

Hastings and St. Leonards LSP Board Meeting
10:45am, Monday, 11th May 2020
Via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Carole Dixon (Chair) – Education Futures Trust
Alan Sheppard – Hastings Borough Council
Andrew Palmer - Hastings Borough Council
Catherine Orbach – Project Artworks
Chantal Lass – Hastings Borough Council
CI Sarah Godley – Sussex Police
Cllr Kim Forward – Hastings Borough Council
Cllr Rob Lee – Hastings Borough Council
Coral Harding – Hastings Borough Council
Cllr Martin Clarke – Hastings Borough Council
Graham Marley – Let’s Do Business Group
Jane Hartnell – Hastings Borough Council
John Shaw – Sea Change Sussex
Lewis Williams – East Sussex County Council
Marc Turczanski – Hastings Voluntary Action
Michael Courts – Hastings Borough Council
Pranesh Datta – Hastings Borough Council
Richard Watson – Hastings and Rother CCG
Simon Hubbard – Hastings Voluntary Action
Steve Manwaring – Hastings Voluntary Action
Tracy Dighton – Citizens Advice 1066
Victoria Conheady – Hastings Borough Council
Victoria Spencer-Hughes – East Sussex County Council
Tracey Rose – Fellowship of St. Nicholas

Apologies received from: Jackie Everett and Vanessa Biddiss

1. Introduction

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

The chair stressed that given the impact of COVID-19 in Hastings it is crucial that we have leadership from the council and other leaders from across the town. The LSP has a mandate to be able to take forward the strategic overview of the town. The meeting this morning is to see how we can move forward as a town. For Hastings, the impact is going to be profound. We know that the impact for the whole country is going to be significant, but in Hastings we know that we face a number of additional challenges, particularly with vulnerable people, who won’t be able to pick up and take on life in whatever normal looks like, going forward. As an organisation and structure, it is important that we are able to represent all people of the town. We are going to need to work differently, think differently, and it is important that we share

information, retain that overview and look to the future to think in terms of moving forward with a unity and a sense of purpose.

From this perspective, working along side the Town Deal Board, we have slightly different perspectives, the LSP has always had an overview of the town and the Town Deal Board has a very particular purpose, but it is going to be really important that the work of both of these boards come together and that we look to see how the money, the research, the influence and any lobbying can work for Hastings in a united way.

One of the things that we need to do with the LSP is to make sure that business as usual isn't abandoned and we try to run this alongside the impact of the Covid virus. When we look at health, education, the Town Deal, it is all going to be through the lens of the new world that the Coronavirus has brought about. When we talk about business as usual, it is going to be a very different perspective. And we will be looking at education in the light of closed schools; we will be looking at health in terms of the perspective that the virus brings to us.

We are going to look it in 3 particular areas:

- 1) the immediate response, which has been significant in Hastings, with people pulling together and doing things they have never done before
- 2) maintenance and support for those impacted by the crisis. Where some will be able to pick up life and work with the new normal, we know a lot of residents in Hastings will need significant support for a long time to come, and particularly as lockdown starts to ease and we move into our new world and
- 3) recovery and restart, which nobody knows what this will look like yet.

Richard Watson needed to leave the meeting early but provided assurance that NHS locally/Hastings and Rother CCG continue to work hard to ensure an adequate response to COVID-19. He thanked partners for their help and support, particularly the voluntary and community sector. The NHS is now expecting to see an increase in demand in community health, primary care and mental health and is preparing for this. The NHS is open for business as usual and want to work collaboratively with partners to ensure that our responses are safe and effective and will continue to work with the borough council and others to communicate safe and effective messages particularly to the most vulnerable in the town.

In response to a question about the impact of the virus, Richard explained that a review is being carried out on the impact this has had on the most vulnerable population and the BAME community and that the CCG is reporting findings to central government and is keen to explore the issues with the LSP going forward. Richard is happy to answer any questions that partners may have following this meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – 27th January 2020

Agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising:

HBC Re-organisation – Jane advised that the HBC has undertaken a small aspect of the senior management restructure. Simon Hubbard has now left and is now working with Hastings Voluntary Action on secondment. She has been appointed as Managing Director. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, HBC needs to further review its budgets, due to costs incurred and income lost, to identify what resources are available moving forward and further work on the re-organisation will progress later in the year. Cllr Kim Forward is now leader of the council and Cllr Colin Fitzgerald is deputy leader.

3. Update – Covid-19 impact and response

A joint presentation on the response to date was given by Victoria Conheady, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture and Andrew Palmer, Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment at Hastings Borough Council and Steve Manwaring, Chief Executive at Hastings Voluntary Action. The highlighted points were:

- Small business and retail, leisure and hospitality grant funding – up to the end of last week, 1,432 grant applications have been processed, totalling £16,745,000. This figure is 80% of the expected applications. Work is underway to identify businesses which are yet to come forward
- Discretionary grant scheme – full guidance is still to be received. It is hoped that the scheme can be operated in alignment with other districts and boroughs across East Sussex, but this is dependent on further guidance
- There are currently 239 households in temporary accommodation, which is a significant increase from 170 during locked
- Homeless presentations continue to rise, with approximately 16 each week, mainly due to eviction, and it is expected this will increase as lockdown measures are eased. New measures to manage a potential influx of evictions are being considered
- The council continues to provide its homelessness advice and support remotely
- Outreach to rough sleepers continues in partnership with others including the Seaview Project, the Clinical Commissioning Group housing associations, and through initiatives such as the Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway
- The Hastings Covid-19 Community Hub was set up in response to Covid-19 and supports the extremely vulnerable/shielded, other vulnerable residents, those self-isolating and anyone who identifies themselves as in need of support. The hub includes a number of local organisations including the voluntary and community sector, housing associations, the borough council and others

The are 4 sub-groups on the hub:

1. information/communication,
2. food supply
3. mental health, and
4. children, young people and families

and the 5 areas of activity are:

1) telephone line and triage, 2) volunteer support telephone befriending, 3) resources (relief fund and other forms of funding), 4) information/communication and entertainment and 5) pathways into more specialist/acute services where needed

- There were 900 registrations as of this morning to the Community Hub telephone line. This is operated by the council, which provides an inbound phone line and outbound triage service. A memorandum of understanding and data sharing agreements are in place to enable a joint response and to ensure referrals can be made quickly
- Maintenance planning and options for continuation of the triage and other services are now being investigated

Feedback is sought from LSP partners on how to deal with the response to date – are there any gaps in provision going forward and what additional services should be provided – are we meeting the needs of local people?

Graham Marley, Chief Executive at Let's Do Business Group, gave a presentation on the economic and business position. Highlighted points:

- From a national perspective, the economy wasn't in great shape before the crisis and the Office of Budget Responsibility is predicting it could shrink 35% over the next month
- Locally, the retail sector was struggling before the crisis. In April 2019, 60 empty shops were identified in the town centre and it is likely that this will increase
- The tourism and leisure sector have been significantly affected; all attractions are closed, and it is possible that the whole season may be lost
- In addition, the language school business contributes around £35m to the local economy
- Manufacturing businesses are operating between 0 and 40% capacity and many staff have been furloughed
- Support is available through grants and loans, and businesses have been appreciative of the small business and retail and hospitality grants provided by the borough council
- Let's Do Business Group is one of the lenders accredited to lend under the government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and had a huge number of enquiries during the first couple of weeks of lockdown. These are now reducing although it is expected these will go up again as we come out of the crisis
- The full impact of the crisis is still not known, whether there will be a bounce back and if the various support packages will work

4. Borough Recovery

East Sussex County Council is developing a recovery plan and feedback is being sought from partners by 18th May. All partners were asked to respond to the Slido survey by which will be re-circulated by close of play on Wednesday, 13th May.

Action: ALL

5. Town Deal update

Pranesh Datta, Economic Development Manager at HBC gave an update:

The Hastings Town Deal Board met on 4th March and came up with ideas for the vision for the town. However, this was before the pandemic and there may be a need to review this piece of work. The update from the minister, Simon Clark, is still keen to proceed with the work and some councils are keen to put their plans forward for approval as quickly as possible. Government has appointed the contractor to support towns to develop their plans. It is hoped a new prospectus will be issued in late June. The Town Deal EDG will be meeting next and Pranesh can inform LSP partners of decisions on how to take the work forward.

The Town Deal Board meeting is scheduled for 25th June.

6. Any other business

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance and asked for feedback on what worked or didn't work and would be happy to receive comments from partners.

Choice of online platforms for these meetings seems to be quite challenging for some partners. Microsoft Office and Teams is OK for some organisations and not for others due to the licencing costs and that may prohibit some organisations from participating. Zoom is better for meetings but is not being used by the statutory sector due to security issues.

7. Date of next meeting:

10am, Monday, 20th July 2020