
Sustainable Essex Partnership (SEP) Executive Board

Essex Records Office, Chelmsford

Tuesday 27th January 2009, 09:30am

Board members:

Cllr. Graham Butland	(GB)	Chair, District and Borough Councils representative Braintree District Council.
Cllr. John Buchanan	(JB)	Essex Association of Local Councils representative.
Canon John Brown	(JB)	Stronger Essex Partnership representative. Rural Community Council of Essex.
Suzanne Harris	(SH)	Rural Community Council of Essex representative. Essex Rural Partnership Representative.
John Hall	(JH)	Voluntary Sector representative and Target Lead for NI 197, Biodiversity; LI 10.1, Living Landscapes. Essex Wildlife Trust.
Cllr. Roger Walters (Representing Cllr. Jeremy Lucas)	(RW)	Essex County Council representative.
Frank Saunders	(FS)	Environment Agency representative.
Caron Brooks (Representing Margaret Read)	(CB)	GO East representative.
Steve Nelson	(SN)	Nibs Buses representative.

Target leads:

Malcolm Knights	(MK)	Target Lead for NI 156, Temporary Accommodation. Chelmsford Borough Council.
Jason Searles (Also Representing Kevin Jones & Robert Overall)	(JS) (KJ) (RO)	Target Lead for NI 191 Residual Waste Per Household; NI 192, Recycling; NI 195 Improved Cleanliness. Essex County Council. Target Lead for NI 186, Carbon Reduction; NI 188, Climate Change Adaptation. Essex County Council. Essex County Council, Director for Environment Sustainability and Highways.
Paul Murphy (Also representing Sue Sumner)	(PM) (SS)	Target Lead for NI 6, Volunteering. (Target Lead for NI 7, Thriving Third Sector. Essex Association of CVSS)
Rosemary Welch (Representing Liz Saville)	(RW)	Target Lead for LI 5.2, Congestion. Essex County Council.
Nick Shuttleworth	(NS)	Target Lead for LI 5.1, Access to Services.

Officers:

Gwyn Owen (Also Representing Dan Gascoyne)	(GO) (DG)	Lead Officer. Essex County Council. (Essex Partnership Secretariat. Essex County Council.)
Jan Plummer	(JP)	Essex Partnership Secretariat. Essex County Council
Sophie Cheetham	(SC)	Essex Partnership Secretariat. Essex County Council (minutes)

Apologies:

Cllr. Michael Talbot	(MT)	Joint Waste Management Advisory Board representative. Tendring District Council.
Ian Vipond	(IV)	Target Lead for LI 2.2, Affordable Housing; NI 154, Additional Housing. Colchester Borough Council.
Richard Gravatt	(RG)	Target Lead for NI 198, Children Travelling to School. Essex County Council.

Duncan Wood	(DW)	Target Lead for NI 4, Influencing Decisions. Essex County Council.
Cllr. Pam Challis	(PC)	LSP Chairs Forum representative. Castle Point BC.

1. Welcome:

Cllr Graham Butland opened the meeting as Chairman.

2. Development of the Partnership & delivery of LAA targets:

GO introduced the Sustainable Essex Partnership (SEP) work plan.

JH raised issue that although we are reaching the end of year one of a three year programme, most projects are only just under way therefore it is unrealistic to expect that a third of the target would have been met so far.

GO agreed that work plan interim targets can be revised in discussion with Target Leads.

All agreed that outstanding items on the work plan would be discussed at each meeting, and the relevant sections would be sent out in advance of meetings.

3. Diversity & Equality Assessment

Presentation by GO & JP to give background to Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) & introduce draft EIA for SEP. The aim is to produce improved EIAs for SEP and to provide additional support to Target Leads to facilitate this; support will include more information on the Essex Partnership (EP) website & individual support from JP. Based on new data EIAs may wish to focus on specific groups such as; older people, disability groups, BMEs, Travellers and Gypsies.

This activity will involve developing existing EIAs from Target Leads, not starting them again.

Target Leads requested feedback on EIAs already submitted.

Action - Overarching SEP EIA & information to assist with improving EIAs to be made available on EP website at the start of March 09. Feedback on existing EIAs is also to be provided to Target Leads.

All agreed that improved EIAs are to be completed by 31st March 2009; this will be built in to the SEP work plan.

4. Final allocation of parked Performance Reward Grant (PRG) funds

£75,000 had been parked at the last meeting (06.11.08) for NI 195, Cleanliness, pending further development of the action plan by JS.

JS – previous proposal requested £100,000 PRG; current proposal requires **£75,000 PRG**.

The service issue with cleanliness is that delivery comes from a number of partners leading to fragmentation.

In addition to this problem there are varying levels of performance and validating the data is difficult.

The aim is for the service to be proactive rather than reactive.

Proposal has 4 key actions:

1. Establishment of an Essex LEQ (Local Environmental Quality) Action Group.
2. Cleaner Safer Greener Network Membership.
3. External Validation of NI 195, Cleanliness.
4. Delivery of Countywide Campaigns and Education Activities.

No PRG required.
£39,000 PRG required.
£16,000 PRG required.
£20,000 PRG required.



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RW – Queried how many Districts are already Cleaner Safer Greener members?

JS – Three.

RW – Would support external validation of standards. Recommends stronger partnership with schools in this area and stronger deterrents to littering.

GB – Raised concern that 26 places at a National conference (action 2) are unnecessary.
JS – Responded that some of these places would be for partners.

All agreed happy to 'un-park' the £75,000 parked funds for this new proposal from JS for NI 195, Cleanliness.

GB – £123,051 had been parked at the last meeting for LI 5.2, Congestion.
GO/RW – This funding cannot be usefully spent to meet targets within the timeframe, therefore it is available to reallocate.

GB – SEP had agreed at the last meeting that NI 156, Temporary Accommodation would be a priority for any other available funds however there is also another suggestion from JH around NI 197, Biodiversity.

JH – The DEFRA guidance on NI 197 has just changed; it now requires evidence of Positive Conservation Management (PCM) of Local Wildlife Sites (LOWs) in addition to a PCM Statement. This means more resources will be needed to meet NI 197 targets.
Initial request for PRG for NI 197 was £220,000, however only £92,000 was allocated by SEP. This means it will be hard to achieve NI 197 targets without more funding.
Requested a further £40,000 top be allocated to NI 197.

GB – Will £40,000 make a difference?
JH - £40,000 will allow PCM for another 100 sites. In addition Local Authorities may undertake PCM at a lower rate to allow more funds to be available for private landowners PCM.

JB – Highlighted concern that initial NI 197 targets were unrealistic and suggested revising targets down rather than allocating more funding.
JH – Responded that Target Leads were encouraged to be ambitious and that GO East had set recommendations as to the level of increase of PCM (any changes in targets would need to be agreed by GO East). In addition the change on DEFRA guidance puts more strain on resources.

All agreed to park £40,000 because NI 197, Biodiversity may need additional resource to meet targets. Once there is more clarity/information on the possibility of revising NI 197 Targets this will be decided.

GB – This leaves £83,000 of PRG unallocated, what difference would this make if allocated to NI 156, Temporary Accommodation?
MK – More funding will allow more units to be delivered through the deposit scheme.

RW – Queried how many units this will provide and if the demand existed?
MK – Deposits are approximately £700 per property; confirmed the demand is there.

All agreed to allocate a further £83,000 to NI 156, Temporary Accommodation.

5. Update on Volunteering (NI 6) work stream

PM – At the last meeting of SEP it was recommended that NI 6, Volunteering & NI 7, Thriving Third Sector work more closely together. In response to this a working group has been set up to link NI 6 & 7 and ensure coordinated action if Economic Participation funding is bid for successfully. The first meeting will take place on Thursday 29.01.09 at which time the NI 6 Action Plan will be re-evaluated.

Survey results for NI 6 are due in Mid Feb 09 and again in 2011, this means it is hard to agree a target because the data is not yet available.

NI 6 focuses on 2 actions; employer supported volunteering and volunteering for statutory agencies.
Working group will look at; how best to use funding, promoting image of volunteering, training to improve volunteer retention, youth volunteering, volunteering around the 2012 Olympic games and short term volunteering i.e. for those temporarily out of work.

Links have been made with LI 3.1, People with mental health problems moving into employment or education, on

supported volunteering projects.

Essex County Council (ECC) has been proactive in its own supported volunteering scheme for employees which could have a huge impact on NI 7 as ECC is a large employer.

Update on NI 7 – Jackie Sully will be the interim Target Lead for NI 7 in Sue Sumner's absence. NI 7 was allocated £123,000 PRG which will be concentrating on compact compliance & procurement strategy. The Economic Participation Programme will provide funding for development activities including training and a Strategic Manager, therefore it is important to ensure the funding streams are complimentary.

RW – Queried demand for volunteers, availability of meaningful opportunities for volunteers and the danger of paid work being taken up by volunteers in the economic downturn.
PM – The definition of formal volunteering is clear in NI 6; with the links to the Thriving Third Sector there are lots of opportunities available. The Voluntary Sector is aware that volunteers must not replace paid employees.

JB – Highlighted the fact than many informal volunteers are not counted.
PM – The development of 'Timebanks' is being examined.

PM – Raised question of NI 6 remaining a designated Target? Although this is a priority it is difficult to measure due to survey data. In addition PM would need to identify the 3rd sector's perception of this change. PM would also need to make a case for this to GO East.

PM to report back on this issue at the next meeting.

6. Minerals and waste in Essex

Presentation by Roy Leavitt, Head of Environmental Planning, ECC. Lesley Stenhouse, Principle Planner, Minerals and Waste Planning, ECC. Paul Hinsley, Sustainable Procurement Manager, ECC.
Introducing the Essex Sustainable Procurement Strategy and seeking the comments of SEP as part of the consultation process for the strategy. In addition seeking support in terms of reducing waste and making good use of closed landfill sites (i.e. for Biodiversity, recreation etc).

All agreed this needs to be explored further and this will be done through The Essex Planning Officer's Association, which meets next on 04.02.09. This will then be discussed at the May 09 meeting of SEP.

7. Any Other Business

Presentation by Andrew Grenfell, Partnership Delivery Team, ECC, introducing the new Partnership Information Portal. The aim of the portal is to increase Partnership communication, locate synergies between Partnerships and to create transparency and public accountability.
Partners will undertake the admin for keeping the information on line up to date, the time burden for this should be minimal. The Portal will create links to Partnership's own websites rather than duplicate them.
This will be live by late April 2009.

Close. The date of the next meeting is 17th March 2009. This will be held at the Rural Community Council of Essex, 9:30-11:30.