

# ***Information/Discussion Paper***

## **Economy and Business Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

### **Cheltenham Strategic Partnership**

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

#### **1. Why has this come to scrutiny?**

- 1.1** When Cheltenham's new sustainable community strategy came to full council for approval on 8 October 2007, an amendment was added that a bi-annual report be sent to all Council members and that the report be used by the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review the progress and outcomes of the strategy.
- 1.2** The Scrutiny Champions group agreed on 18 March 2008 that there should be scrutiny of Cheltenham Strategic Partnership (the body that is responsible for the strategy) by Economy and Business Improvement O&S and this should focus on how well the CSP is delivering on its plans and strategies and its overall performance and efficiency. A report was presented to EBI on 21 July 2008. Since then, an annual report was made to all stakeholders at an event on 3 November 2008.
- 1.3** A paper was presented to EBI on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009 but unfortunately the Chair, nor Vice-Chair of the CSP were able to be present. Since then, the Chair and Vice-Chair of EBI have met and agreed a set of questions which the Committee would like more information on:
1. Who determines which Organisations are invited to have representation on the CSP and its committees?
  2. Can we have sight of your constitution/Business Plan
  3. What powers are vested in the CSP?
  4. What has the CSP achieve since its formation?
  5. Does the funding provided by the council attract matched funding from other sources and how do you go about getting this?
  6. How does it monitor performance of its thematic partnerships?
  7. How do you view your relationship with the County Strategic Partnership?
  8. How do you ensure activity of the CSP supports the LAA targets?
  9. What is the CSP doing to address the issues identified in the recent peer review?
- 1.4** This paper provides some of the background information which can be discussed by the committee at the meeting.

#### **2. Who sits on the CSP?**

- 2.1** The CSP agreed a new structure in 2007 to ensure that it was in the best possible position to deliver the new community strategy and to add value to the existing work of organisations.

**2.2** A CSP management group was established which comprises core partners (who have a statutory duty to co-operate) and representatives of the six thematic partnerships. This meets every two months to hold the six partnerships to account, ensure effective performance management of the action plan and ensure resources are in place to enable successful delivery of the community strategy. The core partners are:

- Gloucestershire County Council (Cllr. Duncan Smith, Margaret Sheather);
- Cheltenham Borough Council (Cllr. Steve Jordan and Andrew North);
- Gloucestershire Police (Supt. Tony Godwin);
- NHS Gloucestershire (Jill Crook);
- Learning and Skills Council (under review); and
- Cheltenham Voluntary and Community Action (Angela Gilbert).

**2.3** The following are the delivery partnerships for the community strategy which directly link to the ambitions of this community strategy:

- Stronger Communities Partnership (Andy Hayes / Hazel Lonsdale);
- Children and Young People's Partnership (Charles Welsh);
- Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership (Insp Richard Boyles);
- Low Carbon Partnership (Chris Hickey);
- Health and Wellbeing Partnership (Rachel Wigglesworth); and
- Strategic Economic Partnership (Martin Quantock)

### **3. Constitution / Powers**

**3.1** The terms of reference are attached as **appendix A**.

**3.2** There are no formal powers vested in Cheltenham Strategic Partnership. Government guidance says that Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) provide the forum for collectively reviewing and steering public resources, through identifying priorities in Sustainable Community Strategies. But they are not the ultimate decision-makers on such plans. All target-setting, and consequent financial, commissioning, or contractual commitments proposed by LSPs, must be formalised through the relevant local authority, or through one of the other LSP partners (for example, if policing, or health resources are involved).

**3.3** LSPs are not statutory bodies and there is no legal relationship between either local authorities and 'the LSP' or their partners and 'the LSP'. LSPs are instead a collection of organisations and representatives coming together voluntarily to work in partnership.

**3.4** However, Cheltenham Borough Council does have a statutory duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy and this is set out in Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 now amended by section 7 of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007.

### **4. What has been achieved?**

#### **4.1 Governance and accountability**

**4.1.1** Election of Chair and Vice-Chair - Jill Crook, Director of Clinical Development at Gloucestershire PCT was elected as Chair of the CSP at its meeting on 28 February 2008. This followed the matter being raised at Cheltenham Borough Council's

Cabinet on 15 January. The Cabinet supported the leader's recommendation that Jill become the new chair. In addition, Angela Gilbert, Manager at Cheltenham Voluntary and Community Action (VCA) was elected vice-chair at the June CSP meeting.

- 4.1.2** Risk management – the CSP has prioritised the development of a risk management process as an integral part of the overall partnership process and has agreed a risk management policy and risk register.
- 4.1.3** Commissioning framework – the CSP agreed a commissioning framework to enable it to be more strategic in its approach to allocating funding through specifying the priorities to be addressed. For more information on the financial context see section 5 below.
- 4.1.4** Election of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) reps - The CSP has agreed that each thematic partnership will have an elected representative from Cheltenham voluntary sector forum who are there to represent the views of the VCS to the partnership/meeting they attend. Cheltenham VCA has managed this process and the forum has elected representatives to all the partnerships with the exception of the Stronger Communities Partnership which already has good VCS representation.
- 4.1.5** Use of the CSP website – The CSP is pleased with the development of the website; [www.cheltenhampartnership.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhampartnership.org.uk) which now includes meeting details for all the thematic partnerships and the CSP itself. We have also added a governance section which includes key partnership documents.
- 4.1.6** Joint core strategy – The CSP has endorsed the principle of the joint core strategy and worked with the Tewkesbury and Gloucester local strategic partnerships to develop a joint vision for the target area.

## **4.2 Work to deliver the sustainable community strategy**

- 4.2.1** While the thematic partnerships are primarily concerned with progressing the nine community ambitions, the CSP has concerned itself with progressing the three principles:
- The principle of community engagement and participation;
  - The principle of tackling inequalities and promoting cohesion; and
  - The principle of tackling climate change.

- 4.3** For more information, see the attached action plan progress report – **appendix B**

## **5. Financial context for the CSP and the six thematic partnerships 2009-10**

- 5.1** The table below sets out current situation as at November 2009. Around £180,000 has been processed through the CSP this year; £76,700 of this has come from CBC, with £103,379 coming from other partners.

<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Funding allocated in 09-10</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
CSP	£15,000 CBC revenue	<p>£5,000 allocated to Cheltenham West End Partnership to facilitate a St. Pauls Stakeholder Group.</p> <p>£5,000 allocated to Low Carbon Partnership to enable them to continue to deliver carbon reduction initiatives.</p> <p>£5,000 allocated to Stronger Communities Partnership to enable them to build the skills of local partners to coordinate neighbourhood management activities.</p>
Low Carbon	£5,200 CBC revenue plus proposed £9k carried forward from 2008-09	Proposed that funding is used to employ worker to work with VCS.
Economic	£15,000 from LABGI	To be agreed at the partnership meeting on 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2010
Health and wellbeing	£25,000 from NHS – focus will be on reducing health inequalities	Funding has been allocated through small grants round.
Children and young people	<p>£20,350 youth offer from GCC:</p> <p>£30,500 CBC one-off funding to tackle child poverty allocated to three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hesters Way</li> <li>• Oakley</li> <li>• St. Pauls</li> </ul>	<p>Funding allocated through small grants round closing date 12 June</p> <p>£5000 allocated to St. Pauls</p> <p>£3,000 allocated to the five extended service areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Cheltenham</li> <li>• Hesters Way</li> <li>• Whaddon</li> <li>• Leckhampton/Charlton Kings</li> <li>• Warden Hill/Benhall</li> </ul>
Community safety and Stronger communities	<p>£25,000 ASB funding</p> <p>£30,029 revenue funding</p> <p>Priorities are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce crime and the fear of crime</li> <li>• Build stronger communities</li> <li>• reduce domestic abuse</li> <li>• reduce the harm of illegal drugs and alcohol</li> </ul>	Funding allocated through small grants round.
VCS reps	<p>£2,000 – CBC revenue</p> <p>£1,000 – Police</p> <p>£2,000 - NHS</p>	

## 6. Monitoring Performance

- 6.1** The CSP holds the six partnerships to account and ensures that they are all responding to the framework set out in the sustainable community strategy. At each CSP meeting, the six partnership chairs report on progress using a standard template for exception reporting – **see example in appendix C**

## **7. Views on relationships with the county strategic partnerships**

- 7.1** To be discussed at the meeting. Representation is as follows:

<b>County Partnership</b>	<b>CSP member</b>	<b>representing</b>
Gloucestershire Strategic Partnership	Jill Crook	CSP
Accountable Bodies Group	Steve Jordan	CBC
Community Strategy Executive Board	Andrew North	CBC
Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership	Andrew North Plus Cordell Ray	District councils VCS
Gloucestershire Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership	Andrew North Plus Rosi Shepherd	Urban districts Community Safety Partnership
Gloucestershire Health and Community Well-being Partnership	Margaret Sheather Plus Craig Mortiboys	GCC HWB partnership
Gloucestershire First	Steve Jordan	CBC
Gloucestershire Environment Partnership	Chris Hickey	CSP
Gloucestershire Conference Support Group	Richard Gibson	CBC / CSP

## **8. Supporting LAA targets**

The LAA indicators and targets that have been adopted by the relevant thematic partnership are shown in appendix D.

## **9. Responding to the IDeA Peer Review**

- 9.1** In April 2009, the council invited the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government to carry out a peer review to assess progress we have made, future prospects and capacity for further improvement and support for improvement planning. We asked the IDeA to provide a particular focus on partnership working in recognition of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment framework.

- 9.2** They concluded the following in regard to the CSP:

“The restructure of the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership (CSP) is considered to be well-thought through and clear, particularly in terms of the linkages between groups. There is also a sense that the right organisations are involved in each of the partnerships, which makes it easier to develop appropriate and co-ordinated action to deliver the priorities. This clearer structure has meant that there is more action, delivery and focus in each of the thematic groups. The council has devoted resources to supporting the partnerships, in the form of three partnership officers who have responsibility for two thematic groups each, which has provided much needed capacity and support to help maintain

the work of the groups.

However, there is a strong view that the role and responsibility of the Executive Board is not clear. There is a sense that it is not operating strategically enough. Some key partners are no longer attending regularly and there is a perception that the Board is council-dominated. Strategic thinking and direction appears to take place within the thematic partnerships themselves, rather than be co-ordinated by the Executive Board. Given the move to Comprehensive Area Assessment it is vital that the council begins to address some of these issues.

The partnership has a good understanding of need and key challenges, and this focuses mainly on tackling the economic inequality and multiple disadvantage experienced in the more deprived areas of the borough. There are some excellent examples of how the work of the partnerships has led to better outcomes within communities. However, Partnership performance management systems could be improved by ensuring they focus more on outcomes than process, and that a robust, but proportionate performance management process is in place.”

**9.3** CSP discussed the findings at its meeting on 20 August. The discussion focused on three areas where the CSP can exert more strategic influence:

- Through developing more place-based commissioning
- Being more influential in county/ sub-regional initiatives
- Being more influential in place-shaping initiatives such as civic pride / joint core strategy.

**9.4** The agreements coming out of that meeting were as follows;

- The CSP was in general agreement that place-based commissioning was something it should lead on locally;
- The CSP should be clear about what the local issues are based on assessment of local needs
- The CSP should identify and champion a handful of priority issues / geographic areas including LAA targets that are under-performing
- The CSP should help understand what partners are currently doing to resolve the issue
- The CSP should promote more effective use of partner resources.
- The CSP should advocate for a greater role of the VCS in place-based commissioning.

**9.5** The discussion continued at the October meeting when the CSP reviewed a needs assessment paper and each thematic partnership was asked to review the emerging outcomes and measures and identify where sufficient activity is already taking place;

- Then to identify where the gaps are;
- What the responses should be to meet these gaps;
- Where they feel the CSP can add value; and
- What the tangible cross-cutting projects might look like.

**9.6** This work is underway and will be reported to the CSP meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**ENDS**

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**Background Papers****Contact Officer**

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**Accountability**

Leader of the Council

**Scrutiny Function**

EBI O&S