

IN ATTENDANCE

ESSP Members present:

Cllr. Kim Forward
Warren Franklin
Cllr. Keith Glazier (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. Ian Jenkins
Steve Manwaring (Chair)
Graham Peters
Keith Stevens
Michael Turner
Gary Walsh

Hastings Borough Council
Sussex Police
East Sussex County Council
Rother District Council
SpeakUp Representative
Team East Sussex
Sussex Association of Local Councils
Environment Agency
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Also in attendance (official observers):

Andy Arnold
Shabana Bayjou
Gill Cameron-Waller
Sarah Feather
Ian Fitzpatrick (speaker)
Elizabeth Funge (speaker)
Jane Hartnell
Beth McGhee
Andrew Palmer (speaker)
Becky Shaw
Alison Spring

East Sussex County Council
Hastings Borough Council
Wealden District Council
East Sussex County Council
Eastbourne Borough Council
East Sussex County Council
Hastings Borough Council
East Sussex County Council
Hastings Borough Council
East Sussex County Council
Rother District Council

Apologies for absence:

Katy Bourne
Cllr. Chris Dowling
Wayne Edmunds
Jeremy Leggett
Cllr. Carl Maynard
Kamini Sanghani

Andrea Saunders
Ashley Scarff
Cllr. Andy Smith
Cllr. Bob Standley
Cllr. David Tutt

Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner
East Sussex County Council
JobCentre Plus
Action in Rural Sussex
Rother District Council
Kent, Surrey & Sussex Community
Rehabilitation Company (Seetec)
National Probation Service
High Weald, Lewes & Havens CCG
Lewes District Council
Wealden District Council
Eastbourne Borough Council

NOTES

1) Welcome and Apologies

Steve Manwaring welcomed ESSP members, delegates, observers, guests and speakers to the meeting. Apologies were given and those attending on behalf of others were identified. Steve provided a short introduction to the history of State Hall and the State area.

2) Urgent items of business

None.

3) Notes of the meeting held on 2 March 2016 and Matters Arising

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and actions confirmed as completed.

4) Source Skate Park Case Study

Steve introduced a short video of the Hastings Source Skate Park and provided some information on the building and opening of the Park. The skate park is run by local company SourceBMX, now one of the UK's largest BMX retailers, and was part funded by the company and grants from Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and the Foreshore Trust. Steve and other Members commended the project for regenerating a particularly dilapidated part of Hastings that had previously proven difficult to restore and manage.

5) Update on Housing – Ian Fitzpatrick and Andrew Palmer

Steve introduced Ian Fitzpatrick, Eastbourne Borough Council, and Andrew Palmer, Hastings Borough Council, to present a paper on national housing policy developments.

Andrew provided a brief introduction to the paper, and outlined the current direction of travel in national housing policy and the effect this will have on housing across East Sussex. There are concerns that a greater emphasis on home ownership, while beneficial for many in Britain, will decrease the availability of housing for the most financially disadvantaged groups. It is also possible that the shortage of supply in social sector housing will increase demand in the private rented sector thereby pushing up rents and decreasing availability. There may be a particular exacerbation of low housing availability in rural areas where affordable homes are already in short supply. Andrew highlighted the possible extension of a responsibility on local authorities to prevent homelessness, which it is believed the government may be considering, following the introduction of similar requirements in Wales and Scotland.

Ian outlined the known details of the new Government levy on high value property proposed in the Housing and Planning Bill, and the potential cost for Eastbourne Borough Council. The sale of houses to cover levy costs will have an impact on housing revenue accounts and decrease opportunities for development, so authorities will need to consider providing housing in a new format.

A discussion followed in which attendees echoed concerns regarding the implications of the reduction in local authority housing stock on young and vulnerable people. It was agreed that to meet the challenge, authorities would need to work in more commercial and entrepreneurial ways to develop housing. Concerns around the migration of tenants, placed by London Boroughs and moving to take advantage of cheaper property/rental prices, from London to the South Coast were raised. It was felt that although communities have been largely resilient to previous housing policy changes the Housing and Policy Bill marks a fundamental change in the shape of housing that will have wide ranging effects on local communities, particularly with the full roll out of Universal Credit across the County.

6) 3SC Devolution Update – Becky Shaw

Steve introduced Becky Shaw, East Sussex County Council, to provide an update on progress in the Three Southern Counties (3SC) Devolution Proposal since the ESSP last met in March.

Becky outlined that a Leaders' Seminar had taken place in April which further strengthened the 3SC partnership. The key messages from the day were that:

- although there is healthy scepticism, partners are pragmatic and recognise that the deal is worthwhile - if partners are not happy with the final deal proposed by Government, they can choose not to sign;
- success will be delivering real tangible benefits for residents and businesses;
- 3SC need to be bold and demand what is needed to deliver improvements and benefits; and
- strong and fair governance are required but not at the expense of making progress.

A meeting with the Treasury also took place in April, in which it was established that Government are very interested in the 3SC proposal, particularly as the 3SC area is a net contributor to the national exchequer. It was outlined that work on devolution deals across the country is now likely to slow in pace in the run up to the EU referendum in June.

Alongside developments in the 3SC proposal, conversations continue within borough and district councils in East and West Sussex and Surrey regarding opportunities for double devolution. Discussions are also underway with wider partners to consider the establishment of a Sub-national Transport Board in the South East.

To keep up to date on developments in the 3SC devolution proposal, members can sign up to the newsletter at 3SCdevolution@eastsussex.gov.uk.

7) Update on the Environment Strategy ESSP – Michael Turner

Steve introduced Michael Turner, Environment Agency, to provide an annual update on progress made during 2015/16 to deliver the ESSP Environment Strategy.

Michael summarised the report and highlighted key developments within 2015/16, including that two thirds of the strategy actions have been completed, one third are ongoing and one action hasn't been achieved because the original action has not proven to be practicable to achieve. The strategy involves working with an extensive range of partners and in some cases the speed of delivery on actions has increased due to statutory obligations on partners. On the other hand, where statutory obligations do not exist delivery has been slower and work with some partners has ended for 2016/17 because the progress made does not justify investment.

In autumn 2016 progress in the Environment Strategy will be mapped against key indicators, including how the environment is impacting health, the economy and lifestyles across East Sussex. It was agreed that Michael would provide an update to the ESSP following this process.

Members endorsed the Environment Strategy Action Plan for 2016/17.

8) Area review of Education – Elizabeth Funge (ESCC) and Graham Peters (SELEP)

Steve introduced Elizabeth Funge, East Sussex County Council, and Graham Peters, Team East Sussex, to provide an update on the post-16 area review of education currently taking place across East Sussex.

Elizabeth and Graham explained that the review is part of a national programme, lead jointly by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department of Education. The review has considered the local economic and educational needs of East Sussex with a view to having fewer, larger and more resilient and efficient further education (FE) providers with

greater focus/specialisms. The review started in October and the final recommendations, which are currently being considered by governing bodies of FE organisations in East Sussex, are set to be published in May. As a result of the review, FE providers are considering a range of options to provide the high quality education that delivers the skills required by the local economy. The review has only considered FE and sixth form colleges; sixth forms were not included.

A discussion followed in which members asked whether the review has addressed FE provision for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Elizabeth explained that although the review hadn't considered this in particular, FE SEND provision will be considered as part of a broader review of education. The representation of parents and employers in the review was discussed, and members welcomed improvement and expansion of local careers and employability education/advice, which is being pursued as part of the review and the 3SC devolution proposal. In particular, concerns were raised around the ability for FE providers and employers to provide meaningful work experience for students in an increasingly digitised job market.

ACTION: Graham to provide an update on the post-16 area review report, when published, to the ESSP.

9) Any Other Business - All

Steve thanked members for sending in their top three assembly topics - mental health, volunteering, and community resilience were the most popular choices.

A discussion of the three proposed themes followed and members' agreed that mental health and wellbeing is a very important topic and that the partnership could make a real statement by addressing it. It was agreed that it would be important to have mental health specialists involved in the day to help the numerous sectors involved in the partnership consider how they can improve mental health and wellbeing in East Sussex. Suggestions for content included, first-hand experiences, examples of best practice and existing projects, and information on how to support volunteers and employees.

ACTION: Steve to work with colleagues to begin framing the Assembly theme and engage with sectors to draft a mixed and varied programme.

10) Future meetings:

- Tuesday 13 September 2016, 9.00-12.30pm, East Sussex Assembly, Venue TBC
- Monday 5 December 2016, 10-12.00pm, Venue TBC

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS –	
Item	Action
8	Graham to provide an update on the post-16 area review report, when published, to the ESSP.
9	Steve to work with colleagues to begin framing the Assembly theme and engage with sectors to draft a mixed and varied programme.

A copy of all the presentations from the meeting can be found on the ESSP website (<http://www.essp.org.uk/Meeting-papers-and-reports>).