

HASTINGS AND ST LEONARDS LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

28 APRIL 2014

Present:

Statutory Sector:

Catherine Ashton – Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group
Cllr Nick Bennett – East Sussex County Council
Cllr Jeremy Birch – Hastings Borough Council
Alan Blackwell – Sea Change Sussex
Bruce Campbell – Job Centre Plus
Nigel Cusack - ESFRS
Paul Frost – University of Brighton in Hastings
Simon Hubbard – Hastings Borough Council
Jenny Jones – Hastings Academy
Paul Phelps – Sussex Police
Mark Philips – Ark (Academy Sponsor)
Mike Thompson – Amicus Horizon

Community & Voluntary Sector:

Lawrence Bell – Hastings Community Network
Marie Casey - Hastings Community Network
Carole Dixon – Education Futures Trust
Julie Eason - Hastings Community Network
Jackie Everard - Hastings Community Network
Steve Manwaring - Hastings Community Network
Mark Turczanski - Hastings Community Network
Catherine Watson - Hastings Community Network

Business Sector:

Clive Galbraith – Chamber of Commerce (Chair)
Drew Knight – General Dynamics

In Attendance:

April Carrol – Sussex Coast College Hastings
Jane Hartnell - Hastings Borough Council
Jenny Ling - Hastings Borough Council
Jenne McTaggart – St Leonards Town Team
Erica Smith - St Leonards Town Team

Apologies for absence were notes for Councillor Cooke and Chief Supt Neil Honor

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made.

Apologies were noted.

2. HANDOVER OF CHAIR

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The biennial handover of the LSP Chairperson took place. Marie Casey, representing the community, will chair the Board. Clive Galbraith was thanked for all his hard work over the last two years and a presentation was made.

3. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT ITEMS

None

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

(a) RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2014 be approved as a true record with the following matters arising.

(4 – Education Update) Simon reported that a meeting to discuss barriers to recruitment has recently been convened with relevant partners. A number of actions were agreed including research into the suitability of privately rented housing stock and developing a ‘Hastings story’ to help market the town externally to suitably qualified professionals. Jenny Jones added that closer working with local primary schools will be necessary as families will be attracted by good quality local provision. A representative for local primaries on the LSP Board was suggested. **Action: Carole Dixon**

(6 – Housing and Homelessness) Julie Eason reported that SEAP and HARC have been working together to provide advice and assistance for people going through the work capability assessment and to support them to ensure that ATOS or future contractors of this service make the correct decisions during these assessments.

6. UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON IN HASTINGS

Paul Frost, the interim director of the University, gave an update on the future plans for the organisation.

Expansion from the current number of 800 students to 2000 by 2020 is hoped to be achieved by focussing on 3 academic areas: journalism, media and digital studies; environmental, marine and coastal studies and training for professions such as teaching, social work and nursing.

A considerable amount of capital is being invested and close working with partners is also taking place to develop halls of residence to ensure that guaranteed places can be offered to all first year students. The development of a digital media centre, a student union and sporting facilities is also planned.

It is hoped that the new prospectus will attract students from outside of the area who will stay living within the town after qualifying and that staff will also be drawn to live here.

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To date, business courses have not been popular and closer working with the business community was discussed at the recent Executive Delivery Group meeting to examine and address possible reasons for the low uptake. Clive Galbraith noted that advanced engineering and manufacturing training is still not provided and 'growing our own' future employees in this field will be required. Tourism and cultural activities were also identified as key areas of development for the town.

Paul informed the group that the curriculum should not be constrained by the undergraduate programme in Hastings but could include short courses or link with the curriculum in Brighton.

The Board welcomed the achievements the University has made through partnership working. Steve Manwaring highlighted the Greenway project which would benefit from further partnership working including the University.

7. SUSSEX COAST COLLEGE HASTINGS (SCCH)

April Carrol, Deputy Principal for SCCH gave a presentation on their progress since the poor Ofsted report in November 2011 which gave an overall score of 4, inadequate.

A reassessment was carried out in January 2013 and showed a marked improvement in many areas. The latest inspection in January 2014 has elevated the overall score to 2, good, with Leadership and Management rated as outstanding.

Various members of the Board offered congratulations to the College on their remarkable results. Ensuring that we do not let complacency set in but continue to work together to achieve even better results is now necessary. Capturing good practice and rolling it out to other educational establishments will also help spread the positive effects.

April reassured the Board that the College are developing strong links with other learning bodies both locally and nationally and constantly reviewing and revising targets to achieve excellence.

8. FOCUS ON ST LEONARDS

This Board received three presentations focussing on St Leonards.

The first by Ch. Insp. Paul Phelps outlined the 'reduce the strength' campaign. This initiative aims to reduce the supply of high strength beers, lagers and ciders in the local area; improve enforcement and offer help to those dependant on these products.

Andrew Palmer then gave an update on the Coastal Space project which aims to address long term problems associated with the private rented sector, support community involvement and the local economy. Work to improve a number of properties in the 7 street renewal area has been undertaken and is combined with an enforcement programme of inspections to raise standards.

Erica Smith and Jeanne McTaggart then updated the Board on the work of the St Leonards Town Team. This body is a mixture of local business people, residents and other partners whose aim is to make high streets more accessible, attractive and safe.

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A 10 point plan for 3 distinctive areas of the town has been developed to help achieve this.

The Community Network reported that rumours had been circulating about the possible closure or change of use of Heron House. The Job Centre currently operates from this site and is an essential service for the local community and if necessary an alternative venue must be found.

Bruce Campbell said that Job Centre Plus are aware of the situation and considering their options but have not yet been officially informed of any changes of tenancy from the Ocean House landlords. He will keep the Board updated as and when information becomes available.

Clive Galbraith thanked Erica and Jeanne for their presentation on the Town Team and suggested that the Chamber of Commerce also have the opportunity to hear it. He will liaise with them to make arrangements.

The Board welcomed the positive steps being taken in St Leonards and recognised progress that has been made to date. The consensus was that families, education, community leadership and access to jobs are key themes which will help to continue the upward trend. Rolling out good practice to other areas, in particular Castle ward, could help to spread the success.

9. FOR INFORMATION ITEMS

Reports on the following items were submitted for information only:

- Seawater Bathing Quality
- Equality Charter Report
- Regeneration update
- Family Keywork Update
- LSP Executive Delivery Group Notes – 1st April 2014
- East Sussex Strategic Partnership Notes – 21st January 2014

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 21st July 2014

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 12.40 pm)