

Date: 9th January 2008
Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Magistrates Room, Chester Town Hall

PRESENT: Wendy Wright - Chair

District and District LSP Representatives:

Chester:	Robin Norrie, Chair, Chester in Partnership and Chris Hardy, Managing Director, Chester City Council.
Congleton:	Craig Nicholson on behalf of the Chief Executive, Congleton Borough Council and Bill Owen, Chair of Congleton LSP.
Crewe & Nantwich:	
Ellesmere Port & Neston:	Rev. Gordon Mc Guinness, Chair of Ellesmere Port and Neston LSP and Brenda Harvey, Chief Executive, Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council.
Macclesfield:	Vivienne Horton, Chief Executive Macclesfield Borough Council and John Wilbraham, Macclesfield LSP Chair.
Vale Royal:	Anne Bingham-Holmes, Chief Executive, Vale Royal Borough Council.

Other CCP Member Body Representatives:

Cheshire Safer Stronger Communities Partnership:	Gary Shewan, Cheshire Police (representing Peter Fahy)
Cheshire Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership:	Joan Feenan, Chair
Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance:	
Sustainable Cheshire Forum:	Chris Mahon, Chair
Cheshire Healthier Communities Group:	John Weeks, Chair
Cheshire & Warrington Cultural Consortium:	Guy Kilminster on behalf of Chris Brown.
Cheshire & Warrington Rural Partnership:	David Rowlands, Chair
Cheshire County Council	Jeremy Taylor, Chief Executive

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service:	Mark Cashin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Health / PCTs	Helen Bellairs, Western Cheshire PCT
Cheshire CABx:	
Cheshire CVSs:	Alison Roylance-White on behalf of Michael Metcalfe.

Support Staff:

Jan Burns, Lisa Green, Alison Armstrong, Gavin Butler and Robbie Taylor (Cheshire County Council), Clare Babbs (Chester City Council); Sean Daley (Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council).

Visitors:

Greg Burke, Government Office for the North West.
Ann Riley, Audit Commission.

35.0 WELCOME MESSAGE

Robin Norrie welcomed the Partnership to Chester.

36.0 INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Wendy Wright welcomed partners to the meeting and introductions were made, followed by an acknowledgement of the Government final LGR decision announced in December.

37.0 CHESHIRE LAA 2007/10: ¾ YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

Partners received the exception report from Alison Armstrong, based on the underperforming sub-outcomes identified at the half year point. Discussion followed concerning the large remaining number of identified amber performance indicators and continuing uncertainty over their status, with regard to success or failure at year end.

Helen Bellairs reported how the PCTs have a different approach to the traffic light system and terminology; they report ambers as a measure which is on target, but some small risks attached to successful attainment. An example of a current amber indicator was provided by Joan Feenan. The Youth Parliament is due to convene shortly and therefore engagement, involvement and consultation with children and young people around decision-making will have been achieved. However, until the Parliament actually meets, we cannot evidence the performance indicator as being green. Greg Burke suggested that for the new transitional LAA 2008/09, partners should seek to include performance indicators which have in-year milestones so that the current state of progress can be assessed during the year.

Jeremy Taylor advised the Partnership to consider what it expects the Governance Board to do when performance reports are presented

there – more specific actions would be appropriate. At the suggestion of John Weeks it was agreed that the Chairs of the countywide thematic partnerships should identify any relevant LAA performance issues / required actions for the Governance Board in the future.

DECISION

The Communities of Cheshire Partnership agreed:

- that the three quarter year performance report would form the basis of subsequent reports to be made to Cheshire County Council's Performance and Overview Committee (as Accountable Body) and the Cheshire Governance Board.
- Thematic Chairs to identify any actions required of the Governance Board

38.0 INTERIM CHESHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY & LAA 2008/09: NEW NATIONAL INDICATOR SET, NEW LAA PRIORITIES & PROPOSED INDICATORS

Lisa Green presented a paper outlining progress on the development of a new interim Sustainable Community Strategy and the preparation of the new transitional LAA for 2008/09.

Community Strategy

It was agreed to make the following changes prior to consultation

- Reflect success and high quality of life for most people
- Central theme to be around narrowing the gap / reducing inequalities between those experiencing/achieving success and those that have yet to benefit
- Reflect rural issues as well as urban inequalities
- Incorporate mental health into revised inequalities section
- Add two priorities on road safety and anti-social behaviour (arson focus)

Local Area Agreement

Considerable discussion took place concerning the nominated new national indicators to be measure the outcomes of the Strategy through the transitional LAA for the next financial year. A number of Partners again questioned the need to prepare and deliver a nine month arrangement given the LGR context within Cheshire. Jeremy Taylor would share these ongoing concerns with CLG on behalf of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership. Greg Burke stated that CLG had not changed its mind and a new Agreement would be required to release the 2008/09 Area Based Grant. But Partners also agreed to continue to plan for a new LAA as the most pragmatic course of action, pending a definitive view from the Permanent Secretary at CLG.

Colleagues were reminded of the selection criteria applied to the

indicators provided by the countywide thematic partnerships and the need to undertake further evaluation to ensure we use the most appropriate and practical indicators.

Following the discussion; it was agreed that the performance indicators identified as green, plus road safety and arson, would be acceptable for inclusion in the draft outcomes framework to be submitted as the starting point for GONW negotiation. Some further work would need to be done on those identified as amber to ensure they are robust enough for inclusion. Further evaluation against the criteria would be undertaken directly with the responsible reporting organisation for each indicator before finalising the list for the Governance Board

DECISION

1. Partners agreed the priorities for inclusion in the draft Cheshire Sustainable Community Strategy, subject to alterations / further work outlined above.
2. Partners approved the draft Cheshire Sustainable Community Strategy for a 12 week consultation across the Cheshire Partnerships Framework, subject to amendments above
3. Partners recommended the nominated indicators for the 2008-9 LAA to the Cheshire Governance Board for onward submission to GONW on 29th January 2008.
4. Jeremy Taylor to pursue issues relating to Community Strategy / LAA2008 requirements with the Permanent Secretary at CLG

39.0 THIRD SECTOR UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS

Alison Roylance-White, on behalf of the Cheshire and Warrington Change Up Consortium, provided a presentation on current activities and development work being undertaken by partners from the local Third Sector. A meeting is planned toward the end of February as the next of the strategic development of the sector toward a single network of organisations and partnerships.

Joan Feenan commented upon how difficult the process of producing and delivering the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Plan would have been if the Cheshire Children Young People and Families Voluntary Community and Faith Sector Hub had not been formed. The process of engagement and involvement of the sector in planning, funding and commissioning dialogues would have so much more difficult without a single point of contact with the sector. Joan also reported on the successful involvement of the same consultant in both development projects.

Chris Hardy remarked that when the new local authority and local

strategic partnerships form, it will be essential to involve local Third Sector partners and for the sector to have a strong voice in that work. A single point of engagement with the very broad and numerous sector in Cheshire would be greatly facilitated by communicating through a single network of organisations and receiving a single response on behalf of the sector.

The Chair thanked Alison, on behalf of the Consortium, for her presentation and the progress report on the ongoing work.

40.0 COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT: JOINT CONSULTATION

Ann Riley provided a verbal report on the consultation exercise, currently underway, to produce a new style of inspection and evaluation of local public sector organisations and local partnerships. Essentially a single assessment would draw together a number of bodies to produce a single evaluation comprised of the Audit Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection, Healthcare Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted. Local quality of life issues will underpin the new assessment regime and greater attention will be given to the role of LSPs to deliver change. The first stage of consultation closes on 15th February.

A brief discussion followed where a number of concerns and questions arose about a single vehicle for assessment. Anne Bingham-Holmes suggested a number of issues would need addressing if a joint assessment procedure was to succeed. There would be the need to ensure that local authorities would not be held to account for performance outside their responsibility. There would be the need for a consistent style of assessment from family of assessing organisations as they all currently have different approaches and cultures. Joan Feenan explained how the JAR self assessment process had a number of positive outputs and could provide some good examples of what the Partnership may wish to include in its response to the consultation.

The enhanced future role of LSPs will be key to CAA and this will provide a significant challenge to the new governance arrangements from 2009; when CAA will be implemented.

ACTION

The CCP Improvement Group to receive contributions from individual organisations and partnerships and produce a co-ordinated response on behalf of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership.

41.0 CREATING STRONG, SAFE AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES: GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Greg Burke from the Government Office provided a verbal report on the Government consultation on the new draft statutory guidance for local

areas.

The key points included the proposed radical change in the relationship between central and local government, not just in terms of LAAs and CAA, where more space will be provided to focus on local priorities. There will be the need to consult and engage local people more effectively when setting priorities. There will be an enhanced role for local councilors and LSPs in 'place shaping' and improving co-ordination between local actors, especially in aligning individual funding streams. The duty to cooperate between named organisations to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of services is optimised. There are seven key questions in the consultation.

ACTION

The CCP Improvement Group to receive contributions from individual organisations and partnerships and produce a co-ordinated response on behalf of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership.

42.0 NOTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes from the meeting in November were accepted as an accurate record of discussions and decisions.

Helen Bellairs noted that Roger Simpson does not attend on behalf of the PCTs

43.0 PARTNERSHIP REPORTS – ISSUES FOR THE CCP

Joan Feenan reported that Grade 3 had been achieved in Cheshire following the recent APA evaluation and was a cause for local celebration: the Chair passed on congratulations on behalf of the CCP.

Bill Owen stated he will be stepping down as Chair of Congleton LSP in the near future, a position held since 2002 and this would be his last CCP meeting. The Chair thanked Bill for his support and contribution to the Communities of Cheshire Partnership.

NOTE:

Date of the next meeting, **TBC**

Signed (Chair):

Date: