

Hastings and St Leonards Local Strategic Partnership

Minutes 12 October 2020

Present:

Carole Dixon (Chair)	Hastings Community Network
Bruce Campbell	Department for Work and Pensions
Catherine Orbach	Culture Shift / Hastings Community Network
Chantal Lass	Hastings Borough Council
Chris Broome	Sea Change Sussex
Clive Galbraith	Let's Do Business Group / Chamber of Commerce
Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group
Helen Kay	Hastings Opportunity Area
Jane Hartnell	Hastings Borough Council
Insp Jonny Hartley	Sussex Police
Marc Turczanski	Hastings Community Network
Pranesh Datta	Hastings Borough Council
Richard Watson	NHS East Sussex CCG
Sean Dennis	Let's Do Business Group / Chamber of Commerce
Simon Hubbard	Hastings Voluntary Action
Simon Neill	East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Steve Manwaring	Hastings Community Network
Teresa Andrews	HARC
Tracy Dighton	Hastings Community Network / CA1066
Vanessa Biddiss	Optivo Housing Association
Victoria Conheady	Hastings Borough Council

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Kim Forward	Hastings Borough Council
Cllr Martin Clarke	East Sussex County Council
Becky Shaw	East Sussex County Council
Claire Lee	East Sussex County Council
Mark Horan	Hastings Borough Council
CI Sarah Godley	Sussex Police

<p>1</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan – East Sussex College Group is a recipient of Town Deal accelerated funds and has submitted a bid to the Town Fund • Carole – Education Futures Trust has submitted a bid to the Town Fund • Chris – Sea Change Sussex has submitted bids to the Town Fund • Jane – HBC is a recipient of Town Deal accelerated funds • Steve – a consortium of voluntary organisations has submitted a bid to the Town Fund; also, as a trustee of Education Futures Trust and a member of the Sea Change Sussex Board 	
<p>2</p>	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>No matters arising.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p><u>DRAFT HASTINGS AND ST LEONARDS LSP RECOVERY STATEMENT OF INTENT - BUILDING BACK BETTER</u></p> <p>Victoria Conheady presented the proposed statement of intent for the LSP Board. As LSP members will recall, at the last meeting it was agreed that we would focus on 3 strands for recovery: 1) the overarching response, 2) maintenance of response and 3) recovery. Input is required from LSP partners on the draft statement, on the key areas of focus for the LSP, i.e. the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and tourism and culture, which have been impacted the most, and others that may be impacted in the future. Other key sectors that need to be supported are insecure housing and homelessness, the wider economic recovery, health inequalities, jobs and pathways to employment. Other key areas of collaboration for the LSP are the Kickstart scheme and other funding streams, education and skills, policing and enforcement.</p> <p>It is intended that the statement will be finalised by the December LSP Board and LSP members are now being asked to review, comment and add content by 31st October.</p> <p>It is also suggested that Task and Finish groups are set up to take forward the key sector areas. With regards to setting up these groups, it is important to ensure that they will add value and align to existing capacity of organisations and with county-wide groups, which will be focusing on similar things.</p> <p>It was agreed that a paragraph describing the statement of intent would be added at the beginning of the document and the number of pages reduced. The draft statement will be circulated to partners and it is requested that tracked changes be used when amending the draft.</p> <p>In terms of taking this piece of work forward, ideas and rationale for task and finish groups and what each partner can bring to the table are also welcome.</p>	

Action: ALL suggestions for establishment of Task and Finish group be submitted (pdatta@hastings.gov.uk) asap with a brief scoping document, key objectives, membership and start and finish dates.

4 **UPDATE ON TOWN FUND AND EMERGING CHALLENGES**

Pranesh Datta updated:

The £1m accelerated fund was awarded by government for quick win projects. The Town Deal Board recommended 4 capital projects for approval for completion by the end of March 2021:

- 1) Phase 2 redevelopment of former White Rock Baths to create new commercial and leisure use spaces – grant amount = £485,000
- 2) Hastings Commons – bring the Lower Alley into use for businesses and community – grant amount = £250,000
- 3) An Employment, Events and Tourist Advice Hub at Hastings College – grant amount = £250,000
- 4) Investing in electric vehicle charging infrastructure in town centre car parks – grant = £15,000 with additional £35,000 match funding from HBC

Carole Dixon updated:

Through consultation, 4 key themes and challenges have been identified for the Town Fund:

- 1) Skills and enterprise infrastructure
- 2) Arts, culture and heritage
- 3) Urban regeneration, planning and land use/connectivity
- 4) Urban regeneration, planning and land use

Work will be done to create straplines for the challenges and ambitions. As per the guidance, these need to be specific to Hastings. The Theory of Change for the Town Deal is being developed and will help to bring the projects together in a coherent manner. In terms of evaluation of the programme, there are cross cutting themes that will run through the programme and one of these is looking at how any capital investment programmes directly benefit some of the wider communities and that there is a strong relationship between the capital programme and some of the revenue activity that might take place to ensure benefits have a wider reach.

5 **SHAPE OF THE SECOND WAVE**

i. Community impact

Steve Manwaring updated:

A networking event was held a couple of weeks ago, in which, across the sector, lockdown was looked at: the position as it was understood and what we need to move towards.

With regards to the impact of the second wave, 3 separate strands need to be looked at: 1) impact of Covid with whatever lockdown measures

accompany it, particularly in relation to the most vulnerable and isolated, 2) the economic impact that will follow and 3) within the health sector, looking at the extents at which it will distort a wider network of health services, bearing in mind that there are a lot of residents in Hastings with long-term health conditions.

In terms of community organisations within the voluntary sector, the first outbreak has thrown a spotlight onto some of the inadequacies of the physical accommodation in which services are delivered and ways to innovate and how technology can be used to accommodate more hybrid working. There are also concerns particularly in how young people will be disproportionately impacted by whatever happens next and this needs to be understood. A report was produced and we know nationally that Covid fell disproportionately on the BAME communities and this also needs to be understood. Links to some Hastings specific research will be circulated after this meeting. **Action: Steve.**

It is important to understand what has happened in Hastings with Covid and we have benefitted from input from Steven Orchard of the University of Sussex who has been doing some work trying to understand the nature of prevalence in our specific community. Steven started his work with a presentation at the community hub meeting and he will be returning to this week's meeting to share his preliminary findings. The meeting is open to LSP members wanting to attend

ii. Local business impact – Clive Galbraith / Sean Dennis

Clive Galbraith provided an update:

For many trades, contracting and construction in particular, have reported that the position will be similar to that of last year and the view is that the next 12 months will be pretty much the same. For self-employed individuals, it will be more difficult to make up the year on year figures. Clearly, the 1066 economy is based around a diverse number of businesses, from micro businesses employing just one person, to larger business employing hundreds of people, although the major challenges have been within the hospitality and tourism sectors. Events have been taking place virtually, but this does not help the local economy. It has been reported that cars and caravan sales have been doing quite well.

Sean Dennis updated:

Comments received from the advisory team which covers East Sussex, Kent, Essex and the wider east of England is that comments are similar in these regions. Some sectors are benefitting, and others have caught up or still playing catch up. If the recovery continues in the current vein, they will have caught up by the end of the year. The obvious sectors have been hit the hardest: tourism, retail, hospitality and culture, which are particularly key and relevant to Hastings and the surrounding areas and will continue to struggle for some time to come.

What it has highlighted is very reflective of what is heard in the national press and what has happened in the economy. Quarter 1 was very difficult, quarter 2 has seen quite a strong bounce back and is expected to continue, albeit at a slower rate into quarter 3. Overall, if we take the whole economy, we will see quite a contraction, but within that there are pockets that have done well and some that have suffered. On a practical basis, businesses fear uncertainty and as we move forward into the Winter period, those concerns for lockdown restrictions will add to their concerns.

iii. LSP Partners – feedback on impact

Richard Watson updated:

NHS has been working with a broad range of partners in the town and across East Sussex. It is expected that this will be a challenging Winter with an increased demand for health care services, combined with what is being experienced already, a Covid surge and the likely impact of flu and the national requirements that we have around restoration and recovery of services, particularly around elective care. The CCG has created a Winter Plan, which is underpinned by challenges, particularly around mental health, learning from wave 1 and capacity and demand modelling. Risks have been identified, which includes a local surge and risks around critical care capacity that is available. The link will be circulated to the LSP. **Action: Richard**

Jonny Hartley updated:

Business has returned to levels of normality within the last 2-3 months. In terms of the police roles and responsibilities during the first phase, the focus was on protecting the NHS. As the rates have fallen, work has returned to the normal business cases. For the second wave, complications will be with local lockdowns and localised areas with different restrictions and different levels of legality, especially if this is localised within East Sussex, which will be very difficult to manage. In terms of enforcement, there has not been a huge number of complaints about breaches of the rule of six. In addition, Brexit is likely to have a huge impact on policing nationally and contingency plans at ports are being reviewed.

Bruce Campbell updated:

Planning for the second wave is underway. It has been known that from mid-March the highest number of new claims to universal credit was made and the figures have remained constant for the last 3 months. The latest figures are due to be released tomorrow. A significant number of easements and adjustments were put in place to manage the number of benefit claims. Alongside that, significant recruitment drives took place and 13,500 work coaches have been put in place to help and support those that have had to access the services. 30% of the working age population have been accessing the furlough and self-employed income support schemes and will continue to access the service, however the upcoming changes in

those schemes will have an impact. Additional resource has been brought in to manage the Kickstart scheme and other national initiatives as part of the Chancellor's plan for jobs and expanding the 18-24 year old cohort offer.

Jane Hartnell updated:

HBC is back in response phase and majority of the work is increasing significantly. A system for self-isolation payments has been set up and should be signed off today and payments made. Clarity is still awaited on what is to happen with support to businesses if we were to go into another lockdown situation. Work is being carried out to bring mobile testing units into the town as and when required and work will be carried out this week on establishing a local testing unit to keep in the town for the next 3-4 months.

Support to schools, employers and to the community is ongoing. The Environmental Health team is continuing to support locations and venues, giving advice, fortunately any enforcement is yet to be carried out, but the situation is being monitored. With regards to Covid marshals, an East Sussex-wide approach is being taken and the details are being worked out to ensure consistency. Rough sleepers and homelessness are still causing a significant amount of concern in terms of Winter preparation, as shelters cannot be used at the current time. Work is being carried out with other groups for vaccine preparation and the distribution and availability of sites is being looked into. Work continues with the pan-Sussex strategic coordination group on local escalation and outbreak control plans. The EU exit is causing concern, particularly given the close proximity to Kent. Another area the strategic coordination group is focusing on is exhaustion and fatigue of colleagues across the whole sector, going into this difficult Winter, which aligns to social cohesion and potential attacks on police, ambulance and other staff, and HBC is reviewing its risk assessments as a result. Any events that go ahead are being coordinated to ensure they are Covid-secure, i.e. Remembrance Day.

Dan Shelley updated:

Fluid arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of students and staff. Most of the delivery is still in classrooms and workshops, but there is also some online provision. There has been 2 positive cases in Hastings. For the first, 170 A-level students had to self-isolate and for the second, only 3 had to self-isolate. All used Google Classrooms to ensure they did not miss out on their learning and if they were eligible for free school meals then they receive their allocation for the time that they were self-isolating. Changes have been made to support education and the wider social implications of students affected by self-isolation, and laptops and dongles have been handed out if needed. The pledge of a £1m adult education budget has been released and it is expected that in the next couple of weeks the 1000th learner will be on both online and pre-employment programmes. Work continues with DWP to make the link between candidates, potential employees and jobs and to support the chamber and other providers as they become intermediaries within Kickstart to provide the pre-employment training.

Vanessa Biddiss updated:

Optivo staff continue to work from home, although some 20-25% of staff have returned to the office following completion of Covid risk assessments. Optivo works across 4 regions: Midlands, Kent, London and Sussex and work continues to deal with local lockdowns. Safe operating procedures are in place for all the services that are being delivered. Optivo is in phase 2 of its resident's resilience project and residents who are at risk of losing their jobs at the end of the furlough scheme are pro-actively being contacted. Optivo is part of Kickstart and apprentices are being recruited to work with the teams.

Teresa Andrews updated:

It's business as usual for HARC and a staff roster is in place to ensure social distancing. Advice continues to be carried out via email, internet and over the phone, although phone advice is trickier due to the length of some of the forms which have to be completed. The online appointments are difficult not just because of access to devices, but also the lack of free Wi-Fi in the area, especially with the libraries being closed and clients are unable to afford enough mobile data suitable for the length of time needed to complete any forms. Extra staff are now on board to work on calculations as it is envisaged that as soon as furlough ends more work will have to be done. All training programmes have been moved onto Zoom, thanks to HVA for advertising the training which has been a huge success and very helpful to get advice out to those who need it.

Tracy Dighton updated:

Looking at the various working groups through the community hub and Hastings Community Network Executive, it is felt, from the lessons from the first wave, that there has been flexibility in the processes in several different areas over the period and it is felt that that partners were able to work quickly to sort out basic needs. For fuel vouchers, CA1066 benefitted from funding from the energy redress scheme and DEFRA funding. CA1066 also coordinates a fuel voucher distribution system for the county, which is working well. It is envisaged, if the scheme is extended, that there will be tremendous pressure on the system and CA1066 is relying on partners to manage client expectations. In terms of advice, the local job centre was able to work with CA1066 and refer them to specialists at the job centre if needed. Funding for money advice has been received, although this will only last until the end of March, which makes it very difficult to train staff and manage. Finally, the Hastings Community Network Executive has got a Digital Inclusion Working Group which has been looking at training materials and what is available nationally which is low cost and free. The list is available on the CA1066 and HVA websites. A piece of work is also being done with Dave Perry from Seaview Project on how to hand out devices, for which a safe, Covid-secure space is needed to do this and the Lottery Fund has given CA1066 some funding for a post to carry out the work to support the working group, support clients and other organisations to skill up those who need it.

<p><u>6</u></p>	<p><u>BREXIT UPDATE</u></p> <p>Sean has sought feedback from his advice team, and it is understood that the focus for businesses is still currently around Covid and that Brexit is not yet on the radar. The micro businesses have a very local market and focus, with no imports or exports being undertaken and Brexit ranks very low in their priority areas of concern. The larger companies that undertake imports and exports are still not focusing on it in much detail as mitigation rules have previously been put in place, only for the rules to change again. The fundamental issue for any business of any size is uncertainly and currently there are still no answers to the questions that businesses have, and until that happens, it will be business as usual until the implications are known.</p> <p>Marc advised that as of December 31st, any Europeans arriving in the country will have to be let into the country under whatever the new arrangements will be. Those who are already resident in the UK have until the end of June next year to apply to the settled status scheme which will protect the rights that they have built up, either giving them full rights to remain or pre-settled status. We are reaching a point when majority of citizens know they have to complete these applications. The final 10% of applicants are more complex cases which are being supported with their applications going forward.</p> <p>Jane advised that supply chains are being reviewed, particularly for refuse trucks, cremator parts, etc. The biggest issue is lorries going into Kent and the infrastructure that may have to be built around Newhaven to enable use as a freight route. Until we know what the agreement is at the end of October, it is still hard to put firm plans in place.</p>	
<p><u>7</u></p>	<p><u>CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY - WORKSHOP AND SUB-GROUP INVITATION</u></p> <p>Chantal Lass updated and thanked everyone that attended the workshop run by AECOM. AECOM has been working with HBC to help inform the Local Plan policies and with the climate emergency modelling.</p> <p>At the workshop the initial findings from the recent Low Carbon Energy Study were presented. Slides from the workshop will be shared with the LSP. Action: Chantal</p> <p>How we can work together as an LSP to address the climate emergency has been discussed previously. Some members have already come forward to join a sub-group to explore and address the issues. There is substantial funding available for this cause from various sources that LSP members may also benefit from. If anyone else is interested in joining the sub-group or has any questions, please contact Chantal: CLass@hastings.gov.uk</p>	
<p><u>8</u></p>	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p>Simon Neill advised that because of Covid, the fire and rescue service is finding it difficult to get in contact with communities and arrange home safety visits. It would be useful if the number for home safety and general</p>	

wellbeing advice could be shared. ESFRS is looking at doing things in different ways but they do need to speak to people. Any ideas are welcome from partners. Further information will be sent through to circulate to the LSP. **Action: Simon**

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

10:00, Monday, 11th January 2021