impact of cutbacks on the provision of services and the effect this would have on residents' lives. This was proposed by Cllr Driver and seconded by Cllr Hills. **ACTION:** Partners to forward their specific concerns to Roz Tidman to form the basis of a LSP response.

ALL/RT.

East Midlands Ambulance Service – Consultation – Cllr Ogden report on the consultation meeting she had attended in Northampton. Simon Bovey advised that EMAS had attended Daventry District Council's Strategy Group meeting to answer Members questions. Cllr Hills added that EMAS had also held a public meeting in Daventry, which had been attended by a number of District Councillors as well as members of the public. The event had been well attended, and there had been two main areas of concerns, the provision of a hub in Daventry and response times to emergencies.

The public concerns about the proposals from EMAS had been noted and Carella Davies suggested EMAS be invited to the next LSP Board meeting to hear those concerns. This was supported by Cllr Griffin. **ACTION: Roz Tidman**

3. Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service

The meeting received a presentation from Darren Dovey. A copy is **attached** for information. The Service had two areas of responsibility, Operational and Fire & Community Safety activities across the county. The Service was currently consulting on their strategic plan (Integrated Risk Management Plan) for 2013-17.

Prevention, Protection and Response were all covered by the Integrated Risk Management Plan. These were supported by three strategic targets; keeping the public safe, providing value for money and keeping firefighters safe.

Since the introduction of the Plan in 2004 there had been a reduction in the number of incidents across the county, which meant a movement of resources from response to prevention. Vulnerable households were being targeted with fire prevention measures such as installation of smoke alarms. In 2011/12 the service attended 8.84% less incidents than in 2010/11. Unfortunately funding has also been reduced by £1m along with a number of 'back office' redundancies. A similar level of funding reduction was anticipated, spread across the next three years. As part of efficiency savings a strategic alliance with Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service was being developed. This would not affect front line services, there would be no station closures, instead the alliance would focus on areas such as sharing a joint fire control function, training and the joint provision of technical services and transport.

The majority of stations that serve Daventry district ran on the retained duty system. Retained firefighters were part time and many stations were empty during the day. Retained firefighters could be attached to two stations, one in the area where they work and one where they live, as they need to be within 5 minutes of a station. A number of stations voluntarily acted as community first responders on behalf of East Midlands Ambulance Service. Firefighters were trained in emergency care and could be called to an incident if they were closer than an ambulance, therefore enhancing the level of medical response across the county. 65 first responder calls had been received so far this financial year. Discussions were also underway with EMAS about using Fire Service buildings as hubs.

The use of vehicles was also being reviewed eg. smaller vehicles with reduced crew to small fires.

The consultation closes on 4 January 2014.

The Partnership welcomed the retention of front line services, and the joint working with the Ambulance Service.

In response to a question from Cllr Hills, Dave Dovey advised that youth engagement work was continuing in schools and with the Princes Trust, in partnership with Tresham College. Two schemes, Arc and Yes, which ran over a 6-10 week period, could also be commissioned from the Fire Service.

Cllr Driver queried response times, particularly to areas on the edge of the county. Darren Dovey advised that a mutual aid agreement with neighbouring authorities meant that eg. a Leicestershire force could deal with fires on the edge of Northamptonshire and vice versa.

Simon Bovey suggested the LSP formally respond to the consultation. He added that response times were a fundamental issue in rural areas and retained fire stations were important to achieve those response times, so it was good to hear that these would not be closed. **ACTION:** Partners to forward their responses to Roz Tidman to enable an LSP Board response to be prepared. **ALL/RT**

4. Welfare Reforms

Alison Harris advised on the changes to Housing and Council Tax benefits due to come into force from 1 April 2013.

From April 2013 for the next five years there would be a number of changes in the administration of Housing and Council Tax benefits. Local authorities now had to

design their own scheme, but with reduced Central Government funding. Daventry had an opportunity to partly fund this shortfall via changes to empty property discounts but there would still be an impact on benefit claimants.

Information on the changes would be provided on the District Council website and would also be included in annual bills in March 2013.

Approximately 550 residents would be affected by reductions to Council Tax exemptions on empty properties or second homes.

The main change was in Council Tax benefit, which would be localised from April 2013. Funding would be cut by 12%, though pensioners (anyone over 61) would not be affected and would continue to receive the same level of benefit. The Government's intention was to reduce the benefit budget and encourage people to work. The Council had looked at a number of options and chosen the one with the least amount of hardship for residents. It had also taken advantage of a transitional grant available from the Government for the first year of the scheme. As an example someone of working age, in receipt of Council Tax benefit, with a Council Tax bill of £100/month would have to pay £8.50 of that bill. This worked out at approximately £2/week. Over 2,000 claimants would be affected between 10p-£2/week. Some claimants had never paid Council Tax before and would now be expected to make a contribution.

In addition changes were also being made to Housing Benefit. Claimants would gradually move over to Universal Credit by 2017. Again pensioners had been protected from the change but would eventually receive their Housing Benefit as part of their Pension Credit payment.

For working age people Housing Benefit will be changing from 1 April 2013. The benefit will be capped and the cap will be administered by DDC. There will be under-occupation rules for social housing tenants whereby anyone with a spare bedroom would no longer receive full Housing Benefit. A tenant with one spare bedroom would have their Housing Benefit rent calculation reduced by 14%, two or more spare bedrooms would see a reduction of 25%. As an example, 10% of Daventry & District Housing tenants would be affected by this change. Housing associations were working to review the situation and move tenants, where possible, into appropriately sized homes. The Council had also advised claimants. This was a difficult situation with no easy solution.

A minor change would also be made to Benefit Fraud with the creation of a national fraud team in the next two years.

In less than a year working age people, in work but claiming benefit, would migrate to Universal Credit. This would be administered by the Department of Work & Pensions on line or down the phone, but not face to face. The District Council would provide face to face advice. Universal Credit would be paid monthly, direct to the claimant's bank account. It would then be the responsibility of the claimant to pay their rent, bills etc.

Lorraine Mosolf commented that people were often reluctant to take on the responsibility for paying their rent; it was difficult to get people back into work as they were concerned about earning sufficient to cover their rent. The move of JobCentre Plus into the District Council offices may help to provide support for these people. Lynn Aston added that DDH were funding an additional part-time Welfare Advisor post at CAB to provide face to face support for people. She added that there was a need to ensure that everyone was aware of the changes and the lack of information was a concern.

Carella Davies suggested this item be included as a standing item on the Board agenda to ensure partners are kept up to date. **ACTION: Roz Tidman to include Welfare Reform as a standing item.**

Cllr Hills asked if there was a benefits appeal process. Alison Harris confirmed there was currently an appeal process, but this would move to a Valuation Tribunal. The Council would reconsider a claim, but if this could not be resolved then it would have to be heard by the Tribunal.

Cllr Driver suggested that transferring holiday lets in villages to permanent housing would go towards resolving the situation. Alison Harris advised that the Council Tax discount for second homes would be removed in April but the Council had not currently been given the opportunity to deal with holiday lets, however this may change.

Simon Bovey commented that increasing the housing stock with smaller properties would help. Dave Spencer commented that bringing empty properties into use would also help. Simon Bovey added that the Council did have a policy in place for this, which had been successful in respect of a limited number of properties in the district in conjunction with the home owner. Cllr Griffin asked that any long-term empty properties should be reported to DDC. Cllr Ogden suggested that developers should be encouraged to build more bungalows for the private sector, to encourage people to downsize.

5. Strategic Health Issues

Cllr Driver reported. The Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board had met the previous week, receiving presentations from Fiona Grant (NCC-Public Health) and Sarah Hyatt (Nene Commissioning – Daventry North Locality Manager).

Board priorities were agreed, which included the need to meet local needs. Four projects were being developed which would be submitted to the County Board for support; however this was all dependent on the budget.

6. Partners' Contribution to the LSP

Simon Bovey reported. Since the last meeting partners had been contacted. Offers had been received from the Police (£1,000) and Northampton College (£500). Daventry & District Housing had offered to assist with administration however it was incumbent on the Council to continue to administer the Partnership. Bromford Housing had given in-principle support.

The LSP was a strong brand in Government circles and was a good way to access funds, as well as a networking opportunity.

Darren Dovey advised that Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service would contribute £1,000 towards the LSP.

7. Review of LSP and Sustainable Community Strategy

Roz Tidman presented the results from the consultation exercise on the LSP.

Business Theme Group – The Group had struggled to find its way in the past. At their last meeting it had been recommended the Group met once a year with meetings being more business focussed and front facing. An annual survey would be carried out to set the direction for the Group. However, Simon Bovey considered this theme was the most important and needed revamp and frequent activity.

Environment Theme Group – The Group had not met often during the year, though a number of projects were underway. It had been recommended that the Group meets once a year, whilst carrying out a number of task and finish projects.

Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board – Early days for the Board. Meetings would remain quarterly but there may be a need to review the structure of the Board in the future.

LSP Board – The strategic remit of the Board would remain, with meetings on a quarterly basis.

It was noted that, in Northamptonshire, only three LSPs were still operating, while across the country LSPs were working really well in many areas.

Sustainable Community Strategy – 82% of responders considered that an overarching strategic partnership was still needed for the District. Currently there was still a statutory duty for a Strategy to be prepared and partners recognised the importance of doing this anyway even if the statutory requirement was not there. It was important to keep the Strategy up to date. Work on the refresh would start shortly, and a timetable would be presented to the next meeting. **ACTION: Roz Tidman.**

Dave Spencer advised that a number of the Community Safety Partnership priorities would link to the LSP Environment Theme such as fly tipping and litter.

Cllr Driver commented on the low level of activity from the Business Theme Group and agreed that there was a need to get good people on board. Dave Spencer offered to approach Maxine Aldrey from the Federation of Small Business.

ACTION: Dave Spencer

8. LSP Project Update

- a) Wise and Well – Final event held on 17 October at Braunston was very popular. A 'slips, trips and falls' campaign was being developed with partners. Four events were planned, one in Daventry and three in rural areas during 2013.
- b) Cycle Promotion – Planning to hold a number of events during the spring/summer hopefully including family cycling sessions.
- c) Canal Improvement – Once a month volunteer days will continue until the end of March. It was hoped the Canal and River Trust would take this over.
- d) Wildflower Project – Looking to develop toolkit/database for people to download. Work with parish councils and other community groups was also being explored.
- e) Bulk Oil Purchase Scheme – 200 members had joined the Northants ACRE scheme, and the number was increasing. The membership fee of £20 could bring savings of between £25-£35 per 500 litres. Enquiries also being made with British Gas about their green energy deal. Roz Tidman advised that she had received information on a dual fuel electricity scheme, which operated like the Bulk Oil Purchase Scheme. This was being investigated by DDC officers.

9. Any Other Business and Information Exchange

Cllr Hills reported that, following the success of this year's inaugural Daventry triathlon it would take place again in 2013.

Approximately 160-170 people had attended the recent Daventry Sports Awards. The overall winner then went forward to the Northamptonshire Sports Awards. This

was the 10th year the awards ceremony had been held.

New Street toilets had been awarded a 2012 Loo of the Year award, and Attendant of the Year award.

Cllr Ogden reported on a very successful Daventry Over Fifties Forum Tea Dance, with over 100 people attending.

Lynn Aston reported on the success of Daventry & District Housing's Star Awards, which took place in the iCon. This was the first year the awards had been held and consideration was being given to holding this again in 2013.

Roz Tidman reported on the proposals for play equipment in New Street Recreation Ground. A contribution of £60,000 from the SITA Trust had been obtained for a new skate park. New play equipment would also be provided at Wimbourne Place.

Cllr Driver reported on the well attended consultation events on the Council's Settlements and Countryside Local Plan for the District. There had been lots of feedback and very clear suggestions from some villages.

Simon Bovey advised that the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee would be asked on 19 December to submit the Joint Core Strategy to Government for examination.

10. Date of Next Meeting

19 March 2013, 10am, Committee Room 1, Daventry District Council