

**Date:** 12 April 2007  
**Time:** 10.00am  
**Venue:** Capesthorne Room, Macclesfield Town Hall

**PRESENT:** Wendy Wright, Chair

**LSP Representatives:**

<b>Chester:</b>	Robin Norrie, Chair Paul Durham, Chief Executive, Chester City Council
<b>Congleton:</b>	Bill Owen, Chair
<b>Crewe &amp; Nantwich:</b>	John Bowler, Chair Paul Ancell, Chief Executive, Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council
<b>Ellesmere Port &amp; Neston:</b>	Gordon McGuinness, Chair Stephen Ewbank, Chief Executive, Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council
<b>Macclesfield:</b>	John Wilbraham, Chair Vivienne Horton, Chief Executive, Macclesfield Borough Council
<b>Vale Royal:</b>	Cathy Boyd (representing Anne Bingham-Holmes, Chief Executive, Vale Royal Borough Council)

**Other CCP Member Body Representatives:**

<b>Cheshire Safer Stronger Communities Partnership:</b>	
<b>Cheshire Children &amp; Young People's Strategic Partnership:</b>	Joan Feenan, Vice Chair
<b>Cheshire &amp; Warrington Economic Alliance:</b>	
<b>Sustainable Cheshire Forum:</b>	
<b>Cheshire Healthier Communities Group:</b>	John Weeks, Chair
<b>Cheshire &amp; Warrington Cultural Consortium:</b>	Chris Brown, Chair
<b>Cheshire &amp; Warrington Rural Partnership:</b>	David Rowlands, Chair

<b>Cheshire County Council</b>	Jeremy Taylor, Chief Executive
<b>Cheshire Fire &amp; Rescue Service:</b>	Phil Hales (representing Steve McGuirk)
<b>Cheshire PCTs:</b>	Roger Simpson
<b>Cheshire CABx:</b>	
<b>Cheshire CVSs:</b>	Michael Metcalfe

### **Support Staff**

Alison Armstrong, Jan Burns, Lisa Green and Robbie Taylor (CCC); Bernadette Hurst (CNBC); Andrea Mageean (Chester); Cedric Knipe (MBC);

### **Visitors**

Ann Riley (Audit Commission) attended for item 3.0.

Hazel Manning (Cheshire County Council) attended for item 6.0.

Helen McCairn (Cheshire County Council) attended for item 8.0.

## **1.0 WELCOME MESSAGE**

John Wilbraham as Chair of the host LSP (Macclesfield) welcomed partners to the meeting.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME TO NEW CCP MEMBERS**

Wendy Wright, Chair, welcomed three new members to the Communities of Cheshire Partnership (John Wilbraham, Chair, Macclesfield LSP; Robin Norrie, Chair, Chester in Partnership; and Chris Brown, Chair, Cultivate). All CCP members introduced themselves.

## **3.0 NOTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2007 were approved as a correct record. The following matters arising were discussed:

*Item 47.0* - Michael Metcalfe noted that the embryonic third sector 'hub' was continuing to meet though needed sufficient resourcing to ensure its long-term sustainability.

*Item 52.0* – Ann Riley reminded partners of the recommendations arising from the Audit Commission's project – Improving Partnership Working in Cheshire – and the Commission's commitment to continue to work with the partnership over the next twelve months prior to an annual review of progress. Whilst it was recognised that the uncertainty posed by a possible re-organisation of local government in Cheshire could hinder progress, it was felt that the issues to be addressed as a result of the project would remain for resolution irrespective of future local government arrangements. Development work needed to happen sooner rather than later if the partnership was to continue to grow and respond to increasing demands. Specific consideration would need to be given to support resources, particularly the capacity of the LAA Officer Group and the involvement of other partners in shaping and supporting the process.

**AGREED:** That a sub-group of the CCP comprising the Chairs of the district LSPs and other interested partners, under the Chairmanship of Wendy Wright and involving Paul Ancell as a link back to the Cheshire Chief Executives, be convened as soon as possible to progress the Audit Commission recommendations.

#### **4.0 CHESHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT – PROGRESS REPORT, NEXT STEPS & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Alison Armstrong, CCC, updated on progress to date and the latest thinking emerging from the Department for Communities and Local Government on how the new LAA arrangements as part of the new performance management framework outlined in the Local Government White Paper 2006 might be implemented from 2008.

In discussion, it was felt that the latest thinking reflected an evolution of the current approach rather than a new direction for LAAs though concern was expressed at the emphasis on local government delivery. It was felt that for LAAs to make a real difference, all partners needed to focus on the wider priorities for action and ensure that sufficient resources are attached to the achievement of outcomes. As a result, the LAA needed to become embedded as the 'day job'.

The process for allocating the additional resources available from second homes taxation was queried though it was suggested that this should rest ultimately with the Cheshire Governance Board based on recommendation by the Cheshire Chief Executives and the CCP.

The Chairs of the core thematic partnerships present were invited to comment on the development of their respective blocks.

*Healthier Communities and Older People* – As part of its structure, the Partnership had established two Commissioning Groups - one for healthier communities and one for older people. In addition, the Partnership had identified within the LAA those outcomes that it 'owned', those that it 'contributed to' and those that it 'influenced'. It was felt important to better engage the Chief Executives of the two Primary Care Trusts to ensure proper alignment of activity and processes (e.g. performance management) in the delivery of the LAA. A presentation to each of the PCTs would, it was hoped, raise the importance of this approach.

*Children & Young People* – Work was underway to identify the level of current investment in achieving the outcomes contained within the Children & Young People's Plan / LAA. This would inform the development and terms of reference of the new Children's Trust. A meeting to be held on 25 April would explore options for the engagement of the district LSPs on the CYPSP.

**AGREED:** That a presentation on the development of the Children's Trust be made to a future meeting of the CCP.

*Safer & Stronger Communities* – The financial outturn for the Safer Stronger Communities Fund was within the tolerance level set by government. Discussions in relation to the ‘stronger’ element were ongoing. Sub outcome owners had been identified across the block and training in the use of the performance management IT system – Excelsis – was underway.

*Economic Development and Enterprise* – The structure for delivery and monitoring of the block had been reviewed. Strategic oversight would be provided by the seven local authority Chief Executives and the CE of the Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance through the receipt of quarterly and six monthly progress reports. A multi-agency officer group would focus on delivery. The LAA refresh would need to include a fundamental review of the block to ensure that environmental and cultural issues, as highlighted within the current thinking on the future of LAAs, are reflected. The Chief Executives would need to reflect on this though any guidance from the CCP would be welcomed.

*Rural Focus* – The Rural Recovery and Rural Enterprise Boards had been amalgamated to oversee the substantial government investment in rural issues across Cheshire.

*Culture* – Whilst the evolution of Cultivate as the Cheshire-wide partnership responsible for driving forward the cultural agenda had taken longer than anticipated, a framework was now in place to make fast progress. This would include strengthened links with each of the district LSPs.

**AGREED:** That a written progress report from the Environment block be requested.

In conclusion, Wendy Wright welcomed the update and acknowledged the volume and extent of activity being progressed by the thematic partnerships.

## **5.0 DEVELOPING AN OVERARCHING STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN CHESHIRE - UPDATE**

John Weeks, CCC, updated on progress and encouraged those not currently engaged in the work to identify local representatives and get involved. It was suggested that the Partnership receive the outcome of this piece of work in October.

Roger Simpson alerted the Partnership to an imminent ‘outcomes framework’, similar to that already in place for children and young people, for integrating older people and health commissioning.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That a timescale of September 2007 be set for the completion of the work and that the officers concerned have the capacity to ‘do their bit’ to ensure completion by this date;

- (2) That the involvement of the four district councils not represented at the first meeting be secured; and
- (3) That the outcome of the work be reported to the CCP in October.

## **6.0 CHESHIRE LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY**

Hazel Manning, CCC, briefed partners on the development of the Cheshire Lifelong Learning Strategy. Liz Davis, LSC, had sent apologies to the meeting but wanted partners to be aware of the Council's commitment to the process. A briefing paper and draft document developed by a 'virtual advisory group' had been circulated prior to the meeting as background.

It was noted that good, often excellent, learning provision was already available widely across Cheshire with both adults and children getting a good deal. However, challenges do exist with 5.2m adults nationally without basic skills / level one qualifications. Specific reference was made to the added challenge in disadvantaged areas, the changing skill set needed as a consequence of demographic change and the economic v. social drivers of education and learning.

The draft Strategy was presented to the Partnership as 'work in progress' though consideration by the Partnership of ownership, content and support for further development of the Strategy was sought.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The value of a Lifelong Learning Strategy was acknowledged and welcomed though it should also:
  - incorporate and join up the range of learning available across communities and provided via more informal learning mechanisms, e.g. voluntary and faith groups;
  - address the needs of employers;
  - reflect the process for learning, i.e. how people learn and support for those that need it;
  - provide specific focused targeting and investment where necessary;
  - better reflect skill needs and gaps, particularly at level three and above, to ensure skill levels are raised across the piece; and
  - be more robustly connected to the economic agenda as a mechanism for getting people into work.
- Other groups, such as the district Lifelong Learning Partnerships, the Learning Provider Network and the CYPSP need to be better engaged in the development of the Strategy.
- The Strategy should be seen more as a programme of activity over a long period of time nurtured as a cross-cutting issue across the Cheshire Partnerships Framework. If this approach were to be adopted, the commitment and practical application of a whole organisation approach to promoting lifelong learning and giving focus and direction would be required. It was suggested that further thought be given to this at a future meeting.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the development of a Lifelong Learning Strategy / Programme be endorsed;
- (2) That wider consultation on the content of the Strategy / Programme be undertaken; and
- (3) That the Partnership consider the integration of lifelong learning across the Cheshire Partnerships Framework at a future meeting.

**7.0 CHESHIRE PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK – FIT FOR PURPOSE REVIEW**

Andrea Mageean, Cheshire LAA Group, outlined a paper recommending deferral of the agreed 'fit for purpose' review of the Cheshire Partnerships Framework in the light of the new LAA guidance, delay in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 announcement and possible Local Government Re-organisation in Cheshire.

**AGREED:** That the 'fit for purpose' review of the Cheshire Partnerships Framework be deferred to September.

**8.0 CHESHIRE LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT – PROGRESS AND FINAL YEAR ACTION**

The Partnership considered an update on progress towards the achievement of the Cheshire Local Public Service Agreement targets by March 2008. The following comments in relation to three of the four targets / indicators currently showing as red were made:

*Target 3 / Indicator 2* – Further investment would be made in this area though it was becoming increasingly difficult to place people with disabilities into employment. As such, further consideration would need to be given to the possibility of additional investment and the subsequent likelihood of hitting the target.

*Target 5 / Indicator 1* – Over 20 separate initiatives, funded though Pump Priming Grant and mainstream resources, were underway to reach the target though it was acknowledged that this had always been extremely challenging. Some initiatives had been reviewed and broadened out and progress had been made though a massive change was still needed.

*Target 8 / Indicator 1* – The target is subject to fluctuation due to the numerous factors contributing to road traffic accidents. Whilst activity to achieve the target can focus on the education and engineering aspects, many factors are beyond the control of partners. The recently launched Safer Roads Partnership and joint enforcement education programme with the Police would help support achievement of the target alongside existing initiatives.

It was noted that some targets were more imposed than negotiated and whilst additional financial investment in some areas may help, other targets (e.g. target 5) were unlikely to be met even with additional resources.

It was suggested that the origins of the final targets (i.e. negotiated or imposed) be reflected upon and assessed against success with a view to learning lessons which could better inform any future LAA / LPSA process.

**AGREED:** That all partners be encouraged to work towards the achievement of the under-achieving LPSA targets during the final year.

## 9.0 PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

*i) Climate Change Group* – Alison Armstrong reported on the recently formed Cheshire Climate Change Group responsible for co-ordinating the Cheshire & Warrington sub regional delivery of the North West Climate Change Action Plan. The Group, chaired by Chris Mahon and operating as a function of the Sustainable Cheshire Forum, had £270k available over the next three years to assist in the delivery of the sub-regional plan. The Group would play a key role in supporting the Forum’s Cheshire Year of Climate Change and delivering against the LAA climate change targets. Chris Mahon would be interested to hear from partners intending to make climate change adaptations or mitigation measures.

*ii) Local Government Re-organisation* – As a named consultee on the proposed re-organisation of local government in Cheshire, partners debated the appropriateness of a response as this could be detrimental to partnership working.

**AGREED:** That the Communities of Cheshire Partnership would not express a view on LGR in Cheshire.

*iii) Sharing Success*

**AGREED:** That the Chairs of the thematic partnerships be asked to prepare a short (single side of A4) note highlighting examples of success and achievement of their respective partnerships.

**NOTE: DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 8 JUNE 2007, 2.00PM, OAKLANDS HOTEL, WEAVERHAM**

Signed (Chair): .....

Date: .....